

Monday, 4 June 2007

High honors for Benalla's SP AusNet apprentice

Benalla SP AusNet Electrical Fitter Apprentice, Jason Ward, has been awarded the 2007 second-year Apprentice of the Year Award. SP AusNet who distributes electricity in the Benalla area designed the award to recognise and reward apprentices who strive to excel in their chosen field. The Apprentice of the Year Award demonstrates SP AusNet's commitment to training, developing and recognising employees.

At a special ceremony held at the company's Melbourne headquarters last week, Mr Ward was presented with an award and congratulated on his outstanding work performance.

Mr Ward, who worked as a welder before beginning his electrical apprenticeship with SP AusNet, said the award would motivate him to work even harder during the final two years of his apprenticeship.

"Changing careers is always a bit risky, but winning this award confirms I have made the right decision and that I'm meeting the expectations of my role. Being awarded an Apprentice of the Year Award is a great confidence booster and I'm very happy to accept it," Mr Ward said.

Now in the third year of his apprenticeship, Mr Ward said the company's Apprentice of the Year Award was a good way to recognise the work and enthusiasm of trainees and apprentices.

"It's great to get some recognition for the effort I have made to learn as much about my trade as possible. I hope the award and the recognition it brings, will encourage younger apprentices to work hard and achieve the most they can in their roles," Mr Ward said.

Mr Ward's role involves constructing and maintaining electrical zone sub-stations, which carry high-voltage electricity. Currently Mr Ward is part of a team working to rebuild a zone sub-station at Clover Flat, near Falls Creek.

Out of 25 second-year apprentices Mr Ward's outstanding performance made him the judges preferred candidate. The judging involved a thorough assessment of his academic results and referee reports on his performance from management, colleagues and peers.

Mr Ward's supervisor and mentor, Graeme Briggs, said Jason was deserving of the celebrated award.

"Jason is a respected member of our team. He has an admirable attitude towards his work and is always looking to learn and develop new skills.

"As an adult apprentice, Jason sets a great example for younger apprentices to follow. He has pursued his career change into the electrical industry with passion and his thirst for knowledge is commendable," Mr Briggs said.

Mr Briggs said SP AusNet's commitment to helping tackle the skills shortage and aging workforce in the electricity supply industry was being achieved by the company's focus on new apprenticeship and trainee programs.

"The most important component of the electricity supply industry's future is the development of skills by way of apprenticeships and traineeships and each year SP AusNet actively recruits, trains and rewards those who join the company as apprentices and trainees," Mr Briggs said.

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