TAFE Illawarra student wins the Inaugural Steve Hornery Award!

A Retail Baking student from TAFE Illawarra has been awarded the Inaugural Steve Hornery Award at a presentation held at TAFE NSW Sydney Institute in Ultimo recently.

This year’s award was received by Jessica Timpano in recognition of her achievements and enthusiasm. Jessica completed a Certificate III in Food Processing (Retail Baking – Combined) at Wollongong Campus in 2011 and also competed in the National WorldSkills competition this year.

“We are very proud of Jessica’s wonderful achievement and especially as this is the first time the award has been presented,” said Ms Dianne Murray, Institute Director.

As a fitting tribute to Steve, the generosity and support that he was well known for continues through the development of the Steve Hornery Trust. This Trust is managed by the Hunter TAFE Foundation and the financial assistance that rewards the recipient of the Steve Hornery Award.

The Steve Hornery Award is presented at each WorldSkills National Competition event to a NSW competitor. All NSW national competition competitors in all categories are in the running to be awarded this prestigious award.

Jessica showed a depth of character which embodies the competition spirit in which Steve would be proud to be associated with.

Jessica works at Cavallaro’s Cakes in Liverpool as an apprentice Pastry Chef and leading up to the National Competition would travel to Wollongong Campus to attend class and train for the WorldSkills competition. She even trained in her own time with her supervisor from work.

Jessica was involved in a workplace accident about four weeks prior to the WorldSkills Competition. Jessica’s fingers were damaged in a nut grinder and she was admitted to Liverpool Hospital where she underwent surgery to repair six of her fingers with countless stitches. She endured a skin graft along with weeks of physiotherapy to regain movement of her fingers.

Jessica’s determination, focus and thoughts at this stage were of the WorldSkills National Competition and the ability to compete.

Unable to use her hands Jessica continued to do research for the competition at home until she was able to use her hands again. She was only able to work with her fingers 10 days before the Competition. For Jessica, this meant coming into the competition with an existing injury. She knew from the beginning the competition would be a greater challenge than normal and armed with numerous cotton and rubber gloves she arrived with a smile and determination.

By the end of the first day of competition Jessica’s fingers had started to swell and the pain had gotten to an unbearable level. After icing her hands and regaining her composure she submitted what she had managed to complete.

By the third day Jessica had clearly demonstrated her professional attitude, great perseverance and determination and it was inspiring to watch. The quality of the work she produced even with her injuries was of a very high standard.

Media are invited to interview Jessica. Please call Maria Sevastis on 4222 2928 to organise a suitable time.