

Debra Richardson

Debra Richardson, the mother of a current Year 12 student here in Adelaide, recently completed her training and started work on an offshore oilrig, on the Northwest shelf of WA.

Debra, an experienced and qualified chef, last year decided she wanted a career change. She first completed the sixteen-week *Vocational Geoscience* course at Marden Senior College, then some further units at the O'Halloran Hill campus of TAFESA. Last month she started work with the Adelaide based company Geoservices, as a sample catcher and trainee mud logger.



Debra is one of the first women to work on an offshore rig in Australia.

"I am really happy with my work", she said. Talking last Thursday with the current class at Marden, Debra advised trainees to take "something for themselves", when working away from home. "I like to take some sewing", she said. "It helps pass the time between the rotating 12-hour shifts".

Last week Debra returned to the rig after a two week break in Adelaide. She said she was looking forward to the rig moving to the Timor Sea, in the near future, then possibly some further training in Singapore.

Marden Senior College recently won the 2007 SA Training Initiative Award for its *Vocational Geoscience*. This training program is offered at Marden in a shared delivery arrangement with the O'Halloran Hill campus of TAFESA. Trainees can be directly accredited for units completed towards the Certificate III, and with a further 18 months of full time study at TAFESA, towards the *Diploma of Geoscience* if they so choose.



MARDEN
SENIOR COLLEGE
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Vocational Geoscience is offered at Marden as a part time one semester course, commencing twice each year with choice of either a day or night class, for mature age men and women as well as senior secondary (year 11 or 12) students, through the VET in schools program.