



2009 NESAs Awards for Excellence winners

Australia's greatest employment success stories of the past 12 months were shared on stage on 27 August, when the winners of the 2009 NESAs Awards for Excellence were announced.

Sally Sinclair, CEO of NESAs and host of the Awards, said "While the awards recognise a special few, all providers of Australian Government-funded employment services have achieved something remarkable by helping millions of Australians into work.

"These awards are the earliest recognition of those dedicated professionals who are working in the new Job Services Australia system. There are few programs that truly acknowledge the direct and lasting impact that employment services have on improving the social fabric of our society. The NESAs Awards for Excellence do," she said.

All finalists and winners were presented with their trophies and certificates by Senator The Hon. Mark Arbib, Minister for Employment Participation, and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Government Service Delivery. The Hon. Jason Clare, Parliamentary Secretary for Employment, and Sally Sinclair assisted with the presentations.

Achiever of the Year

Sponsored by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
Terry Bahl from Ballarat, VIC – nominated by BEST Community Development

Just a few years ago, Terry was well-known in Ballarat for all the wrong reasons. He used to suffer from drug and alcohol addiction, subsequently lost his teeth, became homeless, and was convicted of numerous crimes. Impacting on all these things was clinical depression and a disabling anxiety disorder. With the help of his employment services provider – a commitment which spanned more than a decade – Terry overcame his addictions, began taking medication and seeing a counsellor. He now has a set of sparkling new dentures, and trains job seekers. He now, understandably, can't stop smiling.

Champion Employer of the Year

Sponsored by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
Cox Industries from Acacia Ridge, QLD – nominated by Centacare Employment Group

Cox Industries is Australia's premier manufacturer of ride-on mowers. The company prides themselves on being 'the tough Australian', however, the judges saw their softer side. Almost a quarter of the manufacturing plant workforce are former Job Services Australia job seekers. Cox Industries began looking to employment service providers two years ago and have been working solidly with Centacare ever since, with 18 former job seekers currently placed in full-time work. More than half of these Brisbane workers are ex-prisoners, about 25 percent are Indigenous, several have a hearing impairment, and others are refugees from countries such as Sudan.

Employment Consultant of the Year

Sponsored by NESAs

Belinda Farley-Wills from The Salvation Army Employment Plus Launceston, TAS

Her determination to assist up to 100 Tasmanian Aboriginal people find employment has translated to this national accolade. Belinda works for The Salvation Army Employment Plus in Launceston, is herself a Tasmanian Aborigine, and is a member of the Stolen Generation. She has invested more than 15 years working for her community to make it a better place, and that's included providing other indigenous people with skills that translate to a brighter future in employment. Belinda comes from a large family of, yet she sees all Aboriginal people as family. This will help her with her next challenge – to extend the influence of her skills to breathe new hope into the lives of unemployed people living on Flinders Island.

Secret agents...revealed!

The gala awards dinner was held at The Hilton in Sydney and attended by more than 400 industry leaders as part of the NESAs National Conference.

Winners were hailed as secret agents who had achieved incredible feats, proving that when we set our minds to it, *anything's possible*. Renowned 'perceptionist' Tom Berger then amazed guests, reading their minds and blurring the lines between the possible and impossible.

Right: The gala awards dinner in the Sydney Hilton's 'Grand Ballroom'.



Above left: Employment Consultant of the Year national finalists (left to right) – Cheryl Jungbauer from MatchWorks, Vicky Hourigan from Campbell Page, and national winner, Belinda Farley-Wills from TSAEP.

Above right: National Achiever of the Year winner, Terry Bahl.



Questions?

Contact the Awards Convenors on **1300 88 22 59** or at nesa@awardsabsolute.com.



Stars of the employment services industry