

Teaching the next generation

A Central Coast NSW broker is helping young people learn financial literacy



A Central Coast-based finance broker has partnered with a local high school to introduce a financial literacy program and teach students how to run a small business.

Mhairi MacLeod, founder of award-winning brokerage Astute Ability Finance, told *Australian Broker* she had teamed up with Tumby Umbi High School's economics department.

"The commerce teacher invited me to come and chat with her about what I could do in the sense of possibly sponsoring their commerce department," she said.

"One thing led to another and what we have come up with is looking to show kids how to be entrepreneurs – how to set up a business, where to start, how to name a business, what's involved with ABNs, and things like that."

MacLeod will join the economics class for a weekly lesson, in which she will organise open discussions so they can share ideas and ask questions. She will also help the students apply their knowledge more

practically in a project that will count towards their syllabus.

"We are also looking at setting up a mini business where the kids can actually generate an income for the department. I will donate \$500 as a start-up for this coming term, and with that \$500 we will get things in place like registering a name and setting up a web page. Five hundred dollars doesn't sound like much, but the kids have access to do most of it by themselves," she said.

"It is yet to be discussed what product we will actually be selling, but one of the things I do in my business is give away stylus pens – the pen that you can plug into your iPhone or iPad. So we could have 500 of those made up, and the kids will have to sell those stylus pens to other students to inject funds back into their project for the following term, and we will keep building that business.

"It might be stylus pens for term one and then something else for term two, and so on. It will teach them how by networking and working with each and every one of their family members and friends and each other, we can actually build a business."

While the program won't centre around driving students towards working in mortgage and finance broking specifically, MacLeod said she would be thrilled if it encouraged more young people to enter the industry.

If the program runs smoothly at Tumby Umbi, MacLeod hopes she will be able to implement it in a second high school on the Central Coast. **AB**

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FBAA SEES STUDENT MEMBERSHIP TOP 1,000

The FBAA's campaign to recruit young brokers is paying off, as the broker association now has more than 1,000 student members.

Since the membership promotion commenced in November 2014, in a partnership with Perth-based student association Student Edge, FBAA chief executive Peter White says the results and feedback have exceeded his expectations.

"We have been proactive and committed to this cause, doing promotional videos targeting students and promoting broking as a rewarding career path," he said.

"Digital media is the way to reach the younger generation. Our videos are cool and professional and delivered by brokers in their mid to late twenties. We touched a nerve with them about just how exciting a career it can be."

The campaign was part of the FBAA's wider push to tap into the youth market. The two winners of their student scholarship award, in conjunction with Australis College, were announced in May.

"The students coming through are the future of the industry as well as your business," White said.



Peter White

AUSSIE HITS RECRUITMENT MILESTONE

Franchise brokerage Aussie Home Loans has announced the recruitment of its 1,000th mortgage broker.

Melbourne mother of two Marianna Scerri became the franchise's milestone broker after completing her Diploma of Financial Services. Scerri says she intends to take part in Aussie's free mentoring program over the next two years.

"I am a bit daunted by the challenge of mortgage broking; however, the level and quality of the training I have received from Aussie has been outstanding and was one of the many reasons I chose to join the Aussie group," Scerri said.

A resident of Craigieburn in Melbourne's north, Scerri said its new transport routes and housing estates were bringing many young families to the area.

Aussie CEO James Symond said he was delighted to welcome Scerri to Aussie.

"I am sure she will excel in her role, and we will give her every support to achieve her goals and provide our customers with the best service in this very fast growing area of Melbourne.

"We are always looking for motivated, dynamic professionals like Marianna to join Aussie, as we are on a strong growth phase and keen to expand our network of mortgage brokers across Australia," Symond said.



James Symond