

Skilling SA for the future

DAVID GOLDSMITH

SOUTH Australians updating their workplace skills – such as Nora Fragoso – will be best placed to take advantage of exciting new career options.

A childcare worker at the Hessel Children's Centre in Port Adelaide, the 19-year-old Edwardstown woman is among those taking advantage of government investment in training.

She says polishing up her skill set is important to secure her future in an area she's passionate about.

"It's amazing. I love it," Ms Fragoso says of her role at the Commercial Road centre, where she has been working for the last three weeks after completing a placement there.

"The staff here are so nice and helpful.

"I've been connecting with children and families and it's just been an amazing experience. I've always wanted to do childcare and never had the opportunity.

"As soon as I had the chance to start the course, I did, then did my placement and got hired. I couldn't be happier – everything's turned out perfectly."

Having completed her certificate three in childcare through the Hessel Group, Ms Fragoso – who is working in the centre's two-year-old room – is now excited about tackling her diploma course under JobTrainer.

Recent funding announcements from the Australian and State Governments – including the joint \$88 million JobTrainer initiative – provide significant and transformative investment into South Australia's training sector.

JobTrainer complements the existing Skilling South Australia program to help more young people, school leavers and jobseekers access necessary training to launch or advance their careers.

Under the scheme, investment in employer and student supports focus on transitioning



More than 800 courses are available

Hessel Group chief executive Tanya Cole at the Hessel Children's Centre in Port Adelaide, where employees Nora Fragoso, left, and Tigesti Bekit, right, are developing their skills under the JobTrainer program. Picture: Russell Millard

people aged between 17 to 24 years of age who have undertaken a JobTrainer course to sustainable employment, apprenticeships and traineeships and further training pathways.

JobTrainer aims to drive skills development and employment in industries where there is a high demand for skilled workers, such as construction, aged care, disability care and childcare; and into new and emerging sectors, such as cyber security, ICT, defence industries and creative industries.

More than 800 courses are available, including more than 100 new short courses and skill sets – such as the Entry into Care Roles Skill Set, which leads to the Certificate III in Individual Support and a role

in the growing social care sector; or the Entry to Technology Skill Set, which supports young people to start their careers in ICT and cyber security.

Hessel Group chief execu-

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TANYA COLE

tive Tanya Cole said the social care industry was an essential service.

"We need skilled workers to feel confident in providing safe, purposeful care," Ms Cole

said. "This initiative is highly welcomed to support the social care industry in providing a highly skilled workforce. It is a growing workforce, and the more opportunities for us to assist in being known as a qualified social care service, is of high importance."

The Hessel Group, a specialist social care provider established in 1998, offers a suite of services including childcare, nannying services, aged care and disability care, as well as operating as a registered training organisation.

It presently has around 240 people on its books across a range of roles, from casual employees to permanent staff and contract workers.

Ms Cole said the importance of JobTrainer was that it

allowed people to take on training and be paid while they worked.

"I went on a delegation to Europe and the UK last year, and the way they support trainees and apprentices there, it's almost 'We're really proud that we're skilling up our future'," she said. "I look at JobTrainer as being the start of that – skilling up SA's community for the future.

"And we need to be able to support people via their learning. There are many people who go into work who want to learn but they can't afford to take a year off in the process. This allows them to do both."

Visit skills.sa.gov.au to explore what's on offer or contact the Skills Infoline on 1800 673 097

Unlocking the door to career options

- JobTrainer provides access to low-fee training for school leavers, young people and job seekers to unlock opportunities for work or further training.
- The \$1billion JobTrainer Fund is a partnership between the Australian and state and territory governments.
- The Australian Government will provide \$500 million in 2020-21 towards the fund, with matched contributions from other governments.
- The JobTrainer Fund is part of the broader JobTrainer package, announced in July, in which \$1.5 billion has been made available to expand and extend the Supporting Apprentices and Trainees wage subsidy.
- The fund will provide for around 340,700 additional free or low-fee training places to help school leavers and job seekers gain the necessary skills to get a job.
- The focus is on training in areas of anticipated employment growth.
- Skilled people are needed now in growth areas of the economy, for example social care, defence industries, IT, space and creative industries.
- There are around 15,000 training places available in SA with JobTrainer.
- To be eligible for access to low-fee training through JobTrainer, you'll need to be either: not currently employed; or aged between 17 and 24 and not enrolled in school; or hold a health care, pensioner or veteran affairs concession card.

Sources: Department of Education, Skills and Employment, skills.sa.gov.au