**Bega Valley business chambers, schools, career services and other supporters met recently to create a Ticket to Work network, increasing career options for young people with a disability.**

Led by WorkAbility, the South East NSW Ticket to Work Partnership Network’s informal and formal partners include Australian Apprenticeship Centres, TAFE, South Coast College, Bega Valley Shire Council, University of Wollongong and the Southern Region and Canberra Business Enterprise Centre.

“The goal of this network is to develop a partnership between employers, schools, families and local agencies to increase employment opportunities for young people with a disability as they transition from school to the workforce,” Workability Employment Connections Manager Dave Grealy said.

“The partners work together to source jobs and prepare young people for the world of work.”

The focus is on School Based Apprenticeships and traineeships.

“We’ve had a great response from schools, employers and other important players”, WorkAbility’s Employment Consultant Deb Bennington said.

The establishment of the network is supported by peak body National Disability Services, and operates in 31 regions across Australia.

Robert Hayson, Chair of the Combined Business Chambers of the Bega Valley, endorses the Ticket to Work network.

“Compared to other young people with similar disability, Ticket to Work participants are 50 per cent more likely to complete Year 12, four times more likely to be in employment, and experiencing higher levels of social participation, quality of life and wellbeing”, he said.

Picture above: PARTNERSHIPS: Richard Arbon, Charmaine Lucas, Ingrid Thompson, Michelle Bond, Kerryn Grainger, Virginia Fitzclarence, Keith Bourke, Robert Hayson, Dave Grealy and Michael Bulters at a Ticket to Work session

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