

## CITB CEO Speech: Construction Industry Immersion

22 Nov 2021

Today, CITB CEO Andrew Fullgrabe addressed an audience at the Industry & Schools Collaboration Event at the Adelaide Convention Centre.

Minister Pisoni, Minister Gardner.

Good afternoon, folks.

It's an honour to talk with you today on behalf of the CITB Board to celebrate the spirit of cooperation and progress in the room today.

Cooperation between industry and schools is making a significant difference to our industry, to our businesses and to the lives of young people.

Progress in the way industry and schools are collaborating is providing meaningful career pathways to support the transition of students from school to the world of work.

Let me start today by sharing one of the many success stories that we celebrate at the CITB - Christine Mason.

From a very young age, Christine was interested in how things go together, how stuff works.

Construction seemed a good fit. But how would she really know?

Christine did all the right things - the things that we encourage students to do today.

She went out and got work experience.

She enrolled in Doorways2Construction at Salisbury High School.

Christine's experience completing the Doorways program convinced her that she wanted to pursue carpentry as a career.

She applied for an apprenticeship through the Master Builders with a small building company.

She got one.

And she will tell you that the four years that she spent as an apprentice didn't seem like a long time at all.



In fact, she says it all went by “like a blink of an eye”. That is what happens when you are busy doing something you love. When you discover your passion.

Christine excelled ... and during her apprenticeship as a carpenter, she was recognised as the South Australian Apprentice of the Year.

And just two years after finishing her apprenticeship, Christine followed her dream and started up Mason Carpentry and Construction.

Her company offers new house builds and renovations, extensions and general building work from decks to pergolas. And she now employs her own apprentice.

She has never been busier.

This is at the heart of what we are all about – opportunities to support our young people, bring them into our industry, train them well, grow businesses, and contribute to our community and our State.

Christine’s path to a thriving building business started with the CITB Doorways program.

The Doorways program was established by the CITB in partnership with secondary schools as a pilot program in 1999.

It started with just six schools. Doorways has grown to more than 50 host schools spread across regional and metropolitan South Australia. More than 100 other schools participate in the program by sending their Doorways students to those host schools to complete the program.

Throughout the past two decades the program has been revised to keep it relevant to the needs of industry.

And over the past 20 years Doorways has welcomed more than 10,000 students and produced nearly 4,000 apprentices.

More than \$1.2 million has been allocated by the CITB for Doorways this financial year.

But we are particularly excited about next year’s program as we support the implementation of the government’s VET for School Students Policy and the introduction of the Building and Construction Flexible Industry pathway ... the FIP.

The new FIP will have even more emphasis on construction career education, industry immersion and programs that will lead to even better employment outcomes.



We are extending our support to schools to include students in Years 7 to 9. It's never too early to start learning about the fabulous careers our industry provides. A key component to that is our partnership with local company Makers Empire.

Maker's Empire, based at the Lot Fourteen precinct just up the road, will roll out its innovative Learning by Design program for us next year. Its supporting curriculum will empower students to create, design and solve problems within a building and construction industry context.

Students in Year 10 will experience VET taster programs - supported by the CITB. These programs will include 'Try-a-Trade' activities, site visits and other industry immersion events to provide an introduction to building and construction careers and pathways to work.

Doorways2Construction will be offered to students in Year 11 as part of the FIP and will provide VET qualifications in building and construction, electrotechnology, plumbing and civil skills.

An Advanced Skills Program for students in Year 12 will provide an opportunity for students to continue learning through vocational training programs that include work placements.

Which brings us back to why we are here today.

I read a report last Friday. It was a research report on why young people do or don't complete apprenticeships. That research found that the most significant contributing factor to completing an apprenticeship was the experience of that young person before they even commenced their apprenticeship.

Whether they had visited sites, completed work experience, spoken with tradies, completed VET programs while at school.

This is why what we are celebrating today is so important.

This is why what you have achieved is so relevant.

This is why the CITB will support more industry immersion programs next year.

And this is why the FIP, and the opportunities it provides for greater collaboration between government, industry and our training providers is so important.

And so, to our builders, our tradies and workers, our training providers, to DfE, to DIS and to the schools and their teachers: Thank you for providing the opportunity for students to gain hands on experience in the building industry.

Thank you for your work to develop the next generation of Christines.

