



May, 2018

MEDIA RELEASE

YOUNG LONGWOOD VOLUNTEER HIGHLY COMMENDED

Tyson Huggins joined the Longwood Rural Fire Brigade the day he turned 16 and two years later he's making his mark as a volunteer.

Tyson has been highly commended in the Spirit of CFA youth award and was this week elected to be the brigade's training officer and community safety coordinator, with captain Shaun Hearman as his mentor.

It's not the first time Tyson has been recognised for his community service. He's previously been named Longwood Citizen of the Year and Shire of Strathbogie young citizen of the year and was highly commended in the 2016 Keep Victoria Beautiful Tidy Town Sustainable Communities Award - young leaders section.

The youngest member of the Longwood brigade, Tyson would like to see more young people volunteer. "I'd definitely encourage other young people to get involved. It gives you great life experiences," he said.

"I'd always wanted to volunteer with the CFA for the camaraderie and the chance to help the wider community."

Tyson is an apprentice electrician and continues his volunteering in the evenings and has long-term plans to become a career firefighter.

After undertaking his basic skills training, Tyson has joined Longwood brigade in responding to several local fires and other emergency incidents.

His connection started as a student at Euroa Secondary College where Tyson organised a mock car crash with the local fire brigade, police, ambulance and SES to show how trapped people are rescued as part of a Prevent Alcohol Related Trauma program.

Longwood brigade secretary Barbara Porter said Tyson was willing to help with anything.

"He's a great young man and very switched on when it comes to the CFA," she said. "It would be nice if we had more like him. Our brigade is very strong but we always want to recruit more young people."

Euroa Fire Brigade member and district state councillor Phil Hawkey was also highly commended in the Spirit of CFA awards.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria CEO Andrew Ford said it was pleasing to see young people making a big contribution to the CFA.

“Today we have highly experienced and qualified people from all ages, gender, backgrounds and demographics performing front line firefighting roles, operational leadership roles and support roles.

Mr Ford said volunteers also benefit by giving back to their communities, learning new skills, developing leadership qualities and making new friends.

The VFBV continues to encourage everyone to become CFA volunteers to help protect their communities through a broad range of roles.

People interested in volunteering can contact their local brigade or visit www.vfbv.com.au

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