

## NEWS RELEASE

30<sup>th</sup> May 2008



**\*\*EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01AM SATURDAY 31<sup>st</sup> MAY\*\***

### **Winners of Norfolk's The Big Skill Awards revealed**

The winners in Norfolk's inaugural The Big Skill Awards 2008 were announced today (Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> May) at a ceremony held in front of the Forum in Norwich.

The Big Skill Awards 2008, run by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in partnership with BBC Radio Norfolk, recognise and reward people who have improved their life or the lives of others through learning. The seven winners were announced this evening in an outdoor awards ceremony that was open to the public to attend. The Big Skill Excellence Award Winner, selected from the winners of each category, was revealed to be Chad Hogben, 19 from Swaffham.

The winners of The Big Skill Awards 2008 are:

#### **14 - 16 Learner Award**

- Kayleigh Topley, 16, from Norwich

#### **17 – 19 Award**

- Chad Hogben, 19, from Swaffham

#### **Adult Learner Award**

- Christian Ashworth, 34, from Great Yarmouth

#### **Skills for the Community Award**

- Lorraine Waller, 26, from Norwich

#### **Skills for Work Award**

- Karen Archer, 40, from Norwich

#### **Workforce Learning Award**

- Premier Foods in Thetford

#### **The Learners' Champion Award**

- Sharon Holsey, 50, from North Walsham

#### **The Big Skill Excellence Award Winner**

- Chad Hogben, 19, from Swaffham

Tim Bishop, Head of Region BBC East and Chair of The Big Skill judging panel said: “The standard of entries for The Big Skill Awards were outstanding. We received more than 70 nominations from learners across Norfolk who have all been successful in their learning and should be very proud of their achievements.

“Our award for The Big Skill Excellence Award went to Chad Hogben, a highly determined and dedicated learner who has achieved a great deal at his workplace through his apprenticeship but also in his personal life too. Chad’s enthusiasm and motivation for learning is an inspiration and a fine example of all that the Big Skill Awards stand for.”

Winners were presented with a trophy and £250 of vouchers by Kenny Logan, who returned to Norwich to present the awards after launching The Big Skill in February this year. Kenny learned a new skill last year when he competed in the BBC’s Strictly Come Dancing, and also learned to read as an adult due to dyslexia.

The Big Skill Awards culminated today following a day long showcase event outside the Forum followed by the evening awards ceremony. The showcase event saw members of the public try their hand at different skills that are taught by colleges and training providers in Norfolk including tractor control and building wind turbines. There were also stage demonstrations and performances from learners across the county, such as dancing and a fashion show from City College Norwich.

BBC Radio Norfolk presenters showed their support for The Big Skill by demonstrating on stage the new skills they have been learning since The Big Skill launched. Four BBC Radio Norfolk presenters have taken up new learning opportunities and successfully completed courses; Stephen Bumfrey – cookery, Nicky Price – singing, Graham Barnard – driving a bus and Karen Buchanan – Indian head massage.

Graham Brough, Area Director at LSC Norfolk, who sat on the panel of judges for The Big Skill, said: “The Big Skill has done a fantastic job of raising awareness of the learning and training opportunities on offer in Norfolk. Chad and our other award winners will hopefully 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 judges of The Big Skill Awards 2008 were:

Tim Bishop - Head of Region, BBC East (Chair),

Graham Brough – Area Director, LSC Norfolk,

Steve Downes - Education Correspondent, Eastern Daily Press,

Fiona McDiarmid - CEO, Connexions Norfolk,

Clare Anderson – a highly successful Norfolk learner who works for Fitness Express.

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### **Notes to editors**

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### **Runners-up**

#### **14 - 16 Learner Award**

- Charlotte Overton, 16, from Norwich
- Carl Harder, 15, from Thetford

#### **17 – 19 Award**

- Oliver Bock-Brown, 17, from Norwich
- Natasha Canham, 17, from North Walsham

#### **Adult Learner Award**

- Annette Purchase, 50, from Norwich
- Graeme Brinded, 46, from Potter Heigham

#### **Skills for Work Award**

- Magdalena Kostuch, 32, from Norwich
- Robert Upson, 20, from Lowestoft

#### **Workforce Learning Award**

- Lotus Cars in Hethel, near Wymondham
- May Gurney in Trowse, Norwich

#### **The Learners' Champion Award**

- Richard King, 24, from Thetford
- Sally Church, 55, from Neatishead

### **Key dates for The Big Skill Awards 2008**

31 March – closing date for nominations

3 – 23 April – judging takes place

Week commencing 28 April – finalists informed and invitations sent

30 May – The Big Skill showcase event and awards ceremony with Kenny Logan

## **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

## **LSC Norfolk**

LSC Norfolk works with schools, sixth forms, colleges, other training providers and partner organisations such as Connexions to ensure the people of the county have every opportunity to become skilled.

LSC Norfolk is investing £118,200,000 in education and training in Norfolk in 2007/08. For more information on the LSC, visit [www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk) or telephone the Norfolk office on 0845 019 4173.

## **About BBC Radio Norfolk**

Over its 28 years, BBC Radio Norfolk has been one of the most successful of the BBC's 40 Local Radio stations, achieving a warm and close relationship with the county that is the envy of national broadcasters.

It first started broadcasting to Norfolk in September 1980 and has built up a strong reputation for its local news, travel, weather and sport. If it's happening in Norfolk, it'll be on BBC Radio Norfolk; from the euphoria of a promotion season for the Canaries, to the vital overnight programming when the threat of flooding hits Norfolk.

For more information visit [www.bbc.co.uk/norfolk](http://www.bbc.co.uk/norfolk)