

Facility: Junee Correctional Centre  
Media: Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga  
Published Date: 28 February 2014

# Trained for a brighter future

**BY DECLAN RURENGA**

THIS week, the Riverina Institute of TAFE at Junee Correctional Centre presented 64 qualifications to inmates on completion of their studies.

TAFE operates an educational program at the jail which allows inmates to study building, hospitality, agriculture, automotive and horticulture.

"It's great to see inmates taking on board the opportunity to educate themselves in what can be a difficult and challenging environment," offender services manager Trevor Coles said.

"The fact that they've completed their study to this level is evidence of their commitment," he said.

Mr Coles said it was also due to the dedication of TAFE staff who taught the courses, their understanding of their students and their flexibility in delivering the course.

One of the highest achieving inmates, Mata Ngati, who studied hospitality in the jail's kitchen, took out the outstanding student of the year award.

"We're the only jail in NSW that prepares all of its food on-site," Mr Coles said.

Staff from TAFE and the GEO Group supervise the work while inmates assist in producing close to 3000 meals a day.

"They're fully transferable skills, hopefully they'll be able to gain meaningful employment ...

we run our kitchen to industry standards," Mr Coles said.

"We start at 9am with set tasks and shiftwork."

It's not just cooking skills that are taught, but work and social skills such as punctuality and dealing with fellow GEO Group cooks.

"It's strict regime," Mr Coles said.

Training and education manager Mark Apps said if a course could be taught within the walls of the jail, TAFE would offer it.

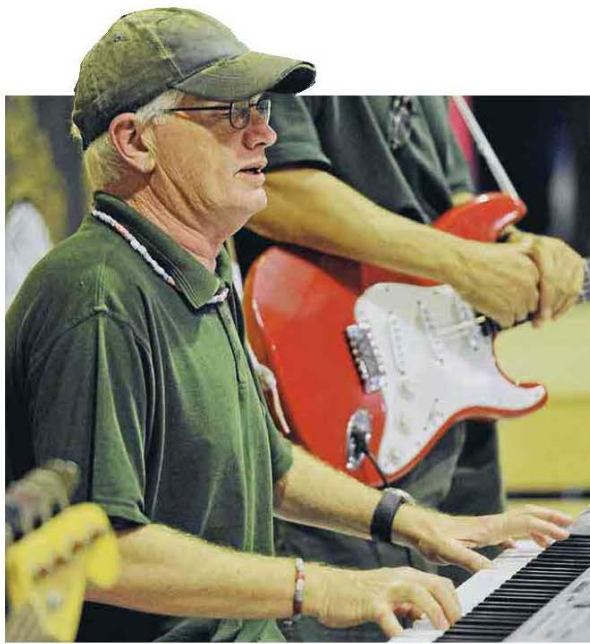
Thirty 30 courses are available.

"Our most recent addition is a spray paint booth," Mr Apps said.

"(It's) helping to address areas where there are skill shortages."



**BUILDING BLOCKS:** Building and construction graduates inmates Ahmad (front, left) Raymond, Jean (centre) and Aram with teacher Andrew Werder.



**MUSIC MACHINE**  
**(right):** Inmate Neil performs as part of band The Time Machine during TAFE Riverina Institute's Junee Correctional Centre graduation ceremony.



**CREATIVE GIFT (left):** Inmate Kenneth hands a thank you gift to the business, arts and service industries director Brian Millar.



**GLORIOUS CAKE (above):** Student of the year and hospitality graduate Mata Ngati shows off his renowned cheese cake with commercial cooking teacher Jack Stratford. Pictures: Alastair Brook