



Department of
Education and Training

Media Statement

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Attention: News Editor / Chief of Staff

Passion for children leads success in the WA Training Awards 2009

A passion for working in the childcare industry has seen Mindarie mother of two Louise Bythway and Marangaroo children's services lecturer Linda Holmes named as finalists in the prestigious WA Training Awards.

Linda Holmes is one of four finalists in the WA Trainer of the Year category sponsored by the Training Accreditation Council, and Louise Bythway is a finalist in the WA Trainee of the Year category sponsored by GESB.

Mrs Holmes, who has been working in the childcare industry for the past 13 years, said the family day care sector was a booming industry driven by parents wanting to have their children cared for in smaller, more flexible environments.

"Family day care workers have not traditionally accessed TAFE training and I recognised a great potential for tapping into this," she said.

"Many of the care workers have English as a second language and need individualised programs and greater support, so I developed a series of workshops and organised workplace-based assessment.

"I have been delivering training to this sector for around 18 months now and it just keeps getting busier and busier.

"There are now more than 130 students going through the training and I have a number of staff to help me."

Embarking on a new career after 13 years out of the workforce was a daunting prospect for Louise Bythway, but 18 months on she is now a finalist for the WA Trainee of the Year.

Ms Bythway immigrated to Australia from England almost four years ago in search of new opportunities and a better life with her husband and two children, who are now 14 and 15 years old.

"I have always relished the idea of having a career working with young children and now that my children are older I decided to take the opportunity to make my dream a reality," she said.

"I began working at Mindarie Keys Early Learning Centre over three years ago and have worked my way up to being a qualified team leader of the kindergarten room, directly responsible for the care of 90 three to five year olds each week and leading a team of three other staff members.

"It is absolutely wonderful to be nominated for this award but it is even more exciting to be living my dream."

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 Trainee of the Year 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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