

## Merseyside Learners Celebrate Award Wins

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Five Greater Merseyside learners have beaten strong competition to be named winners in the Greater Merseyside heat of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) North West Learner Awards.

Fern Rowlands, 16, from Huyton, was named Young Apprentice of the Year. Fern is completing a Young Apprenticeship in Hospitality with Knowsley Community College and attends Knowsley Hey School.

Twenty-five year old James Davies from Crosby was named Apprentice of the Year. James works at Eldapoint Ltd and trains for his Engineering Apprenticeship at Knowsley Community College.

Adam Roman, 23, from Brighton-le-Sands was presented with the award for Advanced Apprentice of the Year. Adam is undertaking an Apprenticeship in Amenity Horticulture with Glendale Liverpool and studies with Myerscough College. Apprentice Employer of the Year was Greenfields Kennels and Cattery in Meols, Wirral.

Carl Morris from Riverside College, Halton, won the Further Education Academic prize, and Kelly Aspinall from Wirral Metropolitan College received the Further Education Vocational award.

Konnie Huq, who has a degree in economics from Cambridge University and spent more than 10 years hosting popular children's TV show Blue Peter, told the assembled audience of the importance of education and skills.

"To us, education and training are basic rights. My parents came to the UK from Bangladesh in the 1960s to give me and my sisters a better start in life, otherwise I would have grown up in a Bangladeshi village with no education. You have no control over where you're born, and everyone here is lucky to have the opportunities available to them in Greater Merseyside.

“I’ve filmed for Comic Relief in Africa where children play schools and pretend they can read and write, because they want so much to be able to do it for real. There are so many people in the world who just don’t have the chance to learn or develop skills, and we should value our opportunities every day. Everyone here has done that, and by doing so you have proved what hard work can achieve. Congratulations to all of you.”

Helen France, Area Director for LSC Greater Merseyside, congratulated the finalists and said: “In Greater Merseyside, we need a bedrock of businesses that invest in people, especially in times of an economic downturn. Investing in employees will boost the success of business in our region, and better skills mean better jobs and better lives. The best thing about learning is there are no losers – you are all winners tonight.”

The winners in each category could now go on to be named North West Regional Winner, competing against winners from Cumbria, Cheshire and Warrington, Greater Manchester and Lancashire. Winners in the Apprenticeship categories could also go on to the National Apprenticeship Awards final, which will be held at Old Billingsgate in London on 16 July.

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## **Notes for Editors**

**The winners in the Greater Merseyside heat of the North West Learner Awards 2009 are:**

**Young Apprentice of the Year  
Fern Rowlands, Huyton, Liverpool**

Highly Commended:  
Matthew Guy, Runcorn

**Apprentice of the Year  
James Davies, Crosby, Liverpool**

Highly Commended:  
Emily Jackson, Liverpool  
Paul Chapman, Wirral

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## **Advanced Apprentice of the Year**

**Adam Roman, Liverpool**

Highly Commended:  
Anthony Ion, St Helens

## **Further Education Vocational Award**

**Kelly Aspinall, Wirral Metropolitan College, Birkenhead**

Highly Commended:  
John Cartwright, Knowsley Community College  
Kayleigh and Leann Murphy, Riverside College Halton

## **Further Education Academic Award**

**Carl Morris, Riverside College Halton**

Highly Commended:  
Jamie Pinto, Birkenhead Sixth Form College  
Alan Tierney, Hugh Baird College, Bootle, Liverpool

## **Apprentice Employer of the Year**

**Greenfields Kennels & Cattery, Wirral**

## **About the Learning and Skills Council**

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.

## **About the North West Learner Awards 2009**

The LSC's North West Learner Awards recognise the achievements of further education learners, apprentices and apprentice employers from across the region. The awards comprise Apprentice of the Year, Advanced Apprentice of the Year, and

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Young Apprentice of the Year, the Further Education Academic Award, the Further Education Vocational Award, plus awards for apprentice employers. Winners in each category are honoured at awards ceremonies in Cheshire and Warrington, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Greater Merseyside and Lancashire; they then go on to compete for the North West Region Award for their category and those in the Apprenticeship categories are also considered for the national Apprenticeship Awards.

#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**

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