

### **GLOUCESTER GIRL WINS APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR 2009 AT THE NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP AWARDS**

**Sinead Smith takes home the Apprentice of the Year 2009 Award for the South West**

\*\*\*Pictures available upon request\*\*\*

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A Gloucester girl has won the coveted Apprentice of the Year 2009 title as England's best apprentices were last night recognised at the 2009 Apprenticeship Awards. Held at Old Billingsgate, London and run by the National Apprenticeships Service, the Awards celebrated the achievements of apprentices and their employers.

At the ceremony hosted by Rugby World Cup winner Matt Dawson, people working in industries from motor to marine and from retail to rail came together to celebrate the successes of Apprenticeships.

South West apprentice Sinead Smith, 19, was announced as Apprentice of the Year 2009, with Advanced Apprentice Wayne Manton and Large Employer Princess Yachts International Plc both highly commended in their categories.

Sinead Smith, who won the Apprentice of the Year title after completing an Apprenticeship in Business Administration, said her Apprenticeship has given her opportunities she would never have dreamed of:

"My Apprenticeship has helped build my confidence and made me far more independent than I would have been if I had spent the last two years in a classroom. When I first started working in the Admissions Department, I was too shy to even answer the phone, now I am happy to chat to anyone and have even been asked by the college to run the late applications scheme over the summer. I am so proud of what I have achieved over the past two years and would highly recommend an Apprenticeship to anyone considering it."

Despite the current economic climate, both employers and apprentices have successfully used Apprenticeships to make them stand out. The Awards recognise

and celebrate the hard work, commitment and achievements of apprentices and employers who drive business performance and productivity with apprentices.

Simon Waugh, Chief Executive of the National Apprenticeship Service said that the Awards were a fitting recognition of apprentice's achievements and it was encouraging to see employers committed to Apprenticeship training:

"Apprenticeships are vital to business in today's challenging times - particularly as we prepare for the upturn.

"We need a skilled workforce. We need employees that are motivated and fully engaged in what they do so they can build skills to fulfil their potential. Many thousands of employers across the country recognise this and are actively investing in their people every day. The Apprenticeship Awards celebrate "winning by doing", both for apprentices and employers who employ apprentices," he said.

Awards presenter and former three-time Lions team player Matt Dawson said:

"It's a real honour to be involved in this year's national Apprenticeship Awards. It has been truly inspiring. I believe Apprenticeships are tremendously important to Britain's future. They unlock talent and provide a viable, alternative route for individuals to pursue a career and gain personal and professional satisfaction.

"No one knows more than me just how important training is to help you bring your A-game to the pitch. These winners have shown that they are not only true team players but they really are at the top of their game in their respective areas."

This year's Apprenticeship Awards attracted 1,058 entries, representing individuals and companies from all over England vying to win one of three Apprentice of the Year or one of five Employer of the Year Awards at yesterday's ceremony [16 July].

Skills and Apprenticeships Minister Kevin Brennan said:

"Apprentices are playing a crucial role in ensuring Britain overcomes the challenging times ahead. That's why this Government will fund Apprenticeship places for one in five young people by 2020 and make more places available; real help, where our country needs it most.

"These Awards have proved that apprentices are 'doers' who make things happen, which is why Apprenticeships remain a key component of the Government's economic and employment strategy. Better skills provide measureable benefits to people across the country and Apprenticeships are vital to give the competitive edge we need to thrive in the global economy."

For more information about the Awards ceremony visit [www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk) or call 08000 150 600.

- Ends -

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### **The Apprenticeship Awards**

There are five categories open to employers depending on their company size; Micro (1-9 employees), Small (10-49 employees), Medium (50-249 employees), Large (250-4999 employees) and the new Macro size category covers businesses with over 5,000 employees. Employers were assessed on a number of criteria including implementation of the Apprenticeship programme, clear demonstration of the way Apprenticeships have benefited their business and the level of support provided to their apprentices. In addition to the employer Awards, there are three categories open to apprentices - Apprentice of the Year, Advanced Apprentice of the Year and Young Apprentice of the Year. The three individual award categories acknowledge and celebrate apprentices' exceptional contributions to their workplaces where entrants have made a real difference to the business they work in by exceeding expectations and delivering measurable benefits.

### **The National Apprentice Award 2009 results:**

#### **Young Apprentice of the Year**

Winner: Mark Jefferson

- Region: Market Harborough, East Midlands
- Sector: Automotive

Highly Commended: Rebekah High

- Region: Newcastle-upon-Tyne, North East

- Sector: Sport

Highly Commended: Laura Bannister

- Region: Birmingham, West Midlands
- Sector: Health and Beauty

### **Apprentice of the Year**

Winner: Sinead Smith

- Region: Gloucester, South West
- Sector: Education (Business Administration)

Highly Commended: Lucianne Hinch

- Region: Wakefield, Yorkshire & The Humber
- Sector: Manufacturing (Furniture)

Highly Commended: Jignesh Madhavji

- Region: Bolton, North West
- Sector: Health and Beauty

### **Advanced Apprentice of the Year**

Winner: Paul Boulton

- Region: Alfreton, Derbyshire, East Midlands
- Sector: Retail (Charity)

Highly Commended: Wayne Manton

- Region: Bristol, South West
- Sector: Engineering (Automotive)

Highly Commended: Michael Crowe

- Region: Sunderland, North East
- Sector: Engineering (Health)

### **Micro employer of the Year**

Winner: Russell Marlow Painting and Decorating

- Region: Worthing, South East
- Sector: Painting and Decorating

Highly Commended: Scott Bailye Hairdressing

- Region: Leicester, East Midlands
- Sector: Hairdressing

Highly Commended: Complete Computer Systems

- Region: Leeds, Yorkshire and The Humber

- Sector: IT

### **Small employer of the Year**

Winner: Hendra Healthcare (Ludlow) Ltd.

- Region: Ludlow, West Midlands
- Sector: Health and Social Care

Highly Commended: Greenfields Kennels and Cattery

- Region: Wirral, North West
- Sector: Animal Care

Highly Commended: Michael and Margaret Naylor & Associates

- Region: Sheffield, Yorkshire and The Humber
- Sector: Dentistry

### **Medium employer of the Year**

Winner: Berthon Boat Company Ltd

- Region: Lymington, South East
- Sector: Manufacturing

Highly Commended: Rosy Apple Childcare Ltd

- Region: Preston, North West
- Sector: Childcare

Highly Commended: Kesslers International (Ltd)

- Region: London
- Sector: Manufacturing

### **Large employer of the Year**

Winner: Tube Lines Limited

- Region: London
- Sector: Engineering

Highly Commended: Bentley Motors (Ltd)

- Region: Crewe, North West
- Sector: Automotive

Highly Commended: Princess Yachts International plc

- Region: Plymouth, South West
- Sector: Manufacturing

### **Macro employer of the Year**

Winner: BT

- Region: London
- Sector: Engineering and IT

Highly Commended: Rolls-Royce plc

- Region: Derby, East Midlands
- Sector: Engineering and Aerospace Manufacturing

Highly Commended: Sellafield Limited

- Region: Seascale, North West
- Sector: Engineering

### **National Apprenticeship Service:**

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) was announced in January 2008 and officially launched in April 2009. Reporting to the Departments for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), the service will drive forward the Government's ambition for Apprenticeships. The service aims to bring about a significant growth in the number of employers offering Apprenticeships.

The NAS has total responsibility for the delivery of Apprenticeships that includes: Employer Services; Learner Services; and Apprenticeship vacancies online. This online system enables individuals to search and apply for live vacancies and allows employers, and their training providers to advertise their vacancies to a wide range of interested applicants.

The service has ultimate accountability for the national delivery of targets and co-ordination of the funding for Apprenticeship places. It will act to overcome barriers to the growth of the programme and assume responsibility for promoting Apprenticeships and their value to employers, learners and the country as a whole.

### **Sponsors:**

**City & Guilds** - Premier sponsor for the fifth consecutive year

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**EDI** - Young Apprentice of the Year

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