



MEDIA RELEASE
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Regional carpentry apprentices compete in the capital for top honour

Following a series of regional events that involved building children's playhouses, twelve regional champions gathered in Wellington over 26-28 May for the national final of the Certified Builders Carpentry Apprentice Challenge.

Clement Richer, 34, from Herne Bay, Auckland, took away the top prize. Second place was awarded to Wade Puklowski, 23, from Nelson, and third to Adam Johnson, 24, from Whangaparaoa, Auckland. Max Southworth, 23, from Tauranga, received the Chairman's Personality Award.

The final event took place at the New Zealand Certified Builders Association (NZCB) 18th annual conference and expo.

NZCB Chief Executive, Grant Florence, said the conference was a fitting backdrop for the final event, as it gave the apprentices a chance to mingle with, and learn from, experienced builders and other tradespeople.

"As the only building trade association that requires trade-qualification for membership, a major focus for NZCB is fostering more quality apprentices.

"This is one of the reasons why we run our Carpentry Apprentice Challenge, as well as to recognise the talent coming up in the industry – and I'm not just talking about young talent.

"The age of our apprentice challenge finalists this year ranges from 19 to 41 years, and half of them are over the age of 25. There's a growing number of people who are seeing building as an attractive career path and retraining later in life, which is great.

"The apprentices' technical skills were tested during the regional events, where they were tasked with building a children's playhouse to set specifications within an eight-hour timeframe. The final challenge involved a panel interview and presentation to test their theoretical knowledge and communication, which are particularly important skills to hone in an industry that demands a high standard of professionalism," said Mr Florence.

This is the 9th year of the Certified Builders Carpentry Apprentice Challenge, which is run by NZCB and the Industry Training Association Building (ITAB), in conjunction with industry training providers across New Zealand.

Clement Richer takes away over \$15,000 worth of prizes including trade quality tools and an Outward Bound scholarship.

While at the NZCB conference and expo, apprentices also took part in a Great Apprentice Race, a fun building-related challenge that involved designing and building a bicycle from scratch and racing it around an obstacle circuit. Tools and supplies were generously provided by Mitre 10 Trade for the challenge, setting the apprentices up with everything they needed to dream-up and create a functioning plywood bicycle.

Another regular feature of the NZCB conference and expo is a charity auction for their Apprenticeship Scholarship Trust, which this year raised over \$16,000. The Trust supports apprentices in times of personal hardship that would otherwise prevent them from completing their training.

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Media contact: Eden Green, 021 964 783