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JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

## LEADING QUEENSLAND HOSPITALITY SCHOOL MARKS FULL YEAR SINCE FIRST GRADUATION

After its first year, Queensland's leading hospitality training school has turned out 50 six-star-trained students and successfully fast-tracked 90 per cent of them into jobs.

The Queensland Hotel & Hospitality School – a partnership between TAFE Queensland and The Star Entertainment Group – was launched in 2015 to train the state's next generation of five and six-star hospitality workers.

The school is helping build a pipeline of future tourism workers ahead of the Queen's Wharf Brisbane project that will require 8000 operational roles, and amidst a shortage of hospitality workers in Queensland.

Of the graduates employed, nearly 30 per cent are now employed by The Star Entertainment Group, while the remaining 70 per cent have been employed by the wider industry.

As one of the first 14 students who graduated from the school last year, 20-year old Richard Tidswell today works as a food and beverage attendant at The Star Entertainment Group's Treasury Brisbane property.

"The school provided the knowledge and skills to begin my hospitality career but just as importantly, it helped me secure my first job through practical work experience and networking opportunities," Mr Tidswell said.

"The past year working for Treasury Brisbane has been great for my career – I've grown more confident in my barista and bartending skills, but also in being able to interact and develop relationships with customers."

TAFE Queensland Chief Executive Officer Jodi Schmidt said the school was leading the charge to prepare Queensland's workforce for the thousands of new jobs expected in the coming years, including the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

"Now is an exciting time for people to start their career in hospitality and our Queensland Hotel & Hospitality School today offers three outstanding programs to choose from," Ms Schmidt said.

"They are the International Hospitality Service Program, culinary arts apprenticeships, and front-of-house apprenticeships.

"The results after the first 12 months are fantastic and demonstrate how our school can give students an edge, especially through the work experience they receive with leading industry employers like The Star Entertainment Group."

Development of the school's courses is overseen by an industry panel, made up of many of Queensland's leading global brands including Hilton Brisbane, Palazzo Versace, Hotel Jen Brisbane, Next Hotels Brisbane, the Royal International Convention Centre, Sofitel Brisbane Central, and Sea World Resort & Waterpark.

Ms Schmidt thanked the hotel groups and industry partners for their unprecedented and highly successful collaboration.

The Star Entertainment Group Managing Director and CEO Matt Bekier said the one-year anniversary is an important milestone ahead of significant tourism infrastructure projects in South East Queensland, including its Jupiters Gold Coast and Queen's Wharf Brisbane developments.

"We're delighted with the great outcomes the school is achieving, and how the employment gained by graduates in the wider industry shows the value these courses are bringing," Mr Bekier said.

"We look forward to achieving even bigger numbers in the years to come as our company, and industry, continues to grow and transform."

Mr Bekier said The Star Entertainment Group has a long-held commitment to local jobs and training, which will also apply at the \$3 billion Queen's Wharf Brisbane development.

"Our focus is on jobs for Queenslanders and working with organisations who share our vision," he said.

"At Queen's Wharf Brisbane, we will require our contractors to support local jobs, local suppliers, local training and apprenticeships, Indigenous participation, and enforce the highest level of health and safety standards for our people."

Mr Bekier said Queen's Wharf Brisbane will require more than 2000 construction workers and 8000 operational roles when open, expected in 2022.

"Our partnership with TAFE Queensland is important to ensure we train Queensland's hospitality workers of the future and offer this inaugural six-star training in Queensland," he said.

"The Queensland Hotel & Hospitality School builds on our daily focus on training, which also includes our school work experience program, mentoring programs, internships, and management training."

Mr Bekier said The Star Entertainment Group's Jupiters Gold Coast property is also set to provide more career opportunities once its \$345 million transformation is complete.

"New opportunities will come with the six-star hotel tower that we're building at the front of the property, which will be ready in time for the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games," he said.

The Star Entertainment Group also plans to build an additional 700-key hotel and apartment tower on Broadbeach Island, as the first new tower in a master plan of proposed further development in a consortium with Hong Kong-based partners Chow Tai Fook Enterprises and Far East Consortium.

The Queensland Hotel & Hospitality School's next courses begin on 23 January 2017 at its Southport campus and on 30 January 2017 at its South Bank campus.

For more information, visit <http://tafegoldcoast.edu.au/> or <http://tafebrisbane.edu.au/>.

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