

Young Lihirian talents join mining operation



Second to fourth from left: Heavy Equipment Technicians Dorothy Ziksaranie, Cecilia Aeh and John Liu celebrating their success with colleagues from the mining team.

Six young Lihirians have joined Lihir mining operation as competent heavy equipment technicians after completing a 12-month training program recently with the Mining department.

Geotechnical Superintendent James Bu, who was the then Acting Mine Manager, presented certificates and licenses to the technicians and congratulated them and their trainers for completing the training program despite COVID-19 restrictions and challenges.

They completed an initial three-month training program that included simulator training, familiarisation on haul truck, safe operating procedures, and theory assessments before proceeding into mine operations for real training experiences.

The simulator training allowed for safe training and prepared the Lihirians to be safety cautious during real operations; it also captured mistakes, allowing the trainers to train them on the procedures again.

Congratulations!

Name	Age	Village	Ward
Elizah Penias	26	Sianios	8
Aaron Toarino	22	Zuen	11
Dorothy Ziksaranie	27	Lisel	4
John Liu	25	Kinami	4
Gerard Anap	30	Malie	12
Cecilia Aeh	24	Zuen	11

The technicians received their certificates and full licenses to operate haul trucks, during a small gathering at the mine training room on 18 December 2020.

“As a business, we are proud of your achievement as it reflects our commitment to upskilling Lihirians to take up roles in Lihir operation. Your results are impressive, which shows that you understand procedures and safety standards for working in a high-risk area, well done,” Bu told the technicians.

“Now that you are part of the workforce, take this opportunity at heart and perform to your best. Like everyone, you have families to support, so safety must be a priority in all your tasks,” Bu stressed.

Essentially, Bu praised Newcrest Lihir’s Work Ready program for preparing these young Lihirian talents for the workplace before their 12- month training program with the Mining department started.

“The Work Ready program taught them skills such as time management, public speaking, work standards and ethics, innovation and problem solving, and safety. These skills helped them focus and succeed in their training with the Mining department,” Bu highlighted.

“Since 2019, the Mining department has trained and recruited 12 Lihirians who were initially trained under the Work Ready program. This pathway is building local talents with a good attitude, confidence and skills,” added Bu.

Production Engineering Superintendent Noven Giuna shared the same sentiments as Bu.

“(The) Work Ready (program) has done great in training Lihirians with employability skills. The program’s outcome is seen in the performance of these young talents. Work Ready program is crucial to the operation as it builds a diverse workforce and sets us in the right direction, not just for Lihir operation, but for PNG,” Giuna said.

Mine Production Superintendent Cliff Staines and Senior Trainer Augustine Elikis said the 2020 batch had raised the bar for upcoming trainees.

“There were no incidents during their training – this batch has a clean safety record,” they said.

Cecilia Aeh, one of two women among the new technicians, described her achievement as ‘proof

that anything is possible.

“Operating haul trucks makes me feel like I am on top of the world; it is such a great feeling. I am empowered as a woman and a Lihirian to achieve more – thanks Newcrest,” said Aeh.

Technician Dorothy Ziksaranie, a proud young mother of two children, said her spouse, who also works in the operation, had encouraged her to apply for training under the Work Ready program, which enabled her to take on further training with the Mining department.

“Achieving this accreditation and licence is an achievement that I share with my family and my colleagues. If I can come this far, other young Lihirian women can too; I encourage them to believe in themselves and take on such opportunities,” she said.

This achievement aligns with Newcrest’s **‘People’** pillar in developing a capable and engaged workforce. It also reflects Newcrest’s commitment to building a strong, diverse and inclusive workforce. ■

