

Ceremony marks London's exceptional apprentices

Date of issue 23 May 2007
Publication number LSC-PR-LOR-070009
Embargo until

Photo-opportunity: 11:00-14:30, 30 May 2007, the Savoy Hotel, The Strand, London

Employees and employers making an exceptional contribution to London's global competitiveness are being recognised in an awards ceremony this month.

Radio and TV presenter, Richard Bacon will host the Learning and Skills Council's London Region Apprenticeship Awards 2007 at the Savoy Hotel, on May 30 2007. Up to 250 guests are expected to attend the ceremony. They include learners and their guests, employers, training providers and Learning and Skills Council (LSC) staff.

Six winners, out of 18 finalists, who have made an outstanding contribution in Apprenticeships, have been selected by a panel of judges from over a hundred entrants for the awards. The entrants came from all over London.

London director of the LSC, David Hughes says: "These awards have shown that high-quality training like Apprenticeships can have a big impact on people's futures. Some finalists have said that their apprenticeship changed their lives and allowed them to find their true potential, often undiscovered at school.

"Training gives people control over their own future. We're happy to recognise their achievements."

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown recognises the importance of Apprenticeships in closing the skills gap and making employers more competitive. He has pledged to increase the number of Apprenticeships to 500,000 by 2020. Since 1994, employers have increasingly recognised the importance of apprenticeships as a means of providing the skills they need to remain competitive and have taken on over one million Apprentices.

The awards, now in their fourth year, recognise achievements in a number of different categories.

Three awards recognise individuals who have made a difference to their employer by taking on extra responsibility, improving productivity, being a good team member or inspiring colleagues. These are:

- Apprentice of the Year – aimed at 16 and 18-years-olds,
- Advanced Apprentice of the Year – aimed at over 19-years-olds, and
- Young Apprentice of the Year – aimed at pupils at school between 15 and 16-years-old.

The Personal Achiever of the Year has overcome an obstacle or barrier in his or her personal life or in the workplace.

There are also two awards for employers who have invested in Apprenticeships as part of a staff development strategy. These are: the Employer of the Year and the Large Employer of the Year.

Winners will receive a trophy and all finalists will be presented with a framed certificate. The short listed finalists have been put forward to the National Apprenticeship Awards.

-Ends-

For further information and attendance requests please contact:

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Notes to Editors:

The event begins at 11:00 and concludes at 14:30 on 30 May 2007, The Savoy Hotel, The Strand. David Hughes, Regional Director for London will welcome guests and broadcaster Richard Bacon will present awards to successful entrants. The ceremony is expected to last an hour with lunch served at 13.00.

The judging panel comprised:

- Rod Kenyon, Director at Centrica
- Louise Routh, Marketing and Communications Manager at Connexions - London South
- Mark Hart, Communications Manager at Connexions North London Partnership Ltd
- Anthony Kendall, Director at Social Action Radio
- Ali Kaye, Director at WBLA
- Chris Hayes, Director for London Jobcentre Plus
- Penny Allen, Learning & Quality Director at LSC London Region
- David Boyer, Partnership Manager at LSC London West
- Priti Gaberria, Partnership Manager at LSC London East
- Varsha Mistry-Hand, Partnership Manager at LSC London East
- James Miller, ESF Network Manager at LSC London North

About the Learning and Skills Council Apprenticeships Programme:

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funds and promotes Apprenticeships. There are currently approximately 12,000 young people aged 16-24 undertaking an Apprenticeship in about 60 different sectors of industry and commerce in London.

There are two levels of Apprenticeships:

- 'Apprenticeships', equivalent to GCSE level, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 2; key skills and in some cases a technical certificate
- 'Advanced Apprenticeships', equivalent to A-levels, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 3, key skills and a technical certificate

An opinion survey carried out last year by BMRB on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) showed that 71% of people in the UK agreed that on-the-job training provided them with the necessary skills for their career. 62% of respondents stated that they had benefited most of all from a mixture of formal and work based training. The survey questioned more than 2003 respondents in England, Scotland and Wales about their attitudes to learning and skills.

LSC

The Learning and Skills Council 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.