



Top award for computer wizard



••• Parklea IT specialist Sagafili Aupaa is the 2010 GEO Employee of the Year.

"Tinkering around on the computer" has earned Sagafili Aupaa the award as GEO's 2010 Employee of the Year.

Better known around Parklea Correctional Centre as 'Sa', the affable 27-year-old is an information technology whiz.

Sa began working with GEO at Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre in 2007 in a temporary clerical position but his value was immediately evident and he soon became a full-time employee.

In November 2009 the Ipswich-raised Queenslander transferred to Sydney and Parklea to take up a position as an information technology (IT) specialist during the early period of transition from state government operation to GEO management.

"The move has provided more opportunity and more responsibility — it's been great," Sa said.

Since then he has been responsible for the introduction, implementation and roll-out of the GEO and Corrective Services NSW information technology systems for the centre as well as the myriad of challenges associated with various operational and administrative requirements.

Sa also coordinates initial and ongoing IT training programs for staff.

Some of the projects undertaken upon his arrival at Parklea included the installation of all hardware and software at the centre as well as the telecommunications infrastructure.

Sa also established an IT helpdesk, developed a more efficient pay system and accepted responsibility for the management of day-to-day IT issues.

"GEO executive management acknowledge the significant efforts and contribution made by Sa in his role as an IT specialist at Parklea," said Pieter Bezuidenhout, The GEO Group Australia managing director.

"We had some significant challenges during the initial transition stage at Parklea and during the early months of operation and it would be fair to say that the contribution made by Sa and his dedication to his role in the provision of IT services was of great benefit to the centre."

On weekends Sa has been exploring his still relatively new surrounds, enjoying the sights of Sydney and wandering around the harbour, but admits that he spends much of his spare time on the computer.

"I do spend a lot of time generating programs and just generally keeping up to date with what is happening in IT," he said.

In the nomination for GEO Employee of the Year, Parklea centre management highlighted that: "With limited resources Sa has been able to meet the centre's operational needs through a very committed approach to his duties while demonstrating a very high level of competency in managing and maintaining the systems and networks within the centre.

"This includes having the GEO system interface with government's probation and parole unit, chaplaincy, therapists and compulsory drug court centre.

"Sa is a very quiet person who relishes working within the team environment and making his contribution count as part of the team. He is a quiet achiever who does not seek any accolades, yet all staff are aware of his contribution and openly appreciate his level of service and commitment."

Sa receives a \$4000 travel gift card, \$1000 spending money and up to two weeks special leave to be used with the travel prize as the GEO Employee of the Year (see page 3 for details of the other finalists in the 2010 GEO Employee of the Year award).



MD's Desk

Welcome to this edition of The GEO Group Australia newsletter.

The first news I have for you is the result of the 2010 Employee of the Year award and it gives me great pleasure to announce that Sa Aupaau from Parklea Correctional Centre is GEO Australia's 2010 Employee of the Year.

As the IT specialist at Parklea, Sa has worked tirelessly to implement and develop the IT systems at the prison, a task made all the more challenging given the transition from public management to GEO management and the speed with which this occurred. He has set an example of exceptional service, professionalism and flexibility and I congratulate Sa on his achievement.

GEO also acknowledges and congratulates the four finalists from the other centres.

Peter Hughey from Arthur Gorrie was singled out for his commitment to providing excellence in the reception function at the prison, and was rightly recognised for his willingness to resolve problems and seek new and efficient ways of working.

Esther Dekkers from Fulham was the driving force behind the implementation and success of the prison's Pups in Prison program, which won a Corrections Victoria Community Work Partnership Award for the 'Most Outstanding Location Based Project'.

Garry Carpenter from Junee was acknowledged for his exceptional operational knowledge, personal commitment to his duties, his willingness to work across functions and add value to them, and his auditing achievements.

Joanne Hall from PSH was nominated for her energy, dedication and initiative at both Barwon and Loddon prisons, including providing leadership in challenging circumstances. Joanne's sound clinical judgment was also highlighted.

I am very pleased and proud to have been able to recognise the contributions of these individuals from different backgrounds and with diverse responsibilities. Well done to all!

On the business development front, we have continued working as a part of the New Zealand Custodial Services consortium towards the submission of a tender on 1 August for the design, construction, finance, maintenance and operation of the Wiri prison in Auckland.

The consortium has developed an innovative proposal and we expect to hear the result of the tender process in February 2012.

Finally, the 2011 Christmas card competition opens this month with entry details in this newsletter. The very best of luck to all members of the GEO family who submit entries.

Pieter Bezuidenhout
Managing Director

Parklea personnel do time

The Blacktown PCYC (Police & Community Youth Club) has raised more than \$7000 from a 'lock up your boss day' with a significant contribution from Parklea Correctional Centre.

The event was held at Bunnings Warehouse Seven Hills where Parklea general manager Peter Ma'a and Bunnings manager Peter Taylor were locked in a makeshift cell and provided with a phone so that they could call friends and

colleagues to help them raise enough funds to post bail. Parklea operations manager Phil Mannion also did some time behind bars.

GEO raised the most funds on the day, contributing \$4000 as well as providing some materials, organisational support and personnel.

The money raised from the venture will help Blacktown PCYC purchase new equipment and maintain its clubrooms.



••• NSW police kept watch on Parklea general manager Peter Ma'a (left) and operations manager Phil Mannion in support of Blacktown PCYC.

Total turtle care at Arthur Gorrie

Breeding Australian 'bush tucker' including jumping crickets, brush roaches, meal worms and red claw crayfish to feed injured native animals is now a major initiative at Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre.

Prisoners in the centre's Indy 2 unit are part of a partnership that Arthur Gorrie has established with the internationally renowned Australia Zoo and its Wildlife Warriors program.



••• One of the turtles being cared for by Arthur Gorrie inmates.

The program was established in 2002 by 'Crocodile Hunter' Steve Irwin and his wife Terry Irwin to encourage individuals and organisations to support the protection of injured, threatened or endangered wildlife.

Arthur Gorrie is providing food for the zoo's wildlife hospital and assisting in the rehabilitation of injured native reptiles.

The first two patients to arrive at the centre were turtles. One was suffering from a fractured shell and the other had a head wound caused by a fishing hook.

Prisoners are responsible for feeding the turtles and recording the pair's progress while in care. They are also constructing portable enclosures for other injured turtles.

The program supports Australia Zoo and teaches prisoners animal husbandry skills and a level of responsibility that assists in their rehabilitation.

Arthur Gorrie prisoners and staff are enjoying helping the first patients return to health and are eagerly awaiting the arrival of further injured reptiles.

Fantastic five share spoils



••• From left: 2010 GEO Employee of the Year finalists Esther Dekkers, Joanne Hall, Garry Carpenter, Sagafili Aupaau and Peter Hughey with Pieter Bezuidenhout.

Five finalists shared the spoils in the 2010 GEO Employee of the Year award.

While Parklea information technology specialist Sagafili Aupaau claimed the top prize he had some tough opposition from correctional supervisors Peter Hughey (Arthur Gorrie) and Esther Dekkers (Fulham), Junee correctional officer Garry Carpenter and Pacific Shores Healthcare health services manager Joanne Hall.

Selected from more than 1300 employees, the finalists were acknowledged by GEO's executive team at a special function in Sydney.

The GEO Group Australia managing director Pieter Bezuidenhout said the finalists had all made a significant contribution to GEO throughout the year and each should feel proud of their achievements.

"All five finalists are to be congratulated for their commitment to GEO, their initiative and leadership in the workplace and their capacity to continuously exceed the expectations of their role," he said.

At Arthur Gorrie, Peter Hughey is responsible for all movements both internally and externally from the centre's reception store. He

implemented a number of systems to increase efficiency and reduce costs and also reduced the number of prisoner complaints in relation to management of their property.

Esther Dekkers was nominated for her exceptional leadership at Fulham and in particular her dedication to the Pups in Prison program, which extended to coming to work on her days off to ensure the program was running smoothly. Her passion for the program inspired and motivated eight prisoners who took on the important role of training pups for Assistance Dogs Australia.

Junee's Garry Carpenter was nominated primarily for his outstanding commitment to the internal auditing process. The nomination highlighted his knowledge, positive approach and support for diverse and challenging assignments in various departments.

Joanne Hall successfully managed Barwon Prison's medical centre after a difficult period and developed a strong Pacific Shores Healthcare team at the facility. She was then placed at Loddon Prison where she continued to demonstrate excellent leadership and sound clinical judgment.

Finalists in the 2010 GEO Employee of the Year receive a trip with a partner to the capital city of their choice (in either NSW, Victoria or Queensland), accommodation and \$500 spending money.

Colourful dreaming at Junee

An impressive body of artwork developed through the Colourful Dreaming program at Junee Correctional Centre (JCC) has been touring Riverina communities in recent months.

JCC, the Department of Environment, Water and the Arts and the Australian Government's Indigenous Cultural Support Program joined forces to develop the Colourful Dreaming program to support Aboriginal children who experience parental incarceration. The program is facilitated by the SHINE for Kids organisation.

In conjunction with its support for this program, GEO built the SHINE for Kids Child and Family Centre within the grounds of JCC to enable children to visit their fathers in a non-confronting environment.

Colourful Dreaming combines Aboriginal culture and the expertise of SHINE for Kids to create

a dynamic, effective and culturally specific program for Aboriginal children aged from 10 to 15 years.

The program encourages the children to explore their personal challenges through artwork and increase their sense of cultural identity. It also promotes positive contact between the children and their imprisoned fathers.

Colourful Dreaming employs an Aboriginal group worker and engages Aboriginal elders and artists to assist with groups of children.

A major aim of the program is to improve the life chances of participants and reduce the risk of future involvement in criminal activity by strengthening social support and cultural connections. Through the touring art exhibition, the program is also increasing public awareness of Wiradjuri culture.



••• SHINE for Kids child and family worker Karen Westbrook (left) and Wiradjuri elder Aunty Kathleen Withers at a Colourful Dreaming exhibition in Narrandera. (Photo courtesy of the Narrandera Argus).

JCC's child and family centre opened early this year and is a comfortable environment for parents, carers and children to relax in before and after prison visits. The centre provides information and referrals to support services if needed.

IN BRIEF



••• Parklea general manager Peter Ma'a (left) with Bakers branch manager Roy McCauley.

Bakers donation a delight

Leading industrial products supplier Bakers Construction and Industrial, the famous Penrith Panthers rugby league club and Parklea Correctional Centre have combined to raise more than \$5000 for Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre employees affected by January's devastating floods.

Bakers, a long time supplier to Parklea, donated a signed photograph of the Panthers rugby league team which raised \$1200 at a fundraising event organised by Parklea staff.

Parklea stores supervisor Colin Tormey said the support from Bakers was fantastic and the auction of the Penrith Panthers photograph was a highlight of the evening. "Even for those who don't support them!" he said.



••• Junee's Andy Walker (left) and John Barnes flank successful students (from left) Samuel Splitt, John Stewart, Vivienne Koschel, Heidi Eldridge, Deanne Barnes and Joshua Splitt.

Junee study scholarships awarded

The GEO Group Australia offers annual financial scholarships to employees' children and grandchildren who are studying at university or TAFE.

GEO calls for nominations each January and the \$500 scholarships are awarded on a merit basis to assist with books, fees or accommodation. The scholarships support GEO's aspiration to be an 'employer of choice' and are eagerly sought by the students.

This year Junee Correctional Centre awarded nine scholarships at a morning tea celebration attended by staff members, management and the students whose studies varied from photography to medicine and agricultural sciences.

Arthur Gorrie leads the way

Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre was the first and remains the only correctional facility in Australia to offer the extensive Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training course to all prisoners.

While other centres have run the MHFA course for indigenous inmates, AGCC offers standard MHFA training to everyone.

Mental health first aid is providing assistance to a person developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis, until appropriate professional treatment is received or until the crisis is resolved.

A mental health crisis may be a person who feels suicidal, a person having an anxiety attack, a person in an acute stress reaction or a person who is in a distressed psychotic state.

The feedback from inmates who have completed the courses has been overwhelmingly positive.



••• This artwork forms part of an impressive mural depicting Polynesian culture.

Cultural Centre looks a picture

Inmates at Junee Correctional Centre have put their artistic talents to great work in the facility's Cultural Centre.

Individual artworks and murals adorn the walls of the Cultural Centre, reflecting the diverse cultures within the prison population.



••• Greg Battley (left) is congratulated by Fulham general manager Troy Ittensohn.

Age no barrier to success

A Fulham Correctional Centre employee who has been able to fund further studies in correctional management through the GEO Debra Diplock Scholarship has been presented with two prestigious awards at the 2011 East Gippsland TAFE Awards night.

Correctional manager Greg Battley, 55, won the Jack Armstrong Memorial Award for a student of business and management and the Most Outstanding Student of the Year Award.

Greg, a GEO employee since 1997, completed a Diploma of Management and a Diploma of Human Resources Management concurrently.

Members of Greg's family and Fulham's senior management team were among the 200 people at the awards evening.



••• Suzanne Fahy accepts her award as dux of the 2011 Correctional Officer Pre-Service Course from Fulham operations manager Peter Thompson.

New recruits and promotions

Fulham Correctional Centre has welcomed its latest batch of new recruits with 14 correctional officers graduating from the six-week Correctional Officer Pre-Service Course.

Four female and 10 male correctional officers proudly accepted their certificates from national training coordinator Mark Butler at a graduation ceremony. Suzanne Fahy became the first female recruit to be awarded dux of the course at Fulham.

The appointment of three new correctional managers was also celebrated informally with members of the senior management team recently.

General manager Troy Ittensohn congratulated Mark De Moel, Christine O'Brien and Chris Smalley who have amassed a total of almost 34 years at Fulham.

Prizes for artistic talent

The GEO Group Australia is again staging a Christmas card design competition open to children and grandchildren of GEO employees throughout the country. The best design or designs, as judged by a panel of festive judges, will be used to print The GEO Group Australia Christmas card for 2011. Split into two categories, the competition is open to children aged 5-10 years in one section and 11-16 in the other. Individual prizes of \$100 will be awarded to a finalist in each category from each centre. Entries close on Monday 31 October 2011.

Christmas Card Competition details: The competition is only open to children and grandchildren of The GEO Group Australia employees. The design must be a Christmas or festive season design. Entry must be A4 size and produced by hand (ie computer generated designs will not be accepted) in any medium (ie pencil, paint, crayon, etc). There are two sections of the competition: a junior section for children aged 5-10 and a senior section for 11-16 year-olds. Individual prizes of \$100 will be awarded to a finalist from each category in each GEO centre. The GEO Christmas card may be printed from one or more of the winning entries. Entries may be displayed at each centre during the Christmas period. Entries will remain the property of The GEO Group Australia and may be reproduced by GEO in any format it chooses. Closing date for entries is Monday 31 October 2011. Please ensure entries include the name and age of the child as well as the related GEO employee and the centre. Entries are to be submitted to the HR manager at each centre and forwarded to our Christmas Card Competition coordinator, Olga Subrt, at head office by the closing date. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.