

2025

OPERATIONAL REPORT



swconnect.org.au



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Connecting **YOUth**
to Success



Proud member of the



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

South West Connect would like to show our respect and acknowledge the Cabrogal Clan of the Darug Nation, who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which we work and live.

We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture.



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ABOUT US

South West Connect is a not-for-profit, community-focused organisation committed to enhancing the life opportunities of young people and their families across South West Sydney

SWC has a proven track record of **empowering over 155,000 young people in South West Sydney** to discover pathways to a better future for themselves and their families. As a registered charity, our work centres on fostering inclusive, resilient communities by addressing barriers to education, employment, and social participation.

We collaborate with over **150 schools** and a wide network of local businesses, service providers, and community organisations to deliver programs that support youth aged 5 to 25 years. Our initiatives are designed to assist young people—particularly those from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), refugee, and migrant backgrounds—who may be experiencing disadvantage or disengagement.

Through **practical learning experiences, career readiness programs, and community engagement activities**, South West Connect helps young people build confidence, develop essential life and employability skills, and transition successfully into further education, training, or employment. To date, we have facilitated more than **92,000 work placements** and implemented **over 100 collaborative projects** that promote wellbeing, skill development, and social inclusion.

South West Connect is proud to work alongside community groups to create meaningful change and ensure that every young person has the opportunity to thrive and contribute positively to their community.

Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)

South West Connect is a not for profit organisation and a registered charity with deductible gift recipient status, complying with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission framework. All donations over \$2 made to SWC are tax deductible. Further information of SWC's financials can be obtained from the ACNC website: <https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity>



SWC WORKS WITH STUDENTS FROM 3 EDUCATION SECTORS



SWC SERVICES "REGION E" COVERING 3 LGA'S



L TO R: Cathy Pellegrino- Work Placement Manager, Annie Dang- Business Development Consultant, Maryanne Riviera- Work Placement Officer, Jayne Occhiuto- Executive Director
Harley McGregor- Employer Liaison Consultant, Dominique Gaby- Tender & Projects Manager
Rosa Reddy- Work Placement Officer, Deborah Cross- Work Placement Officer
Jennifer Mercuri- Work Placement Officer & 2IC

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

2025 Board of Directors

South West Connect (SWC) maintains a strong governance framework supported by established processes and mature operational standards. These structures help ensure accountability, transparency, and compliance in the delivery of government-funded services.

With more than two decades of experience operating across the Liverpool, Fairfield, Bankstown, and Cumberland LGAs, SWC brings a deep understanding of local needs and community expectations. Long-standing organisational presence, coupled with stable staff retention, further contributes to consistent and informed service delivery.

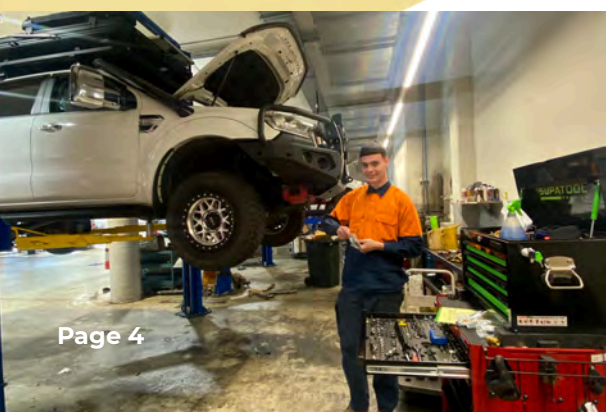
SWC is overseen by a nine-member Board responsible for ensuring sound organisational stewardship. Their responsibilities include monitoring compliance with legislative and statutory obligations, maintaining financial sustainability, and supporting strategic objectives.

The Board also ensures that decision-making is supported by accurate, up-to-date information relevant to service delivery. This governance structure provides a stable foundation for SWC's operations and supports the delivery of high-quality work placement services across the region.



Left to Right

BOARD MEMBER	Dr Kenneth Edge - School Principal (NSW DoE)
BOARD MEMBER	Luke Whalen (Industry)
BOARD MEMBER	Carol Amorim (Independent Schools NSW)
DEPUTY CHAIR	Christine Shakya (Education Consultant)
CHAIRPERSON	Susan Turner (Industry)
TREASURER	Jayne Occhiuto (Industry)
BOARD MEMBER	Michael Morris (Sydney Catholic Schools)
BOARD MEMBER	Dominique Ghaby (Industry)
BOARD MEMBER	Dean Bain (NSW Department of Education)



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Over the past year, SWC has continued to focus on delivering steady, reliable support to students, schools, and employers across our region. The Board is encouraged by the organisation's commitment to maintaining consistent service standards while navigating changing educational and industry needs. Our operations have remained anchored in the principles of quality, collaboration, and accountability—ensuring that the work placement system continues to function effectively for all stakeholders. We also recognise the ongoing efforts of our team and our partners, whose cooperation has enabled SWC to respond constructively to emerging challenges and opportunities.

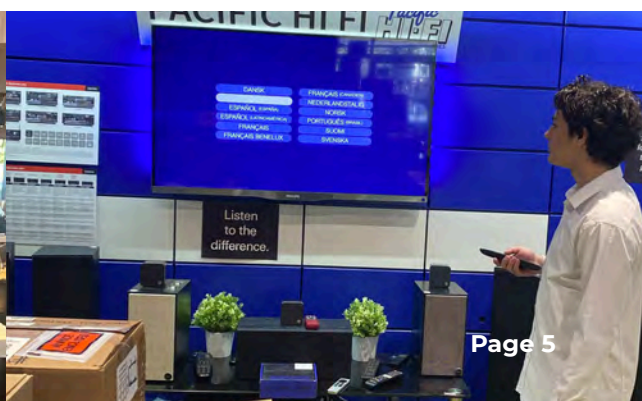
The progress reflected throughout this report demonstrates meaningful advancement toward our strategic objectives, particularly in strengthening relationships, supporting student outcomes, and sustaining a diverse network of engaged employers. The Board remains committed to guiding the organisation with stable governance and a long-term view of supporting vocational learning pathways in our community.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The past year has been a period of steady operational focus for SWC as we worked to support students, schools, and employers through consistently delivered services. Our team has remained committed to ensuring placements are well coordinated and responsive to stakeholder needs, while continuing to refine our internal processes to improve efficiency and clarity. This operational discipline has helped us maintain stability across programs and prepare for the evolving expectations of both the education and industry sectors.

Our work has also been strengthened by the relationships we hold with our partners. The cooperation of schools, employers, and fellow providers has allowed us to address challenges collectively and adapt where needed. Looking ahead, SWC will continue prioritising collaboration, transparent communication, and thoughtful planning to support meaningful work placement opportunities for students. I am grateful to our staff and stakeholders for their ongoing dedication and look forward to building on this foundation in the year ahead.



OUR PURPOSE

OUR VISION

To inspire young people and their families by connecting them to the resources, skills and opportunities that enhance their options and empower them to be their best.

To engage communities, local government and employers, to address the needs of young people transitioning into the workforce.

WORK PLACEMENTS 2025



9,300 work placements arranged

EMPLOYER RECOGNITION 2025



3 employers received a 10-Year Service Award



3 employers received a 20-Year Service Award

13 employers received a Host Employer of the Year Award

Appreciation certificates sent to all Host Employers

SECTOR ENGAGEMENT 2025

4 Breakfast Meetings held with VET stakeholders throughout the year



Attendance at Chamber of Commerce meetings, Department of Education Development Meetings, Expos and other network meetings

OUR MISSION

- Empower young people to achieve their educational, social and employment potential.
- Coordinate work placements that allow students to develop industry specific competencies, employability skills and appropriate work attitudes in a work environment.
- Support students in career exploration, career decision making and the transition into work.
- Engage with and build relationships with schools and career advisers across our region to promote the importance of career education and workplace learning.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT 2025



168 students were nominated by their host employer for a Work Placement Award

41 students received the VET Student of the Year Award

160 Outstanding Work Ethic Awards issued

STUDENTS SUPPORTED 2025



10,000 students across grades 9-12

WORK PLACEMENT BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

SWC has developed strategic objectives and actionable steps for delivering a high-quality, inclusive, and responsive work placement program. Our aim is to strengthen stakeholder relationships, expand employer engagement, support student preparation, and promote vocational education pathways. Through collaboration, continuous improvement, and targeted promotion, we ensure consistent service delivery and positive outcomes for students, schools, EVET providers, and host employers.

OUR KEY OBJECTIVES

1. Deliver high-quality placement services.
2. Provide schools and EVET providers with reliable, responsive, and professional support that meets educational and industry standards.
3. Expand and sustain employer partnerships.
4. Maintain and grow a diverse base of host employers to meet the evolving placement needs of schools and students.
5. Foster collaborative partnerships.
6. Work cooperatively with other placement providers to share knowledge, align practices, and ensure consistent, high-quality service delivery across regions.
7. Increase visibility and engagement in work placement programs.
8. Promote work placement initiatives and activities to raise awareness, encourage participation, and highlight the value of vocational education and training pathways.



WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

83% of students reported that their work placement was enjoyable and provided a valuable learning experience

97% of stakeholders surveyed indicated they would like SWC to remain their Work Placement Provider

98% of employers have stated they intend to continue hosting in 2026

PREPARING STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND SCHOOLS FOR WORK PLACEMENT

SWC supports students in preparing for their work placement through dedicated VET Work Placement Ready sessions delivered prior to placement commencement. These sessions outline expectations of the workplace, provide guidance on presentation and behaviour, and offer practical tips to help students make the most of their experience.

Students are also provided with the SWC VET Work Placement Ready Student Guide, and both students and teachers have access to a range of supplementary resources available on the SWC website.

In addition, SWC delivers Preparing for Work Experience, and Part-Time Work sessions for students in our service region, supporting young people from Years 9 to 12 as they prepare for broader workplace opportunities.



South West Connect has been an active member of the Youth Futures Network (YFN) for the past seven years. The YFN is a collective of fifteen organisations across New South Wales, each operating under a shared commitment to supporting young people through locally managed service models. In addition to delivering Work Placement Coordination services, member organisations have provided a broad range of workplace learning programs to schools, industry, and communities in their regions for more than two decades.

The YFN plays an important role in creating opportunities for students to build the skills and workplace exposure needed to make informed personal, educational, and vocational decisions. A key strength of the network is its local governance structure—member organisations are managed, staffed, and embedded within their own regions. This ensures services are responsive to local needs and aligned with community expectations, supporting more effective and meaningful outcomes for young people across NSW.

Parents and carers are also supported in preparing their child for placement. Prior to the commencement of a work placement, they can access the Parents & Carers Guide to Workplace Learning via the SWC website, which outlines key information to help shape a positive and realistic placement experience.

Families may also refer to the VET Work Placement Ready Student Guide provided during student preparation sessions, and information translated into multiple languages, ensuring they have consistent and practical information to support their child's readiness for the workplace.



EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

Two Clancy Catholic College students, Marcus and Christiano, recently completed their VET Cookery work placements, gaining valuable hands-on experience in professional kitchen environments.

Marcus undertook his placement at the **Liverpool Catholic Club**, where he was welcomed into a supportive and collaborative team. His tasks included food preparation, maintaining hygiene standards, assisting with cooking techniques, and learning how to operate commercial kitchen equipment.

Reflecting on his time there, Marcus shared, **“I’ve had a very good experience, the people here are very kind and make you feel welcomed. They make you feel part of their crew and always offer a helping hand. I would recommend work placement for everyone at school.”**

Meanwhile, Christiano completed his placement at **Bellbird Café**, located within the vibrant Casula Powerhouse. In Bellbird’s bustling kitchen, he developed skills in knife handling, food presentation, and meal preparation, while experiencing the fast-paced rhythm of a commercial kitchen.

“You get to meet amazing staff, experience the kitchen atmosphere—it’s great for gaining real-life experience,” Christiano said. **“It gives you a sense of what you’re going to do and how the workplace really is. I really enjoyed it here, it’s very fun!”**

Both placements offered the students a chance to apply their classroom learning in real-world settings, build confidence, and develop industry-relevant skills that will support their future careers in hospitality.

Bellbird Café and Liverpool Catholic Club continue to be valued partners in supporting the next generation of hospitality professionals helping students build confidence and practical skills for their future careers.

 **Watch the videos on our YouTube channel — just scan the QR codes to see Marco & Christiano in action!**



SCAN
HERE



Marcus at Liverpool Catholic Club

SCAN
HERE



Christiano at Bellbird Cafe



Liverpool Catholic Club



Marcus preparing salad pots at
Liverpool Catholic Club



Christiano preparing croquets
at Bellbird Cafe

STUDENT SNAPSHOTS



Kevin Kuoch, Cabramatta High & David Lee,
Bonnyrigg High - **Novotel Darling Harbour**



Azrael Tapaleao, Fairvale High School
National Tech



Nicholas Thai, Bonnyrigg High School
Just Stone Australia



Nabaa Ghazali, Chester Hill High School
The Coffee Club, Merrylands



Luka Katavovic, Prairiewood High School
National Tech



Ken Ah Kuoi, St Anthony of Padua and Lisiate Havilli, Ashcroft
High School - **Bunnings Hoxton Park**



Dima Sabeth, Mary MacKillop Catholic College
OM Real Estate

*"It was an amazing
experience"*
Cookery Student
Bonnyrigg High School



Narita Trieu, Canley Vale High School **Woolworths Cabramatta**

STUDENT SNAPSHOTS



Zoey Napper, Westfields Sports High
Smithfield RSL



Easter Letuu & Kathreen Youhanna,
St Joseph Trade Skills Centre - Bossley Parkside



Ava Iocca, Freeman Catholic College
Club Marconi



Cooper Nemaz, Good Samaritan Catholic College
Level 42 Constructions



Hilary Diachenko, Westfields Sports High School
Rosetti's Cafe



Ali Sena Hossani, Newington College
Vaccaro Group

"I enjoyed trying
something new out"
Construction Student
Fairvale High School



Christian Banni, St Joseph Trade Skills Centre **Peter Warren Automotive Group**



Sara Kirtas, Amity College
ITP Liverpool

CAREER EXPOS

South West Connect is proud to support Brett Carter Events, continuing our partnership through key career expos across Greater Western Sydney.

This year, we were excited to take part in both the Greater Western Sydney Careers Market and the Apprenticeship/Traineeship & Jobs Expo—two major events connecting students, job seekers, and employers under one roof.

At the Careers Market, we joined hundreds of exhibitors engaging with thousands of high school students and career advisers, helping them explore diverse career and education pathways. Meanwhile, the Apprenticeship/Traineeship Expo offered a dynamic space for networking, resume collection, and showcasing real job opportunities across industries.

These events are all about sparking ambition, building connections, and opening doors to the future.

DON'T MISS OUT!

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook to stay updated on upcoming events and opportunities!



BRETT CARTER
EVENTS



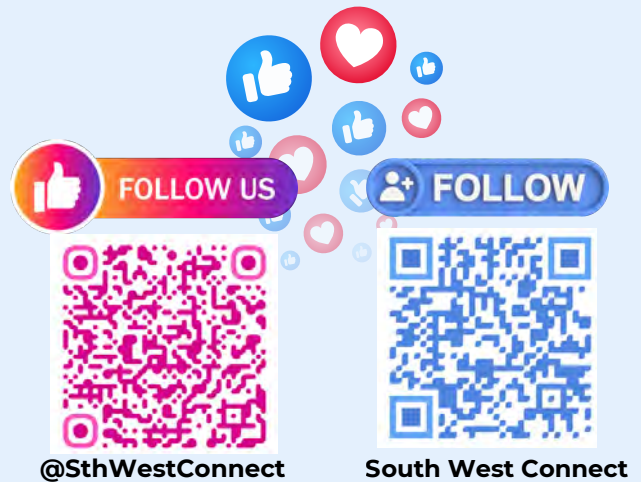
**Our Lucky Door prize winner
Carine Fleming
from WPC Group**

CONNECT WITH US

socialmedia ^{SWC}

**Scan the QR Codes to follow
and connect with us on
Instagram, Facebook & YouTube**

Stay updated on all things
work placement, and you might
even spot yourself in one of our
posts or videos!



Videos

SOUTH WEST CONNECT



YouTube^{AU}
Office Works
Katie Crisafulli
Retail, Business Services



YouTube^{AU}
RAMs Cafe
Morris Oraha
Hospitality
Food & Beverage



YouTube^{AU}
Holiday Inn Warwick Farm
Chef Salindra
Hospitality Cookery



YouTube^{AU}
Holiday Inn Warwick Farm
Khalil Srouf
Business Services



YouTube^{AU}
National Tech
Spiros Missiakos
IDT



YouTube^{AU}
Vaccaro Group
Cameron Bruzzese
Construction
Electrotechnology



YouTube^{AU}
ARK Cafe
Sam Berberian
Hospitality
Food & Beverage



YouTube^{AU}
UFC Gym Wetherill Park
Emma
Fitness

COUNCIL PARTNERSHIPS



Throughout 2025, SWC continued to strengthen its long-standing partnership with Fairfield City Council (FCC), which provided work placement opportunities across several VET courses. This collaboration supported a range of student learning needs and contributed to consistent access to high-quality workplace environments within the local area.

FCC hosted numerous HSC students across multiple council sites, offering placements that enabled participants to deepen their practical understanding of their VET course requirements. These experiences also supported the development of employability skills and provided students with opportunities to enhance their resumes through meaningful, hands-on engagement in professional settings.

LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL

In 2025, SWC further strengthened its long-standing partnership with Liverpool City Council (LCC), with council sites continuing to provide valuable work placement opportunities across several VET courses. This collaboration supported diverse placement needs and contributed to consistent access to industry-relevant learning environments for local students.

LCC hosted a significant number of students across multiple Liverpool Pre-Schools, offering HSC participants meaningful opportunities to develop practical skills aligned with their VET studies. These placements enabled students to apply classroom learning in real-world settings, build their employability skills, and enhance their readiness for future pathways.



How You Can Help



Your generous contribution to South West Connect will help us continue to support young people to achieve their educational, social and employment potential.



All donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible

Fairfield Business Education Partnership Inc. (trading as South West Connect) is endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR). It is covered by the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

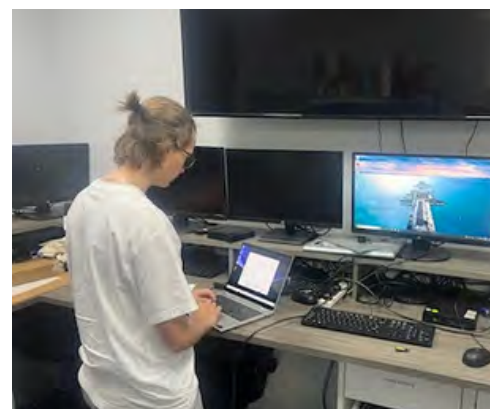
Workplacement

Do you want to influence young people's educational outcomes and help them to prepare for the world of work? Your organisation can make a significant difference by hosting a HSC student for workplacement.



Volunteer

If you would like to volunteer your time or resources to help one of our projects or initiatives, please contact South West Connect on (02) 98229370.



Corporate Partnership & Sponsorship

Join us in a partnership that could make a genuine and positive difference in the local community.

Please see our website www.swconnect.org.au for further details about the innovative and impactful projects and initiatives that may align with how you or your organisation would like to contribute to our community.

2 EASY WAYS TO DONATE

I would like to contribute to the programs that help South West Connect's Local Community.

Amount Enclosed: ☐ \$10 ☐ \$20 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$200 ☐ Other amount _____

Donation Details:

Name	Telephone
Address	Suburb
E-mail	Post Code

1. MAIL

Please make cheque payable to:
Fairfield Business Education Partnership Inc.

Send Cheque or Money Order to:
PO Box 68, Edensor Park, NSW 2176

OR

2. INTERNET BANKING (EFT)

Our bank details are as follows:
Commonwealth Bank
BSB: 062 736
Account No: 1006 4734
Account Name: **Fairfield Business Education Partnership Inc. (Please mark ref: Donation)**

For further information on how you could financially assist our services please contact Jayne Occhiuto on 9822 9370.

CONTACT US



Thanks! **THANK YOU to our Stakeholders, Host Employers, FBEP Board Members, School Staff, SWC Staff, and Community Partners for the economic and social contribution they continuously deliver to Region E.**



Visit our
website



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