



MEDIA RELEASE

21 August 2008

Barkuma presents best practice program at International Forum on Disability Management

Barkuma Incorporated will next month present their school-to-work transition program as an example of best practice at the International Forum on Disability Management in Berlin.

Craig Harrison, Manager of Personnel Employment, a division of Barkuma Incorporated, said the forum will be an opportunity to show the world that South Australia is leading the way in helping school students with a disability move into employment or go on to further study.

“When the program was established in 1999, it was a national first pilot program and it’s been a great success,” said Craig. “It’s now offered at all metropolitan schools in Adelaide and we’re working with services in other states to help them adopt the model.

“It’s wonderful to now be presenting at the International Forum and showing governments, businesses, disability service providers and advocates from around the world what we’ve achieved for students with a disability.”

The State Transition Program is a collaboration led by Personnel Employment involving Department of Education and Children’s Services (DECS), Public, Independent and Catholic schools and Federal, State and local governments.

“The young people who complete the 12-month program participate in a range of Vocational Education and Training programs,” said Craig.

“By engaging young people with disabilities before they leave school, providing them with a vision to move into open employment or further education and the training they need to achieve this, the transition is much smoother and more successful.

“Within the first year of completing the Disability Transition Program, 50 percent of students find employment and 30 percent go onto further study, which compares very favourably with participation rates for non-disabled people in this age group.”

Those who enter the workforce find positions in diverse fields including retail, hospitality, administration, construction, horticulture, manufacturing and local, state and federal governments.

This year's International Forum on Disability Management will run from 22-24 September in Berlin, Germany and will focus on "Breaking down barriers together". Further information about the forum is available at <http://www.disability-manager.de/e/ifdm2008/>.

About Barkuma

Barkuma's employment service, Personnel Employment, helps people with a disability secure and maintain employment in the mainstream workforce, with ongoing support for employers. Personnel Employment currently provides open employment support to over 500 clients.

Barkuma Incorporated provides a range of services that assist people with disabilities to live and work in the community. In its 40-year history, Barkuma has grown to employ 120 staff and support more than 800 people, making it one of the largest disability service providers in South Australia.

For more information:

Jane Miller
Marketing Manager
Barkuma Incorporated
Ph: 08 8414 7100
Email: janem@barkuma.com.au

Anna Day
Senior Consultant
FULLER
Ph: 08 8363 6811
Email: anna.day@fuller.com.au