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# Region's achievers rewarded

The Illawarra never fails to produce its share of high achievers. Today the Mercury profiles three of those achievers who have been recognised for their contribution to the region.

## Wollongong TAFE teachers take out awards

By JODIE MINUS

WOLLONGONG TAFE teachers have blitzed the inaugural National Institute for Trade Excellence Awards.

Of 15 winning teachers across the country, three from Wollongong TAFE were awarded Teacher of the Year in their trades at a ceremony in Sydney on Wednesday night.

Fiona Shewring won in the Fit-out and Finishes category, Ray Wales was named best teacher for Mechanical Trades and George Dragovic was awarded Building and Construction Trade Teacher of the Year.



MR DRAGOVIC

Each received a \$5000 personal cheque, \$5000 towards their faculty and a rather heavy trophy.

"It weighs a tonne, it's

like one of those Oscar things," Mr Dragovic said.

"But I don't have any problem carrying it.

"It is the first national award for trade teacher of the year so it has significance, it is a history-making award."

Mr Dragovic undertook his bricklaying training at the Wollongong campus in the 1970s.

He has been teaching for more than 25 years and is now head of the bricklaying department.

"We have a brand new building that is state of the art and the best in the country, if not the world," he said of the changes in the past 30-plus years.