

LOCAL WINNERS IN QUEENSLAND TRAINING AWARDS

Seven of South West Queensland's local employers, students and workers have been named regional winners in the 2009 Queensland Training Awards.

The Queensland Training Awards, now in their 48th year, showcase Queensland's best vocational education and training achievements. These regional winners are outstanding examples of those who are furthering skills and strengthening communities at a local level.

The Queensland Training Awards regional finals comprise seven categories — Small Employer of the Year, Employer of the Year, School-Based Apprentice or Trainee of the Year, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year, Vocational Student of the Year, Trainee of the Year and Apprentice of the Year.

Celebrated at the South West Queensland Regional Final on Friday 31 July 2009 at Rumours International in Toowoomba, below are the 2009 Regional Winners:

Jesse Alroe - Apprentice of the Year

After working in retail, the hotel industry and starting a law degree, Jesse decided to pursue his passion for building with a carpentry apprenticeship in 2005, and has since been indulging his appreciation of architecture on a host of construction projects.

A highlight has been helping renovate the Darling Downs' heritage-listed Jimbour House which was built in 1876, and his next study goal is to complete a Certificate IV.

Charlotte Mounsey - Trainee of the Year

After finishing high school, Charlotte spent two years at university before embarking on her traineeship with the Bremer Institute of TAFE, which has given her focus and inspiration for the future.

Now employed as a customer service officer, Charlotte enjoys working in an organisation that provides vocational education and training, while having the chance to develop her own skills. She hopes to continue studying business in the future.

Peter Capp - Vocational Student of the Year

After running his own gardening business and living overseas, Peter completed an apprenticeship in turf management as a mature-aged student at Brisbane North Institute of TAFE, and working at the Brisbane Golf Club gave him the confidence to open another business.

He gained his QBSA licence after completing his certificate and now, using the name '*Captivating Landscapes*', Peter employs two staff and hopes his enterprise will continue to flourish.

Clinton Apelt - School-based Apprentice or Trainee of the Year

Clinton is juggling his role as school sports captain at Oakey State High School with the practical experience he is gaining in the maintenance department of New Acland Coal Pty Ltd.

Clinton enjoys learning about new technologies in the industry, and eventually hopes to manage a heavy vehicle maintenance shed.

Rhonda Perry - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year

Rhonda is a Police Liaison Officer in the St George area and throughout her studies, Rhonda sought extra information about the law and policing procedures so she could better understand her role, and has taken a special interest in helping women deal with issues around domestic violence.

LSM Advanced Composites - Small Employer of the Year

Since 1996, LSM Advanced Composites has been producing custom manufactured advanced composite materials that are used in a range of fields and applications, from medical and mining industries to aeronautical products and musical instruments.

Using specialised processes means training is critical from both an operational and safety perspective, with staff and supervisors completing yearly assessments to review performances and plan for the future.

Oswald Bros. Civil - Employer of the Year

Oswald Bros Civil started as a small earthmoving business in 1990 and today employs more than 350 fulltime staff, with around 10 projects operating in remote locations at any one time.

In the face of a national skills shortage and drought, the company aims to be self-reliant and while offering a mix of formal training and on-the-job experiences, it also runs a scholarship program that encourages professionals and tradespeople to regional areas.

Recipients now progress to the state finals at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre in September, where a further four awards will be presented — Public Training Provider of the Year, Private Training Provider of the Year, the Skilling for the Future Award and the Premier's Innovation in Skilling Award.

State winners will then go on to compete at the 2009 Australian Training Awards in Canberra on November 19.