



Department of
Education and Training

Media Statement

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Attention: News Editor / Chief of Staff

Fremantle, Melville and Cockburn talent on way to WA Training Awards 2009

A promising young Fremantle musician; a dental technician from Hammond Park; a horticultural apprentice from Bibra Lake and an offshore process plant operator trainee are local finalists in the prestigious WA Training Awards 2009.

Harry Winton is one of four contenders for the WA Vocational Student of the Year sponsored by the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations; Matthew Bailey of Hammond Park and Craig Woolley of Bibra Lake are vying for the title of WA Apprentice of the Year, sponsored by ApprentiCentre; and Glenn White of Bullcreek is a finalist for the WA Trainee of the Year, sponsored by GESB.

Fremantle guitarist and songwriter Mr Winton, 20, said 18 months studying music at WAAPA had transformed him as a performer.

“Before I started the course I had never played in front of an audience, but in a very short time I have been propelled from being a bedroom guitarist to a confident performer,” he said.

He has formed an acoustic and vocal duo called Blackbird, developed a website where listeners can download his songs and he also gives guitar lessons to earn extra income.

“Coming to WAAPA has given me a glimpse of what it is like to be a real working musician and find new ways of connecting to the industry,” he said.

“You know you’re in safe hands when you are receiving guidance from the most experienced people in the Australian music industry.”

Matthew Bailey, WA Apprentice of the Year finalist, completed his four year apprenticeship in dental technology with PJ Dental Laboratory through Central TAFE’s Oral Health Campus in 2008 and specialises in crowns and bridges, particularly ceramics.

“Ceramics requires a high level of skill and I enjoy the challenge it presents,” he said.

“The on the job training gave me an intense and real world view of dental technology and fuelled my passion to one day own and run a small business.”

“My message to apprentices across Australia is to stick with your course and, although it is hard work, if you surround yourself with people who help you learn and grow, you will succeed.”

Also vying for the title of WA Apprentice of the Year, passionate environmentalist and horticulturalist Craig Woolley said he used his skills to prolong the life of trees and protect public parklands.

“I volunteer for many local organisations such as Marapana Wildlife Park to help preserve the flora and infrastructure,” he said.

“I completed my apprenticeship this year which helped me secure a job as a Horticulturalist for the City of Gosnells.”

WA Trainee of the Year finalist Glenn White who is currently in his second year of a process plant operator traineeship at Challenger TAFE’s Australian Centre for Energy and Process Training, said he found his traineeship challenging and rewarding.

“I am very fortunate to be a trainee at the centre because I’m learning from highly experienced trainers,” he said.

Department of Education and Training Director General Sharyn O’Neill said the WA Training Awards recognised the very high quality and standards of the training system in Western Australia.

“A highly skilled workforce is essential for our economic and social prosperity,” she said.

“The high calibre of the finalists across all the award categories shows how flexible and innovative training delivers results for industries, employers, communities and training providers.”

Winners of the WA Training Awards 2009 will be announced on Friday 4 September.

The winner of the WA Apprentice of the Year and the WA Vocational Student of the Year will go on to compete against the best in Australia at the Australian Training Awards in Canberra in November.

The WA Training Awards 2009 are a joint initiative of the Department of Education and Training and the State Training Board.

For more information visit: trainingawards.det.wa.edu.au.

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