



Budding florist blooms

IF you had asked Cassandra Vella what she wanted to be three years ago, a florist would have been the last thing on her mind.

But a stint of work experience at Plaza Flowers in 2007 soon had the Londonderry teenager thinking outside the square as her creative juices began to flow.

"I just love the job and recommend it to any young person looking for work," Ms Vella, 17, said.

"You are being creative and don't do the same thing every day."

She had attended the Bede Polding College at Windsor but said she wasn't keen on higher studies because she wanted to try something different.

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Her budding career has already gained wider recognition. The Richmond College student won the gold medal in the recent TAFE Worldskills Western Region competition.

Judges at the ABC Gardening Expo, Sydney, last month were impressed with her five different arrangements.

"I am excited to win this award." Ms Vella said.

"I thank my employers and my TAFE teachers for the skills I have learnt.

"We were judged on the arrangements but also on technique, use of materials and occupational health and safety.

"We were being observed the whole time and it was very, very nerve-racking, but exciting."

"Cassandra is a treasure," Plaza Flowers manager Liz Grima said.

"She's a natural, with a real love of flowers and brilliant customer service skills."

Ms Vella, who finishes her Certificate III in Floristry this year, is keen on opening her own flower shop one day.



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Page 2 of 2



**Award winner
Cassandra Vella
wants to own her
own florist shop
one day.**
Picture: MATT SULLIVAN

