



Ted O'Brien MP
Federal Member for Fairfax

Mayor Mark Jamieson
Sunshine Coast Council

MEDIA RELEASE

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NATIONAL AWARD DISTINGUISHES SUNSHINE COAST COUNCIL

Sunshine Coast Council has taken out the Multicultural Australia category in the 2020 National Awards for Local Government.

Member for Fairfax Ted O'Brien, joined by Sunshine Coast Council Mayor Mark Jamieson, made the announcement in front of staff and participants of the Migrant Work Ready Program for which Council has been honoured.

"More than 100 entries were received across the nine award categories for this year's National Awards for Local Government so to take out the Multicultural Australia category is a huge achievement and I want to congratulate Sunshine Coast Council and everyone involved," Mr O'Brien said.

"These awards celebrate the hard work of our local governments in delivering targeted, quality services to local communities.

"Recent migrants to the Sunshine Coast can face challenges in finding employment. Council's Migrant Work Ready Program helps them understand Australia's work culture, overcome the challenges of not having locally-recognised qualifications and provides networking opportunities."

Sunshine Coast Council Mayor Mark Jamieson said Council reflected the views and sentiments of the region and its communities and that is why supporting a program like the Migrant Work Ready Program is so important.

"Our Sunshine Coast is an increasingly diverse and welcoming community and our Council has always placed a high priority on promoting inclusion and valuing the contributions that new residents add to the economic and social fabric of our region," Mayor Jamieson said.

“Receiving this national award for a program that is squarely focussed on valuing inclusion and providing opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to find a job in their new home really reinforces the aspiration we have set through our Sunshine Coast Community Strategy 2019-2041 – that Together we Thrive”.

The Migrant Work Ready Program is delivered in collaboration with both the public and private sector, including Nambour Community Centre, Maroochydore Chamber of Commerce, Solbar, TAFE Queensland, Volunteering Sunshine Coast and Services Australia.

It includes a series of workshops where professional experts, community organisations and business owners clarify how to prepare for the local job market and improve prospects to find employment. Guest speakers from a multicultural background also share their real-life success stories to inspire participants and build self-reliance.

Tomasa Tano Alinsonorin who lives at Marcoola but was formerly from the Philippines, participated in the Migrant Work Ready Program in 2019, which helped open up new opportunities for her on the Sunshine Coast.

“The program helps migrants understand Australian work culture and how to apply for a job on the Sunshine Coast.

“When I started the program I did not have confidence to apply for a job. Now I understand it’s not just about applying for a job but also about making connections.”

“Right after the program, I applied the networking skills I had learnt which led to a job in a restaurant.

“I am so lucky and grateful I was able to join the program.”

Federal Minister for Local Government Mark Coulton said as in previous years, the standard of applications for the 2020 National Awards for Local Government was very high across all categories.

“I know how hard our local governments work to build stronger and more sustainable communities to meet the growing needs of their residents – especially this year having experienced drought, bushfires, floods and now a pandemic,” Minister Coulton said.

“These long-running awards celebrate the outstanding achievements of local government in providing Australian communities with services that foster inclusiveness, diversity, vibrancy and cohesiveness.

Sunshine Coast Council, together with the other category winners are now in the running for the 2020 National Award for Excellence in Local Government. This award and the Minister’s Award for Progressive Community Leadership will be announced at the 2020 National Award for Excellence in Local Government in November this year.

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