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## Winejobsonline Grant Cheers Graduation Celebrations

Most educational grants are incredibly serious, even in the wine world. But a \$300 grant presented by New Zealand specialist wine industry jobs website winejobsonline.com gave two fortunate graduates just enough hard cash for a bit of fun on graduation day recently.

The graduation grant, in its fourth year, goes to one student each from Lincoln University and EIT (Eastern Institute of Technology) who are about to graduate.

There are no academic requirements, just a commitment to attend the graduation ceremony and provide a photo. Applicants are also asked for a persuasive reason why they should win the grant. Heather Battersby of winejobsonline.com remains tight-lipped about the criteria for winning. "We have certain things we look for in deciding the winner – remembering it's not meant to be too serious," she says. "It's not often that you get money for nothing!!"

This years Lincoln winner was Alice MacKenzie. Most recently doing vintage with Nobilo in Gisborne, Alice used the grant to pay for some good wines at a family dinner to celebrate the occasion! "Graduation day was awesome and made even better by the grant", said Alice.

The EIT winner, Renée Dale, headed south from Auckland's Villa Maria winery for her graduation, and was grateful for the grant which treated her family to dinner in Hawkes Bay. Renée says, "I had a fantastic time at graduation. I can't believe how much I enjoyed it. Thank you again."

Although the grant is not based on academic criteria, it has the blessing of the educational community. Dr Glen Creasy from Lincoln University, says, "I'm very pleased that winejobsonline.com has come up with a grant that helps students attend graduation, which should be a properly celebrated culmination of all their studies. I welcome encouragement from all sides of the wine industry, not the least the ones that help match students with jobs."

Diane Marshall from EIT adds, "Many of our graduates have dispersed to wineries and vineyards around New Zealand and overseas by the time graduation rolls around so they incur quite high costs to return to Hawke's Bay to graduate. It's not surprising that they're very grateful to winejobsonline for the opportunity to cover some of their expenses".

Lincoln and EIT students will have the opportunity to apply for next year's graduation grant towards the end of 2008.

Photographs attached – Renée Dale, EIT; Alice MacKenzie, Lincoln.

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