

# EEI... ENERGISE, ENTHUSE, INSPIRE

## It's all about the people

### *Why does Alana Read love her library and her job with Rockhampton Regional Council Library Services? It's all about the people.*

Coordinating a large public library branch as a new graduate is certainly a challenge, but a very rewarding one. This job is what I had always dreamed of achieving one day, but have been fortunate enough to experience much sooner.

It's not just the interaction with people from all walks of life that venture into the library daily, but also the wonderful staff that I have the fortune to work alongside every day.

To work in the kind of job that we do, you need to be a certain kind of person. The best kind. You need to be caring yet firm, supportive yet fair. Fairness in all things is what is at the core of what libraries are and do. Making all kinds of information and resources available to all is what makes libraries great and another thing that I love about them.

Like most new graduates in the public library sector, I expected the first step on my career ladder would be a basic library professional role, assisting patrons to find their way to the knowledge they require. However, as a Coordinator, my job not only has this pleasure, but also includes the supervision of, and responsibility for, other staff, a building, and collection management, along with storytelling and other creative activities.

A really fun part of my job is to 'act up' for an audience every so often at the storytelling program delivered at the Rockhampton North Library every fortnight. From stories on different themes told through reading books, felt boards, rhymes, finger plays and songs, storytelling for me is a real buzz. It provides me with the chance to be humbled by the honesty and empowered by the pure lively energy that toddlers produce in abundance. It also has a special place in my heart as my own childhood included many visits to the same library that I now get to manage.

### *"To do what we do, you need to be the best kind of person"*

One of my lifelong dreams has been to be a window dresser. With a wonderfully large window display area at my library, I also have the opportunity to satisfy this dream, albeit to a smaller audience than was first imagined. Department store windows may have a larger budget and larger audience, but the displays that can be created at my library have all the charm needed to spark interest from our customers. We use the window to display our resources to encourage customers to borrow and local non-profit organisations use it too, to promote their group or upcoming event.



Alana (shown right) acting up at Rockhampton Storytime.

As I am sure many other public library staff will agree, we have a wonderfully diverse range of clientele that frequent our establishments. From the very young (babies) up to our elderly patrons, from students to local experts in family history, from international tourists to indigenous members of our community; we enjoy serving everyone in our library.

This sometimes makes for an interesting blend of generations, opinions and cultures. As staff though, we like to think that we provide a safe environment for all people - even if sometimes we need to act as a buffer.

I like to think of a public library as a place that epitomises an ideal of hope and a reflection of a world where we would all like to live, where everyone is welcome and everyone is tolerant of everyone else.

The public library is a place where people of all backgrounds, all ages and all levels of knowledge come for a common purpose: to find out something. This is what I love about my job, the fact that I get to be amongst it all and help those who venture into the library, to find what they are looking for and help them on their road to discovery. I love being part of a team of wonderful staff who make this happen every day.

When you are next visiting Central Queensland, please come in and visit us at the Rockhampton North Library or any of the other welcoming branches of the Rockhampton Regional Library Service. It will be our pleasure to assist you in any way we can.

#### **Alana Read**

Coordinator Rockhampton Northside Library  
Rockhampton Regional Libraries  
alana.read@rrc.qld.gov.au

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**Alana Read** began her career in libraries five years ago as a casual Library Assistant. She then went on to become a Home Delivery Officer and is currently the Coordinator of the Rockhampton Northside Library. She graduated in 2009 from Charles Sturt University with a Graduate Diploma in Library and Information Management.