



## Top of the State



*Education Minister, The Hon. James Merlino presented Abbey Zito (left) and Chelsea Rathbone with their awards.*

**T**wo Goulburn Valley Grammar School (GVGS) students from Year 12, Class of 2016, have been recognised in the prestigious Premier's VCE awards. Both Abbey Zito and Chelsea Rathbone received Study Awards for their subjects of Industry and Enterprise, and Environmental Science, respectively.

The annual awards were presented on April 27, 2017, with more than 1100 guests attending a special ceremony in which the top-performing VCE students from last year were recognised for their outstanding academic results.

A total of 320 awards were presented to 287 students, including 292 Study Awards for achievement in a single subject. Individual Graded Assessment scores are used to determine the order of merit and identify the best students. Students must have a study score of 46 or above to be eligible for an award.

Abbey's teacher Mrs Mary Bayly said Industry and Enterprise is a subject that requires students to investigate the concepts of enterprise, leadership and teamwork in shaping attitudes, skills and behaviours. "Abbey was an exemplary student – very hard working and committed, with flair and the determination to always seek excellence," Mrs Bayly said. "I found her to be one of the most dedicated and generous students I have taught. She was selfless in her determination to help others in the class, sharing her ideas and examples freely. This class is usually made up of mostly Year 11 students who are fast-tracking and a couple of Year 12 students. Abbey was in Year 12 so was able to demonstrate great empathy for her classmates. She was kind and thoughtful and always determined to do her very best, which was, obviously, exceptionally good."

Abbey said it was an honour to receive the award and to know that her hard work paid off.

"However, it's difficult because I know so many people who worked tirelessly in Year 12 and deserve to be celebrated," Abbey said. "I feel I owe a lot to, not only Mrs Bayly and

Goulburn Valley Grammar School as a whole, but in particular to my cohort and Industry and Enterprise class, because I would not have come close to getting the results I did without them working equally as hard and supporting me throughout the year."

She described Mrs Bayly as "one of those teachers that has so much faith in you that you just can't help but want to be the best you can to make her proud". "She is so organised and patient, and unbelievably dedicated to her students," Abbey said. "I feel so lucky to have had her constant guidance and can't thank her enough for her support throughout the year."

Abbey is currently studying a double degree of Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Laws at Australian Catholic University in Melbourne and living at St Mary's College. "At this stage I'm not really sure what I want to do with the rest of my life, but I really hope I end up in a career where I can help others," she said. "I'd love to one day join the teaching profession and work with disadvantaged kids, maybe doing my masters through Teach for Australia."

Chelsea Rathbone's teacher Mrs Jacinta Carter said Chelsea demonstrated a passion for her subject, which was illustrated in her work and particularly in the understanding that she displayed in School-Assessed Coursework (SAC) tasks. "This award was well deserved as Chelsea always tried her best and continued to strive to improve her work," Mrs Carter said. "I congratulate Chelsea on her hard work during the entire year, which has been recognised at the highest level."

Chelsea said she was proud to receive the award. "Mrs Carter is a really great teacher

who is passionate about what she teaches and is always willing to help, and I don't think I would have done as well as I did or enjoyed environmental science as much as I did without her," Chelsea said. "Mr Heard was also important to my achievement, because he was my environmental science teacher in Year 11 and first sparked my interest and enjoyment in the subject and helped me learn key things to prepare for Year 12."

Chelsea is now studying a Science/Arts double degree at Monash University. "I'm hoping to major in Environmental Science or Ecology and Conservation Biology in Science, and Human Geography and International Studies in Arts," she said. "So far, I'm having a lot of fun and learning plenty of interesting things, as well as meeting lots of new friends, but it is very different living in Melbourne, away from my family and friends at home. My goals for the future include helping the environment in some way."

Abbey said she had come to realise just how special the tight-knit Goulburn Valley Grammar community is since finishing school. "I've come to realise that our schooling experience is very different to a lot of other people's," Abbey said. "Teachers, support staff, friends, peers and everyone in between, helped me develop skills and make memories that will stay with me well into the future. I'm so proud to be a part of the GVGS community, and I can't thank every member of it enough, not only for providing me with such an amazing schooling experience, but for making me the person I am today. I hope I can make you all proud going forward and can't wait to watch the next generation of Grammarians achieve incredible things."