




Speech By
Kim Richards

MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

Record of Proceedings, 13 June 2018

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Redlands Electorate, Skilling Queenslanders for Work

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (2.28 pm): I rise to talk about the enormous value the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program has delivered to my community. Yesterday, it was fantastic to see in the budget the honouring of the Palaszczuk government's and Minister Fentiman's commitment to Skilling Queenslanders for Work, with a boost to the budget for the program to \$80 million in 2018-19 while extending the initiative for two years to 2020. This initiative will be extended for six years and will help many thousands of Queenslanders, with more than 15,000 having secured jobs as a direct result.

This program is doing a fantastic job of helping a range of people, including mature age Queenslanders and Redlanders in my community, to skill, reskill and become job ready. In the Redlands, I have been privileged to witness the enormous success of this program. It really changes lives.

Importantly, this program has changed the lives of those on the southern Moreton Bay islands, where we have high unemployment and what can only be described as complex remote regional community conditions.

Running Wild is an organisation based in the Southern Moreton Bay Islands that has been successfully delivering the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program in environmental conservation and construction skills. They are a local organisation delivering this wonderful program for our community. This program is delivering in spades and there have been great outcomes through Running Wild's engagement with various other community groups such as Coastcare and Bushcare. They are adding enormous value to the project and bringing our community together. They are also working with the Macleay Island Progress Association and looking for opportunities to take the program beyond environmental and construction skills and into the hospitality space and creating bush tucker training for young people on the islands.

Running Wild, in delivering the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, has been working collectively with the community to achieve meaningful environmental outcomes whilst providing on-the-job learning opportunities. The environmental outcomes have been fantastic and at the most recent graduation the students took me through the work that they had done next to the Tingara Boat Club on Macleay Island. They had rehabilitated all of the bushland that surrounds it and created handcrafted timber picnic shelters. They created kayak stacking racks that were used in the most recent 10th Macleay Island Classic kayaking race which brought in 45 entrants from across Queensland and as far down as Northern New South Wales. The work that they continue to do includes seed collection and propagation to rehabilitate the vegetation, vegetation management across the island sites working with bushcare groups, walking track construction, firebreak management, construction of bird watching hides and nesting boxes and environmental interpretive signage.

Running Wild has been shortlisted as a finalist in the upcoming training awards. Chook, who is the lady who runs it—Julie Larson—is an incredibly passionate Redlands woman.

(Time expired)