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NEWS.COM.AU ANNOUNCES GREEN AWARD FINALISTS

National news website, *news.com.au* has announced the finalists of its 2009 Green Awards.

Chosen by senior news.com.au editors, 37 finalists were selected from over 600 nominations across 10 categories. The winners will be determined with the help of news.com.au reader votes and a panel of experts.

David Higgins, editor, news.com.au applauded the nominees and congratulated each of the finalists.

"The Green Awards have once again unearthed amazing environmental innovation and extraordinary commitment among everyday Australians.

"Our finalists represent the best and brightest environmental ideas in Australia. From our Junior Green Heroes to Australia's Greenest Towns, this year's finalists are leaving giant eco-friendly footprints on the path to a greener planet.

"I encourage news.com.au readers to meet the finalists and cast their vote for the People's Choice award."

Each winner will receive an environmentally friendly Toshiba Portégé R600 laptop worth more than \$3000.

There are ten laptops in all, with nine going to the winners in each individual category and a single "people's choice" award for the finalist voted highest overall by news.com.au readers across the categories.

The "Can Do Better" section aimed at finding examples of poor environmental management and practices is excluded from the laptop prize pool.

News.com.au readers will have until 5pm on Wednesday September 2 to cast their vote.

Winners of the 2009 Green Awards will be announced online on Monday September 7.

To view a full list of the finalists in each of the categories and vote, visit:

<http://news.com.au/greenawards>

Some of the New South Wales finalists include:

Green Household category: Doug Simpson. Daughter Heather says her father is "inspirational" when it comes to reducing his carbon footprint. From turning appliances off to using grey water on his vegetable garden, the 84-year-old NSW senior citizen goes to great lengths to ensure he's doing his bit to safeguard our planet.

Green Hero Category: Huw Kingston. Bundanoon, in the NSW Southern Highlands, this year became the first town in Australia to ban bottled water. The man who galvanised the support

of residents was Huw Kingston: his campaign so successful that the NSW Government followed suit, banning commercial bottled water in the all Government departments and agencies.

Environment 2.0 Category: SchoolEnews. A free email-based solution that allows Australian schools to create and manage mailings lists and bulk email up to 3000 parents. Founders Ryan Turner and Richard Lacey say the system allows schools to dramatically reduce printing and paper costs.

Environment 2.0 Category: Swapstyle.com. Swapstyle.com.au lets would-be fashionistas reduce their environmental impact by allowing them to swap clothes online. The site was created by Sydneysider Emily Chesher who hopes to help consumers all over the world change the way they think about fashion and sustainable living.

Green Business Category: Rentachook. An innovative try-before-you-buy concept that allows Australians interested in having backyard poultry to rent some chickens first. The Sydney-based company also actively promotes ethical and sustainable chook-keeping standards and always puts the welfare of its "environmentally sustainable pets" first.

New South Wales finalists also dominated the Scientific Breakthrough Category – HCCREMS Climate Change Project (http://www.hccrems.com.au/climate_change/index.html); and Carnegie Energy's CETO Wave Energy product (<http://www.ceto.com.au>).

Some of the Queensland finalists include:

Green Hero Category: Kelvin Wood. As executive officer of Rainforest Rescue, Kelvin Davis has been involved in regenerating – and saving - some of the most threatened regions on earth, among them heavily-logged parts of Indonesia and endangered rainforests in Queensland.

Green Invention Category: Greentrac. Invented by the Australian company Event Zero, Greentrac is a type of computer software that allows companies to easily monitor their PC energy usage and waste. The ground-breaking technology also provides company employees with motivational tools that encourage them to change their habits and green up their office.

Green Invention Category: Environmental Toothbrush. Made from bamboo, the toothbrush is 100 per cent biodegradable and environmentally sustainable. This compares to the 30 million conventional toothbrushes that are used and disposed of by Australians each year, which the company says adds 1000 tons of non-biodegradable waste to our landfills.

Other Queensland finalists include Maleny Credit Union in the Green Business Category and What Green Solutions' Green Smile tablets in the Australian Solution Category.

Some of the Victorian finalists include:

Green Town Category: The City of Casey. A few years ago, the local Melbourne council partnered up with the Australian Nappy Network and launched the country's first cloth nappy rebate scheme. Each year, more than 800 million disposable nappies are added to the country's landfills, at great cost to the environment. But thanks to the city's scheme and annual nappy expo, a growing number of local families are ditching disposable nappies, in favour of their reusable counterparts.

Green Hero Category: Aaron Wood. The commitment to the environment of long-term campaigner Aaron Wood has taken him from schools and boardrooms all the way to the United Nations. In his bid to create a better, cleaner future, his Kids Teaching Kids environmental program will be accessible to every school in Australia by 2010.

Green Hero Category: Rose Spielvogel. A barren property that once had only two trees has been transformed into a wonderland of flora and fauna thanks to the determination of its owner, Rose Spielvogel. The self-funded “conservation farm” now has 28,000 trees, and is a haven for local wildlife.

Green Invention Category: Greensacks. Victorian mum Pamela Bellette hopes her environmentally-friendly shopping bags – Greensacks - will help further reduce the use of plastic bags in Australia. More lightweight than existing re-usable shopping bags, Greensacks also feature a see-through mesh fabric for greater ventilation and ease-of-use, and can hold up to 3kg of groceries.

Other Victorian finalists include Jack Croyden and Callum Ashbury who are both up for the Junior Green Hero Award and Ecolimo in the Green Business Category.

Some of the South Australian finalists include:

Australian Solution Category: Stephen and Marian Wicks. Stephen and Marian’s farm in a drought-stricken area of South Australia, showcases many sustainable farming methods. The couple also lead an eco-friendly lifestyle and actively encourage the local farming community to adopt their green initiatives.

Junior Green Hero Category: Jesse Barrett, Josh Gabb, Emily Haydon. Jesse, Josh and Emily’s investigative work on the plight of the cuttlefish in South Australia has received widespread community and government support, as well as national media coverage. The Year 6 students looked at the impact of predators and desalination on the marine animal, and presented their work to the state’s Environment Minister.

Environment 2.0 Category: Sokitt.com. Sokitt is a non-profit website that allows Australian consumers to compare the total cost of appliances on the market. By providing prices, as well as energy and water efficiency information, Sokitt allows consumers to buy energy-efficient goods at a competitive price. Founder Finn Peacock says he created the website at home after “after wasting an entire Saturday” trying to buy a dishwasher within his budget.

South Australian finalists also dominated the Green Town category with two of the four finalists being South Australian districts – The City of Salisbury and The District Council of Yorke Peninsula.

Two South Australian families – The Elliots and Erick and Judy Celmins are finalists in the Green Household category. The Celmins manage Sustainable House Day – a popular annual event that promotes green households across the country.

Some of the West Australian finalists include:

Australian Solution Category: Global Communication Services – The Lighting tower developed by GCS, for remote mining sites requires no fuel, only sun and wind to operate. The GCS light can replace diesel-fuelled generators that consume large amounts of fuel and produce emissions.

Junior Green Hero Category : Jessica Gill and Laura Ryan. After creating an energy reduction competition for a school project, La Salle College Year 11 students Jessica and Laura decided to turn their Switch Off competition into a reality and organised sponsors and prizes themselves. More than 60 schools have entered their competition.

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Please note: To arrange an interview or photo shoot of any of the finalists, please refer to the above contact details.

For further information on the Toshiba Portégé R600, please visit

<http://www.toshibanotebooks.com.au>

Further information about Toshiba's environment commitment can be found at:

<http://www.isd.toshiba.com.au/environment>

The full list of Award categories including an explanation on each are below:

The news.com.au Green Hero award

This award recognises an Australian who has shown extraordinary leadership or innovation in addressing the challenges posed by climate change and environmental impact.

The news.com.au Junior Green Hero award

This category awards a young Australian (aged 18 or under) who has shown extraordinary awareness or leadership in addressing the challenges posed by climate change and our environmental impact.

The news.com.au Green Invention award

This award recognises a simple, cost-effective Australian solution for tackling an environmental problem. It could be something so simple and innovative you wonder why no one thought of it before.

The news.com.au Green Town award

This category recognises a local authority in Australia which has come up with a measure that has had a dramatic effect on reducing the environmental impact of people in the council area.

The news.com.au Green Scientific Breakthrough award

This category recognises an Australian theoretical breakthrough, experiment, or body of research that lays the groundwork for tackling a significant environmental problem. Research areas could include meteorology, climate change, botany, physics, engineering and chemistry.

The news.com.au Green Business award

An award for an Australian individual or organisation making a significant contribution to environmental protection through innovative measures involving staff, resources or new business practices.

The news.com.au Environment 2.0 award

This award recognises an Australian website or a web-based service providing innovative help for people wanting to reduce their impact on the environment.

The news.com.au Australian Solution award

Awarded to an Australian individual or organisation showing innovation in facing up to the challenges posed by the unique Australian environment.

The news.com.au Green Household award

Awarded to an Australian individual or household with the most practical and innovative solutions for tackling environmental issues in the home.

The news.com.au Can Do Better citation

This category is aimed at highlighting examples of poor environmental management or practices. Nominations may be for an Australian individual or organisation either straggling or doing environmental damage by their actions - or lack of them.