

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
27 November 2024

Celebrating Excellence in Automotive as MTA Queensland Reveals 2024 Industry Award Winners

On Saturday, 23 November, MTA Queensland hosted its 2024 Industry Awards Gala, a spectacular evening that celebrated the excellence and dedication of business owners, entrepreneurs, and apprentices across Queensland's automotive sector.

Hosted by Channel 7's Ben Davis, the night was filled with delicious food, live entertainment, and dancing, with a thrilling addition in the form of special guest speaker Will Brown, the newly crowned 2024 Repco Supercars Champion. Brown's presence electrified the room and further elevated the night's excitement.

The event recognised excellence in six prestigious categories: Community, Innovation, Women in Industry, Small Business Excellence, Large Business Excellence, and Apprentice of the Year. Congratulations to the 2024 award winners:

Community Award

The Community Award was presented to **Wheelnutz Garage**, a business that has truly made its mark in promoting diversity and inclusion within the automotive industry. Known for offering hands-on experiences for individuals with disabilities, Wheelnutz Garage also launched the "Torque it Out" initiative, providing vital mental health support to men in the South Brisbane area. The company's tireless efforts to foster an inclusive and supportive environment make it a deserving recipient of this award.

Innovation Award

The Innovation Award was awarded to **Maryborough Service Centre**, a standout business renowned for its commitment to technological advancement. A three-time winner of the Repco Authorised Service – Service Centre of the Year award, Maryborough Service Centre continually raises the bar with its investment in employee training, smart inspection tools, and ADAS calibration equipment. The company's forward-thinking approach positions it for sustained success.

Women in Industry Award

Barbara Sparrow, Service Manager at Mike Carney Toyota in Townsville, was honoured with the Women in Industry Award. A proven leader, Barbara manages a diverse team of 89 and has spearheaded initiatives to enhance customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. Her exceptional leadership has not only elevated her team but has also had a profound impact on the industry as a whole.



Small Business Award for Excellence

The Small Business Award for Excellence was presented to **Highfields Mechanical**, an independent workshop based in Toowoomba. Known for its unwavering commitment to customer satisfaction and a forward-thinking approach to business operations, Highfields Mechanical stands out as a regional leader. The company's focus on staff development, exceptional customer service, and active community engagement earned it this well-deserved recognition.

Large Business Award for Excellence

Auto Parts Group (APG) took home the Large Business Award for Excellence, after achieving a remarkable 20% year-over-year growth. The company's success was driven by strategic initiatives, including employee development programs, facility expansions, and the launch of an innovative recycled product line. APG's dedication to operational efficiencies and cutting-edge technology set a new benchmark in the industry.

Apprentice of the Year Award

The coveted Apprentice of the Year Award went to Kye Robinson, a light vehicle apprentice at BMAS Biloela. Kye's remarkable skills and dedication to excellence have set him apart as a future leader in the automotive industry. As part of this prestigious recognition, Kye will receive a 191-piece toolkit, courtesy of Repco, and an incredible opportunity to gain hands-on experience with the Penrite Racing team, thanks to Gates Australia. He will spend a week in their Melbourne workshop, further honing his expertise.

Rod Camm, CEO of MTA Queensland, congratulated all the winners, noting: "The Awards Gala is the pinnacle of Queensland's automotive event calendar, a celebration of the outstanding individuals and businesses that drive our industry forward. The resilience, innovation, and commitment displayed by our members – particularly in the face of challenges such as supply constraints and economic uncertainty – has been nothing short of inspiring. Congratulations to all of our 2024 winners. We look forward to seeing their continued success in the years ahead."

MTA Queensland would also like to extend its heartfelt gratitude to the generous support of its platinum sponsors: BUSY At Work, Capricorn, CareSuper, and Gates Corporation, whose partnership made the event possible.

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About MTA Queensland:

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.

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