

2018 VPS Graduate Recruitment and Development Scheme (GRADS)  
WELCOME EVENT

Speech:   
jordyn flagg, GRADS Aboriginal pathway

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Jordyn Flagg  
*Representative from GRADS’ Aboriginal Pathway*

Good evening everyone.

Before I begin, I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting today. I pay my respects to their Elders, past and present and emerging. I pay my respects to Elders from other communities and any Aboriginal people who may be here with us today.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. It is a privilege to be speaking here as a young Aboriginal woman.

Going into this program, like many other grads, I didn’t know what to expect, I didn’t know what I was doing - I just knew that it was a lot better than the casual jobs I had been working. I didn’t know how Government worked – I knew how Parliament worked, but not the role of Public Servants, and especially not what a brief was!

An aspect I really enjoyed about the Grad program is the ability to connect with other successful young Aboriginal people through the Aboriginal staff networks in Departments. As well as Aboriginal people at more senior levels who you can look towards as mentors. Having not had much community involvement myself previously, the opportunity to connect with these individuals and my culture was a highlight of my year. And am thankful that the Grad program was encouraging of these experiences.

My first rotation was with Victoria Police in the Family Violence Command. My second rotation was with the Department of Premier and Cabinet in the NDIS Branch (National Disability Insurance Scheme for those who don’t know). And I am currently in my last rotation at DEDJTR in Portfolio Governance and Performance. I was fortunate to be working in two areas of major reform.

While your home Department may still be your first choice, don’t discount the experiences and learning you will have at other Departments. To be completely honest, I noticed the development of my skills most whilst working at the Department of Premier and Cabinet - and it is somewhere I could see myself working in the future (something that I would not have thought before commencing the grad program).

During my rotations there has been a common theme amongst the people I have worked alongside; passion. Everyone I came across was passionate about the work they did and the impact it would have in the future. This passion was important, as it got them through the 10 plus hour days, through the feelings of frustration from “starting over” when they came across a decision that changed the direction of something they had been working on for weeks or months at a time. But that is all part of the job.  It has taught me that to be a successful public servant you need to be motivated, agile and flexible; and always remember the goal that you and your team are working towards.

There may be times during your rotation, that you don’t understand why you are working on a particular thing, or the content might not be something you absolutely love – but you are always provided with an opportunity to develop your skills and experience something new… like learning how to write briefs, the process of going through procurement, or learning how to organise a fleet car when no one else in your team knows how to!

A Grad year is a great time to test the waters, see what skills you have and what skills need to be worked on, be challenged and feel out of your comfort zone at times. It is about learning and development – this program has shown me that unless you experience these challenges, you will not grow. During one project I was responsible for ensuring deliverables were met on time – for me, having to tell an experienced Inspector that he needed to do something (and do it quickly) was almost terrifying. However with time, respect forms and it all becomes less intimidating.

The year won’t be easy, there may be times you may have to work overtime, be at work by 7am, travel, need to meet ridiculous deadlines. This is all part of the grad experience and the friendships you make along the way – whether that’s fellow grads or people from your branch/ team, these friendships will help you complete the year.

Having nearly completed the grad program, I am looking forward to returning to VicPol with an ongoing role in the Family Violence Command. From there, who knows - the beauty of working in the VPS is that there are so many opportunities for growth and development.