



Sharon Grierson MP
Federal Member for Newcastle



4 March 2005

EDUCATION PRIZE WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The Federal Member for Newcastle will today award two students with the 2005 Sharon Grierson Education Prize.

Sam Hughes, a Fine Arts student at the Hunter Institute of TAFE, and Sam Rowe, a Science/Architecture student at Newcastle University, will each be presented with a \$250 voucher from the Co-Op Bookshop.

"I know that students in higher education are having a tougher time now than ever, often juggling study commitments with part-time work," Ms Grierson said. "I am proud to be able to assist some of these students in a small way and hope this Prize encourages them to successfully complete their studies."

"Higher education provides a vital part of the skills and training our young people need to prepare them for the workforce, and we have two fine institutions – Newcastle University and the Hunter Institute – in our region contributing to this process," Ms Grierson said.

"It is a difficult financial environment for our tertiary institutions, but they should be congratulated for continuing to provide a high standard of education to students," Ms Grierson said.

New South Wales university students and graduates collectively owe \$3.184 billion in outstanding HECS debts, according to latest figures from the Department of Education, Science and Training. Similarly, it is estimated that around 40, 000 people miss out on a TAFE place every year because of a lack of funding for places.

"The Federal Government needs to provide more support for higher education if our students and institutions are to continue to strive for excellence," Ms Grierson concluded.

The presentation will take place at 427 Hunter St, Newcastle, at 3.30pm today.

For more information contact Sharon Grierson on 4926 1555

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