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LSC PREPARES TO LAUNCH APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

All employers in Nottinghamshire are the target for the second national Apprenticeship Week from 23 to 27 February 2009, organised by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) – and one Long Eaton firm is a shining example.

The week is a national celebration of the success of Apprenticeships across England. The event seeks to raise the profile of Apprenticeships and encourage more employers to take on apprentices.

There will be a variety of events going on through the East Midlands – from visits to schools from employers advocating the Apprenticeship programme, to Sir Alan Sugar’s former “apprentice” Saira Khan visiting the region and spreading the word about the campaign which aims to get apprentices into jobs.

Company managing directors will be “going back to the floor” to turn back time and try out the work of an apprentice. Meanwhile, East Midlands MPs will be having a go at being an apprentice for the day – and regional journalists will be given the chance to sample courses like brick laying and stable management at local colleges and training providers.

The LSC - who fund Apprenticeship programmes - is charged with raising the number of Apprenticeship placements offered by employers by matching them with approved training providers who can support them and their new apprentice throughout their period of training.

Nick Rashley, LSC director of Apprenticeships for the East Midlands, said: “Our aim is to let local employers know just how beneficial an apprentice can be to their continued business success. We have many success stories where businesses have taken on apprentices and those people have gone on to senior roles in the organisation. It is essential that this type of investment is made to develop the future, skilled workforce that the East Midlands needs.”

Apprenticeships can help businesses across all sectors by offering a route to harness fresh new talent. The programmes provide on and off the job learning so that apprentices achieve the right mix of practical skills and qualifications to suit them and the needs of their employer.

Nick added: “A business can benefit greatly from the ideas an apprentice can bring to it and, at the same time are training their workforce of the future. Apprenticeships offer cost-effective recruitment leading to a well-trained, motivated workforce and contribute to increased productivity and performance.”

One company which is a big believer in Apprenticeships is Barton Products in Long Eaton.

One of their apprentices is Jeremy Millenstead, 22, from Hucknall. Jeremy was diagnosed with a profound hearing impairment at birth. Despite the setback, Jeremy has completed the first year and a half of his Apprenticeship with Barton Products Ltd in Long Eaton.

Jeremy enrolled on a full time Apprenticeship as a wood machinist in September 2007. Barton Products Ltd is a manufacturer of timber products to the furniture industry. Jeremy is expected to complete the course by June 2009 and remain working as part of the team at Barton Products.

Jeremy said: “The Apprenticeship has given me confidence and improved my communication skills. I tell everyone at work to talk slowly and face to face, as it’s the quickest way for me to understand. Sometimes I get confused and make mistakes and this can be frustrating but everyone is very understanding and I’m treated as an equal, which means a lot.”

Jeremy’s successes were recently recognised when he was nominated for Personal Achiever of the year 2008 at the Learning and Skills Council Regional Apprenticeship Awards where reached the finals.

“I was pleased to be a regional finalist for the award as I am the first person with a hearing impairment to reach this stage and I hope it encourages other people in similar situations to aim high and work towards their goals.

“I enjoy working with other people and have never let my hearing become an obstacle. My future plans are to complete my Apprenticeship and move to the Advanced level and in years to come I’d like to start up my own company.”

Peter Waring, director at Barton Products said: “Jeremy is a hard working, polite young man and an asset to Barton Products. He doesn’t let the fact he is profoundly deaf interfere with any tasks he is set and he always gives 110%. I have no doubt that Jeremy will succeed in this career and with his willingness, enthusiasm and delightful personality he will prove to everyone that when you have a goal, nothing can stand in your way!”

Ends

Pic caption: Jeremy Millenstead with Pete Waring, director at Barton Products

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Notes for Editors

Learning and Skills Council: The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers. www.lsc.gov.uk

Apprenticeships: Apprentices follow a framework, which consists of a NVQ qualification, key skills qualifications, and, where applicable, a technical certificate. Two levels are

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available – an Apprenticeship Framework and an Advanced Apprenticeship Framework, offering qualifications at either NVQ Levels 2 or 3* (equivalent to add GCSE and A level equivalent). There are over 160 occupational frameworks on offer including business administration; information technology and customer services and many sector specific frameworks such as chemicals and pharmaceuticals through to tourism and hospitality.

Level 2 is equivalent to five GCSE passes

Level 3 is equivalent to two 'A' level passes or one vocational 'A' pass.

www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Apprenticeship Awards: The LSC East Midlands Apprenticeship Awards 2009 will be held at East Midlands Conference Centre on 2 June 2009. The national awards event will be held in London on 16 July 2009. All regional winners will be automatically entered into the national awards. The closing date for entries is 27 February 2009. For more information please email: realsuccess@headstorm.co.uk or call 0845 058 0490.

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