

# STUDENTS

## *becoming 'Thoroughly Schooled'*

**A RECENT TRAINING PROGRAM HELD AT SCONE PROVIDED AN EXTENSIVE BUILDING BLOCK FOR SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION INTO EMPLOYMENT WITHIN THE RACING INDUSTRY** WORDS: MARK BRASSEL



A five-day Racing NSW training initiative called 'Thoroughly Schooled' – delivered in partnership with Training Services NSW, Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders Association and TAFE NSW at Scone – has proved highly successful.

The program incorporated practical skill sets including a four-hour work placement on a

stud farm and racings stables and received Government funding via Training Services NSW.

The aim of the program is to build on the career aspirations of students who have expressed an interest in pursuing a career within the equine industry.

"This program provides an immersive career and industry exposure opportunity within the local community and incorporates

critical employability skills," explained Stu Rich, Executive Officer for NSW TRB Training Ltd.

"Based upon the 2021 recommendations of the pilot program and evolving from the August and October 2022 programs, the design of the Thoroughly Schooled 2023 program attracts Year 10 to 12 school students from targeted regions of New South Wales as a



career immersion program into the equine industry, with a specific focus on Thoroughbred breeding and racing streams.”

Some of the objectives of the project are:

- Building capabilities among students in the skills and knowledge needed for post-school employment and training in the equine industry
- Inform and promote the diversity of career opportunities in the equine industry
- Establish partnerships between participating stud farms and racing stables and schools around NSW for future collaboration

Performance outcomes included a greater awareness of the equine industry and diversity of careers available, receiving practical non-accredited skill-sets relevant to the industry, site visits and introductions to influential employers and stakeholders in the equine industry and work experience on both a breeding stud farm and racing stables.

Some of the activities these students participated in included non-accredited training by TAFE NSW across 2½ days consisting of classroom lessons focused on





Thoroughbreds and the racing industry, practical lessons on horse-handling skills and Work, Health & Safety tutelage.

There were also bus tours to key industry partners such as Scone Race Club, Godolphin's Kelvinside and Woodlands, Arrowfield Stud and Scone Equine Hospital.

The Thoroughly Schooled program was promoted to local schools in the Hunter & Central Coast region, New England, Mid & North Coast, Far West and Blue Mountains and Western Sydney.

An excursion package form was created that coalesced various forms detailing accommodation, duty of care, insurance, transport, TAFE enrolment and Risk Assessment.

Middlebrook Station accommodation was sourced with a capacity for up to 18 students.

HTBA coordinated transport for the students to be picked up from their accommodation and transported to TAFE Equine Campus and to venues across the week.

Training took place on TAFE



NSW's Equine Campus in Scone and all students handled multiple horses during the practical activities that included horse behaviour, handling, grooming and horse control and care.

All students undertook two mornings of observational work experience with a racing stable and a Thoroughbred breeding stud. Participating in the program were Glastonbury Farm, Vinery Stud, Ridgmont Farm and Newgate Farm.

Racehorse trainers that came on

board were Luke Pepper, Cameron Crockett, Stephen Jones, Scott Singleton, Brett Cavanaugh and Rodney Northam.

Stu Rich said: "Overall, the program structure goes from strength to strength and from an industry perspective there is an appetite to run at least two of these programs per year to showcase the industry to more Year 10 to 12 students across NSW with future delivery of the program anticipated again at Scone during 2024." **RNSW**