



Australian Government

AUSTRALIAN TRAINING AWARDS

REAL STORIES. REAL ACHIEVEMENTS.



DONNA COLOMBINI

2016 VET TEACHER/TRAINER OF THE YEAR

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

When Donna Colombini started out as a 16-year-old hairdressing apprentice she never dreamt that her chosen career would take her all around the world or land her at the pinnacle of her profession. But that is the reality for Donna, who was named the VET Teacher/Trainer of the Year in the 2016 Australian Training Awards.

Donna's recognition is a richly deserved reward for giving 150 per cent of herself to her students and her industry. Her experience spans over 36 years as a hairdresser, including 16 years as a TAFE teacher and five years as Head Teacher of Hair and Beauty at Sutherland TAFE College, Gymea. Under her watch enrolments at Gymea have tripled in a number of courses, against a decreasing trend in apprentice numbers.

"The programs I have developed and delivered are first and foremost student focused for industry outcomes," said Donna.

"I want to ensure I'm aware of every opportunity to build my team and my own skills that will in turn bring benefit to our students. The industry feedback we have received is extremely positive, confirming that we continue to excel in the training we are providing to their apprentices."

Donna sets herself the highest standards and continually strives to improve her teaching through innovative training delivery methods. These include utilising high profile industry guest artists to showcase new styles to students; organising photo shoots and competitions; and leading a study tour to Italy,

providing students with global exposure and a 'life-changing' experience.

"What the Australian Training Awards ceremony brought home to me is how inspiring and empowering are the stories of others who have gone through the VET system and have had such great success. My experience and that of countless others shows that ordinary people can have incredible outcomes. It is really important to have that recognition and to showcase how VET is providing real skills for real jobs and futureproofing the skills base of our country."

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.

