Minister launches Holmesglen Vocational College

The Minister for Education and Training, the Honourable Lynne Kosky, officially launched Holmesglen’s Vocational College on Wednesday October 25th, 2006.

The launch signals an exciting new era in vocational education and development for secondary school students. Minister Kosky said the Vocational College would offer a new level of education and development to address the skill and develop needs of young people in Melbourne.

“There has been much discussion about the need for the education sector to focus on skills training to address our skills shortages within the workplace.”

“Australia currently has an aging population, one that is gradually reducing the number of skilled workers employers can access or employ. At the same time, we are witnessing a reduction in the number of young people entering the workforce within skilled trades. Never before has Australia faced such a demographic shift within the workforce, and to address this, there needs to be a new approach toward skills development among young people and new migrants. Especially if we are to address the skills shortages being experienced by industry, and reverse the current trend.”

“Coupled with this is the need to ensure our secondary schools, and the education system that supports them, provides greater opportunities for young people in the area of skills training and development. This includes the exciting area of vocational education and training. It’s imperative that we actively provide opportunities for young people to enter the workforce through education and training initiatives. Through this process, we can ensure that young people remain at school for longer, and at the same time ensure that when they are ready to leave, they find themselves with study and career pathways that benefit them personally and professionally. The process much also provide a steady stream of work ready people to address the needs of industry, and the issues associated with our current skills shortage.”

During the launch, the Minister recalled her first discussion about the new Vocational College. “Holmesglen’s CEO, Bruce Mackenzie, first approached me about the concept some 18 to 20 months ago. Bruce had the idea of establishing a Vocational College to address the skills shortage that was being experienced across Melbourne, and in particular, the South Eastern corridor. Bruce believed that the ability to provide dedicated, skills based education and training program to young people, especially those aged 16 or 17 years of age, would help address the area address the skills shortage issue. At the same time, he also said that the concept would provide young people with an alternate education stream to VCE, one that would appeal to people who would generally leave the education system at the end of years 10 and 11.”

“A key selling point for the Vocational College was the ability to offer young people a program that combined traditional education with skills based training and development. Development that exposed students to industry relevant equipment, and provided the skills and experience that industry demanded.”

“The model that Holmesglen proposed is one that focuses on the development of the total person. Through the Vocational College, young people can trial a range of vocational education and training opportunities, and explore different career pathways, without the need to immediately commit to one particular pathway or career stream at such a young age.”

“With this in mind, the Government is delighted to support the College. We have provided $3 million dollars in capital funding to help launch the Vocational College, as well as proving recurrent funding to prospective students via the Youth Guarantee”.


"I would like to thank Bruce and his team for developing a model that didn't simply duplicate what was already in place within the education sector. The Vocational College will now offer something new to young people, and provide them with an education format and model that focuses on developing the individual, and delivering them with the necessary skills and experienced to success within industry."

"Personally speaking, I believe this approach will be extremely successful for both the Vocational College and the young people who enter the College in 2007. The College will ensure that we are developing students for industry, and provide fantastic opportunities for young people so that they become work and job ready at an earlier age. The College is about choice for students through vocational education and training."

President of Holmesglen Institute Council, Mr John Sharkey, said that the Vocational College would provide greater study and career opportunities to people aged 16 and 17. "Our aim is to ensure that the Vocational College adds to the education opportunities for young Victorians. Its strength will lie in attracting students from diverse backgrounds, who require a different level of education and skill development beyond that currently being offered through the traditional secondary school sector."

"We are confident that Holmesglen's new Vocational College will create a vibrant and challenging environment, one that will dramatically change our student's vocational education and occupational outcomes."

"Students who are enrolling into the Vocational College for 2007 come from a range of geographic area and secondary school sectors. Enrolments are being received from both state funded and privately funded schools, and they are enrolling into popular career streams like hospitality, carpentry, beauty and hairdressing."

"My Council is confident that the Vocational College will make an important contribution towards the structure of education, within Victoria, and with the support of Minister Kosky, the State Government, the Institutes Council and the team from Holmesglen, I believe that the College has made a very promising start."