

**HESTA Australian Nursing Awards**  
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Media Release  
23 April 2012

## WA star graduate in running for national prize

A WA midwife who spent seven months working in Sierra Leone has been named a finalist in the 2012 HESTA Australian Nursing Awards.

Brooke Jones from King Edward Memorial Hospital is one of five nursing professionals in the running to be named Graduate Nurse of the Year.

Ms Jones was nominated for her passion and commitment to midwifery, which includes participating in local recruitment campaigns, in addition to her international work.

The new midwife worked in Sierra Leone at a time when one in eight women were dying in childbirth and one in four babies did not reach age five.

“During my seven months in Sierra Leone we assisted in over 600 births and had not a single maternal fatality,” Ms Jones said.

“Considering Sierra Leone had the highest maternal mortality rate in the world at the time, the experience demonstrated the massive change you can achieve with minimal intervention.”

Ms Jones first saw the challenges women faced during pregnancy in developing countries during visits to Kenya and India as an undergraduate.

“When you see some of the conditions facing women during pregnancy in developing countries, you soon see the desperate need for assistance,” Ms Jones said.

“When I finished my postgraduate I took the first international offer I received, which happened to be in Sierra Leone, and I haven’t looked back.”

Ms Jones hopes to continue her education and play a significant role in developing projects to increase quality of care for women in the developing world.

“I have seen the potential for change and hope to continue applying what I have learnt during my studies and on the ground — both in Australia and internationally — to improve health care in the developing world,” Ms Jones said.

Ms Jones is currently undertaking her Masters in Philosophy, exploring the professional identity of Tanzanian midwives. Her dream is to help Australian midwives respond to the cultural needs of midwives in developing countries, and share their knowledge and skills.

Ms Jones will travel to Melbourne for the HESTA Australian Nursing Awards gala dinner on 10 May. The winner of the Graduate Nurse of the Year will receive a \$5,000 ME Bank *EveryDay* Transaction Account and a \$5,000 education grant.

The prize money is provided by ME Bank, a supporter of the awards since 2008.

HESTA is one of Australia’s largest superannuation funds with more than 730,000 members. It is chosen by more people working in health and community services than any other fund.

Visit [hestaawards.com](http://hestaawards.com) to book tickets for the event or learn more about the awards.

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