



## **NEWS RELEASE**

Wednesday 3 June, 2009

### **East of England's top Apprentices and employers revealed**

The region's top apprentices and employers were celebrated on Tuesday night at Bright Sparks 09, the glittering ceremony for the East of England Apprenticeship Awards.

The annual Apprenticeship Awards are organised by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to celebrate apprentices who have made a real difference to their future and to the organisation they work for. Employers committed to hiring apprentices in order to create a bespoke, enthusiastic and skilled workforce were also honoured in the awards.

The BBC's sports presenter and former professional footballer, Ray Stubbs and Caroline Neville, Regional Director for the LSC East of England, announced the winners along with highly commended entrants at the prestigious celebration held at the Hilton London Stansted Airport.

Nineteen companies and apprentices were revealed as winners or highly commended on the night.\*

Chris Page from Wish Hair Ltd in Norfolk, winner of the Micro Employer of the Year Award, said: The quality apprentices bring to a business is outstanding. Our industry wouldn't be able to manage without apprentices, and this award will help us attract even more high calibre apprentices and improve on the work we have already done – the sky is the limit!"



Jon Nay, Regional Apprenticeship Director, National Apprenticeship Service - East of England said: "All the finalists at this year's awards were truly inspiring and some extremely worthy winners were chosen. The awards are a great opportunity to celebrate Apprenticeships and the value they bring to employers and apprentices alike."

In a recent survey<sup>1</sup>, 82 per cent of employers said they relied on their Apprenticeship programme to give them the skilled workers they needed for the future.

Ray Stubbs, who is passionate about championing the benefits of learning new skills, said: "Many of the apprentices had remarkable stories of achievement to share and it's a pleasure to meet them and the companies dedicated to training and employing them."

The winners from the East of England region will automatically go forward to the national judging process. National winners will be announced on Thursday 16 July.

- Ends-

\*For a full list of winners and highly commended finalists, see notes to editors

**For more information or photos of the winners and finalists please contact Dawn Humphreys or Lucy Clegg at Tribe on 01603 417722, or email [dawn@tribepr.com](mailto:dawn@tribepr.com) or [lucy@tribepr.com](mailto:lucy@tribepr.com)**

**Notes to editors:**

**Images:** All winners and highly commended finalists

Companies and apprentices from across the region were announced in seven categories:

**Young Apprentice of the Year**

- **Winner:** Brittany Barber, from King's Lynn, Norfolk
- **Highly Commended:** Harry Turner, from Saxmundham, Suffolk
- **Highly Commended:** Kelly Cheung, from King's Lynn, Norfolk

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<sup>1</sup> Populus 2009 on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council



### **Apprentice of the Year**

- **Winner:** Craig Welford, from Great Yarmouth, Norfolk
- **Highly Commended:** Tom Parkhurst, from Bury St. Edmunds, Norfolk
- **Highly Commended:** Kerry Rowley, from Luton, Bedfordshire

### **Advanced Apprentice of the Year**

- **Winner:** Alice Ryan, from Ipswich, Suffolk
- **Highly Commended:** Will Osborne, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire
- **Highly Commended:** Charlee Peters, Stevenage, Hertfordshire
- **Highly Commended:** Martin Dack, from Fakenham, Norfolk

### **Micro Employer of the Year (1-9 employees)**

- **Winner:** The Wish Hair Ltd, in King's Lynn, Norfolk
- **Highly Commended:** Commercial Utility Brokers (UK) Ltd, in March, Cambridgeshire

### **Small Employer of the Year (10-49 employees)**

- **Winner:** Cundy Anglia Ltd, in Cambridge, Cambridgeshire
- **Highly Commended:** Gaswise Services Ltd, in King's Lynn, Norfolk
- **Highly Commended:** Allied Construction, in Rayleigh, Essex

### **Medium Employer of the Year (50-249 employees)**

- **Winner:** John Michael Hair Design Group, in Ipswich, Suffolk

### **Large Employer of the Year (250-4,999 employees)**

- **Winner:** Swift Horsman Group, in Ware, Hertfordshire
- **Highly Commended:** Premier Foods, in Thetford, Norfolk
- **Highly Commended:** SLP Engineering, in Lowestoft, Suffolk

### **The Learning and Skills Council**

The Learning and Skills Council funds and promotes Apprenticeships. For more information log onto <http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/>

### **Apprenticeships**

Apprenticeships are equivalent to GCSE level, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 2; key skills and in some cases a technical certificate

### **Advanced Apprenticeships**

Advanced Apprenticeships are equivalent to A-levels, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 3; key skills and a technical certificate

### **Higher Apprenticeships**

Higher Apprenticeship programs are available in the IT, engineering, purchasing and supply sectors, enabling apprentices to study for a Foundation Degree, learn valuable new skills and earn a living at the same time.

### **Young Apprenticeships**



A Young Apprenticeship is a route at Key Stage 4 which allows motivated and able pupils to study for vocational qualifications not just in the classroom but in college, with training providers and in the workplace too. Pupils are based in school and follow the National Curriculum subjects, but for two days a week (or equivalent) they also work towards nationally recognised vocational qualifications delivered by their local Young Apprenticeships Partnership.

### **National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)**

The NAS was announced in January 2008 and officially launched in April 2009. Reporting to the Departments for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), the service will drive forward the Government's ambition for Apprenticeships. The service aims to bring about a significant growth in the number of employers offering Apprenticeships.

The NAS will assume total responsibility for the delivery of Apprenticeships that includes: Employer Services; Learner Services; and a web-based vacancy matching system. This online system enables individuals to search and apply for live vacancies and allows employers, and their training providers to advertise their vacancies to a wide range of interested applicants.

The service has ultimate accountability for the national delivery of targets and co-ordination of the funding for Apprenticeship places. It will act to overcome barriers to the growth of the programme and assume responsibility for promoting Apprenticeships and their value to employers, learners and the country as a whole.

### **Apprenticeship Awards**

The Apprenticeship Awards are in their sixth year. The 2009 awards officially opened on 8 January 2009 and the closing date for entries was 27 February 2009.

There are five categories open to employers depending on their company size; Micro (1-9 employees), Small (10-49 employees), Medium (50 -249 employees), Large (250 -4999 employees) and Macro (5000+ employees). Employers are assessed on a number of criteria including implementation of the Apprenticeship programme, clear demonstration of the way Apprenticeships have benefitted their business and the level of support provided to their apprentices.

In addition to the employer Awards, there are three categories open to apprentices – Young Apprentice of the Year, Apprentice of the Year and Advanced Apprentice of the Year.