

## 2017 EQUESTART WORK READY GRADUATES



In proud partnership with TAFE NSW, the Hunter Thoroughbred Breeders Association (HTBA) is pleased to announce the graduates of the 2017 Equistart Work Ready Program.

Dr Cameron Collins HTBA President and Mr Jon Black, Managing Director TAFE NSW announced this year's Equistart graduates at Godolphin's Kelvinside stud at Aberdeen before an audience of more than 120 people, including some 70 students from 5 local Hunter Valley schools, representatives of the Thoroughbred Breeding Industry, Racing Australia, the Victorian Race Club, local and State politicians, tourism and community representatives, and proud parents, relatives and friends.

"The HTBA congratulates Mikeala Crowfoot, Madeline Dunbar, Tiannah Witney, Chelsea Kowe, Sophie White, Josie Sinnerton, Ashley Craddock, Cassandra Reid and Ester Green for completing the 2017 Equistart Work Ready Program. All graduates should be very proud of their achievement which has equipped them with important knowledge and skills and the prospect of a future career in the thoroughbred breeding industry." Dr Collins said.

"Our people are the backbone of our industry and critical to its success. We must always plan for the future, and our future is in our people, innovation and education. By developing industry led programs in collaboration with TAFE NSW we are able to offer young people the best start to rewarding career in the thoroughbred industry. We are very pleased that many of these graduates have already secured employment with local breeders either as trainees or entry-level employees." Dr Collins said.

We are very proud of the collaboration between the HTBA and TAFE NSW, which for some years now, has focused our joint efforts on equipping new starters with the knowledge, skills and training (both on and off the job) for a rewarding career in the Hunter thoroughbred breeding industry. We look forward to building on this collaboration well into the future.

At the conclusion of the graduation ceremony, graduates, their families and friends and all visitors were also treated to a Godolphin stallion parade and viewing or photographs with the iconic Emirates Melbourne Cup.

Today's events are part of the wider Hunter Valley Stallion Parade weekend of international excellence which attracts thousands of people to the Hunter every year, including domestic and international investors and clients

Media Contact: Hellen Georgopoulos 0419850224

**BACKGROUND:** The Hunter Valley's Thoroughbred Breeding industry contributes over \$5 billion annually to the national economy and \$2.6 billion annually to the NSW economy. It supports over 230,000 jobs throughout Australia. It is one of three international centres of thoroughbred breeding excellence in the world – alongside Newmarket in the UK and Kentucky in the USA. It is Australia's largest producer and exporter of premium thoroughbreds. It is an iconic part of Australia's sporting history and an industry worth protection.

**The Equistart Work Ready Program** is a three -week course delivered by TAFE NSW Scone Campus designed to equip new starters looking to enter the thoroughbred breeding industry with key skills including workplace health and safety, horse behaviour, grooming and handling techniques. The program also provides industry exposure with local thoroughbred employers providing work placements for all course participants.

The next Equistart Work Ready Program will commence on 20 November 2017 applications are now open for this course and further information can be obtained through the HTBA website [www.htba.com.au](http://www.htba.com.au) or by contacting TAFE NSW Scone on 02 6540 3201.