



MEDIA RELEASE

**Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Justice
Minister for Industrial Relations**

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LOCAL ATSI STUDENT WINS AWARDS FOR COURT WORK

Belmont High School student Jade Luke's dream of a career in law has received a boost, after being awarded the highest honour at the Vocational Educational and Training Workplace Excellence Awards in Belmont on Tuesday night.

Jade was named Student of the Year and received an award for Excellence in a School-Based Traineeship in Business Services for her performance during an 18-month placement at Belmont Courthouse.

NSW Attorney General John Hatzistergos said 18-year-old Jade was a worthy recipient of the awards.

"Staff and clients of the court have been impressed by Jade's strong work ethic and her desire to strengthen programs that assist the Aboriginal community," Mr Hatzistergos said.

"She has developed a reputation as a fast learner and has been rewarded with additional responsibilities that include handling counter enquiries, the sound recording of court proceedings and even training other work experience students."

Belmont Courthouse was also recognised at last night's ceremony, winning an award for Excellence as an Employer in Business Services.

"The court's Aboriginal school-based traineeship program is a great way for Indigenous school students to learn career skills and to prepare for the next stage of their lives," Belmont Courthouse Registrar Jeff Reid said.

"Court staff have invested a significant amount of time training Jade and it has been extremely rewarding to see her develop into an efficient and meticulous worker and a valued member of our team."

Jade, who is midway through her HSC, will complete the traineeship program next Thursday.

"Everyone at Belmont Courthouse has been really supportive and it will be sad to say goodbye," Jade said.

"But I am interested in studying law at university, so who knows, maybe one day I will come back to the court."

Member for Swansea Robert Coombs also paid tribute to Jade and staff at the Belmont Courthouse.

“This is excellent recognition for Jade who has worked extremely hard over the last 18 months to develop her business skills and I wish her all the very best in her future career,” Mr Coombs said.

The Vocational Educational and Training Workplace Excellence Awards recognise Newcastle and Lake Macquarie students and employers who have delivered outstanding results in structured workplace learning or school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.

The awards ceremony was hosted by Career Links, a Local Community Partnership (LCP) between schools, TAFE and industry, which has been funded by the NSW and Australian Government. The ceremony also received support from local businesses.