

Cumbria Celebrates Training Award Winners

Two Exceptional Individuals from Cumbria Win National Training Awards

Date of issue 23 October 2006

Publication number NWR-003

Two exceptional individuals from Cumbria were amongst the six North West winners of National Training Awards, the UK's premier accolade for organisations and individuals that have achieved excellence through training, at a recent ceremony in the Palace Hotel, Manchester.

Karen James from Penrith turned her passion in childcare and education into a career and then into a successful business. The mother of three started by helping out at her daughters' primary school and playgroups, and then in 1991 went to work at a secondary school, Ullswater Community College, supporting children with profound and multiple learning difficulties.

Karen was really bitten by the learning bug, taking many short courses to help her work, and then went on to complete an Advanced Diploma in Childcare and Education. Following her course Karen started working at a university nursery as deputy manager, which gave her the inspiration and confidence to run her own nursery.

The nursery, Kiddlywinks Pre School Centre and Day Nursery, is now very successful and is used by more than 130 families.

Paul Irving from Ulverston has transformed his life from struggling farmer to college lecturer. Paul was from a farming family and left school with no qualifications having suffered from a short-term memory problem and possible dyslexia. Struggling to provide his family with any sort of standard of living, he was struck down by Crohns Disease and

forced to reassess his life. Paul saw this as a challenge and although not owning a computer he set about checking out careers in information and communications technology (ICT).

Paul threw himself into computer studies and finally left farming when he got a place at Furness College, on an HND Computing course. He graduated in 2001 and began teaching part-time at the college, becoming a full-time lecturer in 2002.

At the ceremony television presenter Suzi Perry presented Karen and Paul with golden tickets to the National Training Awards UK gala ceremony on 14 December at the Royal Lancaster Hotel, London, where they will receive their trophies.

Award sponsors included the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Ruth Bullen, Director of LSC Cumbria said:

“I extend my warmest congratulations to Karen and Paul. These stories of personal success are an inspiration about what can be achieved through learning.

These awards have always been about excellence, achievement and improvement. We all benefit from a highly skilled workforce: the individuals themselves, because they are able to fulfil their potential and the organisations who employ them, because they have motivated, loyal and creative employees.”

In a successful night for the region, four North West based organisations also won National Training Awards and a further ten received recognition with North West Training Awards.

Ends

Photo xxx

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NOTES TO EDITORS

National Training Award

Cumbria: Karen James, Penrith and Paul Irving, Ulverston

Greater Manchester: Optimum Contact Solutions, Manchester and RBS Insurance (Direct Line Brand), Manchester

Isle of Man: Fairbairn Private Bank Limited, Douglas

Lancashire: Burnley College, Burnley

North West Training Award

Greater Manchester: First Trans Pennine Express, Manchester, Pipex Home Call, Manchester, Ashtead Plant Hire Company Ltd, Salford, in partnership with Ian Woodward (DLD Solutions), Luton, First Choice Holidays, Salford, in partnership with Blue Sky Consulting, Guildford and **City & Guilds Award Winner** Darran Glenn Yates, Wigan

Greater Merseyside: Johnsons Apparelmaster, Bootle, Everyday Financial Solutions, Bootle and Mersey Care NHS Trust, Liverpool

Lancashire: United Utilities North West, Hoscarr, in partnership with C2B Media Limited, Sheffield and Legal & Trade Financial Services Ltd, Preston

Learning and Skills Council

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational 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 by 2010, young people and adults in England have the knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. Established in 2001, we work nationally, regionally and locally from a network of offices across the country.

Top Level Messages

- We plan and invest in high quality education and training for young people and adults that will build a skilled and competitive workforce.
- We help employers to get the training and skills they need for their business.

- We are transforming the further education sector to meet the needs of employers and the local community.
- We are committed to improving learning opportunities for everyone.