

WOMEN IN SMASH REPAIR

Choosing from the great women who have entered or been nominated for the *Paint & Panel*/NRMA Insurance Women in Smash Repair Award has been extremely difficult.

WE HAVE EXAMINED the submissions from those who have entered so far and chosen Amanda Lombardi from Lombardi Bros and group WA and Nichole Slattery from Cranbourne Bodyworks as the first of five deserving winners. Congratulations to you both.

What is emerging from entries so far is that many women run every aspect of the panel shop from workload planning, to estimating, accounts, OH&S, insurance liason, business planning, marketing and HR – and many do all of the above and cover a few more aspects of the business besides. Entries remain open so nominate yourself or one of your colleagues now at the *Paint & Panel* website. If you were mentioned in the first batch of nominees, don't worry you are still in the mix along, with any new nominees, for the next three women to be selected.

AMANDA LOMBARDI LOMBARDI BROS, MAX GREEN & CO & MODERN COLLISION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Role in the company:

Operations manager for Max Greens and Lombardi Bros. Invoicing, overseeing profit, delegating roles to office staff, overseeing relationships with dealerships and all insurance company staff. At Modern Collision, Amanda organises work flow and oversees sourcing insurance work.

Amanda Lombardi remembers shouting over the workshop tannoy for her dad John to get her some chocolate when she was just five years old, she loved being around cars from an early age. She began her working life at a stock broking company but when her parents



offered to take her on a three month holiday to Italy she didn't want to miss out and while she was waiting for the trip, started to help out in the Lombardi office. She had just turned 17 and she's been there ever since.

Being a pretty, petite blonde was not advantageous for being taken seriously in such a male dominated industry.

"Amanda Lombardi remembers shouting over the workshop tannoy for her dad to get her chocolate when she was just five years old."

Lombardi's has a fine heritage of repairing prestige cars. The dealers were nervous about handing of the keys to her in the early days: "Which is ridiculous because a young female driver would generally drive an exotic supercar extra carefully and be less of a liability than a young lad," she said.

A love of cars is of course an advantage in this business but it took a long time for dealership staff and customers to get their heads around Amanda having the expertise to quote for repairs, but now many customers only want to deal with her.

Her father John and uncle Frank, who celebrated 40 years in business together in 2012, have been an invaluable learning source. Amanda says she learns something new every day from John who is so steeped in industry know-how and knowledge.

NICKY SLATTERY CRANBOURNE BODYWORKS, VICTORIA

Role in the company:

Nicky runs the the shop with her husband Kevin. As operations manager she is responsible for production control and management, managing the organisation's human resources, sales and marketing and financial management.

'Ensuring organisational effectiveness by providing leadership for the financial functions of the business, along with the development and implementation of organisational strategies, policies and practices' is how Nicky describes her primary function at Cranbourne Bodyworks. "I am focused on improving the operational systems by securing clear



Amanda Lombardi (below left) and Lombardi Bros one of the three shops she helps to run smoothly.