

# Media Release

**The Hon Gayle Tierney MLC**

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Training and Skills

Minister for Higher Education



Wednesday, 28 April 2021

## NEW GOTAFE CAFÉ TO BOOST LOCAL HOSPITALITY WORKFORCE

A new \$1.4 million paddock-to-plate café and restaurant funded by the Andrews Labor Government will give Shepparton students real-life training and become a destination for Victorian foodies.

Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney today officially opened Common Ground Café and Restaurant at GOTAFE Shepparton and met with local TAFE students to taste some of their culinary creations.

The state-of-the-art facility includes an operational café that is open to the public with classrooms and multi-functional spaces that support learning opportunities for barista, hospitality and cookery students.

Common Ground will help reinvigorate the Fryers Street campus with its must-eat menu of sustainable foods that also showcase the talents of students in other departments, including agriculture and baking.

It was designed and built by Jointly Builders and Zwei Architects with a predominantly regional workforce.

The new facility is the first stage of the \$2.4 million GOTAFE upgrade and will be followed by the opening of a \$1 million commercial kitchen later this year – creating the Shepparton Commercial Kitchen and Learning Hub. It will eventually house 735 students annually and will ensure highly skilled graduates have a direct pathway to the workforce.

The project is funded under the Labor Government's \$55 million TAFE Asset Maintenance Fund to support bricks and mortar improvements at TAFEs across Victoria.

Since 2015, the Labor Government has invested to rebuild TAFE, refurbish campuses, launch *Free TAFE for Priority Courses* and support disadvantaged students into training and jobs.

A record \$1 billion was invested through the *Victorian Budget 2020/21* to make sure the state has the training and skills system it needs to emerge stronger from the coronavirus pandemic.

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney**

*"It's exciting to see the improved hospitality facilities at GOTAFE – but more importantly how our investment in high quality and industry-based training is changing lives in Shepparton."*

### **Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Mark Gepp**

*"This investment will secure Shepparton's spot on the map for food and hospitality training – and ensure local students get the skills they need to have rewarding jobs anywhere in Victoria."*

### **Quote attributable to GOTAFE CEO Travis Heeney**

*"The new Common Ground Café and Restaurant will provide a great experience to GOTAFE staff and students but also become a meeting place for the community."*