

CIO & COO of the Year Winners Announced



Sam Sicilia, the Chief Investment Officer of HOSTPLUS has taken out the CIO of the Year Award at the annual Awards for fund executives held in Melbourne last night.

The other major category, the Chief Operating Officer of the Year, was won by Nicolle Rantanen, the COO of StatewideSuper.

The Awards this year were run jointly by La Trobe Financial and FEAL and again were well attended on the night. Neil Cochrane, the Chairman of FEAL and one of the Judging Committee panellists, said *"we achieved a number of high calibre nominations. The nominations were particularly difficult to assess this year because of their high quality. Three nominations were selected in each category before the eventual winners were chosen."*

The finalists were: Andrew Spence of Qantas Super and Dr Ian Lundy of Retirement Benefits Fund, for the CIO of the Year Award; and Debby Blakey of HESTA and Colin Sales of AUSCOAL Superannuation, for the COO of the Year.

The Awards were established 3 years ago by La Trobe Financial to support and encourage the professional development of fund executives.

Each Award carries a cash prize of \$10,000 proudly sponsored by La Trobe Financial to put toward an educational program of the recipient's choice.

President & Chief Executive Officer of La Trobe Financial and one of the Judging Committee panellists Greg O'Neill, said *"the number and level of nominations from the industry once again demonstrated the dedication and skill of key people in charge of Australian's national retirement savings."*

He further added: *"Whilst it is clear to us that those savings are in good hands, there can be no grounds for complacency. We hope these Awards act as an additional incentive to the people in charge of investing retirement savings of ordinary Australians to continue to pursue excellence"*

CIO winner Sam Sicilia, who started his career as a Senior Lecturer at the Business Faculty at Swinburne University before working his way up the ranks, was strongly endorsed by the judges for his fund's consistently good investment performance. Sam has also been a finalist for the CIO Awards for the past two years.

Nicolle Rantanen, who started her career at the Electricity Trust of South Australia as a Scholarship Holder has developed an exceptionally successful career and is now StatewideSuper's COO and is also a member of numerous Boards.

The Awards presentation was held in Melbourne at the famous Eureka Tower, 89th Floor, with Michael Pascoe, one of Australia's most respected and experienced finance and economics commentators, presiding over the proceedings. A special guest for the evening was the Honourable Greg Combet AM who addressed those gathered about the future of the industry.

The Judging Panel consisted of Neil Cochrane – Chairman at FEAL, Greg O'Neill – President & CEO at La Trobe Financial, Greg Bright – Managing Director at Binalong Advisory Services, Chris Page – Principal at Rainmaker Group, Jeff Bresnahan – Chairman at SuperRatings and David Coogan – Partner at PwC.

The Awards were also well supported by sponsors including:

Primary Sponsor – Commonwealth Bank

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Last year's winners were Gerard Parlevliet of Commonwealth Bank Group Super for CIO and Graeme Arnott of First State Super for COO.

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