

SOUTH BRISBANE

Adversity leads to a late career move

CHERYL Desmarais had a few surprises late in life, but her unfortunate set of circumstances led her to a new career path.

After Ms Desmarais, 62, separated from her husband her health began to deteriorate and she lost her job.

With financial and health issues plaguing her, she moved into Brisbane Common Ground in South Brisbane – a not-for-profit organisation providing supportive housing for those who are at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness.

“I was in a lot of trouble before moving to Brisbane Common Ground,” she said.

After she became a resident, Common Ground offered Ms Desmarais TAFE Queensland training using a small budget surplus. Along with other residents, Ms Desmarais now has a Certificate II in Business Administration, and has secured relief teaching work at West End State School.

Teacher Daryl Kirkhope said teaching his Common Ground students was hugely rewarding.



Cheryl Desmarais with lecturer Daryl Kirkhope. Picture: PAUL GUY