




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MACALISTER

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ADJOURNMENT

Macalister Electorate, Skilling Queenslanders for Work

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (9.10 pm): I rise to speak about the wonderful achievements of young Australians who have been undertaking training through the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program in my electorate. My electorate boasts a number of organisations that are delivering training through a range of areas. Trainees young and old are undertaking training and upskilling in areas as diverse as land management, disability and aged care, hospitality, business, construction, administration and fitness.

In this parliament we have heard countless stories of the impact of the Labor government's Skilling Queenslanders for Work program and I have attended a number of graduations over the past few months. The thought that those opposite do not value training and development and that they would have axed such a successful training initiative is one that beggars belief. Seeing the excitement that these graduates have as they now have the confidence that new skills and a new outlook provides is a genuine pleasure, but what I really like hearing is the commitment that young Queenslanders have to get the skills they need to get meaningful employment.

Earlier this year the Beenleigh training centre commenced an 18-week certificate II in telecommunications technology with 12 trainees. Last Friday I attended a graduation ceremony where 11 had completed the training package. The fact that not all could attend the ceremony because they were at work speaks volumes of the success of this program. From this cohort five have already found employment and three were in discussions with employers. I would like to specifically mention one of those graduates.

Our young unemployed people are a much maligned and demonised group. They are increasingly finding themselves in a cycle of unemployment or underemployment—enough work to no longer qualify for benefits but not enough work to be able to afford to even get to work or pay their own way or, if there is no work, reporting requirements which actively remove their ability to train and apply for jobs to break that cycle. Having seen the commitment of these Skilling Queenslanders for Work graduates, I have nothing but admiration for them and for one young man in particular.

Fletcher started the certificate II in July this year. Every day he travelled from Deception Bay to Beenleigh and then walked or caught a lift to the training centre. This is in the face of those who would say our young people are lazy and would not even travel for work. Fletcher is a shining example of a young man who has been given an opportunity under this government and developed his professional skills to gain meaningful employment. There is dignity in work and, thanks to Skilling Queenslanders for Work, Fletcher now has that. I am pleased to advise the House that in attendance at the graduation ceremony was Fletcher's boss. You see, Fletcher now works full-time, 38 hours a week, working for Visionstream in their NBN team rolling it out.

Seeing those guys graduate—in my words to them, they are poster children for Skilling Queenslanders for Work. I told them personally that I really do hope that in five or 10 years time from now, when we are still doing this, they will be there as employers with their own companies as they absolutely demonstrate Skilling Queenslanders for Work.