



Australian Government

AUSTRALIAN
TRAINING
AWARDS

REAL STORIES. REAL ACHIEVEMENTS.



CARLA WILLCOX

2016 VOCATIONAL STUDENT OF THE YEAR

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

'Expect the unexpected' could well be the motto for Carla Willcox, winner of the Vocational Student of the Year Award in the 2016 Australian Training Awards. Having been a 'stay at home Mum' for 13 years, Carla never expected her first hesitant steps into part time work and retraining would lead to full time work, promotion and further study; never expected to end up with an enduring career she loves and is passionate about; and never expected to be a national award winner! But that's indeed the reality for Carla and she couldn't be happier.

"When I made the decision to re-enter the workforce and re-train I had no ambition beyond getting some part-time work. But the more I got into my studies and my work in the disability sector, the further I wanted to go—never thinking

I'd get this far," laughed Carla. "I was so shocked to be announced as the Vocational Student of the Year that I didn't even have a speech prepared!"

Carla secured a place in the Certificate III in Disability and subsequent employment as a support worker with Coastal Residential Services North West Tasmania. Carla has now landed a promotion with Family Based Care in Burnie and is excited about the 'terrific' career path that has opened up to her.

"Winning the award has certainly given me great exposure and has helped my career, but it's not just about me. I want to promote and advocate for my industry, and I want to be an advocate for all those other mums out there who are daunted by the thought of re-entering the workforce," said Carla.

"For someone like me the great thing about VET is its accessibility and flexibility—by studying in smaller chunks and gaining certificates and diplomas along the way you build your confidence and it is much less daunting and more doable. I'm living proof that with perseverance and determination anything is possible. I'm really honoured to have at the Australian Training Awards and I plan to give everything I can in embracing it and inspiring as many others as I possibly can."

ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN TRAINING AWARDS

Each year, the Australian Training Awards recognise and celebrate the outstanding achievements of Australian Apprentices, vocational students, training practitioners, businesses, secondary schools, industry and registered training organisations for their contribution to skilling Australia.

The majority of the awards are the culmination of the state and territory awards programs with winners from each state and territory eligible to compete at the national level in aligned categories.

There are also seven award categories available by entering directly to the Australian Training Awards.

Individual

- Lifetime Achievement Award (**direct entry**)
- National Achievement Award (**direct entry**)
- Excellence in Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice Award (**direct entry**)
- Australian School-based Apprentice of the Year Award
- Vocational Student of the Year Award
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year Award
- Australian Apprentice (Trainee) of the Year Award
- Australian Apprentice of the Year Award
- VET Teacher/Trainer of the Year Award

Business

- Australian Apprenticeships – Employer Award (**direct entry**)
- Small Employer of the Year Award (**direct entry**)
- Medium Employer of the Year Award
- Large Employer of the Year Award
- Industry Collaboration Award

Registered Training Organisation

- School Pathways to VET Award (**direct entry**)
- International Training Provider of the Year Award (**direct entry**)
- Small Training Provider of the Year Award
- Large Training Provider of the Year Award

DISCOVER MORE OF THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF APPLYING FOR AN AUSTRALIAN TRAINING AWARD BY DOWNLOADING THE WHY APPLY FACT SHEET OR VISIT THE WHY AND HOW TO ENTER PAGE OF THE AUSTRALIAN TRAINING AWARDS WEBSITE.

WHY APPLY?

The awards offer participants Australia-wide recognition for exceptional training outcomes and an opportunity to become known as the best-of-the-best, nationally.

For individuals, the awards can open up networks and career opportunities within the business sector and provide you with the opportunity to become a national ambassador for skills to promote the vocational education and training sector at a national level.

For businesses and registered training organisations, the awards can propel you into the national spotlight, positioning you as a front runner in skills and workforce development and leader in best practice. This will set you apart from the competition and make you an employer or registered training organisation of choice.

