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2017 Rheem Apprentice Plumber Grants Winners

2017 Rheem Apprentice Plumber Grants Winners*Rheem Australia celebrates 80th anniversary and awards grants to plumbing's "future generation"**16 May, 2017*

A sixth-generation plumber, a young woman who is proud to be a part of the increasing number of female tradies, an East African refugee who finished high school at 27 and is now on his way to achieving his dream of becoming a qualified plumber, a former primary school teacher who changed careers and one day wants to educate other apprentice plumbers. They have two things in common: they're all apprentice plumbers and they have all received a 2017 Rheem Apprentice Plumber Grant.

Rheem, the country's leading producer of hot water systems, kicked off the Rheem Apprentice Plumber Grants in 2012 to mark its 75th anniversary since it began manufacturing in Australia. This year Rheem celebrates its 80th anniversary and its aim remains the same: to invest in the plumbing industry's skills future and provide training support. For 2017 there were 10 worthy grant winners from around Australia. Each recipient receives \$2,000 to go towards their TAFE/RTO fees and/or text books, a \$1,000 tool voucher, plus a tool bag.

"The plumbing industry has provided immense support to Rheem over the past 80 years and these grants are designed as a thank you and to help foster the future generation of plumbers," says Rheem Chief Operating Officer Chris Taylor. "With data showing apprenticeships have declined in Australia, we are happy to play a small role in helping encourage those who might be struggling financially or need a morale boost to continue with their studies."

The applications were reviewed by three judges: Kevin Shinnars, a long-standing plumber and Board member of the Master Plumbers and Mechanical Services Association of Australia; Paul Carey, Deputy Chair of the National Plumbing and Services Training Advisory Group and a teacher at Gordon TAFE in Victoria; and Jon Palfrey, Rheem's Training Manager and a former plumber.

Here are just some of the outstanding winning applications Rheem received:

- Jordan Lilley, 27, from Berriedale in Tasmania: A former primary school teacher who changed careers and loves the variety of plumbing. He has an interest in hydronic heating, an old technology that's becoming popular in Tasmania.
- Adam Nebelung, 31, from Canterbury in NSW: A 6th generation plumber who works two jobs to provide for his young family (including a new-born baby), and wants to be a great role model for his kids.
- Sarah Condie, 19, from Kippa-ring in QLD: An independent young woman who moved out of home at a young age and now works for the all-female Tradettes Plumbing group in Brisbane.
- Patrick Andrews, 19, from Berwick in Victoria: The eldest of six children, Patrick is the main breadwinner of his family and a vital support for his single mum, who requires a liver transplant.
- Mohammed Osman, 36, from Heidelberg Victoria: After living as a refugee for 12 years, Mohammed, a father of two young children, finished high school at 27 and is now a first-year apprentice with a dream to one day go back to his birth country in East Africa and help them with safe drinking water.

Since the Rheem Apprentice Plumber Grant program was launched in 2012, \$180,000 in grants have been awarded to 160 apprentices. The full list of this year's winners can be found on the Rheem website – www.rheem.com.au/apprentice (/Apprentice)

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