



WORTHY RECIPIENT: (from left) NEITA chairman Terry O'Connell, Marlene Steiner and ASG CEO John Veleginis at the award ceremony. PHOTO: Harry Cassio Photography

Teaching honor for Steiner

By VANESSA BURGESS

A WOMAN who has been a mainstay of childhood teaching in Bright for almost 30 years has been recognised nationally for her excellence in teaching.

Local families and friends have long known what a fantastic teacher Marlene Steiner is when they saw her teaching their children, so much the Bright Kindergarten Family and Friends committee decided to nominate Mrs Steiner for the 2012 Australian Scholarship Group National Teaching Award.

In July 2012, there were 1350 nominations nationwide for early years, primary and secondary.

By November the state nominees had been shortlisted to 60, and in January 2013, they were down to 34.

Mrs Steiner then had to write an essay and answer questions in a video format to be in the running for a National Excellence in Teaching Awards (NEiTA).

Finally, after nearly a year-long process, on May 31, Mrs Steiner was one of four early years award recipients, winning a \$5000 Professional Development (PD) grant which she intends to use at the Alpine View Children's Centre.

She would like staff to undertake as much PD as they can, relating to Integrated Service.

"It's a real honor to receive this award," Mrs Steiner said.

"I would like to thank my kindergarten team of Debbie, Denise, Fi and Michelle for supporting me in all my endeavors associated with numerous leadership courses, and their genuine passion for edu-

cating early childhood children."

Having to put together an essay gave her an opportunity to look back on her career and why the passion remains to play such a vital role in the lives of young children as they embark on learning.

Mrs Steiner, who has been teaching for 34 years, 28 at Bright, was inspired to become an educator by one of her primary school teachers, who encouraged her to be strong in her beliefs, to celebrate learning and be a risk taker.

More than a generation of children have benefited from her knowledge, caring nature and enthusiasm and many will have taken on board her most-used and positive quote.

"Great to see you took charge of your learning: you should be proud of yourself."