

NEWS RELEASE

Monday, June 8, 2009



Norfolk Big Skill winners announced!

The winners of Norfolk's Big Skill Awards 2009 were announced on Monday June 8 at a ceremony held outside the Forum in Norwich.

Run by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in partnership with BBC Radio Norfolk, The Big Skill Awards recognise and reward people who have improved their life or the lives of others through learning.

The winner of the overall award for excellence, chosen from the winners of each category, was 16-year-old Abigail Moore – who also won the 14-16 Learner Award.

Abigail, from Norwich, has overcome problems at school and a serious illness to take control of her life, and judges described her as “brave and inspiring”.

“She is determined and dedicated, and has even been able to talk about her experiences to other students and is a great role model to other people,” they added.

Harry Bunting, from King's Lynn, won the Skills for Work Award for successfully retraining and overcoming dyslexia.

The 21-year-old swapped repairing car bodywork for a hairdressing apprenticeship after he was made redundant, and the judges praised his attitude during a “great personal journey”.

“Harry is a great example of successfully going from one career to a very different one. He has overcome fear of others' comments and reactions to succeed,” they added.

The winners were announced on Monday at an outdoor awards ceremony that was open to the public to attend. Winners were presented with a certificate, trophy and a

£150 experience day voucher by BBC Sport presenter Ray Stubbs, who returned to Norwich to present the awards after launching The Big Skill in January this year.

The awards ceremony followed a day-long showcase event outside the Forum, where people could try their hand at different skills taught by colleges and training providers in Norfolk, including climbing, juggling, cookery and carpentry. There were also stage demonstrations and performances from learners across the county, such as dancing and musical theatre from City College Norwich and Great Yarmouth College, and a dog agility show from Easton College.

The Norfolk winners of the Apprenticeship Awards 2009, also run by the LSC, also received their awards at the ceremony. Craig Welford was named Apprentice of the Year, with The Wish Hair Ltd winning Employer of the Year.

Martyn Weston, Assistant Editor for BBC Norfolk, said: "We are delighted to be involved with the Big Skill 2009 and congratulate all those who have both won awards and have reached the finals of such an important event. It is a real honour for BBC Norfolk to be involved with the LSC in recognising learning."

Graham Brough, Area Director at LSC Norfolk, said The Big Skill had done a great job of raising awareness of the learning and training opportunities on offer in Norfolk.

"It's been wonderful to celebrate and recognise the real achievements of learners across the county," he added.

"The Big Skill winners should be an inspiration to others and show that it is possible to overcome challenges and learn new skills that can open doors and change lives for the better."

The full results are as follows:

14 - 16 Learner Award

- **WINNER:** Abigail Moore, 16, from Norwich
- **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Jade Church, 16, from Norwich
- **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Dale Bartram, 16, from North Walsham

17 – 19 Award

- **WINNER:** Request for no publicity
- **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Bobby Colliver, 18, from King's Lynn

- **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Matthew Duerden, 17, from Bunwell

Adult Learner Award

- **WINNER:** Request for no publicity
- **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Illuminée Nganemariya, 40, from Norwich
- **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Ruth Ward, 67, from New Costessey

Skills for the Community Award

- **WINNER:** Hazel Lewis, 35, from King's Lynn

Skills for Work Award

- **WINNER:** Harry Bunting, 21, from King's Lynn
- **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Matthew Summers, 22, from Boughton

Employer Commitment to Skills Award

- **WINNER:** Chris Coubrough, The Crown Hotel, Wells
- **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Lintott Control Systems Ltd., Colton
- **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Norfolk Broads Direct, Salhouse

The Learners' Champion Award

- **WINNER:** Teresa Gibson, 37, from King's Lynn
- **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Peter Thompson, 48, from Hopton

Apprenticeship Awards 2009

Norfolk Apprentice of the Year: Craig Welford

Employer of the Year: The Wish Hair Limited

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Notes to editors

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The Big Skill 2009

The Big Skill first ran in 2008 and following its success in Norfolk was rolled out across all six counties in the East of England, with support from Ray Stubbs.

About the Learning and Skills Council

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) aims to improve the skills of young people and adults to ensure that England has a workforce of world class standard by 2020.

The LSC:

- provides free training programmes to young people and adults employed in local businesses
- plans and funds education and training in schools, colleges and sixth forms
- provides advice and supports people wanting to continue in, or return to, education
- provides financial support to young people and adults to allow them to continue in education

About BBC East

BBC East is built around six local radio stations and online sites - Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Three Counties (Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire).