The NSW Minister for Education and Training, Verity Firth has presented the NSW Training Awards for 2010 at a special event in Sydney tonight.

The Minister announced the state-wide winners of 15 categories including the Apprentice of the Year, Garreth Robbs from TAFE NSW – Hunter Institute and Bistro Molines, and the Trainee of the Year, Gabriella Morona from the Murray Mallee Training Company and F A N & S Morona.

“To win a State Award is a tremendous achievement – these students and training organisations have graduated at the very top of their class,” Ms Firth said.

“The NSW Training Awards continue a long-standing tradition of recognising and celebrating excellence within the NSW vocational education and training system and this year we recognise 55 years of excellence.

“The Awards showcase the amazing talent and dedication we have in NSW, recognising the achievements of apprentices, trainees, schools, training providers and employers and it’s a recognition that winners can take with them throughout their careers.

“The NSW training system is world class. We have a high quality network of public and private training organisations, including our secondary schools, which provide a huge choice for people who wish to start, improve or change their career.”

Over 700 students, schools, registered training organisations and employers vied for awards in 15 categories. Finalists were chosen from 11 regions across the state with regional awards held in July.

“The awards underline the commitment and creativity of NSW employers in supporting their staff in improving their skills and without employers these awards would not be possible,” Ms Firth said.

“Judging such a high quality field is a challenging task and I congratulate all of this year’s finalists and winners.

“I would also like to extend my thanks to all our partners, supporters and sponsors, especially the Principal Partner, the Australian Business Limited Apprenticeships Centre.
2010 NSW Training Award Winners

Individual Awards

**Apprentice of the Year**
Garreth Robbs

Cookery Western-Hospitality
(Commercial Cookery) Certificate III
TAFE NSW – Hunter Institute

Employed by: Hospitality Employment Solutions (HTN)
Host Employer: Bistro Molines

**Trainee of the Year**
Gabriella Morona

Rural Skills-Agriculture Certificate III
Murray Mallee Training Company

Employed by: F A N & S Morona

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year**
Russell Freeburn

Certificate IV in Retail Management
TAFE NSW – North Coast Institute

Employed by: Gibbo’s Auto Spares

**School Based Apprentice of the Year**
Alex Jones

Community Services-Aged Care Work Certificate III
TAFE NSW- North Coast Institute

Employed by: Uniting Care NSW ACT
School: Richmond River High School

**Vocational Student of the Year**
Heidi Scher

Certificate IV in Training and Assessment
TAFE NSW – Northern Sydney Institute

Employed by: Howards Storage World

**VET in Schools Student of the Year**
Bethany Hahesy

Business Services-Business Certificate II
TAFE NSW – Sydney Institute
School: Aquinas College

Organisation Awards

**VET in Schools Excellence Award**
TAFE NSW - Western Institute

**Small Training Provider of the Year**
Western College

**Small Business of the Year**
Century 21 Real Estate (River City)

**NSW Training Initiative Award**
Sydney Ferries

**Large Training Provider of the Year**
TAFE NSW-Western Sydney Institute

**Employer of the Year**
O-I Sydney

**Special Industry Award Winners**

**Phil Darby Memorial Award**
Encouragement Award for an Apprentice or Trainee
Nathan Watkins

Certificate III in Food Processing (Retail Baking-Bread)
Trained by: TAFE NSW-Western Sydney Institute
Employed by: Bakers Delight

**Top Apprentice in the Vehicle Trades**
Todd Manwaring

Automotive (Light Vehicle-Mechanical) Certificate III
Trained by: TAFE NSW-Riverina Institute
Employed by: Harden Automotive

**Excellence in Trade Skills**
Benjamin Brown

Drafting Trade (Structural Design) Certificate IV
Trained by: TAFE NSW-Hunter Institute
Employed by: Northrop Consulting Engineers