

# 'If you believe in your idea, they believe'

HAYLEY WARREN WAS a determined second-year physiotherapy student when she came up with a new way to measure the angles of patients' joints.

Now, after five years of R&D and having won the Start Up category of the WA Innovator of the Year Awards in 2010, her invention is taking on the world.

The HALO digital goniometer she developed uses laser technology to help physiotherapists and other health and sports professionals measure the angle of patients' joints to assist recovery.

Warren, who is now the CEO of Halo Medical Devices, says winning the IOTY award had an effect almost immediately.

"The Innovator of the Year Award really brought about recognition for myself as an inventor and company owner and brought forward opportunities in terms of investors," says Warren.

"As a result of the awards, I met my first mentor who's become an investor in the company, Nathan Buzza, who is heavily involved in the innovation medical device space.

"And from winning the award, we also went on to win the Electronic News Future Award last year, the 40 Under 40 Award for entrepreneurs in WA, and we also won the People's Choice award on the ABC's New Inventors."

IOTY also helped Warren realise her goal of going global. In mid-March, her company HALO Medical Devices launched HALO in the United States.

"We used the money from the award to progress to the stage now where we're selling," says Warren.

"It boosted us through the development stage, making sure the foundations were set correctly – and what I mean by that is we had an opportunity to set up and protect the intellectual property because that was part of the award prize.

"So it really laid the foundations to set us up for where we are today, which is launching the product globally."

HALO already has a healthy following locally.

## STRATEGICALLY

"It's well recognised over here already," she says.

"It's being used in the AFL by people such as the Eagles and some of the top hospitals in Perth as well."

The push into bigger markets is being tackled strategically.

"We're focused on Australia and the US for the time being," she says.

"Given the economic climate in Europe at the moment, the US makes more sense for us.

"Having said that, we recently launched an email campaign in the United Kingdom, so we are branching into there but our focus is on the US and Australia."

Warren says HALO has been sent out to 15 leading universities and private companies worldwide for further product validation. Among them is the world-renowned Mayo Clinic based in the US.

Entering the IOTY in 2010 meant that Warren had to acquire new skills quickly.

"Coming from the small country town of Manypeaks near Albany, growing up on a farm and physio all had common ground, they all needed a practical approach," she says.

"That I do well. Getting up to do pitches and learning about financials, was very new to me, and had to be learnt.

"That process of going through pitches and panels as part of the awards really did assist me.

## 'BACK YOURSELF'

"It even shaped how I pitch to investors now and gave me the foundation to do that correctly and successfully bring in more money as the company's needed it."

Warren's advice for fellow inventors and innovators thinking of entering the Innovator of the Year Awards is to "back yourself".

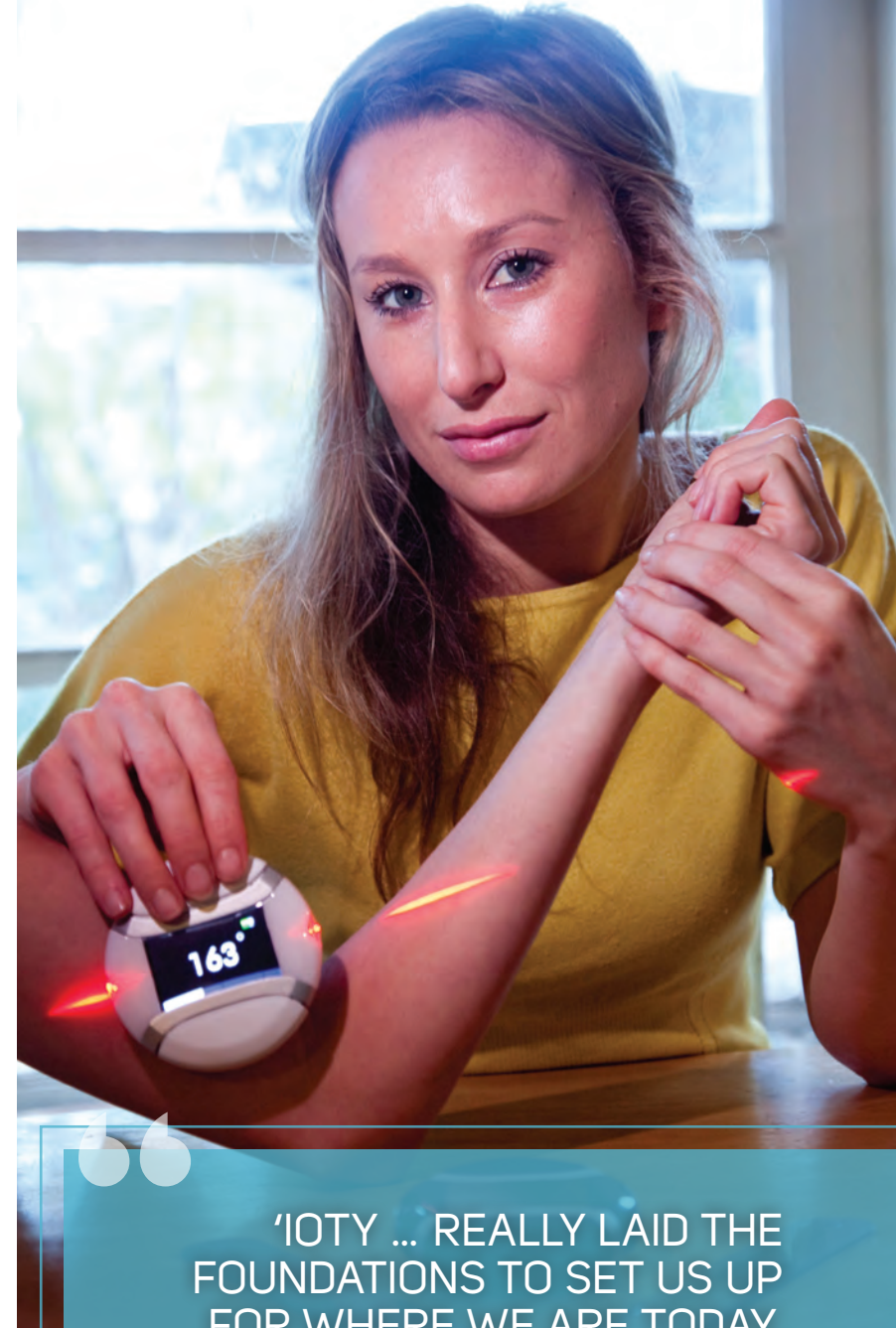
"Unless you strongly believe in your idea, you're not going to get anywhere," she says.

"It comes back to knowing why you're doing it, knowing it's a good idea – and following it through.

"People tend to follow: if you believe, they believe."

Even if you don't win the award, she says you'll still come out in front in terms of the experience and contacts you make.

"That's one of the things I've found that works," says Warren. "If you truly believe in what you're doing and it's a good idea, just follow it through no matter what it takes. There will be many hurdles; just tackle them one by one and you will get there."



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