



Pictured above (L-R) are:
 Scott Dowsett - Cooke & Dowsett,
 Jono Mullins – Indigenous Coordinator & Mentor (CEPU),
 Marty Sibosado – Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation
 and Earl Setches - CEPU Plumbing Division

PARTNERSHIPS EFFECTIVE IN INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT

Reconciliation Australia encourages partnerships when it comes to recruiting, retaining and prospering Indigenous employees. The Director of the Workplace Ready Program at Reconciliation Australia, Sharona Torrens, says engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a view to providing employment opportunities has many economic and social benefits for business.

Ms Torrens says the most successful Indigenous employment strategies have involved partnerships – different companies and organisations coming together for the common cause of offering real jobs to the First Australians.

One such remarkable partnership involved the amalgamation of the Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation, the Victorian Plumbers Union, Cooke & Dowsett Pty Ltd and the Jarlmadangah Aboriginal Corporation to create NUDJ, which provides employment and training opportunities for Indigenous Australians.

Since it was established in 2004, NUDJ has enriched the lives of Aboriginal people in the Kimberley and the Director of NUDJ, Scott Dowsett, says almost 40 Indigenous apprentices, both men and women, have undertaken the program.

He says once they complete their four year apprenticeship they can return to their remote communities as fully qualified plumbers to improve sanitation, water management and living standards.

Scott Dowsett says Cooke & Dowsett’s partnership with the Plumbers Union and Aboriginal communities in Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Victoria has been instrumental in NUDJ’s success.

“Everyone working together for the one aim of creating employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal Australians has been the key,” he said.

“Without the genuine input of the Plumbers Union and the Aboriginal communities involved, the program would have been difficult to get off the ground, let alone been as successful as it has,” says Mr Dowsett.

“NUDJ not only gives the Aboriginal participants lifelong skills that they can take anywhere in the world, but the sense of pride they have for what they have accomplished is just a joy to witness.”

“To be able to contribute to their communities gives them a real sense of satisfaction,” Mr Dowsett says.

Workplace Ready Program



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Visit the online toolkit at
www.reconciliation.org.au/workplace



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