

Awards recognise women in extractives

Internationally recognised environmental work and an ability to roll up the sleeves and do any job, while mentoring others, were defining qualities of the winners of awards given out today in Christchurch by the extractives industry.

Celebrating diversity and inclusion, Straterra, AQA and MinEx hosted their first Women in Extractives lunch and awards ceremony sponsored by Komatsu New Zealand.

Stephanie Hayton took out the MITO - Te Pūkenga Emerging Star award for her environmental work at OceanaGold, as well as showing exceptional skill, leadership, and adaptability in her work.

Her achievements in researching the concept of a passive water treatment system as part of a mine rehabilitation has been recognised around the world. Her current work on Archey's frog, and the biodiversity of the Waihi North Project has the potential to be a game changer.

Allanah Toko-Mikahere was named Hanga-Aro-Rau Workforce Development Council Leader of the Year for her leadership at Winstone Aggregates in Hawke's Bay. Allanah is the supervisor of a mainly male crew at Roy's Hill Quarry. With the attitude that you can't tell someone to do something unless you have done it yourself, she has become proficient at all tasks in the quarry and is responsible for mentoring and employment of local young people and whānau at the quarry.

"There was a real depth of talent in the nominations for these awards which was great to see – the extractives industry is certainly in good hands," Straterra CEO Josie Vidal says.

"Hosting our first Women in Extractives event and seeing how many excellent people were nominated for these awards has been a positive moment in our industry," says AQA and MinEx CEO Wayne Scott.

"For me personally, it was an honour to award the Kristy Christensen Memorial Award (sponsored by MinEx) awarded to Kristy Christensen posthumously in recognition of her valued contribution to diversity and inclusion in the industry. Kristy's enthusiasm, work ethic and big smile were contagious and she never left you in any doubt about what she thought, leading to some interesting MinEx Board meetings," Scott says.

Vidal and Scott said they wanted to acknowledge the other finalists for the awards – Luana Misa from Winstone Aggregates and Molly Davidson from Road Metals for the Emerging Star award, and Samantha Muir from OceanaGold and Karyn Payne from J Swap Contractors for the Leader of the Year award.

Luana is a member of the Otaika Quarry team in Northland and she has influenced the culture at the site significantly by uniting the team behind worthy causes including mental health, wellbeing and connection.

Molly got her first taste of quarrying through MITO's RockUp programme while at Rolleston College in Canterbury. She has progressed from dump truck operator, to site water management and now to running the chip plant at Rolleston Quarry.

Samantha has been proactive in encouraging university students across New Zealand to consider technical roles at OceanaGold. She was nominated by her team for her caring attitude towards others.

Karyn, based in the Waikato, works with a predominantly long serving male workforce. Her empathy, helpful nature and strong communication skills have enabled her to initiate real change in health and safety performance.

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