



Speech By  
**Kim Richards**


**MEMBER FOR REDLANDS**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Skilling Queenslanders for Work

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.02 pm): Skilling Queenslanders for Work is a program that was cut by the LNP when they were in government and they unfunded it going into the last election. It is one of the most important programs in my community. It is changing lives. I want to share the speech of a recent graduate, Erin, because this is priceless. You cannot put a value on the change that it makes to the lives of our young people. Erin says—

Courage. Persistence. Structure. Honesty. Support. Five key ingredients that have laid the foundation of our future.

I knew a girl who was afraid to be seen, doing everything in her power to make sure no one knew her name. She travelled without direction, with a heavy heart of hopelessness and the ongoing feeling of never being enough. There was no stride in her step. She worked dead end jobs and searched within her comfort zone for work that she didn't love, with people she didn't like. In spite of her broken spirit, there was still a piece of her that refused to give in. Weary and tired with nowhere to go but up, she decided to move into an area where she thought she might again find herself. Searching for work, she stumbled upon a community organization Running Wild. A Traineeship in Conservation and Land Management. Unexpected and unfamiliar, she went for it and low and behold she got the traineeship.

This was the beginning of my future. I never expected then that the girl I was, would become a distant memory of the woman I am today. We spent the first few weeks solely focused on team building. This would be the most crucial part of the program; it built the foundation. As the weeks passed, we have fought and overcome challenges. We didn't do it alone, but together as a single unit. We learned patience for one another and how to utilize our strengths to empower ourselves and each of our teammates.

We are a people made up of the most diverse cultures, with the craziest stories and consisting of personalities that some would say fit together like chalk and cheese. But the leadership, standards and dedication running wild role modelled from day one, influenced us to love each other with a mindset that we are all equal. We have all created bonds that build us up and inspire us to be what lies in our potential, not in our perceptions.

I would like to personally thank our Skilling Queenslanders for Work supervisors Sheridyn and Rose. A key piece that was missing in my life was structure and discipline and that's exactly what Rose brought to the table.

To all the staff in running wild, I hope you all know how grateful we are as trainees to have had the privilege to work under you. You empowered us with hope, you taught us things we will carry for the rest of our lives, and you gave us a home where we will always be welcome.

There is always a place for us, and that is only because of the faith and support given by the beautiful people in this community. The time I spent here was not long-lasting but it has reignited my spirit. I have found freedom to move on from the trauma I have struggled through, making new memories that are shaping me for the better. Running wild uncovered the pieces of me I lost and that is more than I could have ever asked for.

Thank you Erin, you have turned it all around. This is what Skilling Queenslanders for Work does: changes lives. I was privileged to chair the estimates for skills and training. Everyone raves about it. There is no person in this place who does not rave about Skilling Queenslanders for Work. It is a fantastic program.