

Economic crisis filters down to classroom

Life's hardest lesson

MARYANN WRIGHT

HINCHINBROOK resident Nhi Tran is one of the many Liverpool youths on the harsh receiving end of Australia's economic downturn which has hit the labour market.

The city is a hot spot for unemployment and is the worst-affected suburb in south west Sydney.

Ms Tran, 17, has been looking for a job since finishing her HSC in November but has found it an increasingly difficult task.

"Businesses were looking for casuals, particularly around Christmas, and I applied everywhere in both the fast food and retail industries," Ms Tran said.

"But I gave up recently. University is about to begin and it's going to get even harder to actively seek work with study constraints."

She would like a job so she can save up for more expensive items such as a laptop computer.

"I'm going out a whole lot less because I have money issues to worry about and I hate that my parents have to pay for everything," Ms Tran said.

As employers discontinue hiring new staff and resort to cutting down hours or laying off their employees to compensate



Nhi Tran, 17, is disheartened by her struggle to find casual employment in Liverpool.

Picture: MAT SULLIVAN -PP249937

for the slowdown in sales, conditions are becoming progressively disheartening for youth, she said.

Ms Tran is now considering

applying for the Youth Allowance.

"University students are broke and I never thought it would be this hard to find a job," she said.



How is the economic downturn affecting you or your job?

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Joblessness: we're worst

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He said Premier Nathan Rees' mini-budget was crippling the economy and called on the government to reduce payroll tax by 15 per cent as proposed by the Opposition.

"This would benefit businesses which employ around 2 million people across the state," Mr Baird said.

"The measure would keep almost \$1 billion in the NSW economy, the equivalent of almost 16,500 jobs."

He said the government needed to act to protect jobs, stimulate the economy and help businesses.

Traineeship plan

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"Liverpool has one of the highest youth unemployment rates across the local government areas," Cr Harle said.

"It has a range of quality tradespeople that could pass on their skills to young people."

"We could offer apprenticeships in plumbing, horticulture and office administration."

The plan already has the backing of TAFE's South Western Sydney Institute, which governs the Liverpool and Miller campuses. The institute's director Barry Peddle told the *Leader* they would do "whatever we can" to support the plan. The council is expected to vote on the proposal in the next few months.

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