

2007 FITEC National Awards

6 June 2007

Award winning night for the forestry and wood manufacturing industries

Wednesday 6 June marked an evening of celebration for those in the forestry and wood manufacturing industries.

Held at the Rotorua convention centre, 400 guests and industry professionals from all over New Zealand gathered to find out which of the 30 finalists won awards in 11 different categories.

FITEC Chief Executive, Ian Boyd says, "Training and education is particularly important for the forestry and wood manufacturing sectors. Not only for personal development, productivity and safety but also to effectively raise skill level and promote the forest industry to the public and future employees and customers.

"The 2007 FITEC National Training Awards have grown significantly in awareness and prestige with hundreds of attendees applauding the best people and companies in the business."

Ian Boyd said it was a means of recognising, rewarding and celebrating training excellence and a way to promote the industry across the two platforms [forestry and wood manufacturing].

Six different sectors of forestry, solid wood processing and wood panel manufacturing, biosecurity, pulp & paper manufacturing and furniture were represented.

"This year's event was hosted by the talented Frankie Stevens. Guests also enjoyed an inspirational presentation about the achievements of multisport champion Steve Gurney – but the evening was really about recognising the successful accomplishments of our finalists and winners."

Organised by FITEC and supported by gold partners ACC Injury Prevention and STIHL, award finalists and winners each received a certificate of achievement, hi-vis gear (provided by Forester Safety Clothing) and prize money. The forestry trainees of the year also received a STIHL chainsaw.

The 11 winners and finalists were:

NZ's Top Furniture Apprentice

(For outstanding workmanship, design and creativity of apprentices working in the furniture industry)

Ja'mi Wells of Design Mobel (Tauranga) showed off her winning design at the ceremony. At just 19-years-old, Ja'mi is passionate about the furniture industry and keen to start up her own business in the future.

STIHL Modern Apprentice of the Year – Forestry

(For outstanding achievement and dedication to learning and self-development)

Christopher Bridgens of PJ & MJ Olsen Ltd (Tokoroa) - Christopher showed just the right mix of professionalism, commitment and skill. He has also received an Environmental Award from CHH Forests for outstanding work near the lake edge and was commended by Environment Waikato for skill, precision and good communication.

Finalists

Simon Fenwick - Hansen EF Ltd

Todd Carew - Timberlands West Coast Ltd

EPMU/NDU Modern Apprentice of the Year – Wood Manufacturing

(For outstanding achievement and dedication to learning and self-development)

Daniel Johnston of Westco Lagan (Hokitika) – Daniel not only has an attitude of perfection, he's a great team player often assisting with the sawmill side of operations. This young Modern Apprentice's career is well under way as a result of hard work, commitment and confidence.

Finalists

Don Carlson - Juken New Zealand Ltd, Masterton

Leslie Meager - Pacific Timber NZ Ltd

Kyle Hewlett - Dongwha Patinna NZ Ltd

MAF Trainee of the Year – Biosecurity

(For outstanding achievement and dedication to continual learning and self-development)

Robyn Hewitt of MAF Quarantine Service (Auckland) - Robyn embraces learning and life with equal amounts of passion. She has strong ambitions and a keenness to seize every training opportunity that presents itself to further her skills and knowledge.

Finalists

Nicole Cairns - MAF Quarantine Service

Nahid Ghadiri - MAF Quarantine Service

STIHL Trainee of the Year – Forestry

(For outstanding achievement and dedication to continual learning and self-development)

This year, two outstanding candidates for this award resulted in joint winners:

Blair McColl of Graham Mitchell Logging (Dunedin) – With precious little time, Blair juggled training, social and home life by choosing to study at the same time as his son. They asked each other questions about what they were learning and found a novel way of spending time together.

Stanley Barlow of PJ & MJ Olsen Ltd (Tokoroa) - Since achieving his national certificates Stan has a stronger sense of pride and self worth. He has gained a lot of confidence as a result and now has set his sights higher and is working towards becoming a certified trainer / assessor.

Finalists

Nathan Wallace - Forest Management New Zealand

Radi Centre Trainee of the Year – Wood Manufacturing

(For outstanding achievement and dedication to continual learning and self-development)

Allan Henley of Tenon Taupo Mouldings – Allan's motto is "you can never stop learning". He says without training and support from Tenon, he would not have been able to achieve his seven national certificates.

Finalists

Warren Burton - Norske Skog Mt Maunganui
Raymond Savage - Norske Skog Mt Maunganui

NZFOA / Matariki Forests National Training Company of the Year – Forestry

(For innovative companies who are committed to people development and have achieved and maintained excellence in providing industry training to their employees.)

Baypine Forestry (Gisborne) - Company directors, Seru and Maureen Tabudravu believe training has not only helped them improve their time management, business people skills and turnover but it has improved their personal relationships with friends and family, suppliers and clients.

Finalists

Ribbonwood Log Supply
Sobieski Contractors

InWood Magazine National Training Company of the Year – Wood Manufacturing

(For innovative companies who are committed to people development and have achieved and maintained excellence in providing industry training to their employees.)

Red Stag Timber (Rotorua) – Tim Rigger from Red Stag says the company managed to gain loyalty and commitment from its employees by promoting learning and development across the site. This is reflected in increased productivity and lower staff turnover. Across the site product volume has increased by up to 40% while high quality products and services are still delivered on time.

Finalists

Juken New Zealand Ltd - Northland Mill
Independent Timber Merchants Ltd

FITEC National Training Mentor of the Year

(For the hard work, commitment and passion of people encouraging, supporting and delivering training to their employees)

Ritz Ellis of Ellis Forestry Training and Assessing Ltd (Turangi) – one of Ritz's major successes is his ability to identify the most appropriate learning style for each individual. He then tailors a training package to suit their needs. As a result of feedback he continuously makes improvements to his teaching to ensure his trainees always receive quality training.

Finalists

Mark Crofskey - Tenon Taupo Mouldings
Kevin Johnson - Tenon Taupo Sawmill

ACC Excellence in Safety Performance – Forestry

(For companies who have achieved excellence in sustained health and safety over a period of time)

Ribbonwood & Arbuckle Group (Tokoroa) – For this award, candidates had to demonstrate a commitment to health and safety training and show the benefits of training to the company and its people. Danny Arbuckle from Ribbonwood and Arbuckle Group uses innovative ideas to increase worksite safety and they have recently produced their own safety DVD.

Finalists

Makerikeri Silviculture

NZ Logger Outstanding Contribution to Industry Training

(For an individual who recognises and promotes the value of training across industry levels)

Kevin Goodman of Ribbonwood Group Ltd (Tokoroa) – For this award, selected finalists must demonstrate a proven commitment to the value of training and leadership not only within their own businesses but the wider community. Kevin is a driving force behind many of the safety training initiatives that we see in the forestry industry today. His nomination highlighted his astute business sense, his ability to deal with a range of people at many levels, and most importantly to stick and succeed within a turbulent industry and to come out on top. He is truly deserving of this award and has touched the lives and hearts of many people through the years.

Finalists

Eddie Creighton - Red Stag Timber Ltd

Steve McLennan - Brand Logging

Each year FITEC (the forestry, wood manufacturing, biosecurity and furniture industries' training organisation) presents its National Training Awards, which recognises the best of the trainees and training companies from the previous year.

Background information about FITEC is available on request and photos of winners/finalists are available after the event.

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