



MEDIA RELEASE

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## Lived experience drives awarding-winning performance for former refugee

Australia's employment services sector is celebrating the professional excellence of a former refugee who has taken out the 2023 National Employment Services Association (NESA) Award for Employment Consultant of the Year.

Overseas-born, but with a remarkable 25 years of experience in employment services within the Adelaide North Region, Hafez Zamani is the Business Development Manager for global health and workplace services provider, APM, overseeing 33 employment consultants across 13 sites and servicing a culturally and ethnically diverse demographic.

APM Regional Manager, Faye Gardiner, said Mr Zamani has cultivated an intimate understanding of the local labour market and an extensive network of employer connections, spanning various industries.

'This enables Hafez to match participants with diverse employment opportunities, resulting in a track record of impressive placements and high retention rates.

'Hafez's willingness to be available seven days a week, including holidays, demonstrates his dedication and has fostered trust among participants and employers alike.

'Many employers rely exclusively on Hafez for their labour needs, enabling him to provide unique opportunities to job seekers, fast-tracking onboarding processes and opening doors to stepping-stone roles,' said Ms Gardiner.

Mr Zamani said his lived experience and struggles to find employment when he first arrived in Australia have made him a dedicated advocate for inclusive workplace practices that welcome people from all walks of life.

'Getting a job changes people's lives and to be a part of that is a privilege,' said Mr Zamani.

NESA Chief Executive, Kathryn Mandla, said the 2023 Award winners and finalists across all three categories - Champion Employer of the Year, Achiever of the Year and Employment Consultant of the Year – represented an incredible range of professional and personal achievement.

'The record number of award nominations this year is testament to the strong partnership between Australia's employment services providers, the dedication and commitment of their frontline staff such as Mr Zamani and those employers committed to an inclusive and diverse workforce,' said Ms Mandla.

'Mr Zamani is a great example of someone investing in people's potential and connecting them not just to any job, but the right job to ensure ongoing sustainable employment.

'My sincere congratulations to all award winners and finalists, and the thousands of dedicated employment services professionals who support more than 500,000 job seekers in this sector,' said Ms Mandla.

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## 2023 NESAs Awards for Excellence:

### **Employment Consultant of the Year | Hafez Zamani (nominated by APM)**

This Award recognises employment services professionals who demonstrate excellence in helping disadvantaged Australians achieve employment inclusion.

*Award sponsored by Aware Super*

Finalists: Amanda Baker (nominated by CoAct Connect + Youth Projects Werribee)  
Kirsty Campbell (nominated by IntoJobs)

### **Champion Employer of the Year | Fruit2Work (nominated by WISE Employment)**

This Award recognises employers who demonstrate excellence in employment inclusion of disadvantaged participants.

*Award sponsored by Readytech*

Finalists: Acciona and Ferrovial Joint Venture (AFJV) (nominated by Global Skills)  
WorkControl Pty Ltd (nominated by Sureway Employment and Training)

### **Achiever of the Year | Joseph Paley (nominated by Workskil Australia)**

This Award recognises a former participant who has overcome extraordinary disadvantage to achieve employment.

*Award sponsored by Jobs Bank*

Finalists: Nathan Bell (nominated by Sureway Employment and Training)  
Thomas Wright (nominated by ASURIA)

Read all [Award winners' and finalists' profiles](#)

### **About NESAs**

The National Employment Services Association (NESAs) is the peak body for the Australian employment services sector. Our member organisations support more than 500,000 Australians facing barriers to work to find sustainable, ongoing employment through tailored labour assistance programs, vocational education and training, and wrap-around social and health services. Through partnerships with respected national and international research institutes, NESAs works with government, not-for-profit organisations and the private sector to support design and delivery of effective labour market assistance and social policy. We advocate for an inclusive Australian workforce that offers employment opportunities for all Australians who can and want to work.