

NW Learner Awards 2008



Leading learning and skills

PROGRAMME



Park Royal Hotel, Warrington  
14 May 2008

**NW**  
Learner Awards  
Cheshire and Warrington



# WELCOME



The North West Learner Awards are funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to highlight the importance of learning - to individuals and employers, to communities and to the future of the region.

The Awards form part of the LSC's National Award Scheme. This is recognised as the most prestigious awards programme of its type in the country - and when we see the finalists here tonight, we can see why.

The judges have discovered an abundance of talented individuals who have excelled in learning and improved their lives. They are equally impressed with the number of employers who recognise that the encouragement of learning and skills is crucial if they wish to develop their workforce and improve their business.

So my congratulations go to all those finalists here tonight. The standard of entries was particularly high and you really have excelled to win through.

My thanks must also go to your colleges, training providers, employers and families, whose support has been vital to your success.

*Liz Davis*

Liz Davis  
LSC Director of Area for Cheshire and Warrington

## DINNER MENU

### STARTER

Tomato Soup

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### MAIN COURSES

Breast of Chicken, Mozzarella, Sun Blushed Tomatoes, Wild Mushroom Sauce

Or

Vegetable Risotto garnished with Mediterranean Vegetables

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### DESSERT

White Chocolate Cheesecake, Espresso Cream

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FRESHLY BREWED COFFEE AND MINTS

## GUEST OF HONOUR: SIMON WESTON OBE



Only a handful of people would have recognised the Simon Weston who headed out for the Falklands Conflict back in June 1982. But the face of the Simon Weston who returned from the bombing of the Sir Galahad is recognised the world over, not for his disfigurement from 46% burns but for the optimism which he radiates. His determination has inspired courage and the will to excel in countless others. His irrepressible humour, his infectious enthusiasm and his immediately engaging personality have made him the number one choice

of many companies who invite Simon back to speak time and again.

A native of Mid Glamorgan, Simon Weston joined the Welsh Guards in 1978 seeing active service in Berlin, Northern Ireland and Kenya before setting off to the Falklands which was to prove the turning point in his young life. Following his injuries, Simon's road to physical, spiritual and mental recovery saw him active in a number of highly successful ventures including 'The Weston Spirit', a Liverpool-based young people's charity. He remains a tireless worker for the Royal British Legion and the Royal Star and Garter Home. His charitable work earned him an OBE in the 1992 Queen's Birthday Honours.

Television and radio appearances, including the major BBC documentaries 'Simon's War', 'Simon's Peace', 'Simon's Triumph' and 'Simon's Return' have been complemented by literary success as a best-selling

autobiography and, most recently, as an author of fiction.

Now married to Weston Spirit volunteer, Lucy and with two children, James and Stuart, Simon Weston's experience is one of triumph over adversity. The horrific burns which he endured when Argentine planes bombed the troop carrier Sir Galahad during the 1982 Falklands War signalled the start of Simon's quest to achieve ever greater heights.

## COMPERE: FIONA ARMSTRONG



Our comperé for the evening is Fiona Armstrong of ITV Border

Fiona Armstrong is a broadcaster and writer. She presents ITV Border's nightly news programme, Lookaround - and other shows, including politics, gardening, cooking and fishing programmes.

A former ITN newscaster and reporter, Fiona's work took her to places like Africa, where she made a programme on Aids orphans. She covered the Lockerbie air disaster and other major news stories. She has fronted antiques and lifestyle programmes and a series

on international businessmen for an American network. She has presented a cooking series and has produced several series of 'Clans' programmes on Scottish families.

Fiona has written two fishing books and two cookbooks and is currently working on a book on class. She writes for newspapers and magazines and does corporate work.

Fiona's hobbies include cooking, fishing, swimming and clan research.

## FURTHER EDUCATION AWARD (Vocational)

The Further Education Award 2008 seeks to acknowledge and celebrate exceptional achievements and contributions through the learner's educational or vocational experience, whether this is in terms of increased opportunity for themselves or for others.



**Naomi Cheetham**  
PRIESTLEY COLLEGE

Naomi studied the BTEC national Diploma in Early Years obtaining a triple distinction

(equivalent to 3 grade As at A level), all the more praiseworthy as she has Cerebral Palsy. She is an active role model being a member of a Young People's Expert Patient Programme, involved in a project called Psychosis Education in Colleges and Schools and volunteer at Blue Planet - a local youth club for young people with disabilities.

Naomi deferred her place at York University studying Social Work because of another operation but in this gap year has taken on a paid role as Young People's Development Worker at Warrington Disability Partnership.



**Kate Mills**  
MID CHESHIRE COLLEGE

Kate is 100% committed to the demands of the National Diploma art

and design course; this is reflected in the quality of her work. She is extremely modest about her talents and is a pleasure to teach. She has a responsible, mature attitude and outlook, is well liked by her tutors and peer group and is always willing to help others. She has a part-time job as a swimming pool lifesaver and teaches swimming to children. Recently, when a student was taken suddenly ill in the corridor; Kate did not hesitate to help, putting the student in the recovery position and making sure their air way was clear.



**James Burney**  
WEST CHESHIRE COLLEGE

Since James started his City and Guilds Painting and Decorating course he

has shown a great determination to succeed; he travels a fair distance and is always on time, usually early. His confidence has grown and he is an active and popular member of the class.

For his level two Key Skills in Communication, James created a Power Point presentation on Health and Safety which was used as a template for the rest of the class to work from. His practical work is at a very high standard: he perseveres and shows determination to get it right. All of his tasks have been carried out with efficiency and James is a good role model for the rest of the class.

## FURTHER EDUCATION AWARD (Academic)

The Further Education Award 2008 seeks to acknowledge and celebrate exceptional achievements and contributions through the learner's educational or vocational experience, whether this is in terms of increased opportunity for themselves or for others.



**Katie Harris**  
PRIESTLEY COLLEGE

In a year of outstanding academic results, Katie was awarded the prize for

Academic Excellence at Priestley College. Not only did she gain excellent exam grades in Maths, Further Maths, Chemistry, A2 Law and AS History, including a perfect 300 / 300 in her AS Law exam, but she also showed an exceptional joy of learning. She impressed her tutors with her extensive further reading and her support of other students.

Katie was the Vice President of the College Council successfully communicating between students and college management and will be attending the University of Manchester reading Mathematics.



**Mags Abbott**  
WEST CHESHIRE COLLEGE

Mags has worked as a Careers Advisor at West Cheshire College since 1997.

She has an inspiring yet realistic way of encouraging, guiding and moving people on and, most importantly, at a pace they can achieve.

In 2007 Mags achieved the full Adult Learner Supporter Course specializing in Literacy which spurred her on to become a Skills for Life Literacy Teacher.

She started the Level 4 Literacy Subject Specialist Course in September 2007 with some apprehension but her excellent grasp of the English language has helped her produce work of a high standard. Mags' new found confidence has already instilled the missing self-belief with her current Skills for Life learners.



**Hannah Langford**  
SIR JOHN DEANE'S COLLEGE

Hannah Langford is an exemplary ambassador and role model for the

College. Comments by staff include: "she really is exceptional in all ways"; and "she has never shown any signs of bitterness about her predicament, indeed she has always remained polite, pleasant and appreciative of any support given to her". Hannah has been a Student Executive Council member, organising events such as Consultation Evenings. She has outstanding levels of achievement - including a place to read Law at Cambridge next year - and is unfailingly positive and cheerful. Hannah has muscular dystrophy confining her to a wheelchair.

## APPRENTICE EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Apprentice Employer of the Year Award 2008 seeks to acknowledge and celebrate employers' commitment to developing their workforce through Apprenticeships.



### Cruden Group Limited

Warrington- Construction Skills

Up to 16% of the company's workforce are apprentices, and the Apprenticeship Committee, which includes a director and senior managers, meets bi-monthly to discuss their progress. Achievements are recognised annually in Cruden's own internal apprentice awards ceremony.

Apprenticeship programmes allow Cruden to develop the skills that are needed in the workplace to support the future growth of the company, many of them moving into management positions; the current deputy managing director joined Cruden as an apprentice joiner. The company also works in partnership with local schools to inform young people of career options in the construction industry through Apprenticeships.

Cruden has continuously worked with training provider Construction Skills to improve Apprenticeship programmes, and provide valuable support in diversity initiatives.

Construction industry company, Cruden understands the importance of supporting local communities through local recruitment, and is dedicated to recruiting, retaining and engaging talented young people as key employees.



### Bentley Motors Limited

Crewe - Total People Ltd

Apprentices are valued within the company at board level, with a member of the board acting as apprentice ambassador to ensure that recruitment and development of apprentices is high on the business agenda. Apprentices are also valued within the workplace, and colleagues are keen to share their knowledge and experience.

Monthly reviews with training providers ensure that college learning matches the practical skills in the workplace, while managers and training providers work together to support apprentices and ensure their development meets their needs and achieves business objectives.

Training provider Total People Ltd cites Bentley Motors as a key partner and advocate of Apprenticeships and skills training at local, regional and national level, and a company committed to developing its workforce.

Recruiting apprentices enables Bentley Motors to meet skills needs in critical areas, and allows the company to select the right person and develop them in a way that meets the needs of both the company and the apprentice.

## PERSONAL ACHIEVER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Personal Achiever of the Year Award 2008 seeks to acknowledge and celebrate apprentices who have successfully overcome barriers or obstacles, personally or in the workplace, to achieve their goals and exceed all expectations.



**Luke Mason**  
18, Winsford

### LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

W Hodgson & Sons.

Reaseheath College

Luke has had to overcome many obstacles to pursue his ambition of working in agriculture, but he has met each challenge with determination.

At the age of 17, he left his home and family in Manchester to take up a position on a Cheshire farm. He found himself lodgings and took an intensive driving course, passing his test in just one week so he could make the eight mile journey to work in time for his 5am start.

Luke's employer says he has demonstrated a positive attitude and made a very valuable contribution to the farm, showing dedication and determination to succeed.



**Adam Leetch**  
17, Altrincham

### CATERING AND HOSPITALITY

Knutsford Wine Bar.

Trafford College

Developing alopecia at a young age severely knocked Adam's confidence. He felt shy and awkward about his appearance and suffered from stress.

But rather than give up, Adam changed his attitude. Instead of worrying about his external appearance, he decided to overcome his difficulties from within. When he started his Apprenticeship, Adam still found it very difficult to communicate with customers, but his passion and commitment have helped him overcome his shyness.

The owner of Knutsford Wine Bar, where Adam works as a commis chef, says he is an extremely talented chef who is a delight to work with.

# APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR AWARD

Leading learning and skills

The Apprentice of the Year Award 2008 acknowledges and celebrates exceptional contributions made by apprentices in their workplace. Judges look for apprentices who have made a real difference to the organisation they work for by exceeding expectations and delivering measurable benefits.



**Alisha-Naomi Cooper**  
17, Warrington

**HAIRDRESSING**  
Lisa B's  
Warrington Collegiate

Alisha has embraced her role at Lisa B's hair salon in Warrington, happily accepting extra responsibilities such as marketing and promotion.

As well as a rapid progression within her own Apprenticeship, Alisha has shown a dedication to training others, having helped to train new staff in the salon. She has demonstrated her commitment to her role by stepping in when other staff are absent, and taking responsibility for opening and closing the salon.

Her employer says Alisha has excelled as a member of the team, and has rare qualities and skills that she is keen to share with others.



**Thomas Jackson**  
17, Northwich

**VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR**  
Town and Country Motors  
Mid Cheshire College

When Thomas began his Apprenticeship at Town and Country Motors in Northwich he was determined to learn everything about the business, from the bottom up.

Thomas pays great attention to detail, and places great importance on health and safety, and has also been praised for his excellent customer care skills, punctuality and quick thinking. He communicates well with his colleagues, and is quick to help out with any task required of him.

Thomas's manager at Town & Country garage is so impressed with his work, he'd like him to stay for years to come and eventually help run the business.

# ADVANCED APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR AWARD

sponsored by Cheshire Skills & Employer Development

The Advanced Apprentice of the Year Award 2008 acknowledges and celebrates exceptional contributions made by apprentices in their workplace. Judges look for apprentices who have made a real difference to the organisation they work for by exceeding expectations and delivering measurable benefits.



**Craig Robinson**  
19, Wirral

**ENGINEERING**  
Unilever UK.  
West Cheshire College

Craig sees his role as an apprentice with Unilever UK as to work hard, be of use to the company, and to ultimately do the best he can.

And he's certainly done that - solutions that Craig suggested when given a cost reduction project to carry out have saved his employer more than £30,000. Craig says his Apprenticeship has helped to focus on his goals and work towards being a highly skilled engineer, as well as helping him to mature as a person.

His project manager at Unilever says Craig seizes all opportunities to better himself, and praises his mature outlook on life.



**Chantelle Makinson**  
19, Cheadle

**HAIRDRESSING**  
Paul Barlow Hairdressing.  
Trafford College

While doing her Apprenticeship in hairdressing, Chantelle has continuously taken herself out of her comfort zone in a bid to experience many aspects of the industry.

When a nationally-renowned salon offered Chantelle the opportunity to train with them, she accepted the challenge and successfully completed their in-house training alongside her Apprenticeship studies. Chantelle says her Apprenticeship has helped her to learn that criticism is a valuable way of learning, and has made her believe in herself.

Her work-based learning co-ordinator says that Chantelle has shown a commitment and passion beyond her years, and commits time and energy to achieve the standards she aspires to.



**Joanne Gardner**  
19, Warrington

**CUSTOMER SERVICE**  
Warrington Borough Council.

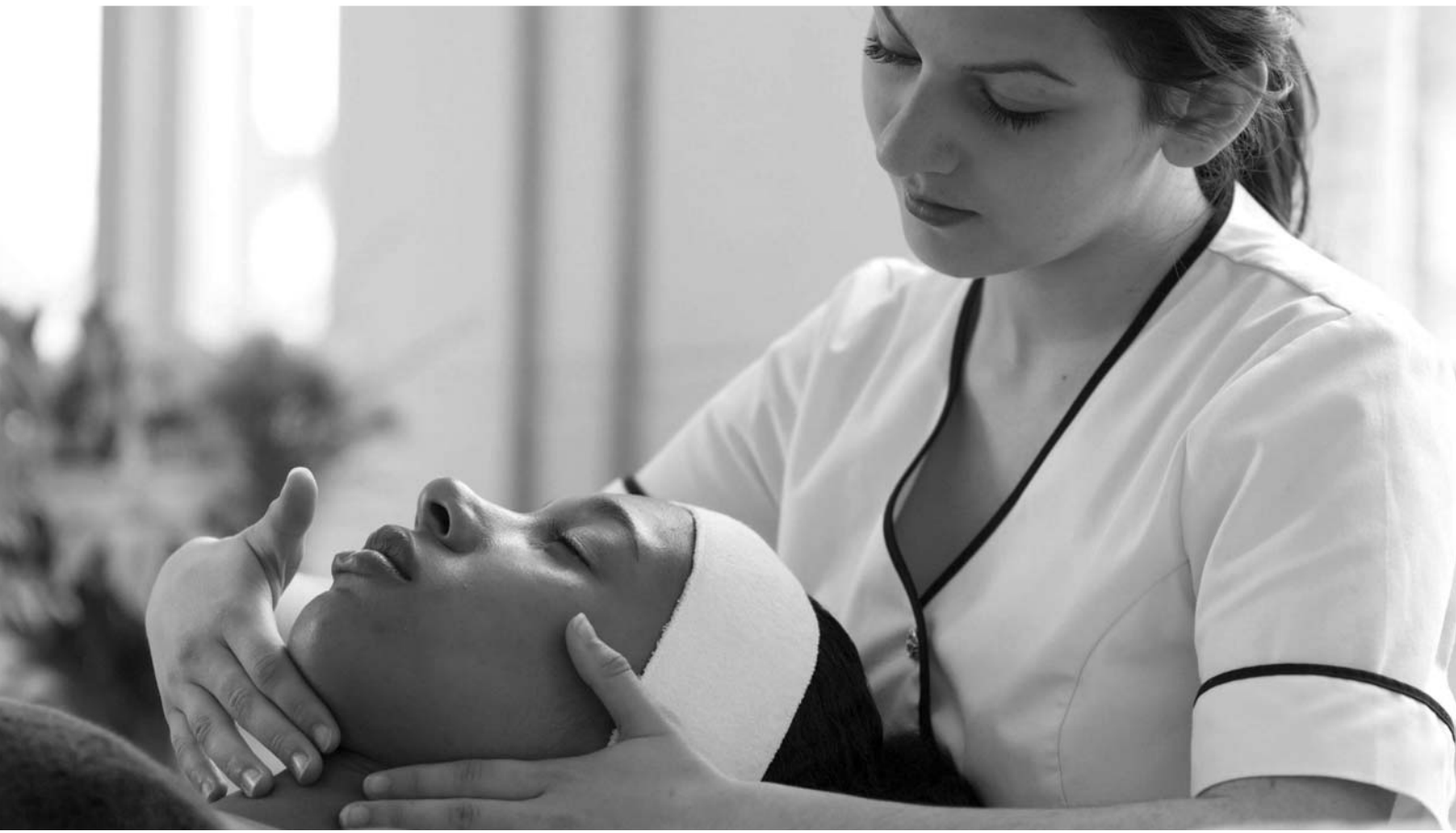
Joanne says she always aims to go that one step further when assisting customers in her role at Warrington Borough Council's new customer contact centre.

When the council opened the centre, Joanne worked closely with analysts brought in to look at how services could be improved, and helped to train new and existing staff. She believes that it is necessary to continually reassess how things are done in order to improve service delivery.

The manager at the council's contact centre says she has brought the council's vision and values alive, and that a presentation she gave to the Chief Executive was outstanding.



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