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## Beating the skills crunch with HIA training scholarships

The Housing Industry Association (HIA) has awarded 30 young tradespeople from across Australia thousands of dollars in training scholarships to tackle mounting skills shortages crippling the residential building industry.

Last year HIA, in partnership with JELD-WEN Australia and supported by STRATCO, launched the *HIA Build Your Future* program – an industry-driven initiative supporting apprentices and young tradespeople in residential building.

HIA Hunter Regional Executive Director Steve Jeffries congratulated three young tradespeople in Hunter who were granted HIA Training Scholarships;

- Brenton Pearce
- Jari Mowatt-Penna
- Lee Stevens

“They will set a fine example for other young people in our industry who recognise the need to continually strive to improve their skills,” Mr Jeffries said. “HIA and its partners are pleased to be able to support these young Australians in their endeavours.”

“As our workforce ages and fewer apprentices join our industry, it’s crucial that we keep striving to equip up-and-coming generations with the skills, knowledge and encouragement to build our future homes. Increasing our skilled workforce will also help address mounting housing shortages – we are currently under-building by about 15,000 homes in NSW each year,” Mr Jeffries said.

The cost of training towards getting a trade licence can often be very expensive. These scholarships provide the financial means to help young Australians get the right qualifications, business skills and better prepare themselves towards a successful future.

Nominees were asked what career aspirations they had and how they would use the new skills acquired from the scholarship.

“It was rewarding to see so many nominees wanting to advance their skills with the ultimate goal to independently operate their own business in the residential building industry,” Mr Jeffries said. “Many also expressed the importance of providing quality workmanship and service, as well as the need for environmental responsible housing.”

To learn more about the *HIA Build Your Future Program* visit <http://hia.com.au/buildyourfuture/> and associated Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/buildyourfuture>

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