

# Pitching in

## WIL student **lightens the load** at Lovedale Long Lunch



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Tanya Henzell-Harvey

The Lovedale Long Lunch has been a fixture on the calendar of food and wine lovers since its inception in 2002. It now attracts 20,000 guests to the New South Wales Hunter Valley wine region for a weekend of art, music, food and wine. The festival grows in popularity each year, however success can sometimes strain resources and for the 2010 Lovedale Long Lunch, organisers sought assistance from The University of Newcastle’s Work Integrated Learning (WIL) program.

The University of Newcastle Business School student Sarah Greedy trod the Lovedale trail that links the seven wineries which participate in the event. Her base was Allandale Winery, a small to medium sized vineyard known for its premium quality varietal wines. Sarah worked one day a week for approximately two months in the lead-up to the Lovedale Long Lunch and then during the event.

Tanya Henzell-Harvey is in charge of marketing for the Lovedale Long Lunch. She said 2010 was the first time they had taken a WIL student: “Our numbers have doubled since 2002 and each year we try different things to improve and refine the event.”

Tanya said having a student work on the event helped the Lovedale Long Lunch committee to evaluate the success of their marketing expenditure. One of the tasks given to Sarah to complete during her placement was a survey of attendees. Sarah conducted interviews at the event, and made available survey questionnaires which could be completed and left at the various event locations. She then analysed the data and wrote a report for the committee which explained the demographic profile of attendees along with information on how they responded to marketing for Lovedale Long Lunch.

“Sarah’s survey contributed to our knowledge and thinking around how we can better promote the event. We wanted to learn how our regulars obtained information about the event,” Tanya said.

Sarah offered a fresh perspective, new ideas and an extra pair of hands to a resource-strapped committee. She also assisted with media liaison, logistics and during the event, she pitched in and helped with ticket and wine sales.

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“Sarah was given a rounded experience of what it is like to run an event and a winery. She was exposed to two worlds – that of a small business, for Allandale has five employees – and that of a large event that represents many stakeholders. Students may come into the workforce with a preconceived idea of how to do marketing but until they go out into the real world, you can’t know how it works in practice. Food and wine marketing in the Hunter Valley is very tightly targeted and we were pleased to have the opportunity to share our knowledge,” Tanya said.

[www.allandalewinery.com.au](http://www.allandalewinery.com.au) | [www.lovedalelonglunch.com.au](http://www.lovedalelonglunch.com.au)

*Allandale Winery is a member of the Hunter Business Chamber and the NSW Business Chamber.*



## Genuine workplace experience



Mentoring is an important factor in ensuring WIL students have a rewarding experience. Allandale Winery’s General Manager and Chief Winemaker, Bill Sneddon helped to give Sarah Greedy a genuine workplace experience by often challenging the theories she learnt at university and encouraging her to test her learning in a real workplace.

“There is a disconnect between theoretical learning at university and the real world. Learning really begins when you leave uni and the opportunity to gain work place experience while studying makes university more meaningful,” Bill said.

Bill noted that a placement student can bring enthusiasm and new ideas. “As you get older you can get a bit stale,” Bill said. “Younger people have a different view of the world and know about things like viral marketing. We can learn from them and they can learn from older, experienced workers. They can learn to view the world in a shade of grey – it’s not just black and white.”

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and Innovative Research Universities (IRU) are working in partnership to assist small, medium and large businesses to participate in work integrated learning programs. IRU members are: Charles Darwin University, Flinders University, Griffith University, James Cook University, La Trobe University, Murdoch University and The University of Newcastle.

Participating ACCI members are: ACT and Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Business SA, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Northern Territory, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Western Australia, NSW Business Chamber, Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Victorian Employers’ Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

For more information on WIL partnerships for employers please go to:

[www.iru.edu.au/group-activities/wil](http://www.iru.edu.au/group-activities/wil) or [www.acci.asn.au](http://www.acci.asn.au)