

Shenhua in awards finals for training

A SCHOOL-BASED training program involving seven regional employers has made Shenhua Australia a finalist in the NSW Training Awards, to be held in Tamworth tonight.

Shenhua Australia is a finalist for the Industry Collaboration Award after being nominated by New England North West Group Training (NENWGT).

The program, which started in November last year, provides eight students from local high schools with an opportunity to gain work experience and training with regional employers.

Under the arrangement Shenhua covers the costs of the school-based trainees by directly paying their salaries.

Shenhua Watermark chief executive officer Wang Ningbo said because Shenhua didn't currently have a work-site – the company is going through an approvals process for the Watermark

project near Gunnedah – it had decided to sponsor the program in order to invest in the local region's youth.

"We will use a local workforce throughout the life of the Watermark Project in line with our vision to see Gunnedah grow in the next 30 years," he said.

"By helping train local young people we are hopefully equipping them to take advantage of the opportunities the Watermark Project will bring to the region in the future."

The program is a collaboration between TAFE New England, St Mary's Gunnedah, Gunnedah High School and Quirindi High School, seven regional businesses, Shenhua and NENWGT.

The local employers are Mckech-nics Boggabri; Downer Rail, Werris Creek; Gunnedah Shire Council; Tamarang Engineering, Quirindi; Gunnedah Industries; Ray Priestley Earth Moving; and Coates Hire.