

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TRAINING AWARDS

Statement by Minister for Training and Workforce Development

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Minister for Training and Workforce Development) [12.06 pm]: Last week, I had the pleasure of hosting the twenty-first Western Australian Training Awards, recognising excellence in our state's nation-leading training system. The awards celebrate innovative programs and partnerships, best practice, and quality in training delivery. Most importantly, the awards highlight the outstanding achievements of individuals who have flourished in Western Australia's training sector.

Although I cannot share the stories of all 13 winners with the house here today, I will briefly highlight a few that illustrate the quality and breadth of the field. Kahli King Elliott, the WA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year, is a police cadet. She is keen to motivate young Aboriginal people living in rural and remote communities to pursue a career through the training sector. Katherine Haag, named WA Vocational Student of the Year, completed her diploma of community services at the Central Institute of Technology and wishes to use her qualification to help high school students increase their financial management skills. An outstanding electrician in the making, Thalia Wilkinson, won WA School-based Apprentice of the Year. Thalia is completing a certificate III in electro-technology at Polytechnic West, while carrying out her practical work at Collins Electrical. Having enjoyed such a positive experience, Thalia is now determined to pursue further studies in the training sector and the completion of her school-based apprenticeship will provide an ideal head start in her career. Sandra Van Der Gaag was named WA Trainee of the Year. She is undertaking a two-year traineeship as a process plant operator with host employer Woodside Energy at its Karratha gas plant.

It was fantastic to see so many inspiring young women among the winners and finalists, and particularly pleasing to note that both Thalia and Sandra are destined for successful careers in industries with low numbers of female participation. Contributions from industry are a critical element of a thriving training sector, so it was great to see Crown Perth named WA Employer of the Year. Crown was recognised for the breadth and depth of training offered to staff and the programs tailored for under-represented groups.