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MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Mature-aged job seeker upskills for the digital age

Mature-aged job seeker Craig Pavy has worked hard all his life and has an impressive array of work skills to offer potential employers. Despite this, the 61-year old is struggling to find work after losing his job due to his employer downsizing 12 months ago.

Determined to get back to work, Mr Pavy is now attending free digital literacy classes at TAFE Queensland South West in Warwick in the Australian Government Department of Education and Training funded Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) programme.

“I was listening to ABC radio one morning and I heard the government wanted to give us over-50s, who were struggling to get work, a bit of assistance with learning technology. One week later my employment officer asked me if I was interested to join, I said ‘I’d love to’.”

Mr Pavy, who had little prior experience working with computers, is now creating documents, using spreadsheets, searching for jobs online, preparing professional resumes and drafting targeted cover letters to apply for work.

Originally from Perth, the proud grandfather has travelled across Australia serving in the Army, as a surveyor in the forestry sector, a diamond driller in the mines, and a logistics operator. He even helped build the local IGA in Warwick.

In each of these roles, Mr Pavy acquired new skills and proved adept at meeting new challenges. But in today’s digital world, computers presented the final frontier.

“I don’t know why but it’s something I was quite nervous about. But our teacher Lorraine has been amazing and I’ve quickly realised that computers are not too bad. It really helps when you have a teacher like Lorraine. I think if I’d had teachers like her when I was in school I’d probably be a rich man today,” he said.

Mr Pavy said the classes improved his confidence to use a computer and he is now optimistic about the future.

His classmates agree.



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“When I came into this class I thought the computer was my enemy. It’s not my enemy anymore,” one classmate said.

Mr Pavy said he has also enjoyed studying with other mature-aged job seekers who had been out of work “for some time”.

“I hope this class will help me to get employed. You see so many jobs out there that need computer skills these days. I’m happy to learn on the job, but it’s difficult to convince an employer to give you that opportunity,” he said.

TAFE Queensland South West SEE teacher Lorraine Lisle said she is proud of her students and hopes that local employers will take advantage of the skills these mature-aged job seekers already possess, in addition to the skills they are now gaining through the course.

“By equipping mature-aged people with digital skills we are helping to improve the value they offer potential employers,” she said.

“My students already have a strong work ethic, and in Craig’s case a wide variety of experience.”

Digital literacy classes at TAFE Queensland South West in Warwick run every Tuesday and Wednesday from 9am to 2.45pm. For more information contact TAFE Queensland South West, Warwick on (07) 4660 4603.

ENDS

Further information:

About the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE)

SEE offers up to 800 hours of FREE training to help participants secure a job or participate in further training. SEE provides language, literacy and numeracy training in a contextualised learning environment for eligible job seekers aged 15-64. For more information on SEE, visit www.education.gov.au/skills-education-and-employment

TAFE Queensland South West Media Contact

Grace Callan, Communications Officer

P: (07) 4694 1502

M: 0439 254 330

E: Grace.Callan@tafe.qld.edu.au

W: www.tafesouthwest.edu.au



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