

Roy bags top award during the 2019 Apprenticeship Graduation

Being recognised as the Best Overall Apprentice during the National Training and Productivity Centre's (NTPC) Apprenticeship Graduation of 2019 was a very proud moment for Deepshay Roy.

He was part of 81 apprentices from all over Fiji who graduated during the event held on Friday, 8 November 2019 at the Novatel Convention Centre in Lami.

Roy, who works as a workshop supervisor for Niranjans Autoport in Lautoka, said while he did his very best during his three-year apprenticeship scheme, he did not expect to win the top awards.

"I did not expect this," said Roy proudly holding his trophies.

"It is a very proud moment for my family and I believe my workmates at Niranjans will also be happy with my accomplishment," he said.

Apart from being honoured with certificates and trophies, Roy has received a fully-funded trip to Auckland, New Zealand where he will spend one-week touring various industries in the automotive field.

Roy said the life of an apprentice despite having some tough moments is very fulfilling. He also hoped more of Fiji's youths who are pondering about their career would take advantage of the benefits that an apprenticeship brings.

"I will like to ask all those who have finished their studies and are unsure of what to do with their lives, to make some inquiries about how to become an apprentice. It is a very fulfilling career as you will be training while getting paid, and the training you receive is the most up to date in the industry," Roy added.

To date, NTPC's Apprenticeship Scheme has produced 8,773 graduates since its inception following the registration of the first apprentice in June 1963 with the South Pacific Sugar Mills, now the Fiji Sugar Corporation.

During the apprentice graduation ceremony, the Chief Guest, Minister for Employment, Productivity, Industrial Relations, Honourable Parveen Kumar said the Fijian Government supports apprenticeship training by providing tax incentives to employers taking on apprentices.

"Under the Employment taxation scheme any employer who



Deepshay Roy, the Best Overall Apprentice during the National Training and Productivity Centre's (NTPC) Apprenticeship Graduation of 2019

employs an apprentice while he or she is studying will receive a 200 percent tax deduction for salaries and wages paid to apprentices and a 150 percent tax deduction for the amount an employer spends on their formal education," he said.

"Our Government aims to improve the quality of education through the five year and 20 year National Development Plan by enhancing technical vocational and lifelong skills training. It is committed to building a skilled and adaptable workforce and creating a knowledge-based society," Kumar added.

The honourable Minister said many of NTPC's former apprentices are now established elite tradespersons and entrepreneurs with some taking up managerial roles in industries, government entities and training institutions.

Whilst there are 41 active organisations in Fiji that are currently recruiting apprentices, Kumar said he encourages all employers to maintain this investment and continue to make the most of the scheme.

"Apprentices are industry-ready products. The extensive training they receive while attached to the industry and simultaneously attending classes makes them highly competent. I want to thank the various industries that continue to invest in the National Apprenticeship Scheme as they make valuable contribution towards skills development of Fiji's workforce,"

Hon Kumar noted that whilst the construction industry has multiplied over the last five years, apprenticeship numbers in some of the trades such as Carpentry, Joinery & Cabinet Making and Plumbing failed to record significant apprenticeship intakes.

"We need to forge stronger links between the worlds of education and employment. In the global search for talent, we need to nurture home-grown skills," Kumar said.



The 81 apprentices who graduated during the National Training and Productivity Centre's (NTPC) Apprenticeship Graduation of 2019 held on 8 November 2019 at the Novatel Convention Centre in Lami.