Minister Firth honours outstanding public school students

September 10, 2008

Minister for Education and Training Verity Firth today honoured 39 of NSW’s best and brightest public school students at the 2008 Minister’s Award for Excellence in Student Achievement.

The winning students were chosen from across NSW for their achievements in academic excellence as well as sporting, cultural, leadership and community contribution.

Ms Firth said the winners had demonstrated a determination to succeed and desire to contribute.

“These young people have embraced the opportunities provided by our schools and proven that achievement in public education has no limits,” Ms Firth said.

“Each recipient is a role model for other students at their school and a wonderful ambassador for their local communities and their families.

“On top of outstanding academic performance, these students have shown a commitment to their local communities through volunteering.

“These awards encourage a well-rounded education, which includes helping others and giving back to your community.

“We are recognising young people who demonstrate a show integrity, respect and responsibility as well as excellence.

“With the HSC beginning next month, I hope this award gives these students extra motivation to perform well.”

Ms Firth said the award recipients should be proud not only of this award but the valued work they had put into their communities.

“Qaanita Van Heerden, Beverly Hills Girls High School in Sydney’s South West is one of the 2008 Minister’s Award for Excellence in Student Achievement winners, and was nominated for her school leadership and community service,” said Ms Firth.

“Another award recipient is the school captain of Penrith High School, Stuart Bryson, who is an outstanding debater and sportsman.

“His intelligence and enthusiasm were recognised when he was selected to represent Australia at the 40th Annual The Hague International Model United Nations Assembly, where he received the Best Delegate Award for his work in the Disarmament Commission.”

Up to 40 awards are presented to NSW public school student across the State each year.

Students are nominated on the basis of achievement throughout their high school years, but with particular recognition of excellence in Years 11 and 12.
2008 Minister’s Award for Excellence in Student Achievement Recipients

HUNTER AND CENTRAL COAST REGION
Courtney Coburn, Lambton High School
Blaine Reichel, Scone High School
Debbie Belfield, Scone High School
Joel Hodge, Rutherford Technology High School

ILLAWARRA AND SOUTH COAST REGION
Vera Planert, Bega High School
Emily Criticos, Bega High School
Holly Isemonger, Kiama High School
Alexandra Berriman, Kiama High School
Melissa Logan, Albion Park High School

NEW ENGLAND REGION
Jessie McKenzie, Oxley High School
Belinda Williams, Oxley High School
Ross Willing, Oxley High School

NORTH COAST REGION
Stephanie Bennett, Wollumbin High School
Laura Bereicua, Westport High School
Melissa Cork, Ballina High School
Kristen Doherty, Kadina High School
Eleanor Fleetwood, Richmond River High School

NORTHERN SYDNEY REGION
Kenta Treacher, North Sydney Boys High School
Eileen Kerr, Northern Beaches Secondary College, Mackellar Girls Campus

RIVERINA REGION
Emma Byrne, Wagga Wagga High School
Emily Fisher, Wagga Wagga High School
Teagan Gerrard, Corowa High School

JARROD HULME-JONES, Kooringal High School

SOUTH WESTERN SYDNEY REGION
Maccia Al-Hamwi, Beverly Hills Girls High School
Qaanita Van Heerden, Beverly Hills Girls High School
Steven Grant, Campbelltown Performing Arts High School
Emily Phimmachanh, Moorebank High School

SYDNEY REGION
Nina Ubaldi, Sydney Girls High School
William Jackson, Fort Street High School
Nathan McDonnell, Sydney Boys High School
Katherine Pendlebury, St George Girls High School

WESTERN REGION
Shannon Waine, Denison College, Bathurst High Campus
Zoe Stone, Coomealla High School
Chloe Mackie, Coomealla High School
Courtney Lane, Nyngan High School

WESTERN SYDNEY REGION
Joseph Callingham, Model Farms High School
Rosemary Baird, Cumberland High School
Jean-Marie Voon, James Ruse Agricultural High School
Stuart Bryson, Penrith High School