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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2023-2024 Timber Queensland Growth Scholarship Recipients Announced

Timber Queensland is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2023-24 Growth Scholarship Awards Program.

Timber Queensland's Strategic Relations Manager Clarissa Brandt said entries increased by 50% from the inaugural 2022-2023 program and the calibre of entries was impressive.

"It's an amazing opportunity to receive one of these Awards, and it was definitely a difficult task for our hardworking judging committees," said Clarissa Brandt.

"Applicants are early to mid-career professionals and skilled workers who have given thought about their future career paths and developed learning project ideas that will benefit their individual growth and contribute to the development of Queensland's forest and timber industry," she said.

"The recipients represent a variety of sectors within our industry supply chain forestry, harvesting, processing and building. Based on the experience of the inaugural award recipients, they will gain valuable skills, knowledge and connections as they implement their learning projects."

The recipients of the 2023 – 2024 Awards are:

\$10,000 Kennedy's Timber Award

Katie Fowden

Learning Project "Canadian Exemplar First Nations Forestry Partnerships"

\$5000 AKD Award

John Said

Learning Project "Mechanisation of the Pruning Regime"

\$5000 HQPlantations Award

Nicola Morris

Learning Project "Designing a Healthy Home – Researching Building Biology & Passivhaus Principles"

\$2500 DTM Timber Award

Daniel Schweitzer

Learning Project "Certificate IV in Work Health & Safety"

Recipient of the Kennedy's Timber Award Katie Fowden, Strategic Relations Manager at Hyne Timber, said she is very excited about the incredible opportunity to implement her learning project.

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“The aim of my study tour is to examine Canadian processes to establish First Nations sustainable forestry partnerships, which are significantly more advanced than Australia’s. I will investigate how long Canada took to establish these partnerships, the financial modelling, lessons learned and where such partnerships failed and why,” said Katie Fowden.

“The major benefit of my learning project, subject to findings, will be the opportunity to influence policy and provide a legacy of the Brisbane Olympics for not only more production forestry in the group, but potential engagement of First Nations people in managing those forests and gaining economic and social value for their generations to come,” she said.

AKD Award recipient John Said will travel to Germany to explore various new options for mechanized pruning that are being implemented internationally.

“My learning project will allow me to gauge the effectiveness of this technology and determine if it is economically viable to implement as a works program. I will gain experience working with engineers, forest growers and plywood and veneer manufactures,” said John Said.

“Pruning is vital to the *Araucaria cunninghamii* estate, there is great value in clear knot free timber. Specifically *Araucaria cunninghamii*, but great value can also be added to the sawn timber of exotic plantation pine species of Australia. By working alongside industry developments in autonomous and mechanical pruning I will be on the forefront of best practice for our forest. These learnings can be applied across Australia forest industry allowing me to further my network and contacts,” he said.

Nicola Morris, a Carpenter working for Eco Cottages, a manufacturer of prefabricated and relocatable modular homes, has received the HQPlantations Award and is going to undertake study on building biology and passivhaus principles. Nicola will learn to design and build a home that supports human health and wellbeing with the dual intention of reducing the impact on our natural environment.

“I know my vocation within the construction industry will only continue to foster and grow. My father is a carpenter and I have been surrounded by design and construction my whole life. As I discover my own authentic path within construction I only become more and more passionate. I am excited and motivated to continue adding more strings to my bow. I feel the variety of short courses that comprise my Learning Project will benefit my current role at Eco Cottages and beyond,” said Nicola Morris.

“For a multitude of reasons timber is the obvious choice of material for a healthy home. Choosing the right timber fit for purpose and non-toxic finishes is key to its longevity. Due to these reasons and others I can’t put words to, my soul is drawn to timber. Hence my desire to continue developing my skills and awareness of working with this incredible matter,” she said.

Long-term GMT Logging employee Daniel Schweitzer started working in the timber industry when he was 16, growing to love the industry and what it delivers.

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"I have operated numerous logging machines over my years in the timber Industry, but have recently shifted to a safety role and would like to gain qualifications to help me encourage a safe working environment for our employees.," said Daniel Schweitzer.

The DTM Timber Award will support Daniel undertake a Certificate IV in Work Health and Safety.

"A greater knowledge in safety can help reduce the incidents and injuries for which our industry is known for being one of the highest risk categories," he said

"This Learning Project will help me within my current job role and assist me in demonstrating a good understanding of health and safety and develop better systems to protect our employees."

Clarissa Brandt said Timber Queensland has been very pleased with the growing interest in the Growth Scholarship program.

"The judging committees were very impressed and there were some long and very considered meetings to select the recipients. In recognition of this Lisa Ottenhaus has been identified as the Runner Up for the Kennedy's Timber Award and industry will be provide in-kind rather than financial support to help her achieve some goals identified in her Learning Project 'Enablers and barriers of a circular forest and timber bioeconomy in Australia and New Zealand', " she said.

"Doubling the number of applicants and achieving an equitable gender balance in the second year of the program is a great outcome for our industry. The ongoing support and commitment of our Foundation partner Kennedy's Timber, Diamond partners AKD and HQPlantations and our Ruby partner DTM Timber means that the program will continue to expand. We would like to thank all our partners for their gracious support, as well as the industry stakeholders who assisted with the selection process," she said.

Clarissa Brandt says Timber Queensland appreciates the time and effort put into the applications.

"We have encouraged all candidates to take consolation from the wise words of one applicant who has said although they were unsuccessful there was reward in taking the time in considering their career and where they want to be in five years. Taking time out of our busy work and personal lives to find direction is to be valued and will undoubtedly provide rewards in some other way,' she said.

Reports from recipients of the 2022-2023 *Growth Scholarship* Program are available [here](#).

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Available Images. The following images can be downloaded from this [dropbox](#).

1. KatieFowden.jpg
2. JohnSaid.jpg
3. NicolaMorris.jpg
4. Daniel Schweitzer.jpg
5. Growth Scholarship recipients.png

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