

EXAMPLE STORY

Heart of the Community
No Finer Man – Nick Darius
Katoomba RSL



HIGHLY COMMENDED 2016

On behalf of NOVA Employment & Training Program Inc (NOVA) I would like to nominate Nick Darius and the Katoomba RSL. In relation to the employment of people with disability, NOVA has established partnerships with many registered clubs, some dating back for more than 25 years. For the past 5 years our partnership with the Katoomba RSL has gone from strength to strength and that is in no small part due to the community minded leadership of Katoomba RSL Chief Executive, Nick Darius. While Nick's answer to the suggestion 'there's no finer man' would undoubtedly be self-effacing, the facts are that he has demonstrated both courage and leadership in ensuring that the Katoomba RSL takes a very proactive stance when it comes to hiring people with disability:

<https://www.facebook.com/novatransition/videos/196638194020336/?theater>

People with Intellectual Disability, people with Physical Disability, those experiencing Mental Health barriers - all are employed as testimony that Katoomba RSL's inclusive hiring policies are more than paper documents - they are practices lived through the day to day operations of the club. Without breaking confidence I have known one of the RSL's workers for almost 30 years and they have been through very significant periods of stress. Employed for the past few years, the difference between the person that Nick offered an opportunity to, and the person that is today an accepted and valued member of the team is the difference between night and day. That can only happen in an environment where committed and skilled management make a conscious decision that's where their business wants to be.

Nick's leadership goes beyond Katoomba RSL's hiring practices, NOVA Employment runs regular business to business forums and events designed to promote the inclusion of people with disability as workers. Nick not only discounts our costs he is a persuasive speaker on the why's of community inclusion, asking other Blue Mountains business owners to also adopt inclusive hiring practices. The Katoomba RSL's commitment to caring for people with disability is not a 2016 New Year's resolution, it's something that the local community has appreciated for many years and recognition in this year's clubs awards is be very deserved.

I have attached 1 of the several local newspaper stories recognising the inclusive environment at the Katoomba RSL, there's a link to our Facebook page above and I am personally keen to speak about the terrific inclusive working environment created by Nick Darius and the Katoomba RSL team. Martin Wren
Chief Executive Officer NOVA Employment Inc.