

Students graduate from award-winning program



Congratulations: Shire of Northam president Steve Pollard, Northam ranger Craig Highlands, Darryl Bennel, Geoffrey Monaghan, Jason Count, Reece Yarran, John Coomer, shire chief executive Neville Hale and Vanessa Miler from Max Employment (back). Shantelle Bennell, Jody Ryder, representative from the Works Department Tom Finlay and Margaret Bennell (front).

THE Avon Valley Advocate has tracked the progress of the Animal Health and Management group from the different jobs they have done to the awards they have won and now the students' graduation.

The graduation was held at C.Y. O'Connor where the students in the program were surrounded by people who were helping them after the program ends.

There were representatives from Serco, Hutchinson Builders, Ochre Personal and the Shire of Northam at the graduation.

All students agreed the program has benefited each of them in different ways.

Darryl Bennel joined the program half way through and said he is gaining certificates and qualifications which will allow him to get a job in the mines.

Shire of Northam president Steve Pollard thanked the students for their effort and commitment to the project.

"With your efforts you have benefited from the project but it will also be those who precede you who will benefit too," he said.

The group started off with eight students but throughout the 26-weeks more students have joined the group.

Northam Ranger Craig Highlands said people were asking to join all the time.

The Shire of Northam announced the program in conjunction with Max Employment last July to boost animal health and management in the region.

The aim of the initiative was to provide training and education, along with practical experience, to facilitate future employment for Aborigines in meaningful work for the community.

The program received a semi-finalist award in the 2011 Department of Local Government Best Practice Awards and received an Indigenous Service Award from the Department of Indigenous Affairs.

The 26-week project was a work experience initiative funded by the Federal Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations.



Support: WA general manager of Max Employment Scott Laing with Ochre Personal representative Joanne Pellew-Hajinoor

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