

“The Trade Training Centre at CRC Sydenham”

# Students learn on the job, at college

By Ozan Beyti

A STATE-of-the-art trade training centre at Catholic Regional College in Sydenham will offer students the unique opportunity to take a hands-on role in the running of on-site businesses, principal Brendan Watson says.

The college is completing the multi-million-dollar centre, scheduled to open in March, after being selected under the Federal Government's Trade Training Centres in Schools program in 2008.

Trade training centres are being implemented to redress skill shortages in traditional trades and expanding industries by providing facilities where students can begin their career with the educational support required to succeed.

CRC Sydenham was one of four Victorian schools, and the only metropolitan school, chosen as part of round one of the program.

Enrolments at the centre will be taken for the opening semester of the year until February 1, with the first month of classes to be held in alternative classrooms until the centre opens.

Subjects taught at the centre in 2010 include certificate courses in baking, picture framing, hospitality, and signwriting.

Under the unique education model employed by the centre, students will supplement studies with work at on-site businesses.

“We provide valuable on-the-job training as students learn in a real-life environment, whether by working in the restaurant, bakery, or at another division at the centre, making for a smooth transition to working life,” Mr Watson said.

## Trading Places Features of the TTC

- 200 seat lecture theatre
- 100 seat teaching restaurant named Quatrefoils
- Commercial kitchen fitted with a pizza oven and ice creamery
- Baking and patisserie kitchen
- Retail shop to sell student-prepared goods from the bakery and patisserie
- Seminar rooms fitted with interactive whiteboards
- Workshop for picture framing and sign writing students
- Picture framing and sign writing retail shop

The TTC will be open to students from all schools in the Brimbank and Melton area and will also provide adult education.

Director of the TTC and head chef at the centre's Quatrefoils restaurant, Nick Weiler is enthusiastic about training students in the area.

Mr Weiler said although his trainee chefs might lack the experience of established rivals, the training provided at the centre might leave local chefs feeling a bit threatened.

He said the environment at the restaurant would enable the VET hospitality program to produce more accomplished graduates. “We treat the students like staff to prepare them for real working environments,” he said.

Trained in Germany, Mr Weiler worked in a range of prestigious Melbourne restaurants, including Hotel Tolarno, before going on to win four

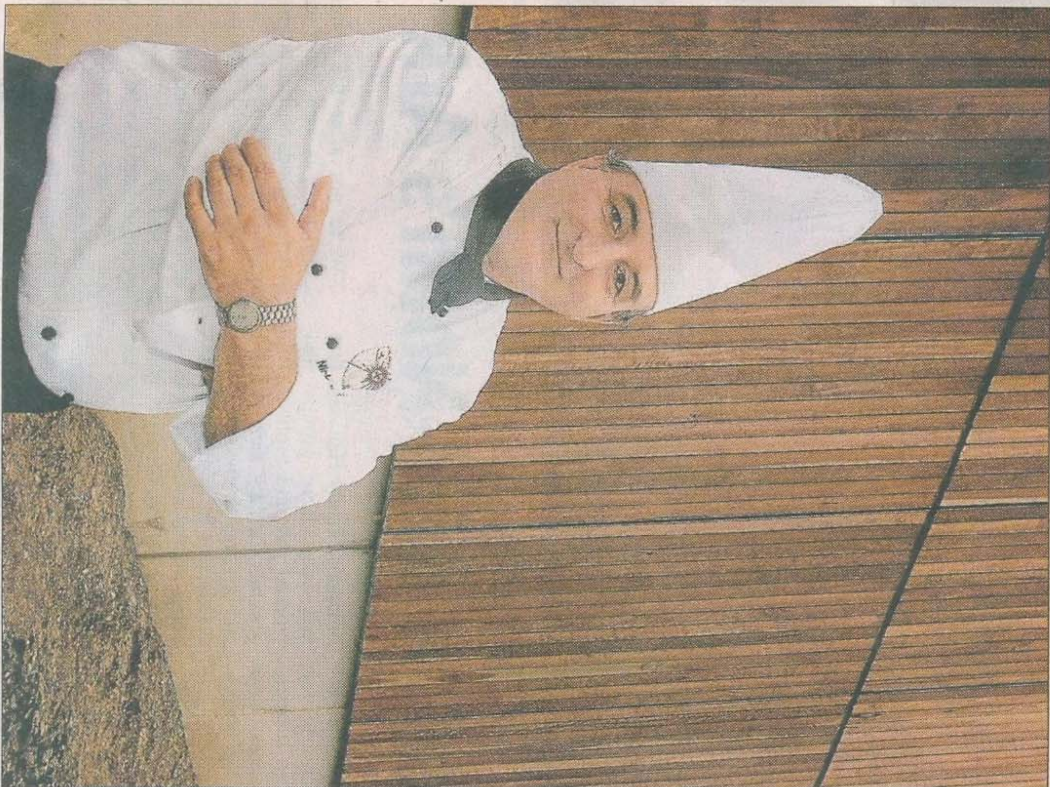
**‘We treat students like staff to prepare them for real working environments.’**  
**Nick Weiler**

national tourism and training awards. Before that, he spent 10 years teaching at St John's College in Dandenong. Mr Weiler, who is both a chef and teacher at Quatrefoils, said the teaching model at the centre would create a unique environment for educators as well.

“The teacher is both business manager and teacher, with equal responsibility for training students and coordinating the profit and loss of the business,” Mr Weiler said. All profits will be reinvested back into the school.

**Details: 9361 0000,**

**www.crcsydenham.net.**



**Cooking up:** Chef and teacher Nick Weiler will head a new trade training centre at Sydenham's Catholic Regional College.  
**Picture:** Scott McLaughlin