




Speech By
Charis Mullen

MEMBER FOR JORDAN

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ADJOURNMENT

Marque Greater Springfield Business Awards; Small Business

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (7.22 pm): Last weekend I attended the inaugural Marque Greater Springfield Business Awards, which is an initiative of the fantastic Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce. The awards are quite significant for Greater Springfield, as they are an important recognition of a maturing small business sector in our region. It was really pleasing to see nominations across so many different businesses, from those that have been long established with decades-long history in the Greater Ipswich region to new fledgling businesses that have been established only in the past few years.

On the night I was very proud to sponsor the professional services category. I congratulate McNamara Law on winning the award, which was hotly contested by many great local professional services in our community. I was also happy to see local businesswoman Kath Manby of VM Family Law take out the Business Person of the Year award. Kath is well known within Greater Springfield for her legal work, which is primarily focused on matters involving domestic and family violence. She works closely with domestic violence support services and legal partners to undertake an extensive amount of Legal Aid and pro bono work. Kath is also one of the 100 Faces of Small Business in Queensland, which is an initiative of the Office of Small Business that showcases the human stories behind our state's diverse businesses.

I congratulate all of the nominees and the winners of the inaugural awards, including the Small Business of the Year, P&L Accountants. That is another fantastic small business in the Jordan electorate that is worth mentioning. The business was started by Paula Rizqallah. Paula has really grown the company by being extremely hard working and dedicated to her profession. Importantly, Paula believes that a healthy work-life balance is of the utmost importance. She employs a group of women accountants who are also mums, and ensures that they never miss after-school extracurricular activities with their children. This ensures she has a company that is productive, a great place to work and clearly very successful.

I thank the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce for all their work in bringing these awards to life, particularly President Neil Coupland, the executive and the wonderful Leila Stewart, who does much of the organising behind the scenes. I am always happy to support our local chambers of commerce in the Jordan Electorate, Greater Springfield and Logan Country.

In my electorate people know it is small business that is the lifeblood of their local economy, generating employment for a growing number of local residents. In fact, in the Jordan electorate 98 per cent of all businesses are small businesses. That is why I am so proud that our government is committed to making it easier for those business to employ staff, particularly apprentices and trainees. Whether it is our \$885 million of targeted payroll tax initiatives to support businesses or our recently announced free apprenticeships for those under 21, where the cost of training will be covered by the government and not the employer, we recognise the importance of small business in our communities and are doing all we can to help them grow, create employment and boost the Queensland economy.