

Media Release —

Australian Training Awards Showcase Independent Sector's Students

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For Immediate Release

The *2019 Australian Training Awards* reinforced the reputation of the independent tertiary education system for delivering students and their employers the quality outcomes they are looking for. The awards were presented in Brisbane on 21 November 2019.

The Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA), the peak body representing independent providers in the higher education, vocational education, training and skills sectors is pleased to recognise the accomplishments of so many member training organisations.

The **2019 Trainee of the Year** was Stephen Witkowski who studied a *Certificate III in Aquaculture with Seafood and Maritime Training*.

Stephen has worked and studied all over Australia in the aquatic industry. While he had plenty of theoretical knowledge going into his role as a technical officer for Tassal, it was the Certificate III qualification that enabled him to bridge the gap between the theoretical and the applicable.

The runner-up for the **2019 Apprentice of the Year** was Ellie Farrington who completed her *Certificate III in Carpentry* at Blue Dog Training Pty Ltd in Queensland.

Before commencing her apprenticeship, Ellie did two semesters of an Architecture Degree and then completed a Bachelor of Mathematics. With a desire to have a career in building design, Ellie felt she would get a better understanding of the design process by getting hands on practical experience, so she embarked on a carpentry apprenticeship to learn from the ground up how the construction industry operates.

“We congratulate these outstanding trainees, their employers and training organisations. The awards were very competitive, and the winners were selected as the best from a group of top performing trainees and apprentices,” said Mr Troy Williams, ITECA Chief Executive.

ITECA represents independent providers in the higher education, vocational education, training and skills sectors. Independent providers support more than 70% of the 4.1 million students undertaking VET program, including 58% of students undertaking a VET Diploma, 64% of students undertaking a Certificate IV and 58% of students undertaking a Certificate III.

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