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Media Release

## **CAIRNS SKILLAROO'S SUCCESS AT THE TRADE OLYMPICS**

The celebrations have begun for the Australian WorldSkills team after winning ten medals at the 40<sup>th</sup> International WorldSkills Competition in Canada – the Olympic Games of trade skills.

Cairns' own, Jessie-Lee Gladwell, has staked a claim to the title of 'World's Greatest Tradie', having blitzed the world class field in the category of Beauty Therapy to secure a gold medal for Australia.

For the past week, more than 800 of the best tradies and apprentices from around the world have had their skills put to the test in disciplines ranging from bricklaying and welding, to floristry and web design.

Over the four days of exhausting competition, Australia's Skillaroos featured prominently across the leader boards, setting a sizzling pace in front of a crowd of 250,000 at Stampede Park in Calgary, Canada.

Jessie-Lee Gladwell, from Cairns, put in an extraordinary effort to finish amongst the top competitors in the category of Beauty Therapy. Jessie-Lee's strong finish was a fitting reward for more than 12 months of intense training, culminating with a dazzling performance at the International Competition - an experience that was equally as fun as it was challenging.

As the winners were announced, the loudest cheers came from the Australian corner, with members of the squad finishing on the podium in ten out of the 24 categories that Australia competed in – more than doubling the haul that the team collected at the last International Competition in Japan, 2007.

Adding to Jessie-Lee's gold medal, Australia also won another gold medal for Restaurant Service. Silver medals were awarded to Skillaroos for Plumbing, IT Software Applications and the Manufacturing Team Challenge, and bronze medals were won in the categories of Web Design, Sheetmetal Work, Wall and Floor Tiling, Welding and Bricklaying.

Once again the Australian team proved to the world that they are a force to be reckoned with, retaining their international ranking of 5<sup>th</sup> place, following some imposing performances by the whole team.

CEO of WorldSkills Australia, Mark Callaghan, was in the stands to cheer home the Aussie competitors.

“Ten medals is an outstanding achievement and one which is well deserved by the team. All of our Skillaroos did their country proud and once again we have demonstrated to the world that our Australian vocational education and training system is world class.

“Jessie-Lee displayed an exceptional amount of focus and determination to bring home a gold medal. It was truly an inspiring effort and I’m sure they are celebrating her success back home in Cairns,” Mr Callaghan said.

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*Jessie-Lee returns to Australia on 10 September and will be available for interview and photo opportunities.*

*WorldSkills Australia is a not-for-profit organisation that has been supporting youth in trade for over 28 years. WorldSkills Australia aims to raise the profile of skill-based vocations through a series of regional, national and international competitions, engaging industry, government and vocational education and training authorities to promote the benefits of skill development as a pathway to a career in trade.*

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