

Former mining blaster rocks new career in health

After leaving a lucrative career in the mining industry, one of Wide Bay's newest Bachelor of Nursing students has taken out a top honour at the 2020 Queensland Training Awards.

Morgan Engstrom, now the Assistant Practice Manager at Branyan Clinic in Bundaberg, was named the regional Vocational Student of the Year at the awards, after completing a Certificate IV in Medical Assisting.

The former Gin Gin High School student said winning the award was further confirmation she had made the right decision to pursue a career in healthcare.

"I started working in the mining industry after finishing school and worked for three years in the drill and blast crew, before started a degree in primary school teaching," Ms Engstrom said.

"But working away was hard and that all changed when I got the part-time reception job in general practice which quickly went full-time and halfway through studying the Certificate IV I was promoted to the role I have now.

"The Certificate IV in Medical Assisting means I can now do a lot of things a nurse can do; dressings and wound care, removing sutures, assisting doctors in excisions, conducting ECGs, spirometry, and writing care plans and health assessments."

"Doing the training was such a good experience; it's given me so much confidence, the opportunity to further my career and there are cool rewards - like this regional Vocational Student of the Year award."

Morgan was nominated for the awards after completing the course in just one year, rather than the recommended 18 months.

Local healthcare commissioning agency Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN's Bundaberg-based manager, Bonnie Dale, said the excellence Morgan has achieved in her studies is to be applauded.

"We are so pleased her hard work has been acknowledged and proud to have a member of a Bundaberg general practice represent Queensland," Ms Dale said.

"As an assistant practice manager you have to be able to support the business, clinical, IT and regulatory dimensions of a general practice, and work with the whole practice team to provide patient-centred care.

"It's apt that during Nursing in the Community Week, we are able to celebrate the success of our local practice staff."

Morgan, who beat out 700 applicants to take out the regional award, has since enrolled in CQU's Bachelor of Nursing degree, with the aim of becoming a registered nurse.

"I really enjoy helping people, working with a diverse range of people, and having that self-satisfaction of being able to help people's lives and enhance their health," she said.

"Working in general practice you tend to see the same patients week in week out, so you can develop a real and personal connection with them."

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Nursing in the Community Week is an initiative from the Australian College of Nursing to raise awareness on how nurses can support you to stay safe at home, and their impact on the wellbeing of individuals and those in local communities.

UNE Partnerships delivers the Certificate IV in Medical Practice Assisting in Queensland, in association with Brisbane North PHN. The program is funded by the Department of Education and Training Higher Level Skills funding.

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