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Lincoln Apprentice Celebrates at Awards Evening

A 19 year old apprentice from Lincoln is celebrating after collecting an award at a prestigious ceremony to celebrate his achievements in work based learning.

Local boy Sam Barstow received the award for the 'Apprentice of the Year' – Apprenticeship category, sponsored by TNG at the Regional Apprenticeship Awards. The event was hosted by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) East Midlands on the 20th May 2008 at the East Midlands Conference Centre in Nottingham and recognises outstanding achievements across nine different categories.

Sam Barstow, who works part-time with Lincolnshire County Council's Youth Development Team, said: "Prior to my Apprenticeship I had very limited options and virtually no career prospects, but now I feel there are a number of paths available to me. My skills and knowledge have increased greatly and I feel extremely confident about undertaking new challenges and embarking upon fresh opportunities."

Tom Crompton, regional director, LSC East Midlands, said: "With the Government's recent announcement about Apprenticeships and how they will play a central role in its plans for growing skills in the economy, it's clear to see how vital apprentices and those companies supporting them are in helping to combat the skills shortages across the region. The

economy depends upon skilled individuals across the whole spectrum of vocational learning and it is important that we recognise the high achievements in these fields.

"The awards are an opportunity to celebrate just a sample of the excellent results being achieved across the East Midlands. Everyone who has taken part: our learners, training providers and employers should all be very proud of their achievements."

Angie Beal, team coordinator for City of Lincoln Council's Anti-Social Behaviour team comments: "When Sam started as an Apprentice with the Anti Social Behaviour team he became involved quickly, working above and beyond what was expected of him. Sam is fully committed to his post, this was shown when he applied for a permanent position with the team. Overall, Sam has achieved so much in a short space of time. I am proud to say Sam is part of the team."

Sam concludes: "When I started work I was a recovering drug addict living in supported housing, which I was on the verge of being evicted from. I am now fully employed with a technical certificate under my belt. I never thought I could come this far, I have a passion for my work and believe I am an example of people's ability to change, with the right support."

Young people taking part in Apprenticeships or an e2e work-based-training programme, nominated by employers, training providers or individuals are recognised at the Regional Apprentice Awards, as well as companies that continue to support staff in Apprenticeship training, for their exceptional achievements.

All regional finalists will go forward for consideration into the LSC's national Apprenticeship Awards 2008 to be held on 10th July 2008 at The Royal Horticultural Halls in central London.

Ends

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Notes to Editors:

- The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational 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 by 2010, young people and adults in England have the knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. Established in 2001, we work nationally, regionally and locally from a network of offices across the country.

About Apprenticeships

- There are currently 244,000 young people aged 16-24 undertaking an Apprenticeship nationally and nearly 18,000 in the East Midlands. They can choose from over 180 career paths in 80 different sectors of industry and commerce.
- Apprenticeships provide 16-24 year-olds with a mixture of on and off-the-job training while they are being paid. For employers, Apprenticeships offer the opportunity to improve their businesses bottom line through the tailored, relevant training of highly motivated young people.
- There are two levels of Apprenticeships:
 1. 'Apprenticeships', equivalent to GCSE level, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 2; key skills and in some cases a technical certificate
 2. 'Advanced Apprenticeships', equivalent to A-levels, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 3, key skills and a technical certificate
- On 10th May 2004, the Government announced the introduction of Young Apprenticeships for students aged 14-16 and Adult Apprenticeships for those people aged 25 and over. Pilots for both are currently running
- e2e (Entry to Employment) is designed for young people aged 16-18 who are not currently in education, employment or training. It can also be for people who may require a range of additional support to enable them to progress into education, employment or training.