

Strictly embargoed until 12 September 2016, midnight

Whakatane educator integrates industry career and earns national award

A teacher who is inspired by seeing his students succeed will receive a national award at the ASG National Excellence in Teaching Awards (ASG NEiTA) on September 13 at an official ceremony hosted by Hon Hekia Parata MP, Minister of Education, in Wellington's Parliament Buildings.

David Dobbin from Trident High School in Whakatane, who joined the teaching profession as a 'career changer,' is one of six outstanding educators from across New Zealand to receive a national ASG NEiTA award. Selected from more than 200 nominations, the six national award recipients will be honoured for their inspiring and innovative contribution to teaching.

Coming from a trades background, David's teaching strategy (metal technology) is focused on involving students in the decision making process and ensuring they have a good base of core workshop trades skills to help them gain a competitive edge when they leave school.

"My career in industry taught me the value of enriching working lives by empowering staff through involvement in decision making. This style of people management translates directly to a teaching style that allows students to co-construct their own project focus, which heightens their interest and sees them through a comprehensive design process. This results in a successful and well documented project outcome, and one that rewards them with academic results."

David's approach and emphasis on hands-on learning and creating individual and authentic learning opportunities, has seen his students produce very successful results, including energy savings at home from investigations as part of their year 13 course. This has been rolled out more broadly throughout the school with a five-year target of reducing energy consumption by 40 per cent by the end of 2016.

"Seeing students succeed continues to inspire me and maintains my enthusiasm to continue to teach. The teaching strategies, student development and community involvement mechanisms that I use continue to evolve as students present more complex project ideas, and we attempt to keep abreast of external technological innovation."

ASG NEiTA Chairman Allen Blewitt says David Dobbin is a wonderful ambassador of the teaching profession, who has earned the respect of his colleagues and the wider school community.

"David was endorsed by the principal and school council for his enthusiasm and commitment, which has seen the number of students choosing metal technology as a subject double at the school with additional classes required. He has also been able to engage at all levels, from year nine where there is a basic introduction to technology, through to senior years' groups, where students manufacture mini motor-bikes and go-karts, and install solar power systems in the school.

David also constantly challenges himself to keep developing and exploring new ways of engaging students in this ever changing environment, where electronic and social media distractions are increasingly part of their world," said Mr Blewitt.

Parents, grandparents, secondary student councils, school boards, councils, parent associations, committees of management and community organisations throughout New Zealand nominated these six, inspiring national recipients.



Media Release

Chief Executive Officer of ASG NEiTA John Velegrinis says the ASG NEiTA recipients represent quality teachers who through their dedication and passion for education, motivate, encourage and inspire an appetite for lifelong learning in their students.

"I congratulate David along with the other ASG NEiTA recipients. Parents have high aspirations for their children's educational successes and the six national recipients have a fundamental and collaborative role in helping young people find their true passions, nurturing their strengths and ensuring they enjoy their learning experiences. This is the foundation on which young people will continue to embrace their education into adulthood, as they potentially change careers or retrain throughout their lives, adapting to changing markets and demands for specific skills and knowledge.

It is in this spirit that we say education is one of the most critical investments that parents, families and communities make and a pillar of nation building. So it is crucial that we recognise and thank our ASG NEiTA recipients who are at the heart of education and help turn dreams and aspirations into a successful and rewarding future. They are education heroes in their own right and the impact they have in supporting children's education has also been felt in their local communities, engaging with parents from all cultural backgrounds, knocking on the doors of charity organisations and community groups and opening their classroom doors through new lenses," said Mr Velegrinis.

ASG NEiTA has been embraced by communities throughout New Zealand for the last 20 years, marking a significant milestone in recognising the achievement and wonderful contribution of early learning educators, centre directors, principals and teachers.

The six national recipients will each receive \$5000 professional development grants. For more information and to view their ASG NEiTA profiles go to: www.asg.co.nz/neita

For more information, images or to arrange interviews, please contact:

Sarah Thornton
Account Manager, hPR
sarah.thornton@prcomms.com
021 753744

Editors notes:

The Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) is a member owned organisation, helping to create educational opportunities for children. ASG has been helping families and their children for more than 40 years. During this time, more than 530,000 children have been enrolled with ASG and more than \$2.5 billion in education benefits and scholarship payments returned to members.

The ASG National Excellence in Teaching Awards (NEiTA) started in 1994 in Australia and 1996 in New Zealand. Since inception, more than 30,000 teachers have been nominated by the community in the two countries, with more than 1000 teachers receiving almost \$750,000 in professional development grants, prizes and endowments.

For more information visit: www.asg.co.nz

