



PRESS RELEASE

Thursday 3rd June 2010

Bodmin resident wins Learner of the Year Award at South West Skills Awards

James Fielder from Cornwall Neighbourhoods of Change is celebrating today after being named Learner of the Year at the South West Skills Awards, which took place last night (2 June).

The prestigious ceremony, which took place at Sandy Park conference centre in Exeter, was presented by BBC's former chief news correspondent, Kate Adie, OBE. Kate, who is the current presenter of Radio 4's *From Our Own Correspondent*, delivered a keynote speech about her own experience learning essential skills on the job.

This journalistic theme was reinforced by compere Clinton Rogers, the BBC's Chief Somerset Correspondent.

The South West Skills Awards recognise and celebrate the achievements of apprentices, learners and employers who have excelled in the region.

Run by the Skills Funding Agency and the National Apprenticeship Service, the evening combined the Skills Awards with the South West regional heat of the National Apprenticeship Awards.

Paul Lucken, Skills Director for the Skills Funding Agency South West said: "I would like to extend my congratulations to James, the other winners of the evening and also to the shortlisted candidates.

"The effort and contribution made by this year's winners have clearly made a positive impact on the organisations in which they work, their own personal development and, in turn, the wider South West economy. It is important to note that all entrants make the

South West a better place for us to live and work – and that it is something worth celebrating.”

Further information about the South West Skills Awards can be found at:
<http://www.skillsawards.org.uk/>

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James Fielder

James Fielder had an established career in the hospitality and tourism industry but a lack of confidence and opportunity meant he had no specific qualifications. Towards the end of 2009, as the summer season drew to a close, James was on notice of redundancy when he heard about the Response to Redundancy programme being run by Cornwall Neighbourhoods for Change. From the moment he joined the programme his life began to change for the better. With CN4C support he has updated his CV and employability skills, passed accredited qualifications and gained significantly in confidence. During eight weeks of sessions he passed CIEH Health and Safety Level 2 and CIEH Food Safety Level 2.

With these qualifications to encourage him, James went back to his previous employer and explained what he had been doing since leaving them. This resulted in his re-employment and he went back to work in February 2010. His employers were so impressed James had taken the initiative to up-skill himself they offered him the opportunity to take the BIIAB Level 2 National Certificate for Personal License Holder, which he has completed successfully.

In just a few months James has grown both personally and professionally and that has given him the drive and passion to continue learning and progressing in the hospitality industry.

The South West Skills Awards

These awards recognise the achievements of individuals at every stage of life and career. By acknowledging the diverse learners and training opportunities in the region, the Skills Funding Agency hopes to encourage more learners and organisations to take part in learning initiatives that not only support individual development but contribute to stronger economic and workforce prosperity.

Sponsors for the South West Awards

Train to Gain Employer of the Year Award – sponsored by Business Link and Train to Gain
Skills Pledge Employer of the Year Award – sponsored by Skills Pledge
Third Sector Employer of the Year Award – sponsored by European Social Fund
Success in Leadership and Management Award – sponsored by Train to Gain

Apprenticeship Awards – sponsored as a whole by City & Guilds

Apprentice of the Year Award – sponsored by EDI
Young Apprentice of the Year Award – sponsored by Unilever
Advanced Apprentice of the Year Award – sponsored by EAL / EMTA Awards Ltd
Micro Employer of the Year Award – sponsored by Skills for Care
Small Employer of the Year Award – sponsored by BT
Medium Employer of the Year Award – sponsored by Sellafield Ltd
Large Employer of the Year Award – sponsored by BAE Systems

Skills Funding Agency:

The Skills Funding Agency is responsible for channelling funding swiftly, efficiently and securely to further education colleges and other providers, primarily in response to customer (employer and learner) choice on programmes such as Train to Gain. It operates through customer focused services: *National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)*, *Employer Skills Services*, *Adult Advancement and Careers Service*, *Learner Skills Services*. The Skills Funding Agency is an agency of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

National Apprenticeship Service (NAS):

The NAS was announced in January 2008 and officially launched in April 2009. Reporting to the Departments for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Department for Education (DfE), 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.