



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Outstanding Apprentices Recognised as Award Finalists Announced

The MTA Institute's (RTO No.31529) best and brightest apprentices have been recognised for their excellence and dedication to the automotive trade, with the finalists officially announced for the 2022 MTA Queensland Apprentice of the Year award.

To be presented at the annual MTA Queensland Industry Awards Gala on Saturday, 19th November 2022, the Apprentice of the Year is traditionally bestowed upon an MTA Institute apprentice who has demonstrated a dedication to learning while performing above and beyond expectations throughout their apprenticeship.

Thanks to tool sponsor Milwaukee Tool, the 2022 Apprentice of the Year will take home a 218-piece automotive starter toolkit A1, ensuring they are equipped with the necessary equipment to thrive as they continue on their journey into the automotive trade. The runners-up, meanwhile, will receive a Milwaukee Tool 3/8" Drive 56-piece Ratchet & Socket Set.

The 12 individuals in the running for the 2022 MTA Institute Apprentice of the Year award are:

- **Mitchell Johnston** – recently completed his light vehicle apprenticeship with Cam Duffy Autos, Malanda
- **Todd Marshall** – recently completed his light vehicle apprenticeship with Insane Performance, Rockhampton
- **Andrew Shepherd** – recently completed his heavy commercial vehicle apprenticeship with Trucks on the Run, Toowoomba
- **Britain Leotta** – second-year automotive electrical apprentice from Mackay Transit Coaches

Motor Trades Association of Queensland

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- **Emily Hodda** – fourth-year heavy commercial vehicle apprentice from BMAS Biloela
- **Grace Campbell** – fourth-year parts interpreting apprentice from Central Bike Centre, Emerald
- **Jack Farraway** – third-year light vehicle apprentice from Done Right Automotive, Charters Towers
- **Timothy Loudon** – fourth-year light vehicle apprentice from GMW Mechanical & Towing, Gladstone
- **Nathan Faggotter** – second-year automotive electrical apprentice from Longreach Motors
- **Klarah Cassar-Tan** – fourth-year light vehicle apprentice from Mercedes-Benz Sunshine Coast
- **Lucas Giacoboni** – third-year light vehicle apprentice from Auto Giant, Brendale
- **Phoenix Ah-Toon** – third-year automotive refinishing apprentice from Allspec Coatings, Yatala

MTA Institute General Manager Paul Kulpa said, “With over 2,200 apprentices currently training with the MTA Institute, the standard of nominations for the Apprentice of the Year award has never been higher. I am absolutely blown away by the passion and the craft our finalists have exhibited throughout their apprenticeships to this point, and I congratulate them all on this well-deserved recognition.

“As the automotive industry continues to experience critical skill and labour shortages here in Queensland, the ability to come together to recognise and acknowledge those achieving and doing incredible things has never been more important. I have little doubt these individuals will continue to aspire to great heights as they progress on their journey in the automotive industry.

“I am also excited by the breadth of regions being represented by this year’s finalists. From the Gold Coast to Malanda, and from Gladstone, Mackay, and Rockhampton to Biloela, Longreach and Charters Towers, this is the most geographically diverse group of finalists we have ever had and speaks to our commitment to delivering crucial skills right across the State.”

MTA Queensland would like to thank platinum supporters Spirit Super, BUSY At Work and Capricorn for their support of the Industry Awards Gala.

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The Motor Trades Association of Queensland (**MTA Queensland**) is the peak body representing the interests of employers in the retail, repair, and service sectors of Queensland's automotive industry. MTA Queensland has been performing its vital representative role for the automotive industry since 1929. In Queensland there are some 16,000 automotive businesses employing more than 90,000 people, that generate more than \$7.24 billion to the state economy annually. The automotive industry is estimated to contribute \$37 billion to the Australian economy each year. The Association represents and promotes issues of relevance to all levels of government. In 2019 MTA Queensland was announced as an ABA100 winner in The Australian Business Awards and a finalist in the Lord Mayor's Business Awards, for Business Innovation.

The **MTA Institute (RTO 31529)** is the leading automotive training provider in Queensland offering nationally recognised training, covering technical, retail and the aftermarket sectors of the automotive industry. The MTA Institute is the largest independent automotive training provider in Queensland, employing experienced trainers who are geographically dispersed from Cairns to the Gold Coast and Toowoomba to Emerald. In the last year, the MTA Institute delivered accredited courses to more than 2,000 students. The MTA Institute is the first trade RTO in Australia to be approved under the ITECA Industry Certification Program and was the winner of the Small Training Provider of the Year at the 2019 Queensland Training Awards.

MTAiQ, Australia's first automotive innovation hub established by MTA Queensland in 2017, is an ecosystem that supports innovation and research for the motor trades.

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