



New South Wales

The Hon Carmel Tebbutt
Minister for Education and Training

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MEDIA RELEASE

STATE'S BEST APPRENTICES TO COMPETE IN AUSTRALIAN TRAINING AWARDS

State Plan priority S5: more students to complete Year 12 or recognised vocational training

NSW Training Awards winners are competing against Australia's best apprentices and trainees at the 2006 Australian Training Awards in Adelaide today.

Four NSW champions and three organisations are representing the state at the national awards, after claiming titles at the NSW Training Awards in September.

"Our best wishes and congratulations go to Karen Hourigan, Steele Adams, Craig Dearden and Allison Burgess, the talented achievers who are showing the rest of Australia what you can achieve when you make the most of the world-class education and training that we offer here in NSW," Minister for Education and Training, Carmel Tebbutt said.

Ms Tebbutt also congratulated 2006 Training Initiative Award winner Gwydir Shire Council, Small Training provider Award winner Early Childhood Training and Resource Centre, and Employer of the Year Challenge Armidale who are all now contenders for the title of Australia's best in their respective categories at the Australian Training Awards in Adelaide.

"NSW leads the states in skills and vocational education Australia-wide, with students and employers reaping the direct benefits of initiatives in the NSW training sector.

"At a time when skills are more important than ever to our state's economy, over a third of students in NSW are getting a head start by doing Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses at school as part of their HSC, and we are creating more pre-apprenticeship places at TAFE NSW to give students a fast-track into careers in key skill shortage industries.

"The introduction of trade schools in NSW will provide even further opportunities for students to fast track their careers whilst completing their HSC," Ms Tebbutt said.

The four state champions and three organisations that will represent NSW at the Australian Training Awards are:

- **APPRENTICE of the YEAR: Karen Hourigan**
Trained by TAFE NSW – Hunter Institute, Muswellbrook Campus
Electrical (Mechanic) (Electrotechnology Systems Electrician) Certificate III

- **VOCATIONAL STUDENT of the YEAR: Craig Dearden**
Trained by TAFE NSW – Northern Sydney Institute, Ryde College
Advanced Diploma of Hospitality Management

- **ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENT of the YEAR:
Allison Burgess**
Trained by TAFE NSW – Hunter Institute, Newcastle Campus
Business Administration Certificate III

- **TRAINEE of the YEAR: Steele Adams**
Trained by Austraining (NSW) Pty Ltd
Local Government (Planning and Management of the Physical Environment)
Certificate IV

The NSW Training Awards are conducted annually by the NSW Department of Education and Training to recognise outstanding achievement in the vocational education and training sector, and honour the achievements of students, teachers, training organisations and employers state-wide.

The principal sponsors of the 2006 NSW Training Awards are Australian Business Limited Apprenticeships Centre and the NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training.

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TAFE facts:

- TAFE NSW is the largest training provider in Australia with a network of 134 colleges across 10 Institutes.
- There has been unprecedented expansion in TAFE NSW with enrolments jumping from 417,319 in 1996 to 513,070 in 2005.
- The lemma Government has increased training opportunities for school students with an \$18 million plan to create 10 new trade schools in partnership with TAFE.
- Trade Schools will enable Year 11 and 12 students to begin an apprenticeship, traineeship or high level training while completing their HSC.
- Last year there was a 12.9 per cent increase in apprenticeship enrolments – training our mechanics, electricians, construction workers and miners. Almost 40,000 apprentices enrolled in 2005.
- Enrolments increased in the eight priority skills shortage areas, with significant growth in Engineering and Mining, Building and Construction, Automotive, Electrotechnology and Hairdressing.
- Every dollar invested in TAFE NSW generates \$6.40 worth of benefits, which amounts to a \$196 billion contribution to the NSW economy over 20 years, according to the independent Value of TAFE report.
- NSW has the most generous TAFE Fee exemption policy of any State in the country for mainstream courses. At December 2005, almost 153,000 students were exempted from the TAFE NSW fee for mainstream courses – that's almost 30% of students in 2005.
- Almost one in ten people in NSW enroll in TAFE NSW at some point in their lives.