




Speech By
Aaron Harper

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

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ADJOURNMENT

Gtec

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (7.22 pm): This evening I want to share with the House my observations of a unique group of people who run a local training and development company called Gtec in Townsville. From the outset I was immediately impressed with the way this company has delivered real jobs in Thuringowa. In 2015 I met up with Mr Richard Roe, director of Gtec, at the Upper Ross Community Centre where a training program called the Community Garden was being delivered, which included instruction and training for 20 young people of both Indigenous and Torres Strait descent.

At the end of that program 16 of the 20 had picked up employment in our area with local companies, which was an outstanding result. From that interaction I knew that Richard was personally invested, and after finding out that his background was as a nurse for many years it reaffirmed my observation that this fellow was caring and compassionate about making real change in the community.

In my role as the local member for Thuringowa I continue to be impressed with very special people who are true community champions, and I commend Richard and the team at Gtec for their determination and passion to deliver more jobs by teaming up the Townsville City Council with another 20 trainees to deliver a horticulture and land management course late last year. We know that when you partner up with major employers like the Townsville City Council there is an increased opportunity for ongoing employment.

Gtec's core practice is to work with people who have limited ability or no access to traditional learning. Their clientele ranges from those aged 15 to 65 years of age. In their eight years of operation, 87 per cent of trainees have gained employment in Townsville. They deliver courses in construction, hospitality, trade, retail and health care. Gtec also works closely with TAFE Queensland. I am proud to support Gtec, who have recently expanded their capacity to assist members of the community by establishing a not-for-profit affiliate company called Connecting 2 Community Circles Limited. Through this company Gtec seeks to provide a space that will instil a greater sense of pride and ownership in our great city by delivering a range of real employment opportunities such as the proposal to have 40 people working on the Riverway Drive beautification project, which will complement the \$35 million road project currently underway in Thuringowa.

Mitchell Stephenson was nominated for the Equity VET Student of the Year at the 2017 Queensland Training Awards. He says that he walked into Gtec nothing more than a broken, depressed and defeated person, but he knew that by teaming up with Mylestones and Gtec he had made the right decision. After completing his training course at Gtec, he writes that he walked out the door into an interview at OfficeWorks and gained employment with a confidence that he never had before. I commend Gtec and continue to support them to this day.