



Longstanding Connection

THIS MONTH WE REFLECT ON THE FUTURE LEADERS OF THE INDUSTRY PROGRAM AND ITS LONGSTANDING CONNECTION WITH THE PRE-EMINENT SKILLS COMPETITION FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS - WORLDSKILLS.

Of the 53 recipients of the Future Leaders of the Industry award, the vast majority are autobody repair or refinish technicians. The objective of the program is, of course, to identify and recognise the emerging talent in their formative years, appreciating that as young men and women, their futures are very much yet to be written.

While it was never the intent to establish a connection with WorldSkills, the very nature of the program has led to several Future Leaders going on to compete at regional, national and international WorldSkills competitions and, in some cases, some have even gone on to become WorldSkills judges.

As we are all too aware, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the WorldSkills Nationals to the extent that some states were forced to run their competition remotely. As we went to print, the autobody repair and

refinish categories in NSW were scheduled to take place on 23 and 24 October at Ultimo TAFE, although some regional winners were possibly unable to attend due to ongoing restrictions. However, we are pleased to report that at least two Future Leaders were confirmed competitors: Jaiden Tesoriero in the autobody repair category and Isabella Turrise in the refinish category.

Jaiden was born and raised in southwest Sydney in the Casula-Liverpool area where he went to All Saints Catholic College. Whilst still at school, he did work experience at Milperra Road Smash Repairs where his dad worked as a spray painter, which is where he caught the automotive bug. After completing Year 10, Jaiden just couldn't wait to start an apprenticeship, which he commenced at Smash Tec in Marrickville and went to

Campbelltown TAFE to learn his craft. The support and guidance of his employer, his dad Jason, his teacher Dat Bui, and Campbelltown TAFE head teacher Carl Tinsley, really paid off as he was the gold medallist at the Sydney West WorldSkills Regional competition.

Isabella (Bella) was born in Canberra and grew up in the small NSW town of Queanbeyan, where she developed her interest in cars and completed a VET automotive course. The next step was a pre-apprenticeship in automotive, followed by a Certificate III in automotive refinishing, also at Campbelltown TAFE. Bella was identified as an up-and-coming talent in late 2018, winning an AAPR scholarship award, and in 2019 she was encouraged by Tinsley to enter the WorldSkills Regionals, where she was the gold medallist gold medal in car painting. In an interesting twist this year, one of the judges for the vehicle refinish category will be Maxine Colligan, a Future Leader from 2018 and bronze medallist from Kazan.

We wish all the competitors in this year's WorldSkills National Competition the very best of luck and look forward to finding out who will be the next Skillaroos when the competition has been completed.



Bella with Carl Tinsley.



Jaiden showing off his best work.

IAG's ongoing support and sponsorship of these awards is greatly appreciated, as is I-CAR Australia's donation of two training courses valued at over \$500 to each Future Leader of the Industry.

