

# Leon Rowe— “Married” but still going strong

In the last issue of *Indigenous Employment in Action*, we featured an article on Leon Rowe who works as an apprentice chef in Innisfail, Queensland. He works at Jagad’s Epicurian Emporium restaurant, which serves modern Australian cuisine and specialises in local produce from far north Queensland.

A lot has happened since then. Cyclone Larry, a category five cyclone, crossed the coastline at Innisfail on 20 March bringing with it extreme wind gusts of up to 290 kilometres per hour and widespread damage and devastation.

When Larry hit, the restaurant was forced to shut down for 11 days due to water damage and lack of power and refrigeration.

As part of the recovery efforts, owner Jeff Baines very kindly set up a kitchen in the main street, providing meals for emergency services staff and families, some who hadn’t eaten in days.

The kitchen was run by restaurant staff as well as ten volunteers from the community. Leon was an integral part of the operation, helping to cook and prepare 1000 meals a day, over six days.

Luckily, the restaurant is back on track again and Leon continues to make a big impression as he starts his second year as an apprentice chef. ○



▲ Leon Rowe in the kitchen at Jagad’s Epicurian Emporium restaurant.