

Mining career a blast for scholarship winner



Tim Hill

Today is his graduation day, but 24-year-old Tim Hill is already well on the way to a big career.

The first student to graduate on an Australian Indigenous Education Foundation-BHP Billiton Tertiary Scholarship, Mr Hill has already been accepted into the mining company's graduate program and is working full-time as a drill and blast engineer at the Jimblebar iron ore mine near Newman in Western Australia.

Mr Hill won the scholarship — awarded to outstanding indigenous students studying engineering and other mining-related subjects who aspire to leadership positions at BHP — during the final years of his double degree in engineering and commerce.

He achieved a distinction average during his final year at university while completing his honours thesis, and says the scholarship helped give the support he needed to excel.

"It's very important and very humbling to think of it in that way, that I might be leading forward and being an example, which is awesome," Mr Hill said yesterday.

The scholarship covers the cost of accommodation, fees, meals and expenses at a tertiary residential college, up to \$22,000 a year.

A Dunghutti and Yuin man from Kempsey on the mid-north coast of NSW, Mr Hill's mother is an artist and teacher, and his father is a dentist.

BHP president of human resources Athalie Williams said he was "a fantastic example of someone whose aspiration to work in the mining industry has come to fruition thanks to this partnership".

NATASHA ROBINSON