

NSW Training Awards Ambassador

Go.Forward

Ambassador Profile –
Josh Nickl



Finding a creative outlet in the kitchen

How do you think you'd go starting work at 3am? Most of us would probably struggle, at least at first. But early morning starts don't bother Josh Nickl, a pastry chef at the Gumnut Patisserie in the Southern Highlands.

The son of two pastry chefs, Josh knew what he was signing up for when he set out to follow in their footsteps. As a kid, Josh and his brother and sister would bunk down on fold up beds while his parents made a start on the day's work at the patisserie they founded.

Years later, Josh poured his passion for pastry into a VET in Schools Hospitality course.

"I was a pretty creative student at school."

Josh has always had a maker's mentality, and at school he applied it to a couple of different areas, but he liked baking best.

"I enjoyed making things and being creative, and I still do," says Josh.

"Finishing a product and getting that instant gratification – you get that warm, fuzzy feeling."

With his sights firmly set on becoming a leading pastry chef, Josh headed to Canberra to do his training. As well as being an easy drive from Bowral, there was another reason that led Josh to study at the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT).

"There was a really good teacher down there who'd worked with the Australian Pastry Team," says Josh. "So, it was great to go down there and learn from him."

Josh's decision to study under a legendary teacher in Canberra led to a pretty cool opportunity. In 2019, he assisted the Australian team at the Coupe du Monde de la Pâtisserie in Lyon, France. The Aussies finished 6th in the competition, the team's highest ever place at the World Cup. It was an awesome experience and not one Josh will soon forget. He learned a lot and even got to hang out with some of the best pastry chefs on the planet. After a working holiday that took him from Antwerp to London, Josh headed home for the final year of his apprenticeship.



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Today, the NSW Training Awards Apprentice of the Year for 2020, heads up the Research and Development effort at Gumnut Patisserie. If you're wondering what that means, it basically involves coming up with ideas for new cakes.

He also enjoys working with the other apprentices in the kitchen. As someone who has benefited from some great teachers and mentors, Josh is keen to help out the junior members of the team as he continues his march towards pastry chef superstar status.

"I love creating different products every week."

