

MEDIA RELEASE

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CAREER DREAMS REALISED

When a young Grace Neale pulled her mums electric candles apart to see how they worked, marked a hint to her parents of a career path the youngster was to embark on.

At 16 years of age, Grace has started her career as a Diesel Mechanic with Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council (CGRC). Not only has Grace always liked the big stuff, and finding out how things operated, she comes from a lineage that encouraged the fascination and fostered her curiosity.

CGRC Plant Foreman Garry Scifleet said Grace brings enthusiasm and passion to her role as an apprentice diesel mechanic to Council.

“It’s in her blood, and we could see that spark. Grace was going to pursue mechanics as a career in any way she could. It’s that passion and keenness for the job, that saw Grace become Council’s first female diesel mechanic, and we are determined to give her the knowledge and skills required to make a success of her chosen career path,” Garry said.

Grace’s interest in mechanics started from a very young age, and she spent many hours with her grandfather, well known mechanic Cliff Cram. A student from Cootamundra High School, Grace undertook the TVET program with TAFE and school that helped build her practical skills and industry specific knowledge. Grace will now be under the tutorage of Garry and CGRC Plant Mechanic Marc Bickerdike as her apprenticeship progresses.

“This girl is no stranger to hard work,” Marc said. “Washing trucks for a local trucking firm and working at a local supermarket as well as holding down her job here, is a testament to her work ethic,” he added.

Grace will commence her formal TAFE studies in the new year, giving the team at Council’s workshop months to ensure she is TAFE ready and has a head start on the basics. Her first job with CGRC was to carry out a 1000-hour major service on an earthmoving machine.

“Whilst we are excited to have the first female apprentice mechanic on board, Council does have other females in typically male dominated industries, it’s never been about the gender for us, it’s all about the ability, the drive and the passion for the job that counts,” Garry said.

Grace is just one of the team at the CGRC depot in Cootamundra and is looking forward to expanding her skill knowledge and taking the steps forward on her new career.

Picture and caption:

1. Grace Neale – CGRC apprentice diesel mechanic is at home with the big gear.
2. CGRC Plant Mechanics – Garry Scifleet, Grace Neale, Marc Bickerdike with a machine that will see Grace giving it some attention during her apprenticeship.



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