

Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts
The Honourable Rod Welford
02/08/2008

North Queensland's top training achievers recognised

North Queensland's best employers, apprentices, trainees, vocational students and training providers were tonight named as winners in the Queensland Training Awards' regional finals.

Education and Training Minister Rod Welford said the event, one of six regional finals being held across the state, showcased the strength of local industries and the people working in them.

"Gaining vocational skills has never been more important, and Queenslanders have more opportunities than ever before to access world-class training in a range of exciting and rewarding industries," Mr Welford said.

"Having skilled workers across a host of professions and industries is vital to our state's ongoing success.

"These awards show the great work that is guaranteeing our future through outstanding achievements in workplaces, schools, colleges and training institutions.

"In a time of skill shortages more Queenslanders are taking up apprenticeships and traineeships than any other state in Australia, so these awards showcase the cream of the crop."

The North Queensland winners will progress to the state finals at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre on Thursday 11 September 2008, when recipients in a further four categories will also be presented. State winners can enter the Australian Training Awards in Darwin in November.

The Queensland Training Awards, now in their 47th year, are run by the Queensland Government's Department of Education, Training and the Arts. For more information on the Queensland Training Awards, visit www.qta.qld.gov.au.

The North Queensland regional winners are:

- Apprentice of the Year, sponsored by Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE - Michael Obah, Certificate III in Plumbing, Johnstone Shire Council, from South Johnstone;
- Trainee of the Year, sponsored by Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE - Kellie Wenham, Certificate III in Business Administration, Thuringowa City Council, from Kirwan;
- Vocational Student of the Year, sponsored by Queensland Apprenticeship Services - Bernard Pope, Diploma of Nursing, Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE, from Maryborough;

- School-based Apprentice or Trainee of the Year, sponsored by Australian Technical College, North Queensland - Rebecca Sheahan, Certificate II in Agriculture (Beef Production), Rural Training and Extension Association Inc., from Woodstock;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year, sponsored by Mount Isa Institute of TAFE - Bernard Pope, Diploma of Nursing, Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE, from Maryborough; and
- Employer of the Year, sponsored by Cairns Region Group Training - Cooltecq from Cairns.

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