

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Championing change: Bunnings Trade calls on women in apprenticeships to step forward for 2026 awards



Fabrication Welder, Sasha Devia, 2025 Women in Apprenticeships winner in her element.

**Nominations are now open for the 2026 Bunnings Trade Women in Apprenticeships Awards, which will recognise six female apprentices with a support pack valued at over \$11,000 to help kickstart their trade careers.**

One year on from being named a Bunnings Trade Women in Apprenticeships Award winner, TRT's sole female fabrication welder, Sasha Devia, is turning recognition into real-world results and helping pave the way for more women to follow.



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One of four women recognised through the initiative, Sasha is nearing the completion of her four-year apprenticeship and says the award support has played a pivotal role in her professional development and personal confidence.

“The award has been huge for me,” said Devia. “I’ve been able to invest in tools I use every day at work, build confidence working on projects at home, and even help out my son’s ice hockey team by repairing a broken goal. Being able to give back using the skills I’m building is incredibly rewarding and it’s something I want to keep doing in my community.”

The Bunnings Trade Women in Apprenticeships Awards recognise and support women in the early stages of their trade careers, helping to close the gap in the underrepresented sector.

Beyond her day-to-day role, Sasha continues to give back, offering welding support to local sports clubs and schools, using her growing skillset wherever it’s needed. Looking ahead, she hopes to do even more to support other women.

“I’d love to create a space where women can learn the basics. How to use tools safely, change a tyre, or just feel confident having a go,” she said. “It’s about celebrating independence and knowing you can rely on yourself.”

Head of Bunnings Trade New Zealand, Matt Heinrich, said Sasha’s journey captures the purpose of the Bunnings Trade Women in Apprenticeships Awards.

“These awards exist to recognise and celebrate women in the trades, and we’re proud to open nominations for 2026 and continue backing the people who strengthen the industry. We’re excited to uncover the next group of trailblazers making their mark and inspiring others to give it a go.”

Last year’s winners also included Samantha Lee (electrician, Auckland), Mikyla Wardlaw-Ruru (carpenter, Whakatāne) and Lola Williams (carpenter, Napier).

All three women represent the growing strength and diversity of talent entering New Zealand’s trades sector.

Samantha has carved out a new career as an Auckland based electrician after leaving the corporate world, using her online platform to inspire others considering the same path.

In Whakatāne, Mikyla balances her carpentry career with community leadership, volunteering her time to local sports and marae projects while continuing to push through industry barriers.

Meanwhile, Napier apprentice Lola is steadily building her future in construction, investing in her tools, training and opportunities as she follows her family’s trade legacy.

Together, they showcase the determination, skill and community spirit shaping the next generation of Kiwi tradies.

Nominations close midnight Friday 10 April 2026 with winners to be announced in May.

To nominate or learn more, visit: [Women In Apprenticeships Award – Bunnings Trade NZ](#)

**ENDS**



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## Notes to the editor:

### About Women in Apprenticeships Awards

Bunnings Trade is proudly supporting women in the trade and construction industry for the second year through the Women in Apprenticeships Awards. This initiative celebrates and empowers women in the early stages of their trade careers by providing recognition and support to help close the gap in this underrepresented sector.

Nominations are now [open](#). If you're a woman in an apprenticeship or know someone who deserves to be acknowledged, nominate them today.

Prize packs include Bunnings gift cards as well as products and vouchers from leading suppliers, including:

- AEG
- Stanley Black & Decker
- Kincome
- Full Boar
- CiteCo
- Esky
- Green Hip Workwear gift card
- SheWear gift card
- Hard Yakka gift card
- Bunnings gift card
- Bunnings merch
- Paslode merch
- Mechanix Gloves – one year's supply

### About Bunnings Trade

Bunnings Trade is a major supplier to project builders, commercial tradespeople and the housing industry. It serves the industry through a network of 51 trading locations made up of 42 stores and 9 trade centres.

<https://trade.bunnings.co.nz/>

