



PRESS RELEASE

Thursday 3rd June 2010

Padstow company wins coveted Train to Gain Employer of the Year award

The Seafood Restaurant is celebrating today after winning Train to Gain Employer 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 the Seafood Restaurant, 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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The Seafood Restaurant

Rick Stein's The Seafood Restaurant in Padstow is one of the largest private company employers in Cornwall with a staff of 248 running the restaurant, bistro, café, fish & chips outlet, deli, patisserie, gift shop, cookery school and 40 guest bedrooms. It recruits 89% of its employees within the county and the aim of its staff training is to assist individuals with their professional skills as well as literacy and numeracy. Employees are encouraged to identify the best development route for themselves and are offered a range of job-related training and development programmes.

The Seafood Restaurant's human resources manager was introduced to training provider, Truro College, three years ago. Since then the best strategies and training methods for company staff have been introduced to great effect including NVQ Level 2 and 3 qualifications in customer service, professional cookery, retail, food and drink service, food processing and cooking and administration, as well as distance learning qualifications, Apprenticeships, advanced Apprenticeships, technical and leadership skills, adult literacy and numeracy skills and other relevant courses to enhance staff expertise. As a result, there has been a 10% reduction in labour turnover during the last 2 years – reducing recruitment costs, improving morale and motivation and improving service for customers.

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 Sellafeld 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.