



Department of  
**Education and Training**

## ***Media Statement***

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10 August 2009

Attention: News Editor / Chief of Staff

### **Peel pair in contention for WA Training Awards 2009**

Keith Savage of Halls Head and Ken Gwyer of Greenfields are both finalists in the prestigious WA Training Awards 2009.

Mr Savage is one of four contenders for the WA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year sponsored by The Graham (Polly) Farmer Foundation and his course coordinator and lecturer Ken Gwyer is a finalist for the WA Trainer of the Year sponsored by the Training Accreditation Council.

Living proof that you are never too old to start your own business - Mr Savage (60) said his studies at Challenger TAFE helped him open a successful gardening business at the age 55.

Mr Savage said he had gained a wide variety of skills and knowledge through several innovative Challenger TAFE training programs at the Winjan Aboriginal Corporation including horticulture, hospitality, Indigenous culture and construction.

“My studies have not only helped me to grow my own business but also given me skills in leadership which are important in my role as mentor to young people in the Peel region,” he said.

“Operating my own business has given me the satisfaction of accepting students from all cultures for work placement and I always encourage them to enrol in further education.”

While continuing his studies this year, Mr Savage has also been employed as a casual lecturer with Challenger TAFE, teaching a leadership development course to Year 10 students in an Aboriginal School Based Training program.

Mr Gwyer took a leading role in developing the training program with the Winjan Aboriginal Corporation in 2002 after recognising that local Aboriginal people were in danger of becoming disconnected from their region and heritage.

“I set out to find a model of learning that would provide Aboriginal people with the confidence, skills and ability to strengthen their culture, develop their own enterprises or move into employment,” he said.

“This partnership is designed to remedy a destructive cycle of low education achievements and unemployment for Aboriginal people by providing training specifically for Aboriginal students in skills valuable to their community.”

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 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander 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](http://trainingawards.det.wa.edu.au).

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