

MEDIA RELEASE

GEELONG CARPENTRY APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR KIERAN COPE NAILS ANNUAL TITLE

22 March 2018

Bannockburn carpentry apprentice Kieran Cope was tonight named Master Builders Geelong Section Apprentice of the Year at Simonds Stadium.

Kieran was among four apprentices from the Geelong region to be awarded for their dedication, skill and hard work.

The other three winners were Employer-nominated winner Digby Watson from Grovedale, Chairman's Award winner Peter Currie from Bell Park and Diploma Student of the Year Joao Ricardo Do Carmo Delgado from Newcombe.

Master Builders' Careers Manager Ingrid Mountford said this year's nominees showed great determination and commitment to building their careers.

"Apprentices have to work hard for this recognition, so there is a great deal of excitement that builds up when they make it this far," she said. "They are genuinely excited about the directions of their careers."

"Kieran has a multifaceted background that helps to illustrate how a building career can take shape from all manner of interests and experiences," she said. "Kieran is a qualified baker, holds a diploma in science, completed a year of study in both criminology and law at Deakin University."

"He is now looking toward his next step of becoming registered as a Domestic Builder-Unlimited," Ms Mountford said.

Employer-nominated apprentice Digby Watson deferred his university degree in construction management in order to gain a hands-on understanding of the coursework he was handling," she said. "He has a keen interest in sustainable building and recognises that good mental health is an important factor in a building career, which can be fraught with all sorts of rewards and pressures alike."

Initially a cabinetmaker for seven years, Chairman's Award winner Peter Currie is a young family man, originally from Benalla. So keen is he to have a strong working relationship with his employer that he looks forward to maintaining it instead of striking out on his own.

Diploma Student of the Year Joao is from Portugal, having moved to Australia in 2015 to pursue a building career. He has learned English in this time and has accomplished training in AUTOCAD, Autodesk Revit and forklifting.

Joao has completed his Diploma of Building and Construction (Building) and takes a strong interest in sustainable building and the ways changing technology can make improvements.

Master Builders Chief Executive Officer Radley de Silva emphasised that apprentices are essential to Victoria's building industry.

"We have a strong need to grow our skilled workforce in the building and construction industry so that it will continue to provide the homes and infrastructure Victoria demands," Mr de Silva said.

"Apprentices help to build our communities," he said. "Acknowledging their hard work and dedication encourages apprentices across Victoria to continue their career path to achieve bigger and greater things in our industry."

Master Builders Regional Apprentice Awards Regional winners are selected after an interview with a panel of three judges. Once awarded, they will be invited to attend the State Apprentice of the Year Awards on 11 May in Melbourne where the overall winners will be announced.

Media welcome – interviews and photos of winners available upon request.

What: Apprentice of the Year Awards (Geelong)

When: 6.30 to 9pm Thursday 22 March

Where: Simonds Stadium, Geelong

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