

A new generation of bush workers



Awhina Paul.

“WHEN WE STARTED THE GENERATION PROGRAMME TWO years ago, we knew there was a demand in the forestry industry for trained, work-ready, and reliable workers,” says Eastland Wood Council’s Generation Programme manager, Siobhain Fyall.

“Our first Generation back in October 2018 was highly successful, with 11 trainees gaining full-time sustainable employment, eight in forestry.”

What came as a surprise was the interest in the programme from women, says Siobhain: “We had four keen young women enrolled on the programme with three gaining full-time employment on completion of the six-week base camp. Their commitment, participation and engagement was on par with the males on the programme. So far we have placed seven females into full-time sustainable employment in the forest industry. From our six programme intakes, we have had 17 females completing the course.”

Poster girl for the 2019/2020 Generation Programme brochure, Caitlin Hauti started her training when she was at Tolaga Bay Area School, travelling to Gisborne at 5am twice weekly to do the Gateway Programme at the Turanga Ararau Forestry Campus. On leaving school, she signed up on the first Generation Programme, and has been working in Quality Control (QC). She has now completed the National Certificate in Forest Operations with strands in Quality Control Level 3.

With a brother in the industry, another graduate, Caitlin Markie decided to give forestry a go.

“Caitlin never missed a day of training — she was always the first to arrive at training and last to leave. The only thing she struggled with was getting her chainsaw started but with pure perseverance, she cracked it,” says Siobhain.

She is now working with Wild Hog Logging as a QC and in Health and Safety. She has also completed the National Certificate in Forest Operations with strands in Quality Control Level 3.

Another trainee, Mere Simpson, worked night shifts at a seasonal job while attending her course until she decided to embrace forestry full-time. She is now working full time for Kuru Contracting. Mere has completed the National Certificate in Forest Operations with strands in Quality Control Level 3.

“They took me under their wing as my mental health was on the rocks too at the time,” says Mere. “It’s been a solid year in the bush and I don’t know where I would’ve ended up without them at work, at home and in my bank account. Since I left school I’ve always kind of worked in more male dominated jobs anyway. I knew this particular industry had potential to get pretty rough but I got there and I’m not going to stop.”

Early on, Generation Programme graduate, Awhina Paul, was unsure which aspect of the industry she wanted to pursue, but after numerous site visits she decided on forest mensuration — the measurement of trees and stands, and the analysis of the information.

“With funding from Tu Uru Rakau we were able to purchase some invaluable plotting equipment which enabled Awhina to



Mere Simpson.



Caitlin Markie.



Caitlin Hauti.

gain the skills in the use of the technology and qualifications to do the job,” says Siobhain.

Awhina is now employed by Isaac Forest Inventory. She has also completed the National Certificate in Forest Operations with strands in Forest Mensuration Level 3.

She says graduating from the programme gave her the confidence, knowledge and skills to work in the forestry industry.

The Generation Programme starts with a comprehensive six-week base camp that gives graduates “real-world” learning combining industry training and work experience, leading directly

into employment. Over the six-week programme, participants are introduced to a range of employment opportunities in the forestry industry, from silviculture, harvesting and technology through to plotting, roading and transport, logistics and wood processing.

A Waratah training simulator is on site, as well as top-of-the-range plotting equipment and technology, along with experienced tutors to deliver the training. Fitness, drug and alcohol education and driver training are all part of the programme, ensuring that the training provides the skills and qualifications that contractors and employers need. ^(NZL)



DESIGNED FOR HEAVY DUTY CLEANING

Unleash the power of the NEW STIHL Petrol Waterblaster range. For professional service and expert advice, contact your local STIHL Dealer

www.stihl.co.nz

YOU’LL ONLY NEED ONE

