

HOLLYWOOD COMES TO STOCKTON (ALMOST) – AS THE LSC LAUNCHES THE COLAS AWARDS

Date of issue

Publication number

LSC0607 - 125

Embargo until

For immediate release

Residents could be forgiven for thinking that Hollywood had come to the Stockton this week, as two of the world's most famous actors, 'Brad Pitt' and 'Angelina Jolie,' visited the region to launch the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) North East Celebration of Learning and Skills Awards (CoLaS) 2007.

The CoLaS Awards, which were first held in the North-East in 2006, have been designed by the LSC to honour the achievements of some of the region's most outstanding individuals and employers, recognising their innovative and progressive approach to skills development and overall learning excellence.

The LSC is urging people to nominate employers or individuals with that little bit of star quality.

Brad and Angelina, or rather their lookalikes, Jeremy Dyck and Lissa Statham, were guests of honour at the pre-awards launch, taking time out of their busy celebrity lifestyles to enjoy a whistle-stop tour of North-East landmarks, including the Stockton Riverside College and The Sage in Gateshead where the 'Oscar's' style ceremony for the 2007 Celebration of Learning and Skills Awards will be held.

Open to any individual over the age of 14 and any size or type of employer in the North-East, this year's CoLaS Awards ceremony is set to be the biggest event of its kind ever to be held in the region, with organisers going all out to ensure that every one of the expected 1,000 guests is made to feel like a true Hollywood star.

It is hoped that some of the region's leading businesses and organisations, will come on board to sponsor elements of the event.

The October 12 ceremony will be packed with entertainment from famous names, with up-and-coming regional acts also being given the chance to experience the glitz and glamour, by auditioning for a chance to play live on the night.

Tom Crompton, LSC Director Area South, said: "The skills debate is high on the agenda at the moment, but the Celebration of Learning and Skills Awards 2007 will showcase achievement and progress on an unprecedented scale, that will really put the North East on the map. The real 'Brad' and 'Angelina' are both mega stars and it was great to be able to bring a touch of Hollywood glamour to the region for the launch, but the real stars at the CoLaS awards will definitely be the nominees."

For a full list of awards categories and information on how to nominate an employer or individual, visit www.lsc.gov.uk/colas07

ENDS

Editor's notes:

The LSC 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.

Celebration of Learning and Skills Awards 2007, flying the flag for employers and individuals who are raising the standard of learning and skills development in the North East.

The Celebration of Learning and Skills is one of the most successful and prestigious award ceremonies in the North East. Currently in its second year, the 2007 ceremony will be the biggest ever held in the region, when 1,000 guests will enjoy a spectacular ceremony at the iconic sage in Gateshead. The region's business leaders will join key employers, politicians, journalists, representatives from the education sector and the families and friends of the nominees for an evening of entertainment and recognition of achievement.

These awards are for employers and individuals who have reached the very pinnacle of innovative, progressive learning excellence. Open to anyone over the age of 14 at any level of education, and any size or type of employer in the North East, CoLaS aims to recognise and reward investment and success in skills development.

Media contact:

Laura Tiplady/Ann Barnes, Regional Press Officers, 0191 492 6355, email laura.tiplady@lsc.gov.uk/ann.barnes@lsc.gov.uk

Out of hours media contact Julie Calvert, Regional Marketing and Communications Manager at the LSC North East: T: 07710075118