



Options for all at SkillsWest Expo



By HEATHER BAILLACHE

RESIDENTS of all ages in the Rockingham area are encouraged to attend a major event aimed at filling the big skills shortage in the State.

Minister for Training and Workforce Development Peter Collier said the SkillsWest Expo would provide opportunities not just for young people, but for all.

Representatives from the Challenger Institute of Technology in Rockingham and in Kwinana representatives will have a big booth at the expo, from August 19 to 21 at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, giving people the chance to try their hand at different trades.

Mr Collier, who will be opening the expo, said the State was facing a major skills shortage over the next four years of around 150,000 workers, but he was encouraged that all the spaces in the expo had been filled, with more than 100 exhibitors attending.

He has recently returned from a "phenomenally" successful trip with other delegates to the UK to find skilled workers willing to emigrate to WA, but added homegrown talent was as important.

"There are more people in training here than ever before in the history of the State," he said. "There has been a great impetus, particularly in the last 12 months, but we have still got a long way to go."

Mr Collier encouraged local residents to enroll for courses at the Challenger Institute.

"It is an opportunity to re-skill," he said. "Maybe

there are mature-aged members of the community who are not satisfied in their jobs who can come and get training in areas they hadn't thought of before, such as aged care, that are lifelong opportunities."

Mr Collier said unemployment could induce an attitude of negativity. "We are moving towards a period of sustained growth and it provides opportunity everywhere, not just locally but nationally and internationally," he said.



The Challenger Institute will be at the expo, showcasing various trades, such as motorsport, with student Daniel MacPhail.