



Australian Government

EVENT PROGRAM
17 NOVEMBER 2023

**AUSTRALIAN
TRAINING
AWARDS**
2023

**CELEBRATING
30 YEARS**

AWARDS
30
AUSTRALIAN
TRAINING

AWARDS
AUSTRALIAN
TRAINING



**CELEBRATING
EXCELLENCE IN
VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION
AND TRAINING**



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We meet at nipaluna/Hobart, the traditional lands of the muwinina people. We acknowledge the muwinina people, the traditional custodians of nipaluna.

Due to war, invasion and colonisation, there are no muwinina people left alive today. In their absence we acknowledge Tasmanian Aboriginal people, the palawa people, as the ongoing custodians of this land. palawa kani, meaning 'Tasmanian Aborigines speak', is a revived language of the palawa people. Many languages were spoken in lutruwita/Tasmania at one time – palawa kani is the only Aboriginal language spoken in lutruwita today.



We pay our deepest respects to Elders past and present. We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land. We acknowledge that they are of continuing importance to the palawa people living today. We acknowledge and respect the palawa people's cultural, spiritual, physical and emotional connection with their land, waters and community. And we also extend that respect to the custodians of the various lands of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people attending the 2023 Australian Training Awards.

kunanyi/Mount Wellington

Australian VET Alumni

Since 1994 the Australian Training Awards has celebrated excellence in VET by recognising Australian businesses, VET graduates, practitioners, and training providers for their achievements on the national stage. In 2016, the Australian VET Alumni was launched—the first national alumni of the VET sector. With over 600 members, the Australian VET Alumni is a passionate community of VET ambassadors showcasing the best that VET can offer.

As part of the Australian VET Alumni, the Australian Apprenticeship Ambassador Program was established in 2011 to raise the status of apprenticeships and traineeships, and has been recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training as a promising and innovative practice in international VET.

The remarkable journeys of the finalists celebrated at the 2023 Australian Training Awards do not end after the announcement of the awards. Every finalist is invited to join the Australian VET Alumni to continue to share their story of career success and inspire people from every corner.

Visit www.yourcareer.gov.au to read more about our inspiring Australian VET Alumni.

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

Master of Ceremonies

Kim Millar

Welcome to Country

Entertainment

Young Voices of Hobart; Sing for your life
Rupert McCall
River Road Duo; River Road Band

Australian Government Address

The Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, Minister for Skills and Training

Host State Welcome

The Hon Felix Ellis MP, Minister for Skills, Training and
Workforce Growth

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Outstanding Achievement in the VET and Skills Sector Award

Industry Collaboration Award

Small Employer of the Year

Large Employer of the Year

Excellence in Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice Award

Vocational Student of the Year

Australian Apprenticeships Employer Award

Small Training Provider of the Year

Large Training Provider of the Year

VET Teacher/Trainer of the Year

School Pathways to VET Award

Australian School-based Apprentice or Trainee of the Year

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year

Trainee of the Year

Innovation in VET Award

Apprentice of the Year

#ATA2023



MINISTER'S WELCOME

Welcome to the 2023 Australian Training Awards, a showcase of excellence in vocational education and training.

Tonight, we applaud the commitment and achievement of people in the VET sector, the best students, trainees and apprentices and the excellence of teachers and trainers. Education and training unlock the potential that is inside all of us, enabling us to aspire to more, and giving people power over their own future.

As Minister for Skills and Training, I am determined to build the best skills sector we can, to provide opportunity for students, for workers and for industry. You simply can't have a skilled workforce or a prospective workforce if you don't have skilled and knowledgeable teachers and trainers. Good teachers can instil a lifelong passion for an occupation or an industry for our students and are at the forefront of our efforts to tackle skills shortages.

Our government is building an inclusive, responsive architecture, that includes States and Territories, unions, business, educators, TAFE and other VET providers. Our goal is to provide access to training and education, which can open the opportunity for decent and secure work.

For 30 years the Australian Training Awards has been the peak national awards program showcasing best practice in VET; we've celebrated ordinary individuals achieving extraordinary things, and recognised businesses and training organisations as leaders in their fields.

To the finalists, congratulations and best wishes for your future endeavours.

The Hon Brendan O'Connor MP

Minister for Skills and Training

STATE/TERRITORY MINISTERS



TASMANIA

The Hon Felix Ellis MP

Minister for Skills, Training and Workforce Growth



NORTHERN TERRITORY

The Hon Joel Bowden MLA

Minister for Skills, Training and International Education



AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Mr Chris Steel MLA

Minister for Skills



NEW SOUTH WALES

Mr Steve Whan MP

Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education



QUEENSLAND

The Hon Di Farmer MP

Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development



VICTORIA

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP

Minister for Skills and TAFE



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Hon Simone McGurk MLA

Minister for Training



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The Hon Blair Boyer MP

Minister for Education, Training and Skills

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN THE VET AND SKILLS SECTOR AWARD

The Outstanding Achievement in the VET and Skills Sector Award recognises an individual or employer who has made an outstanding contribution to the VET and skills sector for over 15 years and has contributed a new innovation, knowledge or practice to the sector.



MARY FARAONE

Mary Faraone is a respected leader in the vocational education and training sector, both nationally and internationally. In a career spanning more than 40 years, Ms Farone has been recognised for her outstanding leadership and lasting contribution to VET practice and skills development in Australia.

As an administrator, policy shaper and a passionate advocate for learners of all abilities and backgrounds, Mary is committed to ensuring Australians have access to high quality public education. Mary's positive influence and impact to the sector has been significant, and her commitment has been above and beyond the everyday.

Mary started her career in education in 1982 as an English teacher at Vacluse College and then joined Swinburne University of Technology in 1989. Since then, Mary has had extensive experience across the VET sector—working with industry, registered training organisations and TAFE in various roles, prior to joining Holmesglen Institute in 2003. Mary was instrumental in leading Holmesglen's teaching and learning, securing a number of significant national and international projects and driving the introduction of higher education programs at the Institute.

Mary commenced as the Chief Executive of Holmesglen in October 2013. Under her leadership, the institute has secured a reputation for innovation, financial sustainability, and industry collaboration. It also continues to deliver on its mission to provide quality education and training, support community diversity, inclusion and cohesion and engage with businesses to develop their workforces.

Mary is also the board chair of TAFE Directors Australia, and a board member of the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics and the Australian Minerals and Energy Skills Alliance.

Mary is committed to the role tertiary education plays in supporting social inclusion and social cohesion in the community, and its underlying values of equity and access. She is a public advocate of VET and its role within the national economy but also the profound impact it has for individuals.



CELEBRATING 30 YEARS





INDUSTRY COLLABORATION AWARD

The Industry Collaboration Award recognises an exemplary skills development collaboration between an employer or industry body and an organisation that is delivering nationally recognised training.



INDUSTRY COLLABORATION AWARD FINALISTS



NATIONAL ENERGY TECHNICIAN TRAINING SCHEME (NETTS QLD)

QLD

Programmed Training Services
South Metropolitan TAFE
CQ University

Process Training (ACEPT)
Shell QGC ConocoPhillips Australia
Santos Ltd

The National Energy Technician Training Scheme (NETTS) is a collaboration between industry leaders Shell QGC ConocoPhillips Australia, and Santos Ltd; with Programmed Training Services, South Metropolitan TAFE, CQ University, and Process Training (ACEPT). The NETTS collaboration share resources across organisations, which lowers training costs, uses innovative training methods, and supports community engagement. With a goal to address the sector's skills needs and support future development, the program has been highly successful, seeing over 95 per cent completion and employment outcomes.



THE WOMEN IN APPRENTICESHIPS VICTORIA ELECTRICAL (WAVE) PROJECT

VIC

Electrical Trades Union, Victorian Branch
Holmesglen Institute
Trades Hall Council

Australian Women in Solar Energy
The Department of Education and Training (VIC)

Attracting women to electrical trades was the goal of the collaboration project, Women in Apprenticeships Victoria Electrical (WAVE). The collaboration included the Victorian Electrical Trades Union, Holmesglen Institute, Trades Hall Council, Australian Women in Solar Energy, and the Victorian Department of Education and Training. A targeted, holistic approach was taken from engagement to placement, supported by strategies to attract, recruit, train, support and retain women into electrical apprenticeships.



DEFENCE INDUSTRY PATHWAYS PROGRAM

WA

South Metropolitan TAFE
Employers within the Maritime
Defence Industry

Department of Defence
Industry Representatives

The Defence Industry Pathways Program is an innovative industry collaboration between South Metropolitan TAFE, Department of Defence, employers within the defence industry and industry representatives. The collaboration was formed to develop and ensure a pipeline of skilled workers for Australia's defence industry. A 12-month 'gap-year' taster program was designed to provide graduates with a broad understanding of the maritime defence industry to build talent through vocational education and training and work placements, focusing on career pathway options in the industry. In 2023, the program has 32 maritime Defence-host employers.



SMALL EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Small Employer of the Year Award recognises small businesses with 99 or fewer full-time equivalent employees that have achieved excellence in providing nationally recognised training to their employees.



SMALL EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR FINALISTS

BEAUFORT AND SKIPTON HEALTH SERVICE

VIC



Beaufort and Skipton Heath Service is a small rural hospital that has acute and aged care facilities and community services. The organisation has recently undergone significant changes resulting in a marked increase in staff motivation, engagement, and retention. Beaufort and Skipton Heath Service provides learning opportunities for nursing, cleaning, catering, maintenance, community, and administration staff who are empowered to explore new study and career pathways. Over the last 2 years, Beaufort and Skipton Heath Service supported 64% of non-clinical permanent staff to complete training.

EK CONTRACTING

WA



EK Contracting has three owners, an Indigenous ex Olympic weightlifting champion, a Nyiyaparli Traditional Owner, and a Pilbara School Teacher. EK offers training and employment opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across WA through connections with Indigenous land groups and organisations. EK's goal is to generate a steady work stream in the civil and mining sector, upskill workers and offer career advancement opportunities to ensure everyone has the chance to shine. With the belief that training underpins retention, 100% of their staff are engaged in nationally accredited training.

TATIARA TRUCK & TRAILERS

SA



Family business Tatiara Truck & Trailers prides itself on the development of their employees. With close to a third of their staff employed under a traineeship or apprenticeship, Tatiara Truck & Trailers has a strong legacy of quality staff training. Since their first diesel mechanic apprentice in 1995, the company has worked hard to provide opportunities for their staff, including building a dedicated onsite training room. The many who have received quality training at Tatiara Truck & Trailers have become assets to the business, the industry, and the wider community.

LARGE EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Large Employer of the Year Award recognises large businesses and enterprises with 100 or more full-time equivalent employees that have achieved excellence in providing nationally recognised training to their employees.



LARGE EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

TRANSDEV AUSTRALASIA

NSW



For transport company Transdev Australasia, training is seen as a continuous journey. As a transport provider that facilitates 50 million customer journeys every year via buses, light rail and ferry services, the value of training is clear. Transdev has responded to industry developments with an educational lens, including the shift towards zero-emissions technology by upskilling maintenance employees. Transdev recognises their strong investment in employee development has many positive impacts, including employee confidence and wellbeing, and greater retention of an agile workforce ready to meet the demands of the future.

ALL PURPOSE TRANSPORT

QLD



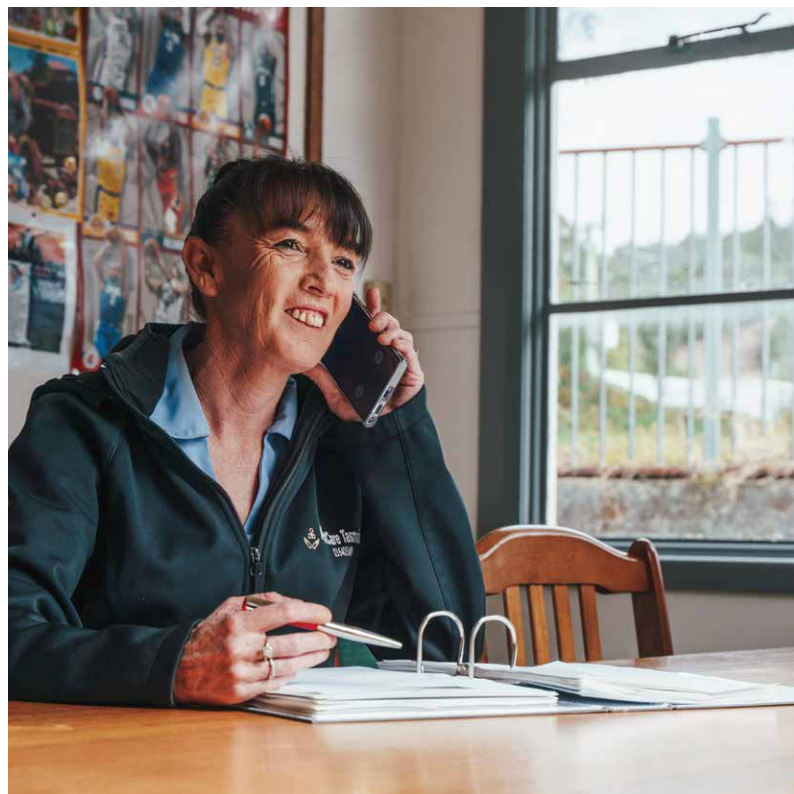
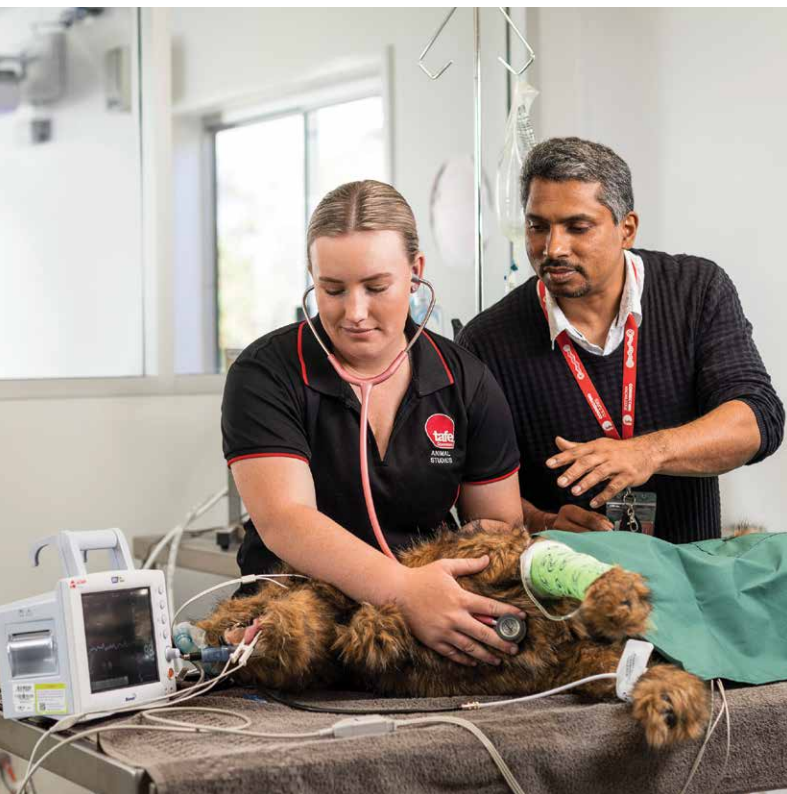
One of Queensland's largest privately-owned transport companies, All Purpose Transport, moves general freight, refrigerated goods and furniture across Queensland and Northern New South Wales. With around 3,000 deliveries each day, over 300 staff ensure they meet regulatory requirements and client expectations. In 2012, All Purpose Transport launched Project APT, a workforce development program with the aim that every employee would gain a qualification from TAFE Queensland. Now in its 11th year, 500 workers have earned a certificate III level qualification or higher in their field of expertise.

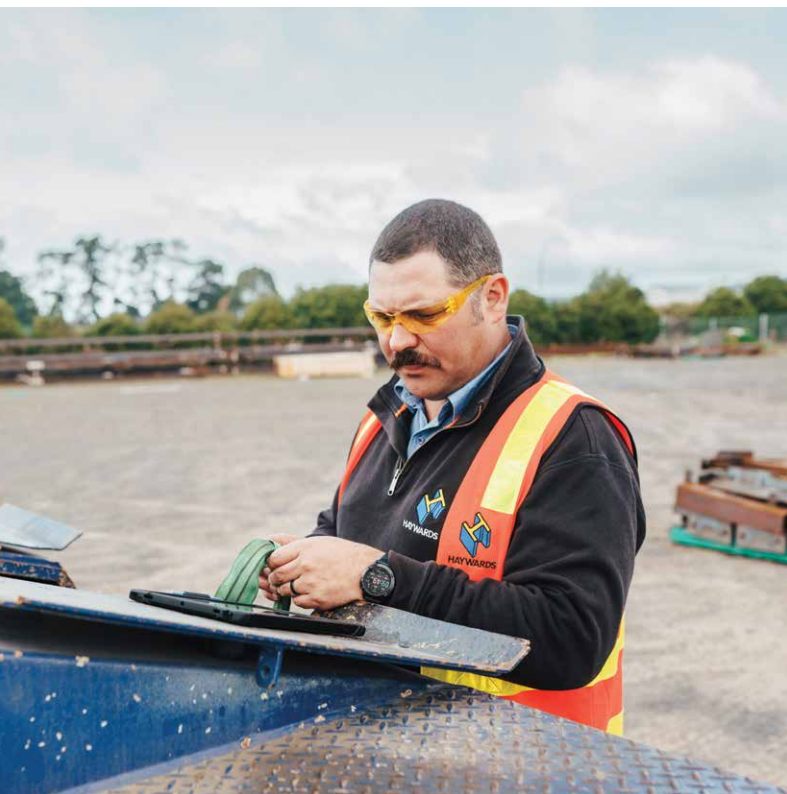
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY FIRE SERVICE

SA



The vision of the South Australian Country Fire Service (CFS) is to be the best volunteer fire and rescue service in the world. As an all-hazards agency, the CFS responds to bushfires, building fires, road crash rescues and hazardous material emergencies. CFS volunteers attend around 8,000 incidents and dedicate 3 million hours each year, to build safety and resilience in their communities. An enterprise registered training organisation since 2000, the CFS offers volunteers and staff nationally recognised training across 6 qualifications, 3 accredited short courses, and many units of competency.





EXCELLENCE IN LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND NUMERACY PRACTICE AWARD

The Excellence in Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) Practice Award recognises innovation and excellence by an individual involved in improving LLN skills in an educational, community or workplace context.



EXCELLENCE IN LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND NUMERACY PRACTICE AWARD FINALISTS



BRENDAN REID

Charles Darwin University

NT

Brendan Reid is a learner support coordinator at Charles Darwin University. A dedicated and passionate individual, Brendan works with students and staff to help students overcome literacy and numeracy challenges and support them to complete their qualifications. Brendan has a vast knowledge that spans many different areas of vocational education and training, and his ability to individualise learner-support activities are appreciated by students, parents, trainers and employers alike. Brendan is extremely passionate about his students' success and takes the time to understand individual needs to target his support accordingly.



KELLY BARRON

TAFE Queensland

QLD

Kelly Barron is an experienced language, literacy, numeracy and digital literacy senior teacher. She delivers English language and digital literacy training to young refugee students in the Adult Migrant English Program at TAFE Queensland. Kelly is extremely committed to providing her students with the best possible introduction to life in Australia. She delivers engaging and innovative projects to foster early positive experiences, including music and art classes, swimming lessons and sport, and frequent opportunities to learn from others in the local community. Kelly organises weekly meet ups with another vocational teacher and their students, to broaden her own students' social networks, and promote understanding and connection.



ANTHONY GEORGEFF

North Metropolitan TAFE

WA

Anthony Georgeff is an Advanced Skills Lecturer in English as a Second Language (ESL) and Course in Applied Vocational Study Skills, working with both migrants and vocational students at North Metropolitan TAFE in Western Australia. Over his 20-year career, Anthony has helped thousands of adult ESL learners advance their English skills. Anthony's passion for the sector has seen him teach at-risk youth, develop an e-Learning course, mentor colleagues in e-Learning, and provide language, literacy and numeracy support for adult vocational learners.

VOCATIONAL STUDENT OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Vocational Student of the Year Award recognises the outstanding achievement by a vocational student in a course of study leading to a nationally recognised qualification.



VOCATIONAL STUDENT OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



LOAN NGUYEN

Qualification: Diploma of Beauty Therapy
RTO: Charles Darwin University
Employer: Charles Darwin University

NT

Working in administration at Charles Darwin University introduced Loan Nguyen to the possibilities of vocational education and training. Utilising the flexibility of VET allowed Loan to complete a Diploma of Beauty Therapy while she worked. This flexibility meant Loan could make her dream of owning her own beauty salon a reality. Beauty therapy is Loan's passion. She loves seeing her customers become more confident after treatments, and each year offers free services to disadvantaged or seriously ill people.



MARIJA RATHOUSKI

Qualification: Certificate IV in Mental Health
RTO: The Australian Academy of Media
Employer: YWCA Canberra

ACT

Marija Rathouski studied a Certificate IV in Mental Health while working as a Case Manager at YWCA Canberra. The course not only aligned with Marija's passion to support people but offered the flexibility of online learning so she could continue to work and balance her other commitments. Through her training, Marija has learned and implemented practical strategies to support clients with compassion, empathy and understanding. Her goal is to continue to develop these skills to make a difference in the lives of others. Marija shares her perspectives and insight through industry panels, networking meetings and informative roundtables.



TRACIE WOOD

Qualification: Diploma of Project Management
RTO: BSI Learning
Employer: Department of Communities and Justice

NSW

With a background of working in youth mental health and homelessness, Tracie Wood has been inspired by her work with Corrective Services NSW where she supports offenders to reintegrate into their communities. When Tracie heard about a project to explore ways that digital technology could extend the reach of therapeutic services and programs, she knew she wanted to be a part of it. Tracie commenced a Diploma in Project Management with BSI Learning and has never looked back. Today, Tracie actively mentors other vocational students and encourages others to undertake training that will allow them to reach their personal goals, like she did.

VOCATIONAL STUDENT OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



JESSICA ADDO

Qualification: Diploma of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education
RTO: TAFE Queensland
Employer: PCYC Cairns West

QLD

Jessica Addo was inspired to pursue a career in education after getting involved in her young daughter's learning. Having left school in year 10, Jessica has now completed several VET qualifications, including a Diploma in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education through TAFE Queensland's Remote Area Teacher Education Program. Jessica is now studying for her Bachelor of Education and has plans to work in remote schools to make a positive change wherever she can. "I'm a living, breathing example of what VET can achieve," Jessica says.



BARBARA MULLER

Qualification: Advanced Diploma of Building Design (Architectural)
RTO: Federation TAFE
Employer: Ballarat Toyota

VIC

Barbara Muller's lifelong dream was to study buildings. Studying an Advanced Diploma of Building Design (Architectural) has elevated her self-confidence and problem-solving skills and has given her the opportunity to collaborate and learn from talented people. Throughout her studies, Barbara took on many leadership roles, often mentoring fellow students and helping them to achieve their best. In 2023, Barbara was awarded the EJT Tippet Outstanding Achievement Award at the Federation TAFE Awards for Excellence, and she has now begun studying a Certificate IV of Training and Assessment.



KAI BAHARTHAH-KING

Qualification: Advanced Diploma of Cyber Security
RTO: North Metropolitan TAFE
Employer: Woodside Energy

WA

Kai Baharthah-King discovered a love for programming at an early age. At 14, Kai attended a cyber security workshop which inspired him to explore a career in the field. He wanted to help make a difference in protecting organisations, public infrastructure, people and their livelihoods from global cyber threats. Kai quickly progressed through his training to complete the Advanced Diploma in Cybersecurity and is now working full time at Woodside Energy as the youngest security analyst on staff. In August 2023, Kai won a gold medal at the WorldSkills Australia National Championship and has been selected to represent Australia at the WorldSkills International competition in 2024.

VOCATIONAL STUDENT OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



KATHLEEN RODDA

Qualification: Diploma of Vocational Education and Training,
Diploma of Training Design and Development
RTO: Healthy Business Training Academy
Employer: The Kat's Whiskers

SA

Mentoring and training at the Healthy Business Training Academy has given Kathleen Rodda a passion for knowledge. In addition to being a qualified hairdresser, make-up artist, barber and beautician with her own successful business, The Kat's Whiskers, she is also a qualified trainer and assessor. Kat has completed a dual Diploma of Vocational Education and Training, Diploma of Training Design and Development. Kat can't wait to impart her freshly ignited knowledge with future students, and one day run her own beauty school, sharing the amazing opportunities that VET offers.



NAOMI COX

Qualification: Certificate IV in Leadership and Management
RTO: Learning Partners
Employer: WestCare Tasmania

TAS

Naomi Cox was working at a local community house, sharing the coordinator's role, when she took the initiative to study a Certificate IV in Leadership and Management with Learning Partners. Naomi's course has opened countless opportunities, equipping her with the skills to manage complex situations, positively influence others, and have the confidence to be a strategic and compassionate leader. Naomi often speaks about the importance of completing a qualification, promoting that people are never too old to learn.

AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIPS EMPLOYER AWARD

The Australian Apprenticeships Employer Award recognises employers who have made innovative improvements in training that provides beneficial outcomes for their apprentices and/or trainees.



AUSTRALIAN APPRENTICESHIPS EMPLOYER AWARD FINALISTS



KERFOOT

NSW

Kerfoot is an electrical contracting company that currently hosts 27 apprentices, all employed by the National and Electrical Communications Association (NECA). Kerfoot has been associated with NECA for over 23 years and during this time, has been a host employer to over 230 apprentices. The Kerfoot Apprentice Program supports those who transition from school to full-time work, and apprentices making a career change to complete their apprenticeship, gain confidence, and become potential leaders in the field. Almost 50% of Kerfoot's current workforce began as apprentices, a testament to a successful apprentice strategy in a trade setting.



KOMATSU

NSW

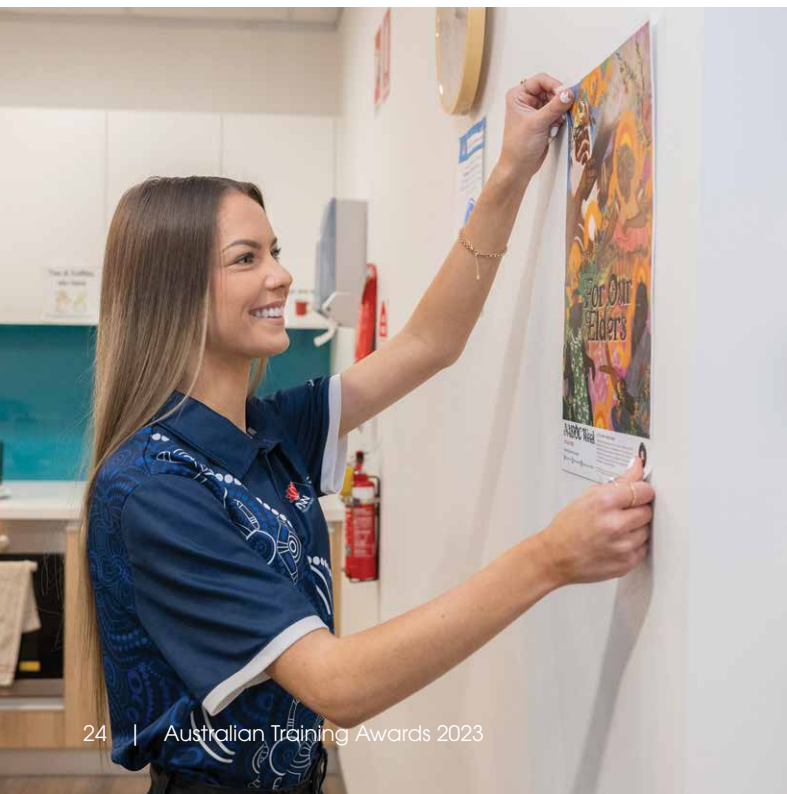
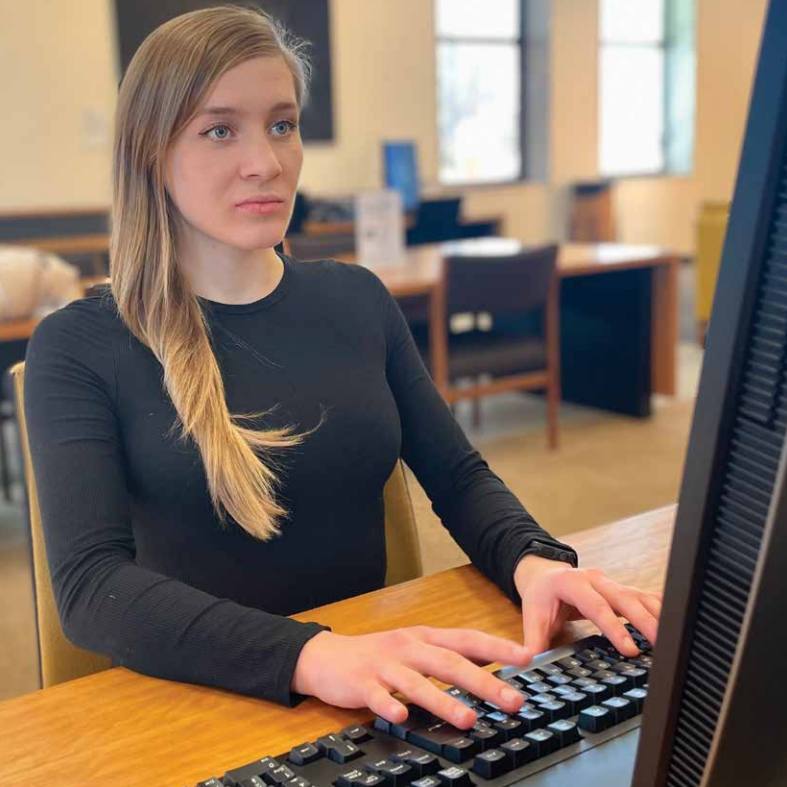
Komatsu is a global leader in manufacturing, innovation, technology, and people development. Komatsu's commitment to people development is evident through its Apprentice Development System (ADS), which has benefited over 720 apprentices and trainees since its inception in 2009. The ADS system involves 12 weeks of structured training per year, including internal training, accredited training, and inductions, preparing apprentices with the technical and life skills necessary for personal growth and success.



PETER WARREN AUTOMOTIVE

NSW

The Peter Warren Automotive Group was founded in 1958 and is a proud family-owned and operated group of automotive dealerships. Peter Warren Automotive has developed the Apprenticeship and Traineeship Recruitment Program, encompassing basic mechanical comprehension alongside language, literacy and numeracy skills, interview skills, and work experience. By providing learning and development opportunities across its business, Peter Warren Automotive has improved its retention and employee skills, which in turn allows them to adapt to new and emerging technologies.





SMALL TRAINING PROVIDER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Small Training Provider of the Year Award recognises registered training organisations, with fewer than 500 students, that demonstrate excellence and high-level performance in all aspects of vocational education and training.



SMALL TRAINING PROVIDER OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



INSTITUTE OF SKILLS AND TRAINING AUSTRALIA

NT

The Institute of Skills and Training Australia (ISTA), has been providing high-quality vocational education and training for more than 20 years. ISTA works hard to meet the needs of their students and industry partners, by actively seeking out new partnerships and opportunities to meet the changing needs of students. Highlights for the RTO include creating an industry-first qualification package, the Certificate IV in Doula Services, and developing and delivering successful pre-employment programs for the hospitality sector. ISTA works to equip students with the skills they need to succeed in today's fast-paced and ever-changing workplaces.



WA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, CUNDERDIN

WA

The Western Australian College of Agriculture, Cunderdin (the college) has a long-standing reputation for achieving vocational education and training outcomes by developing highly skilled and employable graduates. For students, training is conducted between a commercial farm of 4,000 hectares and a state-of-the-art Trade Training Centre, with a focus on excellence and strengthening the primary and trades industries. Each trades course is closely linked with real-world application to prepare students for future opportunities and to meet industry needs.



AUSTRALIAN NURSING & MIDWIFERY EDUCATION CENTRE

SA

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Education Centre (ANMEC) has successfully trained students across a diverse range of vocational education and training-based health and social care courses for almost 20 years. Currently delivering a range of courses from Certificate III to Diploma, ANMEC employs professional nursing educators to ensure teaching and support are clinically relevant, with contemporary context, content, and delivery. Modern simulation facilities are supported by an up-to-date library. ANMEC aims for every student to achieve a qualification and pathway into a profession and career.

LARGE TRAINING PROVIDER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Large Training Provider of the Year Award recognises registered training organisations, with 500 or more students, that demonstrate excellence and high-level performance in all aspects of vocational education and training.



LARGE TRAINING PROVIDER OF THE YEAR FINALISTS

TAFE QUEENSLAND

QLD



TAFE Queensland has over 100,000 enrolled students and offers industry-relevant training with over 450 qualifications on its scope of registration. Operating for over 140 years and with more than 60 locations across the state, the organisation is committed to ensuring students acquire the skills they need to change their lives and build lifelong careers. TAFE Queensland regularly reviews and improves its performance and supports educators to access a range of training in industry and teaching. It continues to build partnerships in emerging industries to deliver the best and most relevant training possible.

TAFE GIPPSLAND

VIC



TAFE Gippsland is today recognised as a leading Victorian regional vocational education and training provider. With a growing portfolio of programs and purpose-built facilities, TAFE Gippsland receives strong student and employer satisfaction results. Strategic partnerships assist TAFE Gippsland to address skills shortages and meet regional demands, offering diverse programs such as food and fibre, bio-manufacturing, and maritime operations. TAFE Gippsland educators create environments where learners can develop their skills through experiential learning, such as their Community Café program, which provides students with disability the opportunity to enhance their skills in an operational restaurant.

QUALITY COLLEGE OF AUSTRALIA

SA



Quality College of Australia is proud to provide first class vocational education and training with clearly defined and supported employment pathways, and pastoral support for students. The College's state-of-the-art online learning platform has led to an increase in student satisfaction and remains a pivotal part of the students' blended learning journey. With a range of industry partners, industry-expert staff ensure training reflects industry trends and practices, assisting students as they build rewarding and dynamic careers across cookery, hospitality, management, and community services.

VET TEACHER/ TRAINER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The VET Teacher/Trainer of the Year Award recognises innovation and excellence by a VET teacher or trainer providing nationally recognised training to students at a registered training organisation, or in partnership with an RTO.



VET TEACHER/TRAINER OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



SHARON STEWART

WANT Training Services

NT

Sharon Stewart's career in vocational education and training spans more than 25 years. Sharon's breadth of experience includes being an auditor for the Western Australian VET Regulator, managing registered training organisations in the Northern Territory, and now owning her own RTO, WANT Training Services. Over the years Sharon has adopted a hands-on approach with her students on their journey of learning, getting to know them personally and focusing on their different needs and capabilities. Sharon regularly attends webinars and conferences to develop her skills and knowledge, to provide the best training to her students.



PETER REDFERN-ELLIOT

Canberra Institute of Technology

ACT

Peter Redfern-Elliot has been teaching at the Canberra Institute of Technology for 15 years. He is currently teaching hospitality, hotel, travel, tourism and events management programs, from Certificate III to Advanced Diploma level. Prior to teaching, Peter worked in the hospitality industry for over 15 years. Peter's students benefit from his passion for vocational education and training and relevant industry contacts. With a desire to help his students reach their full potential, Peter's industry experience offers his students the opportunity to benefit from his expertise and insights.



COLIN TARANTO

NTHA Training

NSW

Colin Taranto offers a wealth of expertise, a commitment to evolve with the industry and unwavering dedication to his students. As a trainer in timber systems design and timber frame or truss management, he goes the extra mile to ensure the highest standard for all involved. With 39 years' experience working across a range of timber manufacturing and design roles, Colin offers foundational knowledge. Colin keeps his students up-to-date on any new developments through his strong industry connections and believes building healthy relationships with his students and adapting to their individual learning styles is critical to their success.

VET TEACHER/TRAINER OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



CRAIG JONES

UQ Skills

QLD

As a master farrier with over 35 years' experience shoeing and caring for horses, Craig Jones' passion for the sector is undeniable. Craig has revolutionised the Certificate IV in Farriery for apprentices at UQ Skills, overhauling the traditional farriery program to include modern, digitised training materials. Craig spent weekends filming himself performing a series of basic to advanced farriery skills to use in structured videos and presentations. These high-quality resources complement practical training and align to the course requirements. Craig's own work with veterinarians, horse owners, trainers, and peak bodies allows him to offer comprehensive feedback on the skills that new apprentices need to develop.



THOMAS PATTERSON

Outer Northern Trade Training Centre

VIC

After 15 years working in the construction industry as a carpenter and licenced builder, Thomas Patterson leapt into VET teaching to share his knowledge and skills. Teaching at Outer Northern Trade Training Centre, he delivers the Certificate II in Building and Construction Pre-apprenticeship (Carpentry) and the Certificate I Construction Pathways. To prepare students more thoroughly for the workforce, Thomas implemented real-world tasks. Small-scale models were replaced with house-sized wall frames, roof structures and sub-floors, which rapidly escalated students' skills. Thomas collaborated with plumbing and electrical trade colleagues to apply the same approach into their trades, resulting in a rapid improvement in student output.



HOLLY GUDSELL

North Metropolitan TAFE

WA

A teaching position in a remote Aboriginal community in Fitzroy Crossing was the catalyst for a change in career direction for Holly Gudsell, as she discovered a passion in Aboriginal education. Having previously worked teaching English in Kenya and China, it was while lecturing in Education Support at North Metropolitan TAFE that Holly was approached to develop and deliver a new program to upskill Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education officers across Perth metropolitan schools. Holly used her extensive knowledge of Aboriginal pedagogy to guide her students through face-to-face support, work placement visits, online modules and hub meetings, successfully supporting students to graduate.

VET TEACHER/TRAINER OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



SIMON LUCAS

Mental Muscle Education

SA

Simon Lucas' purpose is to share the skills that shaped him and nurture empathy-driven professionals. His own training began through a school-based VET program, gaining a Certificate III and Certificate IV in Fitness. He established his own organisation at 20 years old and has now been a reputable health and well-being provider in SA for 13 years. Simon took his passion to schools, becoming a qualified trainer and assessor in 2016. Then in 2020, he founded his second company, Mental Muscle Education, offering curriculum-based health and wellbeing programs to students. Collaborating with RTOs, Simon provides learning pathways to equip young people with skills to follow their dreams.



KIRSTEN BACON

Department for Education, Children and Young People

TAS

Kirsten Bacon has many titles such as chef, food writer, blogger, film producer, and recipe columnist, but above all Kirsten is a dedicated vocational education and training practitioner. Working in the VET sector for over 40 years, Kirsten is fiercely committed to her students and works tirelessly to ensure their VET experiences are engaging, challenging, and rewarding. In her role at Elizabeth College, she has had great success not only with employment outcomes of her students, but also ensuring that all her students have opportunities to practice their craft and be involved in industry activities and real events.





AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL-BASED APPRENTICE OR TRAINEE OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Australian School-based Apprentice or Trainee of the Year Award is presented to a student who is undertaking a Certificate II or above qualification as a part-time Australian School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship. The Award recognises the student's commitment to their formal studies at school, and in the workplace.



AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL-BASED APPRENTICE OR TRAINEE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



LILLY BRIGHT

Qualification: Certificate III in Allied Health Assistance
RTO: Charles Darwin University
Employer: GTNT Group
Host Employer: Northern Territory Government
School: Katherine High School

NT

Lilly Bright has always been passionate about pursuing a career in the healthcare industry. Having studied a Certificate III in Allied Health Assistance, Lilly completed her School-based Traineeship at Katherine Hospital. Throughout her traineeship, Lilly learned the importance of communication, empathy, and teamwork in achieving positive patient outcomes. It also taught her a greater appreciation for the role that healthcare professionals play in improving people's lives. Lilly is passionate about making a meaningful contribution and bringing her skills to her community. Lilly's goal is to study a Bachelor of Medicine.



POPPY CHALMERS

Qualification: Certificate III in Community Services
RTO: Canberra Institute of Technology
Employer: Indigenous Allied Health Australia
School: Dickson College

ACT

In year 11, Poppy Chalmers undertook a School-based Apprenticeship with Indigenous Allied Health Australia, completing a Certificate III in Allied Health Assistance with the Canberra Institute of Technology. Then in year 12, Poppy undertook a Certificate III in Community Services while completing her year 12 studies. Poppy's dream is to work in the health industry, help others and have an impact on the experience of patients and their families. Poppy says the VET pathway opened her eyes to the different roles and needs in the health sector.



MOLLY SMITH

Qualification: Certificate III in Health Services Assistance
RTO: TAFE NSW
Employer: Hunter New England Local Health District
School: McCarthy Catholic College

NSW

After witnessing the incredible impact of nurses, Molly Smith knew that she wanted to help people. Deciding to get a head start in her chosen career, she commenced a Certificate III in Health Services Assistance as part of a School-based Traineeship with Tamworth Hospital. Molly was thrilled to connect with a purpose. "My traineeship lets me study something I'm passionate about, but it's also given me a place where I feel at home," says Molly. Molly's experiences through vocational education and training have shaped her leadership and communication skills, so much so that she was invited to speak at an acute care conference for industry peers.

AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL-BASED APPRENTICE OR TRAINEE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



SOPHIE ORROCK

Qualification: Certificate III in Automotive Electrical Technology
RTO: TAFE SA
Employer: Tatiara Truck & Trailers Pty Ltd
School: Booleroo Centre District School

SA

Growing up around machinery on her family farm in the Flinders Ranges, working on trucks was something that Sophie wanted to do for herself, and to help out those at home. Undertaking a Certificate III in Automotive Electrical Technology School-based Apprenticeship with Tatiara Truck and Trailers and TAFE SA was a natural fit. Completing her year 12 studies remotely, Sophie enjoys going to work each day saying the fun and inclusive culture is important, particularly as a female in a traditionally male industry.



JOACHIM LOPEZ-VALOA

Qualification: Certificate III in Marine Mechanical Technology
RTO: Kangan Institute
Employer: Mercury Marine Australia
School: Cranbourne Secondary College

VIC

Having grown up by the sea, Joachim was intrigued by boats and wanted to understand their mechanics. He couldn't believe his luck when he discovered that he could complete a Certificate III in Marine Mechanics as a School-based Apprentice and sought a position at Mercury Marine. Joachim loved the idea that he could get a head start on his chosen career. Joachim demonstrates enthusiasm, motivation, and initiative at work every day. Once he's fully qualified, he hopes to join the army as a marine mechanic. In 2023, Joachim was awarded Kangan Institute's Automotive Apprentice of the Year: School-based Award.



ROBERT NICOLOSI

Qualification: Certificate III in Sport and Recreation
RTO: North Metropolitan TAFE
Employer: Leisure Employment Australia
Host Employer: BlueFit Belmont Oasis Leisure Centre
School: Ursula Frayne Catholic College

WA

Robert Nicolosi's love for sport and fitness was the motivation behind him undertaking a Certificate III in Sport and Recreation while working at Leisure Employment Australia. Robert's traineeship has provided him with fundamental skills and knowledge in coaching, program planning and leadership. Robert readily endorses traineeships as an excellent opportunity to gain hands-on experience while learning from qualified professionals. Described by his employer as a team player and leader, Robert is well on his way to fulfilling his career aspirations of becoming a physical education teacher.

AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL-BASED APPRENTICE OR TRAINEE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



INDIANA CORBIN

Qualification: Certificate III in Patisserie
RTO: TasTAFE
Employer: Jean-Pascal Patisserie
School: Rosny College

TAS

Indiana Corbin's love for patisserie developed when she undertook work experience at Tasmania's Government House in year 10. Indiana's great passion for cooking prompted her to commence a School-based Apprenticeship in cookery at TasTAFE with the goal of working as a patisserie chef in the future. Indiana didn't hesitate to follow her dreams, undertaking a Certificate III in Patisserie and securing a job at Jean-Pascal Patisserie in Hobart. She regularly encourages her fellow students at Rosny College to undertake VET in Schools studies as a valuable lead-in to School-based Apprenticeships.



KYEZAYA NAMAI-SABATINO

Qualification: Certificate II in Engineering
RTO: TAFE Queensland
Employer: MRAEL
Host Employer: Rio Tinto Weipa
School: Western Cape College, Weipa

QLD

Kyezaya Namai-Sabatino completed a Certificate II in Engineering as a MRAEL School-based Trainee at Rio Tinto in Weipa, Queensland. In addition to undertaking his vocational pathway, Kyezaya was the Vice-Captain and Sports Captain at his school and involved in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aspirations program, where he was a state finalist in 2022. Kyezaya's strong work ethic has seen him learn many of the elements of his trade and his course has affirmed his desire to become a tradesperson in the future.

SCHOOL PATHWAYS TO VET AWARD

The School Pathways to VET Award recognises organisations including schools, registered training organisations, group training organisations, industry bodies and employers that have collaboratively delivered one (or more) excellent VET programs to secondary school students.



SCHOOL PATHWAYS TO VET AWARD FINALISTS

CATHWEST INNOVATION COLLEGE

NSW



CathWest Innovation College is a co-educational Catholic systemic high school with campuses in Mount Druitt and Emu Plains. The college caters to New South Wales Higher School Certificate students in years 10 to 12. Collaborating with several organisations, CathWest offers personalised learning pathways and work readiness for students to acquire the skills they need to transition to work. To improve language, literacy and numeracy amongst students, CathWest added the Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways to their course options in 2021.



ST JAMES COLLEGE

QLD

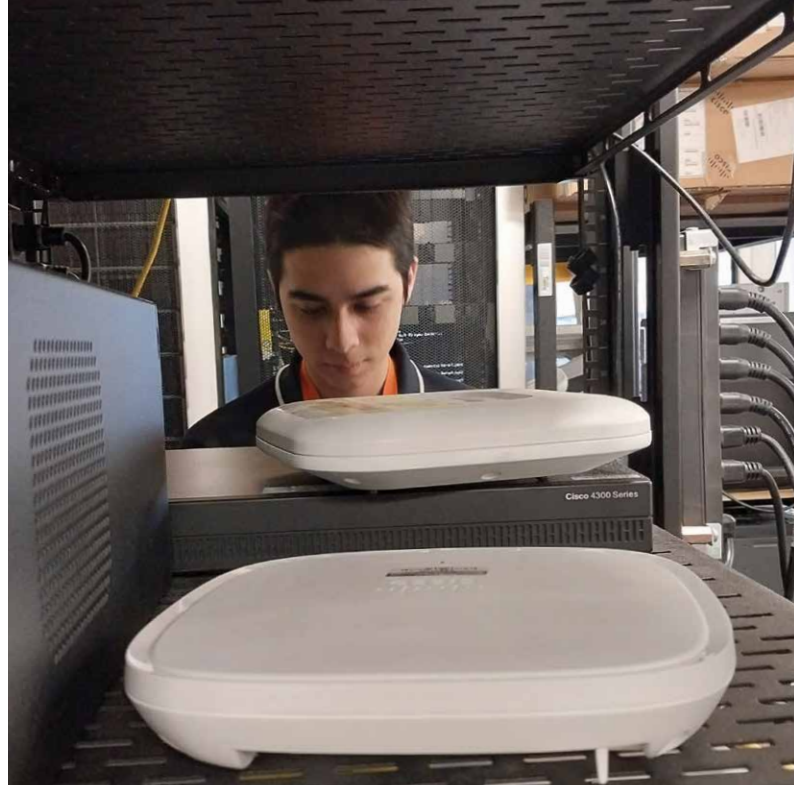
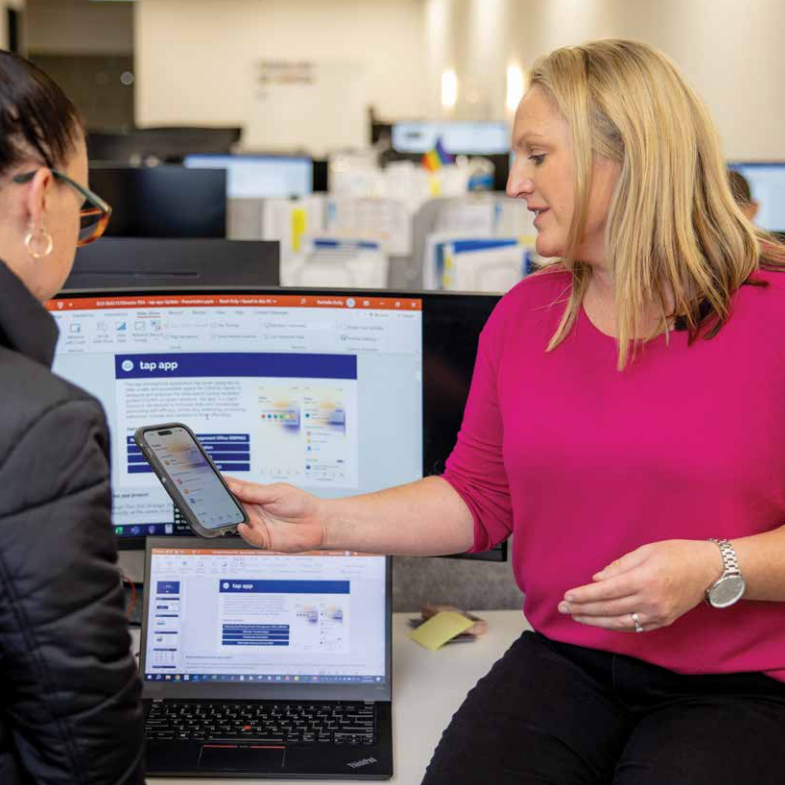
As both a school and a registered training organisation, St James College, Spring Hill, Brisbane is a recognised leader in vocational education and training, offering pathways for school students to gain transferrable skills for further study or work. St James College delivers quality training in industries such as hospitality and tourism, science, technology, engineering, maths, digital technology, business, health and fitness. At St James College, VET is integrated within the full school curriculum with the aim of enhancing students' employability prospects.



HEDLAND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

WA

The School-based Traineeship program at Hedland Senior High School is the largest program offered to students in Western Australian government schools. The program involves one school day a week of paid work experience, complemented with on and off-the-job training with a registered training organisation. This model offers students the opportunity to build knowledge and gain real life skills and experiences prior to entering the workforce. Hedland Senior High School's School-based Traineeship program offers 12 qualifications to students in years 11 and 12 and works collaboratively with RTOs and local employers to continually improve the program.





ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENT OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year Award recognises the achievement of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student undertaking an apprenticeship, traineeship or course of study leading to a national qualification, and who demonstrates the importance of lifelong learning for themselves and their community.



ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENT OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



PORSCHÉ CAHILL

Qualification: Certificate III in Laboratory Skills
RTO: ABC Training and Consulting
Employer: GTNT Group
Host Employer: Menzies School of Health Research

NT

Porsche Cahill wants to make a positive difference in healthcare, especially for Aboriginal people and communities. Developing strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth, Porsche is involved in various community outreach programs. Studying a Certificate III in Laboratory Skills and undertaking a traineeship with Menzies School of Health Research helped her learn more about the science behind medical laboratory work and allowed her to connect to her people and work on country in ways she never thought possible. Porsche has taken on leadership roles including running her own health promotion to teach students how to stay healthy.



EMMA BROWN

Qualification: Diploma Of Government
RTO: Canberra Institute of Technology
Employer: Civil Aviation Safety Authority

ACT

Emma Brown, a proud Ngemba woman, joined the Indigenous Apprenticeship Program in the Australian Public Service where she studied a Diploma of Government with the Canberra Institute of Technology. After completion she secured a permanent position as a Customer Service Officer at the Civil Aviation Safety Authority. Emma now wants to be a role model by demonstrating that people can achieve anything if they try. This year, Emma hosted a NAIDOC event at her workplace, using the training and leadership she learned through her studies to deliver an event that is close to her heart.



AALIYAH MORLEY

Qualification: Certificate III in School Based Education Support
RTO: KARBEN Training Solutions
Employer: NSW Department of Education
School: Peel High School

NSW

Proud Gomeri woman Aaliyah Morley has a vision to help close the education gap for Indigenous People. Undertaking a Certificate III in School Based Education Support with KARBEN Training Solutions and putting her learning into practice at Hillvue Public School, Aaliyah supports curriculum learning, provides additional support to students and plans classroom activities. Aaliyah leads cultural activities and is passionate about connecting students with learning in their local Gamilaraay language and culture throughout the school environment. Aaliyah is proud to be a role model and believes her qualification has positively impacted her students, community and family.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENT OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



SHANIQUA BURKE

Qualification: Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care
RTO: TAFE Queensland
Employer: Apunipima Cape York Health Council

QLD

Wanting to find a way to give back to her community and better the outcomes and futures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Shaniqua Burke chose to train in the health sector. While studying a Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care and working at Apunipima Cape York Health Council, Shaniqua gained knowledge and skills in basic health care and screening processes. She also learned how to advocate for community members' rights and needs. Shaniqua is proud to be a role model for her younger siblings and to receive positive feedback from clients and colleagues.



PEARL DUNN

Qualification: Diploma of Nursing
RTO: Sunraysia Institute of TAFE
Employer: Kerang District Health

VIC

When Pearl Dunn proudly graduated with a Diploma of Nursing from Sunraysia Institute of TAFE, she was fulfilling her lifelong dream of becoming a nurse. Starting at Kerang District Hospital in a graduate role, Pearl quickly moved into a permanent position working in the aged care department, which she found a fulfilling and enriching experience. Pearl faced her share of challenges, yet her incredible resilience placed her in a role model position for her community. Achieving her diploma has given Pearl the confidence to encourage and support others in her community to embrace a nursing career.



ANTHONY NELSON-BURNS

Qualification: Certificate III in Engineering—Mechanical Trade
RTO: Australian Skills Group
Employer: Fortescue Metals Group

WA

Embarking on an apprenticeship with Fortescue Metals Group was a life-changing decision for Anthony Nelson-Burns. Demonstrating determination and resilience, Anthony achieved his long-standing career goal of completing his Certificate III in Engineering (Mechanical Trade) and becoming a mechanical fitter. The apprenticeship has helped shape the person he has become—capable, empathetic and resourceful. Anthony says "This opportunity has fostered significant growth, both professionally and personally, instilling confidence, pragmatism, and authenticity in my day-to-day life. But most importantly, it makes my kids proud!".

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENT OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



COURTNEY SUMNER-KIMLIN

Qualification: Certificate III in Business

RTO: AFL SportsReady

Employer: Adelaide Fringe

SA

With a deep passion for the arts, Courtney Sumner-Kimlin began a traineeship as an administration assistant with the Adelaide Fringe in 2021, giving her a clear career pathway to connect with her interests. Motivated by her dedication to promote diversity and inclusion, Courtney transitioned into the role of Diversity and Inclusion Administrator. In this position, she actively engages in conversations to encourage other trainees, as a mentor and source of support. Through her work, Courtney recognises the role that mentorships play in empowering people to reach their full potential. Her future aspirations centre around making a positive impact on her community.



BRADLEY MAYNARD

Qualification: Certificate IV in Work, Health and Safety

RTO: TasTAFE

Employer: Crisp Bros. & Haywards

TAS

Having previously undertaken an apprenticeship in boiler making and welding, and certification in project management, proud Palawa man Bradley Maynard recognises the many skills that training has provided him. When Bradley realised the importance of workplace health and safety in his industry, he decided to upskill and enrolled in a Certificate IV in Work Health and Safety with TasTAFE. In his role of Safety Manager at Crisp Bros. & Haywards, Bradley oversees the safety across multiple worksites and almost 300 employees.

TRAINEE OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Trainee of the Year Award is presented to an individual who is undertaking a traineeship and has been outstanding in all aspects of their training.



TRAINEE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



THANAPAT KELLIE

Qualification: Certificate IV in Information Technology
RTO: Charles Darwin University
Employer: NEC Australia

NT

Thanapat (Joe) Kellie's deep interest in information and communications technology led to a traineeship with NEC Australia and studying a Certificate IV in Information Technology. Joe says that his traineeship has allowed him to develop many relevant technical skills, and that it helped him to kick-start his career as an Associate Network Engineer with NEC's Networking Team. Joe credits his traineeship with developing his critical thinking and leadership skills, giving him the confidence to study for the internationally recognised Cisco Certified Network Associate exam.



CRYUS WREN

Qualification: Diploma of Project Management
RTO: Wisdom Learning
Employer: Australian Training Company
Host Employer: ACT Education Directorate

ACT

Working within the VET sector for over two years while simultaneously undertaking a VET pathway, Cryus Wren has developed a true passion for vocational education and training. Studying a Diploma of Project Management and working as a Career and Transitions Project Support Officer at the ACT Education Directorate, Cryus believes that he can impact the lives of every ACT public school student through his job. During his traineeship, Cryus has delivered informative presentations about opportunities in VET to over 1,500 students across the ACT. Cryus' goal is to share his story with people across the country to help them understand how VET can change their lives.



BRIDIE SEARLE

Qualification: Certificate IV in Project Management Practice
RTO: Australian College of Commerce & Management
Employer: Thales Australia Limited

NSW

In 2022, Bridie Searle had never been on a ship. Today, Bridie is responsible for managing million-dollar maritime projects, something made possible through her VET pathway. After securing a traineeship with Thales Australia Limited in the Above Water Systems business, Bridie began her Certificate IV in Project Management Practice. Bridie's determination and commitment to her training has provided her the title of the most sought-after project superintendent within her company and a next-generation leader by her Training and Capability manager. Bridie credits her success to the balance of theory and practical work which suits her love of hands-on learning.

TRAINEE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



CHARLOTTE ROSS

Qualification: Certificate IV in Information Technology
RTO: Precept Education
Employer: ONGC Systems

QLD

Having undertaken a traineeship and completed a Certificate IV in Information Technology, Charlotte Ross is a passionate IT professional at ONGC Systems. She has completed a range of additional industry training to further develop her technical and leadership skills. She has also established a 'trainee club' to help her peers stay up to date with new trends and technologies in the sector. Charlotte enjoys her work with BUSY At Work's Busy Sisters' program, supporting apprentices and trainees to complete their training and boost their career prospects.



REBECCA HOPE

Qualification: Certificate IV in Business
RTO: Melbourne Polytechnic
Employer: NECA Education and Careers
Host Employer: Victorian Government Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions

VIC

Rebecca Hope completed her traineeship and Certificate IV in Business with NECA Education and Careers at the Victorian Government Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions. Rebecca lives with autism and has demonstrated that by developing strategies that suit her individual needs, many things are possible. She thrives in the human resources field and has become an advocate encouraging people with disability to undertake traineeships. Following completion of her traineeship, Rebecca obtained a role as Program Coordinator at Amaze, Victoria's peak body for Autistic people in Victoria.



HANNAH MORRISON

Qualification: Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care
RTO: Central Regional TAFE
Employer: Toodyay Early Learning Centre

WA

Hannah Morrison was inspired to pursue a career path where she could positively affect the lives of young people, after she undertook a trip to the Philippines. Following her passion for working with children and advocating for children's rights, Hannah undertook a traineeship with Toodyay Early Learning Centre and completed a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care through Central Regional TAFE. Hannah actively shares her experience with others, and has taken on a mentoring role within her workplace. She positively contributes to change practices within her workplace, updating the service policy regarding traineeships to include a mentorship program and paid study leave for future trainees.

TRAINEE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



RACHAEL KELLY

Qualification: Certificate IV in Real Estate Practice
RTO: Real Estate Training Academy
Employer: MEGT
Host Employer: Key 2 Sale

SA

Rachael Kelly’s enthusiasm for real estate was initially sparked through work experience. A Buyer Liaison at Key 2 Sale in Mount Gambier, Rachael recently completed her second traineeship—a Certificate IV in Real Estate Practice—with MEGT and secured her sales representative and auctioneer licenses. Rachael is passionate about design, architectural history, property sales and helping clients, believing everyone deserves to feel a sense of security and belonging in their homes, and she seeks to play an active role in this.



CATHERINE JONES

Qualification: Certificate III in Hospitality
RTO: TasTAFE
Employer: Cataract on Paterson

TAS

While studying a Certificate II in Hospitality at TasTAFE, Catherine Jones joined the Eski Group as a trainee. Just one year later, she began her Certificate III in Hospitality at the Group’s flagship restaurant, Cataract on Paterson. Drawn to work with a team that encourages professional training, Catherine has always had a strong desire to grow her knowledge and skills. In her position as a junior supervisor, she supports staff to deliver exceptional service—a rewarding role that allows her to share her knowledge and passion for the industry with others.

INNOVATION IN VET AWARD

The Innovation in VET Award recognises and celebrates innovation initiatives in the VET and skills sector.



INNOVATION IN VET AWARD FINALISTS



ST JOHN XXIII CATHOLIC COLLEGE

NSW

Since 2017, St John XXIII Catholic College has been working to break down the traditional, linear approach to education. They do this by offering year 9 students the chance to enrol in various VET courses to get a head start on their career pathways. Courses include Certificate II in Hospitality and Certificates III in Accounts Administration, Business, and Live Production and Technical Services. This innovation allows students to obtain a Certificate II or III qualification by the end of year 10, in addition to 2 High School Certificate units. The early adoption of VET in school allows students to access fundamental skills needed to thrive in modern workplaces.



BRADFORD INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

QLD

In partnership with the Roper Gulf Regional Council and in consultation with community, the Bradford Institute of Advanced Education has developed the Community Night Patrol program, which aims to improve levels of community safety and promote culturally appropriate conflict dispute resolution in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The Night Patrollers have undertaken training as part of a bespoke and innovative vocational education and training program to cater to specific cultural and language needs and have received a Certificate III in Community Services.



**Government
of South Australia**

Department for Education

STUDENT PATHWAYS AND CAREERS DIVISION, SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

SA

The South Australian Department for Education oversees over 500 public preschools and schools in the state, and has offered vocational education and training to students in year 10 and above for more than 20 years. Recently, the department developed the VET in Schools innovation initiative, identifying and curating a list of over 200 VET courses to meet the needs of industry and provide vocational pathways appropriate for secondary school students. This has revolutionised the way VET is integrated into the South Australian school curriculum.

APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Apprentice of the Year Award is presented to an Australian Apprentice who has been outstanding in all aspects of their trade.



APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



JACK HIGGINS

Qualification: Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician
RTO: Charles Darwin University
Employer: GTNT Group
Host Employer: AJF Electrical

NT

After finishing school, Jack Higgins enrolled in a dual trade taster program to see what career was the best fit for him. Upon completion of the program, Jack decided to pursue a Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician as it is both practical and technical. Employed by GTNT, studying at Charles Darwin University and hosted to AJF Electrical, Jack says the work is challenging yet rewarding. He says he found a real passion for the trade that he wasn't expecting. "It feels good to know I'm in a career path that is in line with the global goal of achieving net-zero emissions," Jack says.



TESSA VALTER

Qualification: Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician
RTO: Global Energy Training Solutions
Employer: Evoenergy

ACT

Tessa Valter has been interested in the electrical industry since high school and secured a non-trade position at Evoenergy as an Electrical Network Inspector after graduating. Over the next 6 years, Tessa learnt about the distribution network and when the opportunity arose, started an apprenticeship. Tessa completed a Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician with Global Energy Training Solutions and is now a mentor to new apprentices within the business. Tessa promotes her industry by participating in advertising campaigns encouraging safety and to encourage women to apply for apprenticeships.



CAROLINE MORRIS

Qualification: Certificate III in Engineering—Mechanical Trade
RTO: TAFE NSW
Employer: Newcrest Mining

NSW

As the first woman to complete a fitter machinist apprenticeship at her workplace in over 20 years, Caroline Morris is inspiring young women to pursue trades. Undertaking her Certificate III in Engineering—Mechanical Trade, Caroline loved the dynamic setting. "I worked on a variety of equipment: mill machinery, pumps and crushers—we need to be across it all," she says. Through her training, Caroline found what she was looking for—a job where she could work with her hands, stay living regionally and develop a future-proof career.

APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



GABRIELLE CLIFT

Qualification: Certificate III in Light Vehicle Mechanical Technology
RTO: MTA Institute
Employer: Highfields Mechanical

QLD

Gabrielle Cliff completed a Certificate III in Light Vehicle Mechanical Technology while working at Highfields Mechanical. Early in her career, she has already impressed many with her skills and knowledge of the industry. In 2020, she won Capricorn's National Rising Star Award as well as MTA Institute's Apprentice of the Year, that included the chance for 2 weeks of work experience with Triple Eight Race Engineering, which she undertook in 2022. Gabrielle impressed so much that she was asked to join the crew at the Bathurst 1000 and Gold Coast 500, and is now working for Triple Eight full-time.



LEELA SUBRAMANIAM

Qualification: Certificate III in Commercial Cookery
RTO: Chisholm Institute
Employer: Flinders Hotel

VIC

Leela Subramaniam's career in hospitality almost started by accident. After working part time in hospitality for many years while studying at university, Leela realised that she loved cooking. Relishing in the high-pressure environment of a commercial kitchen, she pursued an apprenticeship. Since completing her Certificate III in Commercial Cookery with Chisholm institute, Leela is constantly on the lookout for new opportunities to put her skills to the test and has won awards in 6 state and national cookery competitions. Promoted to junior sous chef at the Flinders Hotel, Leela is now studying a Bachelor of Business and leading a team of 8 during busy shifts at the restaurant, ensuring that each meal exiting the kitchen is perfect.



AMY HUNT

Qualification: Certificate III in ESI—Power Systems—
Distribution Cable Jointing
RTO: Power Training Services
Employer: Western Power

WA

Amy Hunt wanted a career that involved working outside, working within a team and experiencing a new challenge every day. She was drawn to the fast-changing environment of the power industry, studying a Certificate III in ESI—Power Systems—Distribution Cable Jointing, while undertaking her apprenticeship with Western Power. Amy cites her experience working on low and high voltage electrical cables, as having opened her eyes to the implicit value of safety; both on an individual level and within a team. Amy is the only woman, and the youngest cable jointer at her worksite, bringing a new perspective to the work group. In 2022, Amy was awarded Western Power's Apprentice of the Year for her commitment to her training.

APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



HUGO KREGAR

Qualification: Certificate III in Carpentry
RTO: Adelaide Training and Employment Centre
Employer: Maxima Training Group
Host Employer: Michael Kregar Building

SA

Hugo Kregar gained a wealth of knowledge and personal development through his apprenticeship in carpentry through Maxima Training Group and host employer, Michael Kregar Building. Beyond technical carpentry skills, Hugo is passionate about on-site mental health and was proud to organise training in partnership with Mates in Construction, for more than 40 trade professionals and subcontractors from his organisation. Hugo takes an active role in encouraging local young people in his region to undertake apprenticeships in the industry.

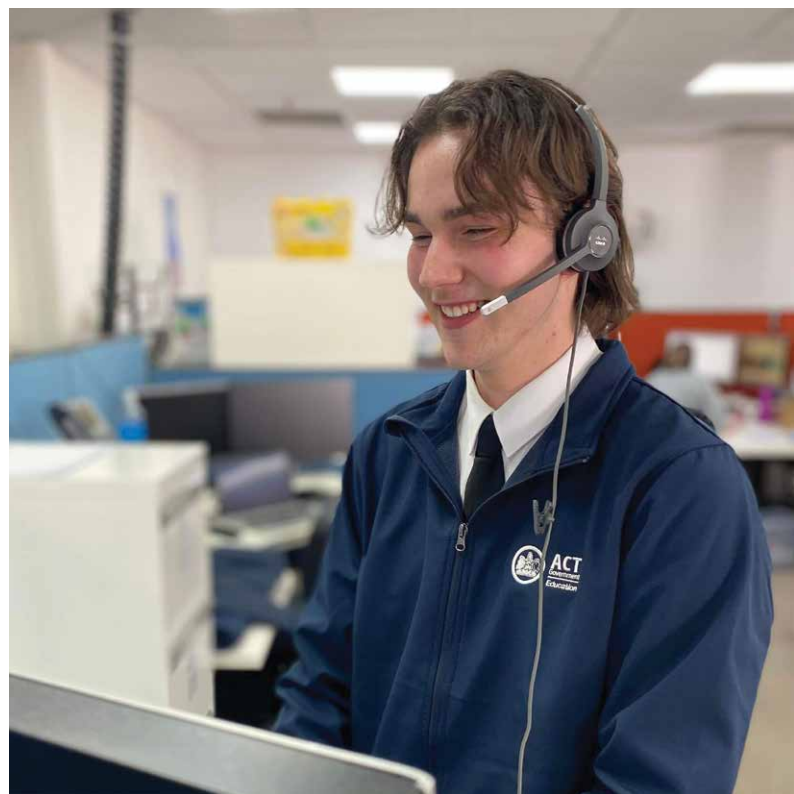


JAKE CHILCOTT

Qualification: Certificate III in Electrotechnology Electrician
RTO: TasTAFE
Employer: MEGT
Host Employer: Bell Bay Aluminium

TAS

Completing an apprenticeship in Electrotechnology Electrician with MEGT and host employer Bell Bay Aluminium has been a transformative experience for Jake Chilcott. As someone who enjoys problem solving, Jake specifically chose to study industrial electrotechnology for the challenges it presents. A key highlight from Jake's time studying and as an apprentice, was the experienced electricians who mentored him, and helped shape the electrician he is today. In the future, Jake hopes to be a positive impact for new apprentices, by being that mentor for them.





AWARD CATEGORY JUDGES

Thank you to all the judges for volunteering your time and expertise in the 2023 Australian Training Awards. It is your significant professionalism, experience and dedication that makes the national judging process rigorous and equitable.



Alec Wickerson	Elizabeth McAllister	Linda White
Andrew Shea	Emily Caswell	Madonna Tomes
Angela Coker	Fi Shewring	Mark Harriot
Angelo Lauricella	Fiona Elliott	Mary Campbell
Anna Faithful	Harry Magoulas	Megan Lilly
Ben Bardon	James Maund	Nick Contradoff
Ben O’Cianain	Jane Hayden	Pamela Simon
Brigitte Bergin	Jenelle Choyce	Paul Stenning
Brittany-Leigh Wragg	Jennah Halley	Rachel Livingston
Caitlin Cook	Jennifer Moloney	Renae Houston
Cameron Baker	Jenny Dodd	Richard Lindsay
Carmen Saunders	John Furness	Sakina Qambari
Charlene Davison	Jonathan Atkinson	Samantha McLean
Chris Lehmann	Josh Furness	Susan Shaw
Christine Laird	Katerina Lawler	Tara Gaudry
Darren Quinn	Kathryn Mandla	Tricia Hennessy
David Collins PSM	Kathy Dennis	Vanessa Iles
Dentia Wawn	Lance Snell	Wayne Ryder
Derek Hennessy	Laura Angus	
Dianne Dayhew	Lena Constantine	



**CONGRAT
TO ALL THE**

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FINALISTS!





The National Careers Institute (NCI) provides Australians with authoritative and accurate career information and support irrespective of age or career stage, so that people can make informed decisions about their education, training and career pathways.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All Australian Training Awards business and organisation category finalists are subject to extensive performance and regulation checks by the Australian Skills Quality Authority and using data from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER).



Australian Government

Australian Skills Quality Authority

As the national vocational education and training regulator, ASQA is committed to ensuring quality so that students, employers, governments and the community have confidence in the integrity of qualifications issued by training providers.



NCVER

NCVER is an independent, not-for-profit company owned by the Commonwealth and state and territory ministers responsible for vocational education and training.

It is the national professional body responsible for collecting, managing, analysing and communicating research and statistics on the Australian VET sector.

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