

## INSPIRATION TO ASPIRATION – CAREERS IN COMMUNITY SERVICE

### Purpose:

To provide insight into the Community Services sector and demystify tertiary education for young people engaged in alternate education.

### Partnership Members:

- Albert Park Flexible Learning Centre (APFLC)
- Brisbane Youth Service (BYS)
- Visible Ink (Brisbane City Council)
- University of Queensland (UQ)

## Context and Goals

Young people, who have received support from community services outside of their home, often feel a desire to return the favour and “give back” to the community themselves. They tend to have a strong commitment to social justice and human rights, and aspire to working within the Community Service sector, often as youth workers.

The *Inspiration to Aspiration* program offers young people an opportunity to explore careers in Community Services and Social Work, a sector that is expecting strong growth and employment opportunities over the next five years. It is anticipated that this program will inspire young people to pursue further study in this sector, particularly at a Certificate, Diploma or Degree level.

## The Partnership’s Approach

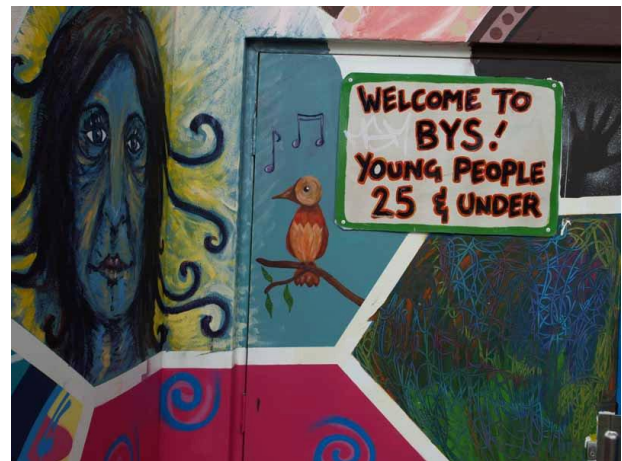
Staff from Brisbane Youth Service and Visible Ink met with selected young people and discussed their personal career journeys and various positions and qualifications they have had. Students were offered many opportunities to ask questions about the employees’ interests, skills learned, and choices made along the way.

The discussions increased the student’s awareness of the qualifications and study options available in the industry, and the diverse backgrounds and career pathways each employee had.

UQ provided students with subsidised ferry passes to travel between partner organisations and provided lunch at their campus. Students toured the grounds with UQ staff and connected earlier conversations with study options at the University.

## Benefits

- Six students participated in the *Inspiration to Aspiration* program and increased their awareness and confidence in pursuing a career in the community services sector.
- School staff observed an immediate improvement in student attendance, goal setting skills and completion of their work/assignments.
- Community staff enjoyed reflecting on their personal career journeys and inspiring young people.
- Albert Park Flexible Learning Centre has developed new contacts with partner organisations with plans to work together in the future.



## Next Steps

Partners are now discussing how this program can be replicated with other schools and exploring other industries.

*“ Our students expressed a feeling of being valued when youth workers showed a genuine interest in their future goals and career interests.”*

*Ms Julie Chenery, Albert Flexible Learning Centre*

## Support from the Partnership Broker

The Partnership Broker assisted APFLC to identify career development opportunities which would support the needs of their young people. The Broker connected APFLC to the partners, and supported the development of effective feedback mechanisms and evaluation processes.

### TOP TIP

Sometimes, one person with an idea can be the catalyst for a partnership that benefits many.