



Bedford Board embraces diversity and inclusion

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South Australia's largest employer of people with disability has appointed three new board members with lived experience in the disability sector.

The three South Australian business leaders are Tim Covark, who runs the product and engineering department of Cashflow Manager, Paul Edginton CEO at Vinomofu Group, and advisory board consultant and SA food and wine expert, Wayne Lyons.

Using Bedford's Board skills matrix, they were selected among a tough field of more than 100 candidates to help steer Bedford at this critical phase of its five-year masterplan.

"I'm thrilled to have three high-quality members join and complement the existing skills and capabilities of the Bedford Board," Bedford's Chair, Richard Hockney said.

Product Development Manager, Tim Covark wanted to contribute to Bedford's Board and the organisation's outcomes after he was recently diagnosed with a life-changing condition.

"18 months ago, I was put on the NDIS with a condition called cerebella ataxia, which is a neurological disease affecting smooth movement. This lived experience has made me want to help people with disability get the most out of life. And that is what Bedford offers," Tim said.

While Vinomofu CEO Paul Edginton has had significant commercial experience, positions on government advisory boards and has been a Fellow at AICD for more than a decade, there is one cause very close to his heart.

"I love Bedford and my family has had a connection with the disability employer for more than 20 years. I have a brother who has worked at Bedford's landscape construction and maintenance division, APG, and he loves his work.

"I ran a related not-for-profit in the disability sector for almost 19 years and early on in my tenure I held Bedford as an example of what an NFP should be like," Paul said.

Wayne Lyons experience spans 25 years in sales, strategic marketing and management and as a consultant for some of Australia's leading SMEs including Maggie Beer and La Casa Del Formaggio.

Wayne is no stranger to Bedford either. His nephew Mark has a disability and entered into adulthood with a great deal of uncertainty about his future, until he landed a job at Bedford as a furniture maker.

“Mark has been at Bedford for almost 20 years now, and I have seen first-hand the impact that it has had - not only on Mark’s life but also the impact on his close-knit loving family.

“Recently, I had the delight and privilege to see Mark marry his Bedford sweetheart Tamika with so many of their workmates and colleagues attending the wedding. It was a truly special night and one the family will cherish forever,” Wayne said.

Current Board member Prue Reid, who works as Executive Director at SA Health, also offers valuable legal, healthcare and lived experience through a family member with a disability.

Bedford’s \$50 million strategic plan will see investment in new sites and services, redevelopment of existing facilities and the creation of pathways into Open Employment.

“As we navigate the changing NDIS landscape and offer participants new choices and skills growth, a strong client voice at the table is important,” Mr Hockney said.

For further media enquiries contact Vassil Malandris on 0418 838 967 or vmalandris@bedfordgroup.com.au

Note: Please refer to the company as 'Bedford Group' or 'Bedford'. 'Bedford Industries' is a previous trading name and now obsolete