

# Festival of Learning

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Led by:

**L&W** LEARNING AND  
WORK INSTITUTE

Supported by:



Department  
for Education

Awards sponsored by:



CITYLIT



## ABOUT US



### ABOUT FESTIVAL OF LEARNING

Festival of Learning is the biggest celebration of lifelong learning in England.

For more than 25 years we have been recognising the remarkable achievements of people, including tutors, projects and employers, that have used learning to positively transform their lives and the lives of others.

Through the stories of our award winners, Festival of Learning aims to celebrate and showcase the breadth of benefits learning can bring to individuals, businesses, communities and society, and inspire more people to learn.

[www.festivaloflearning.org.uk](http://www.festivaloflearning.org.uk)

@ festival\_learn



### ABOUT LEARNING AND WORK INSTITUTE

Learning and Work Institute is an independent policy, research and development organisation dedicated to lifelong learning, full employment and inclusion.

We believe a better skilled workforce, in better paid jobs, is good for business, good for the economy, and good for society.

We want everyone to have an opportunity to realise their ambitions and potential in learning, work and throughout life.

We are proud to have led Festival of Learning since its beginnings in 1992.

[www.learningandwork.org.uk](http://www.learningandwork.org.uk)

@ LearnWorkUK

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A MESSAGE FROM...

## STEPHEN EVANS

Congratulations to all our Festival of Learning award winners and nominees. Your stories and achievements show the many and varied ways in which learning can make a difference.

This year, coronavirus means that we cannot hold an awards ceremony in the same way. Instead, we will be celebrating online and I hope you will also find your own ways to mark your achievements too.

Coronavirus has changed the ways in which people engage in learning but not the importance of doing so. Learning can help to improve health and wellbeing, build community connections, and support finding work and changing careers. Talent is equally distributed across the country, but opportunity isn't: adult learning can help bridge that gap.

Yet the proportion of adults engaging in learning is at its lowest in the 24 years Learning and Work Institute have been measuring it. Through the years, our Festival of Learning winners have been ambassadors for learning and I'm sure you will inspire many more people into learning.

Your stories offer a kaleidoscope of reasons for renewed investment in adult learning and developing new ways to engage adults. I look forward to celebrating your success and working for a renewed and widespread commitment to adult learning.

**Stephen Evans**

*Chief executive of Learning and Work Institute*



A MESSAGE FROM...

## GILLIAN KEEGAN MP

Festival of Learning is a wonderful celebration of the difference that education can make throughout the course of our lives.

The stories of the winners and finalists in this booklet are so motivating. Whether it be learning to find a job or progress in work, learning to improve health and wellbeing, or learning to support your children's education, the people recognised in this booklet are real examples of just how lifelong learning can transform and enrich lives.

Lifelong learning has always been important, but it is more crucial today than ever before. Opportunities to learn new skills will be vital as we seek to level up opportunity, life chances and prosperity across the country after the pandemic. We must all work together to ensure more adults are able to learn, and we must redouble our efforts to tear down the barriers that get in an individual's way.

I want to congratulate every winner and finalist as well as all nominees for this year's Festival of Learning awards. Their achievements serve as an example to us all. I hope that their stories help inspire more adults to take the first steps in their learning journey.

**Gillian Keegan MP**

*Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills*



Department  
for Education



**BUCKINGHAM PALACE**

A MESSAGE FROM...

## HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL

As Patron of Learning and Work Institute, I am delighted to congratulate everyone who was nominated for a Festival of Learning award this year, and to thank them for sharing their personal stories and experiences of lifelong learning.

Celebrating the different journeys that our award winners and finalists have undertaken to reach their goals is important both in recognition of their achievements, but also in highlighting the difference that learning can make to lives of individuals, to families, and to society as a whole. I am sure the award winner stories shared this year will inspire other adults to begin their own learning journeys too.

This year's Patron's Award recipient is Hannah Wilkins. Hannah took the brave step of returning to education at age 28, having left school when she was 13 due to bullying. Motivated by a desire to better support her children and to embark on a new career path, Hannah has now completed over 20 different courses and progressed into further education. Hannah's story of determination and courage and the resulting transformational impact on her life gets to the heart of what Festival of Learning is about.

In addition to the awards celebrations, this year marks our first Lifelong Learning Week. This provides an opportunity to raise the profile of lifelong learning, and to encourage discussions about how we can all work together to increase and improve the opportunities adults have to learn.

Congratulations to all of our award winners and I wish you every success in your continuing learning journeys.

**HRH The Princess Royal**

*Patron, Learning and Work Institute*

## Patron's Award HANNAH WILKINS

WINNER

Education had been a negative experience for Hannah in the past and she had left school when she was 13 as a result of bullying. At age 28, motivated by a desire to better support her children with their schoolwork, she decided it was the right time for her to return to learning.

"My life has been about my children for so long that I wanted to do something for myself and work out what career I wanted. After seeing the confidence course advertised on Facebook I re-started my learning with Wiltshire Council Family and Community Learning. I began by attending the Confidence and New Directions courses at my local children's centre and since then I have completed over 20 different courses and achieved level 2 in functional skills English and maths.

Going back to learning has given me so much confidence. I've formed long-lasting friendships and been introduced to people from all different walks of life. I found the confidence to nominate myself to be a governor for Wiltshire Family and Community Learning, and I've been able to start further education to pursue my dream job as a support worker.

It has helped my children too, as I have been able to support them with their homework, help

them relax, and been given ideas about getting out into nature and healthier eating. It has given me back my confidence to learn that I lost at young age. It has shown myself, my friends and family that it is never too late to learn something new."

Laura Trowbridge, family and community learning tutor with Wiltshire Council said, *"The journey Hannah has taken to develop such a confident and positive vision for her future is phenomenal. Hannah is an inspiration to her family, and to all who meet her."*

**"Hannah is an inspiration to her family, and to all who meet her."**



Nominating organisation: Wiltshire Council | @wiltscouncil | [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)



A MESSAGE FROM...

## NICK STUART CB

My warmest congratulations to all our winners and finalists for this year's Festival of Learning Awards, and indeed to everyone who was nominated. Each one of you is a shining example and an inspiration to us all.

The President's Award recognises learning provision that goes the extra mile. This year's award goes to Positive People, a programme that has worked with over 6000 people across Cornwall, Devon and Somerset to date, supporting them to regain their confidence, learn to manage their mental and physical health and develop a vast range of skills. Learning is tailored to each individual's needs and at the same time brings learners together as a community through initiatives such as the Feel Good Shop.

I warmly applaud all the staff and volunteers that have worked tirelessly to make Positive People the success it is. From helping older, socially isolated learners to develop the digital skills they need to keep in touch with their families, through to teaching young care leavers the valuable life skills that they need to live independently and confidently, they are transforming lives and giving thousands of people hope and ambition for a brighter future.

Positive People have created positive outcomes for so many. It is a truly inspiring programme.

**Nick Stuart CB**

*President, Learning and Work Institute*

## President's Award

# POSITIVE PEOPLE PROGRAMME

WINNER

**P**ositive People, a partnership project led by social enterprise Pluss, operates across Cornwall, Devon and Somerset offering a learning lifeline to the most socially excluded and vulnerable people in society.

"Our learners come from every type of background, with every type of story. We support anyone who is out of work who would benefit from learning, including people with a physical or mental health condition, physical or learning disability, people with addictions, parents, veterans, homeless people and people who are lonely and isolated. We work with fourteen partners and our learning opportunities are unique and tailored to each person.

We run a Feel Good Shop in Plymouth to bring the community together to learn how to live a healthy life from our health and wellbeing partners, learn about managing finances from the Citizens Advice Bureau, learn how to get the most out of their digital devices, and much more. We also have two local community radio shows in Cornwall, helping people learn about media while showcasing to the community what learning opportunities are out there for them.

Our Feel Good and Fly project works with young adult care leavers, helping them learn valuable life skills, and our social prescribing helps people learn how to stay healthy and well, reconnect with society and get active.

We also teach people to live sustainably and inclusively. We run lots of activities around living a sustainable, ethical life, learning how to connect with others and give something back to the community.

These are just some examples of the learning opportunities on offer through Positive People. We have worked with over 6,000 people so far, and 63% of those have moved into further education, training, employment or self-employment."

Oliver Green at Pluss said "We're proud to be innovative and are always thinking of new ideas to engage with people. We feel the learning journey is just as important as the destination."

**"We're proud to be innovative and are always thinking of new ideas to engage with people."**



*Positive People is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and the European Social Fund*

Nominating organisation: Pluss | @PlussInspires | [www.pluss.org.uk](http://www.pluss.org.uk)









A MESSAGE FROM...

## GRAHAM HASTING-EVANS

NOCN Group are delighted to support the Festival of Learning Awards again in 2020, promoting our shared purpose of inspiring adults to learn, and celebrating the positive impact of lifelong learning.

We are particularly passionate about supporting the Festival of Learning because we share a common background. NIACE, who initiated the Festival of Learning (previously Adult Learners' Week), was also instrumental in our early beginnings at NOCN.

Now a leading education and skills charity, NOCN Group's focus is social and economic mobility, not profit. We offer a wide range of education and skills services, including regulated qualifications, EPA (end-point assessment) for apprenticeships and Access to HE Diplomas.

We are proud to be working closely with the Learning and Work Institute to champion the importance of adult learning. In our recent report, 'Close the Gap', we outlined the need for a roadmap to build technical and vocational skills in the UK, not only for young people but also for adults. With the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the economic landscape, there will be an increasing need to upskill and reskill the adult population for successful redeployment.

The Festival of Learning Awards shine a light on what can be achieved through learning, changing not only careers and enhancing prospects, but improving health and happiness too. Every year we are privileged to hear the stories of inspirational people and organisations, and with the right help and attitude, we can all achieve great things.

**Graham Hasting-Evans**

*Managing Director of NOCN Group*

# Learning for Work Award

## PAUL BARNESLEY

### WINNER

Sponsored by  
NOCN GROUP

A course offered online by North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College stimulated Paul's interest in learning about mental health issues, learning difficulties and disabilities, as he could see the direct relevance to his work as a police inspector with Warwickshire Police.

"I was researching mental health online to help better understand my own experience after I was signed off from work. I signed up for a qualification in Awareness of Mental Health Problems, but as I worked through the course I not only made progress with my own recovery,

**"Paul has made a tremendous difference in the workplace, helping Warwickshire Police to promote diversity and gain acceptance for learning difficulties and disabilities."**

I also realised that what I had learnt was going to be extremely useful at work. I went on to complete seven more distance learning courses, including Understanding Children and Young People's Mental Health Challenges, Understanding Specific Learning Difficulties and Understanding Autism.

The learning has improved the way I interact with police service users and helped me to bring fresh ideas to my working practice and to the practice of the wider police force. More than 30 of my colleagues have now signed up to follow online qualifications themselves and amongst other things I have been involved in supporting Warwickshire Police to set up a Disability Network and establish a Personal Supportive Passport initiative, which enables colleagues to flag support needs as they move around the organisation.

I am proud of these initiatives as they are bringing a better integration of diversity into the way the police force works. My professional life has been re-energised. For me it has been like finding a calling and has helped to get me back on track with my career."

Anita Ladva-Cheung, Paul's assessor at North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College said, "As a result of his learning, Paul has made a tremendous difference in the workplace, helping Warwickshire Police to promote diversity and gain acceptance for learning difficulties and disabilities."



Nominating organisation: North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College | @nwslc\_official | [www.nwslc.ac.uk](http://www.nwslc.ac.uk)



# Employer Award NATIONAL CRIME AGENCY

## WINNER

Sponsored by  
NOCN GROUP

**T**he Initial Operational Training Programme (IOTP) designed and delivered by the National Crime Agency (NCA) supports intelligence and investigation training through an accredited flexible learning and development framework. The programme provides learners with knowledge, skills and experience to be at the forefront of fighting serious and organised crime.

“Our unique training programme uses a blended learning approach and combines digital resources, classroom learning, mentoring and on the job experience. The IOTP learners are a combination of new employees to the NCA with little or no law enforcement experience and existing employees looking for a change in direction or promotion.

Learners can access the programme via a virtual learning environment and UK wide classroom-based locations. Digital learning, simulations, guest speakers, subject matter experts and one to one support tutorials all contribute to the learning syllabus. The learners are based in active operational departments and learn from experienced officers through coaching, mentoring, networking sessions, and operational duties.

Learners use a professional development portfolio to record evidence of their learning and log progress. They are also provided with individual support via



experienced operational standards coaches and assessors.

Upon successful completion of the course the learners are awarded with a nationally recognised law enforcement accreditation, receive an uplift in their salary and access to promotions and further training to develop their careers.

This programme equips our officers with the skills and ability to cut serious and organised crime such as child sexual abuse and exploitation, modern slavery/human trafficking, drug trafficking, economic and cyber-crime. Without these officers, we could not support and protect all the communities that we serve. Our officers aspire to #beyourbest.”

Learner Isobel said, “It was a huge decision to change careers and start again at trainee level in a field I wasn’t familiar with. However, the IOTP offered the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge I’d need to become an intelligence officer whilst applying those skills in the working environment.”

**“... the IOTP offered the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge I’d need to become an intelligence officer whilst applying those skills in the working environment.”**

Nominating organisation: National Crime Agency | @NCA\_UK | [www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk](http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk)



A MESSAGE FROM...

## PAUL EELES

The Skills and Education Group are delighted to be sponsoring Festival of Learning 2020. We believe it is a fantastic initiative which shines a much-needed spotlight on lifelong learning.

We commend the decision of the Learning and Work Institute to go ahead with the celebrations in this strange year. Education will be key to society's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and it is important that we continue to celebrate learning achievements.

As an organisation, we care passionately about advancing the lives of individuals through skills and education, something that is even more important in these difficult times. It is therefore a pleasure to once again be supporting the New Directions Award at this year's Festival of Learning. Adult education transforms lives, tackles social mobility and helps communities and the economy to thrive.

The individuals shortlisted for the New Directions Award are all the more impressive this year. The pandemic has caused complications for learners across the country, yet these inspiring people have continued their learning journeys and have accomplished significant goals to reinvent their careers and improve their lives.

We look forward to presenting the winner with this new award and celebrating their achievements, and we congratulate all of this year's nominees.

**Paul Eeles**

*Chief Executive at Skills and Education Group*

# New Directions Award

## LAURA DUNN-GREEN

### WINNER

Sponsored by  
SKILLS & EDUCATION GROUP

**A**n Introduction into Health and Social Care course run by City College Peterborough at a local care home gave Laura the opportunity she needed to overcome her anxiety, discover her passion for caring for others, and embark on a new career.

"I had my daughter when I was 16, so I missed out on college and higher education as I was raising her. Her dad passed away when she

was nearly a year old and this had a massive effect on my mental health. I fell into a deep depression and my anxiety got even worse. I struggled to leave the house at times.

My coach at the Job Centre mentioned the course to me but I wasn't sure I was capable. With their encouragement I signed up to learn. I was a shy, reserved person who didn't know how to socialise or talk to people who I didn't know.

The first week it took me an hour to walk through the door. Each week it took less time until I got to the point of walking straight in with a smile on my face, ready to learn.

I've become a much more confident person and I feel like I have a purpose. Without the course I wouldn't be in the job I am now as a healthcare assistant, which I love. I felt like I had spent so many years being mum and dad that I forgot how to be me but the work academy helped me find myself and made me realise that I could make my daughter proud of me.

Claire Mansfield, health and care sector work academy tutor said, *"Laura is flourishing at work and continues learning and upskilling to further her career to a manager role. Her determination shines through and she is an amazing role model for her young daughter."*

**"Her determination shines through and she is an amazing role model for her young daughter."**



Nominating organisation: City College Peterborough | @CCPboro | [www.citycollegepeterborough.ac.uk](http://www.citycollegepeterborough.ac.uk)

A MESSAGE FROM...

## DAVID RUSSELL

As the national workforce development body for the further education and training sector, the Education and Training Foundation is particularly pleased that Festival of Learning celebrates and champions those adult learners who have transformed their lives through education, and also recognises those tutors who have helped them every step along the way.

This year has been a challenging one for the sector and wider society. The coronavirus pandemic has meant overcoming new challenges in teaching and learning, adapting to different ways of working while continuing to ensure learners are achieving their goals.

The years in front of us will also be challenging. The effects of the pandemic will be felt for some time and that will mean that the education system's ability to support adult learners in acquiring new skills will be as important as ever.

The system is only as good as its teachers, trainers and tutors, though, and as a sector we need to support, showcase and promote the very best – to set a standard for others to aspire to and be able to reach.

Those who have been shortlisted for this award all deliver excellence in teaching adults and recognising their achievements is essential. We are looking forward to the presentation of the award for Tutor of the Year, marking the great achievements of every winner and nominee, and continuing our support for Festival of Learning which plays a crucial role in the world of skills.

### **David Russell**

*CEO of the Education and Training Foundation*



**EDUCATION & TRAINING  
FOUNDATION**

# Tutor Award

## EVRIPIDES EVRIVIADES

# WINNER

Sponsored by  
EDUCATION AND  
TRAINING FOUNDATION

**E**vrripides works for Derby Adult Learning Service teaching English and maths from entry level through to level 2. His innovative, creative and functional lessons have supported many vulnerable and marginalised people to reach their potential and surpass their own expectations.

"I began my teaching career in a young offenders institute where there was a focus on individuals turning their lives around. I learnt that building relationships with the learners was vital, and that I needed to be adaptable in my approaches to teaching. I set up a new education service in partnership with probation to give people another option as part of their community service. I learnt how to structure education programmes and the different factors that can impact learners (for example court appearances, substance use and housing problems). I was motivated by helping people to engage in education and seeing them grow in confidence as they started to achieve.

Seeing learners progress has continued to motivate me throughout my career. I now teach a diverse range of people from different backgrounds and cultures. I work with patients with mental health problems and people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities. Some of my learners achieved high level qualifications in their own countries but need to gain English

qualifications to help advance their employment here. I've also worked in a local primary school, helping parents gain confidence in working with numbers.

I think the main difference I make is empowering people to have self-belief, and to influence their own future. It is important that learners overcome negative beliefs and see that they can be successful.

Education is a great vehicle for social inclusion."

Evripides' nominator, Jo Porrino, said, "*Evripides has unstinting dedication to empowering adults and supporting them to achieve a better future. He is committed to his continuing professional development, and also supports and coaches his colleagues and acts as a mentor for newly qualified staff.*"

**"Evripides has unstinting dedication to empowering adults and supporting them to achieve a better future."**



Nominating organisation: Derby Adult Learning Service | @DALSDerby | [www.adult-learning-derby.org.uk](http://www.adult-learning-derby.org.uk)





A MESSAGE FROM...

## SIMON PARKINSON

The WEA is delighted to continue our support of Festival of Learning. The campaign is an important way of showcasing the tremendous impact adult learning has on individuals and communities across the country.

Having the opportunity to celebrate the social impact that individuals have achieved through adult learning is perhaps more important than ever. Post-pandemic, initiatives that drive improvements to communities and allow individuals to embrace learning opportunities and achieve their potential will be key to our societal and economic recovery. The WEA congratulates all of the award winners on their incredible achievements.

**Simon Parkinson**

*Chief Executive and General Secretary, WEA*

# Social Impact Award

## PHIL BRANIGAN

# WINNER

Sponsored by  
WEA

**P**hil is a volunteer Digital Champion with Clarion Housing, and runs a weekly computer drop-in session at a sheltered housing scheme for the over 55s in Basingstoke. He also provides peer support to other volunteers through the Digital Unite online forum.

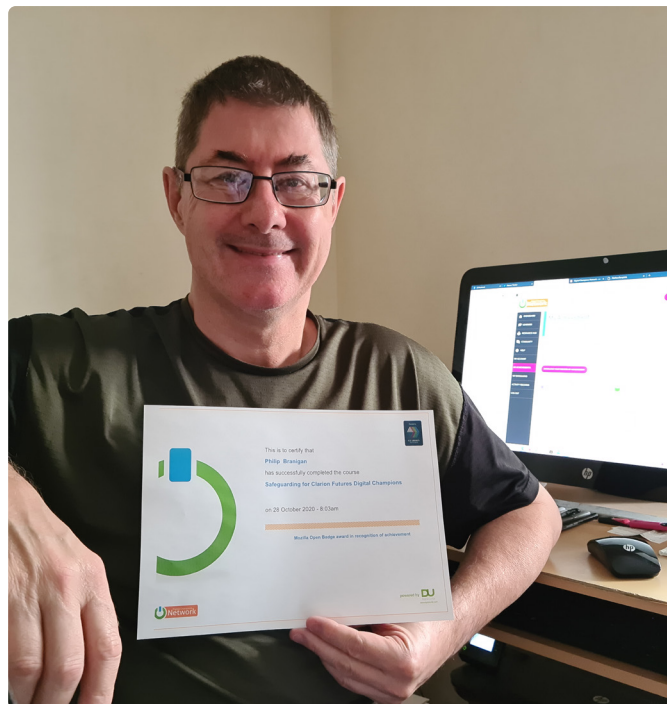
“Teaching has always been a natural extension of my own learning. Being good with technology requires the ability to always think like a beginner as things change so rapidly. I get great satisfaction when I see people comprehend something that they thought was beyond them. I love using a bitesize technique whereby each nugget of information can be practised and absorbed, so that complex features and functions become easily comprehensible.

I support learners to do anything and everything, for example create shopping lists, use maps and travel services, listen to music, watch videos and keep up with the news. Whatever they want to attempt, I try to make it possible for them. If someone can understand and use digital technologies like the internet effectively, it enhances their lives and those of their family and friends.

Many of my learners have dexterity, hearing and sight issues which I help them with by setting up their devices to suit their needs, and in all my tutoring I put privacy and security at the core of the learning process. Keeping people safe is always my priority.

In our fluid electronic world, I don't think I will ever stop learning, and my family, friends and learners help to keep me on track so that I don't become stale.”

Paula Blackledge, Digital Champion Coordinator said, “*Phil's passion for digital technologies and the benefits it can bring to someone's life is what has driven him to support so many people as a Digital Champion, and his mentoring of other Digital Champions through the forum has been fantastic. We ask a lot of him, but he is always so willing to help, and so knowledgeable.*”



**“Phil’s passion for digital technologies and the benefits it can bring to someone’s life is what has driven him to support so many people as a Digital Champion, and his mentoring of other Digital Champions through the forum has been fantastic.”**

Nominating organisation: Digital Unite | @digitalunite | www.digitalunite.com



A MESSAGE FROM...

## MARK MALCOMSON CBE

In the wake of the global pandemic, we believe there has never been a more important place in society for lifelong learning, retraining and upskilling. Adult education opens up opportunities for individuals and communities often under-served by education provision elsewhere. That's why we are particularly pleased that Festival of Learning celebrates those individuals who have returned to learning as an adult, and through this learning have transformed their own lives. We look forward to presenting the award for Return to Learning, marking the great achievements of every winner and nominee.

City Lit is famous for bringing people together to enrich lives through learning. Since we opened in 1919, well over a million people have benefitted from our unique offering. This year, City Lit was forced to close its doors to students for the first time in over 100 years. The enterprising nature of our incredible staff and tutors meant that within weeks, we were able to conclude 80% of our courses for that term online. Further, we now offer over 1,300 courses online, opening up adult learning to even more people throughout the UK and internationally.

We are proud to continue supporting campaigns like the Festival of Learning which play an invaluable role in ensuring that lifelong learning is recognised for the vital contribution it makes to developing people's skills and confidence. It also helps to underscore the economic importance of adult education in helping transform people's lives on a professional and personal level.

**Mark Malcomson CBE**

*Principal and CEO at City Lit*



# Return to Learning Award

## LIZ COLLINS

### WINNER

Sponsored by  
CITY LIT

Liz's experience of education as a child was traumatic, but she took a leap of faith and enrolled on an Introduction to Adult Social Care course with Islington Adult Community Learning. Returning to learning has had a profound impact on Liz, her family and those she now cares for in her role as a support worker.

"I grew up in care and did terribly at school. Life wasn't great after that either. I got married, had children - I'm very proud of them - but it was a damaging marriage. Fast forward 25 years and I'm watching a programme about three people who hadn't done well at school and I saw myself in one of the women. I saw her life had been transformed by education, so I paused the programme and typed 'adult learning in Islington' into my iPad and found the Introduction to Adult Social Care course.

The first day I walked home from the course I remember feeling really excited about life and that it wasn't too late for me. I have found myself. I am now a support worker and I have a sense of purpose.

I'm now doing my Care Certificate as well as training in equality and diversity, medication, first aid, and manual handling. These all have assessments and tests and I'm doing them with confidence that I'm going to pass, which I would never have felt before.

When people say "what do you do?", I can say "I'm a support worker. I work with adults with high complex needs in a residential care home and I absolutely love it!"

Colin Gardiner, Lead Tutor (Vocational and Employability Skills) at Islington Adult Community Learning said, "*Liz has blossomed. Her life has purpose and she is embarking on a rewarding career made possible by taking a course in adult social care.*"

**"Liz has blossomed. Her life has purpose and she is embarking on a rewarding career made possible by taking a course in adult social care."**



Nominating organisation: Islington Adult Community Learning | @IslingtonBC | [adultlearning.islington.gov.uk](http://adultlearning.islington.gov.uk)







## Project Award

# MOTIV8

## WINNER

**M**otiv8, a project delivered by a partnership of social housing providers, led by Jigsaw Group, works with the most disadvantaged and vulnerable residents in Greater Manchester to help them overcome deep-rooted barriers to employment. The project has supported over 3,000 residents to date.

"Framed by Greater Manchester's Local Economic Partnership priorities, Motiv8 tackles issues of low levels of employment, low income, and poor health outcomes, moving the most marginalised groups towards economic activity. We support those facing a range of multiple complex challenges including physical and mental health conditions, domestic abuse, homelessness and substance dependence. Almost two thirds of the residents we work with have been unemployed for five years or more.

Our programme provides a unique, collective offer of support and learning opportunities from a wide-range of specialist partners such as Shelter, Challenge 4 Change and Wai Yin.

Through a personalised action plan, we empower residents to overcome the individual issues they face. These action plans can include a range of learning opportunities, for example ESOL classes, fork lift truck driving and NVQ qualifications. Crucially, the learning often also

includes life skills such as budgeting, time-keeping, self-care and courses to improve self-esteem and build confidence."

Mark, a Motiv8 participant, said, "I had absolutely no motivation and just felt that I was failing at everything. Motiv8 put me on a pre-employment construction training course and as a result of that I'm now employed as a mature apprentice with Guinness Property. Motiv8 supported me every step of the way and I can't thank them enough."

Hazel Clarke, Head of Jigsaw Support who leads the project, said, "Our key workers create and co-ordinate a tailored support package through which residents access a wide range of services. So far we have achieved over 8,800 positive outcomes in areas such as health and wellbeing, finance and employability and self confidence for the residents we have worked with."

Motiv8 is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and the European Social Fund.



**"Motiv8 supported me every step of the way and I can't thank them enough."**

Nominating organisation: Jigsaw Homes Group | @JigsawHG | [www.jigsawhomes.org.uk](http://www.jigsawhomes.org.uk)

# Learning for Health Award

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROGRAMME

WINNER

**W**altham Forest Adult Learning Service has worked in partnership with Waltham Forest Social Prescribing to set up a range of creative courses in locations such as Walthamstow Wetlands, Lloyd Park and Epping Forest Visitor Centre in Chingford.

“As part of a holistic approach to improve health, wellbeing and social welfare, our courses have encouraged residents to work together collaboratively and explore the nature and wildlife on their doorstep. Many of the learners suffer from anxiety and depression, have a long-term illness, are socially isolated, have dementia or other mental health conditions or have reduced mobility. Referrals come from the NHS, Waltham Forest Social Prescribing, Connecting Communities, CGL (Change Grow Live), Alzheimer’s Society, Waltham Forest Vision and many others. Since the project was launched in 2017 we have engaged over 200 residents.

Learners take part in activities such as drawing, painting, watercolours, felt-making, horticulture and gardening, in some of the most beautiful and inspiring green and blue spaces around the borough which has been integral to further enhancing their sense of well-being. The courses reintroduce them to education and many have progressed onto other courses including ESOL, gardening, and

**“As we are a community responsive provision we are able to meet the individual needs of groups.”**



various community courses and accredited courses. Other learners progress on to volunteer in the parks, take part in conversation clubs, and participate in art exhibitions.”

Learner Lloyd said, “I was a teacher until I had a stroke and couldn’t work. I became depressed and anxious. I was referred to the creative wellbeing course, organised by Waltham Forest Adult Learning Service, then felt confident to progress and complete a buddy course working with senior

citizens. I was also successful getting a job at Waltham Forest College as a support assistant.”

Caroline Valentine, Head of Quality and Curriculum at Waltham Forest Adult Learning Service said, “As we are a community responsive provision we are able to meet the individual needs of groups. We have worked collaboratively with a number of NHS partners and it is one of the few effective social prescribing programmes in the country.”

Nominating organisation: Waltham Forest Adult Learning Service | @wfcouncil | [www.lbwfadultlearning.co.uk](http://www.lbwfadultlearning.co.uk)

# English Language Learning Award

## RUBI NAZ

### WINNER

**M**otivated by a desire to support her son who was born with various medical conditions and who has special educational needs, Rubi enrolled at Tameside Adult and Community Education (ACE) to learn English. She is now inspiring and supporting others in her community to return to learning too.

“When my son was born I knew I needed to learn English to support him, to speak to the health visitor about his medical condition and later to support him with his own learning. I wanted to be able to go to the doctor without my husband’s support, and open the door at home

if someone knocked so I can see who is there and what they want.

I started my learning journey in 2012 at Tameside ACE with ESOL entry level 1, and progressed to functional skills level 1. This was a great achievement for me and once I was able to understand English I started maths and IT courses as well. Since then I have joined Tameside College and achieved my maths GCSE and teaching assistant level 2 and 3. I now have a full time job as a teaching assistant.

Learning has made me happier, more confident and independent,

and better able to look after my son. My family respect me and my views more now, as I used to be silent. Now I am educated, I see things in a positive light and help others do the same. I support and encourage my friends to put their names down for learning at Tameside ACE as I can see how it could impact their lives too.”

Selina McCann, Student Services Officer at Tameside ACE said, “*Rubi’s life has been transformed through her learning. She has used what she has learned to secure work and she has become an ambassador for adult education.*”

**“Rubi’s life has been transformed through her learning. She has used what she has learned to secure work and she has become an ambassador for adult education.”**



Nominating organisation: Tameside Adult and Community Education | © TamesideACE | [www.tameside.gov.uk/adultlearning](http://www.tameside.gov.uk/adultlearning)



# Outstanding Individual Learner Award

## BRANDON LAYTON

WINNER

**B**randon was diagnosed with Autism and although he attended a specialist school, as a teenager he found his educational choices and potential were limited. Studying at Derwentside College has transformed Brandon's life and his academic and career prospects.

"In school I was told I wouldn't achieve any GCSEs or go into higher education so I never considered university an option despite always wanting to go. Learning at Derwentside College gave me the confidence to be myself and reach for goals I previously considered unobtainable.

I completed a level 1 foundation learning which helped me develop my social and communication skills, then progressed to level 2 qualifications in ICT and business administration, followed by a level 3 access to higher education. I was offered all four places that I applied for at university.

I've met people I wouldn't have socialised with previously. I've been appointed as a student representative to the College Board of Governors and spoken to school groups and college learners to facilitate discussions and build awareness of Autism. Before starting college I had never travelled independently or stayed away from home without my family, but now I travel extensively on public transport, including independent trips to London to visit my brother.

Without education I know my potential would be unfulfilled. My tutors have shown a belief in me that made me profoundly consider the life I want for myself. My career goals have changed immeasurably. I want a career in politics where I can make a difference and I truly believe I've found the right path."

Julie Eddy, Learning Support Leader at Derwentside College said, *"Watching Brandon mature and become the adult he has reinforces to me how further education changes lives. Brandon is an exceptionally dedicated learner and without doubt the most determined person I have ever met."*

**"Brandon is an exceptionally dedicated learner and without doubt the most determined person I have ever met."**



Nominating organisation: Derwentside College | @DerwentsideColl | [www.derwentside.ac.uk](http://www.derwentside.ac.uk)

# Finalist

# ANNA PALMER

Anna had embarked on numerous hairdressing courses since leaving school, but her circumstances meant that each time she was unable to complete her qualifications and progress. Following a marriage breakdown she decided to return to learning at Weston College once more and turn her life around.

"I've always suffered from low self-esteem and anxiety issues, and never saw a future for myself, but following my marriage separation I decided I need to make something of my life. I had lost all confidence in hairdressing so I went online to look at the courses Weston College were running and found a level 2 hair and media qualification. I absolutely loved this course and after completing it I immediately enrolled on a level 3 theatrical hair and makeup course.

With the support of Weston College I decided to start a foundation degree in hair, makeup and prosthetics for production and I am now working towards a BA Honours degree. I have also started my own make-up business alongside this.

My friends and family are so proud of me. They've seen me in my darkest place and have watched me grow in determination, confidence and maturity. My studies at Weston have helped me to show my children you really can achieve anything you want even when you feel you're not good enough and just want to give up.



I finally feel excited for the future. I've always wanted to have a qualification and career that I enjoy and take pride in. I can't wait to get out into the industry, earn my own money and enjoy life to the full with my children."

Joanne Philpott, Vice Principal at Weston College said, "Anna is a phoenix rising from the ashes. She is determined to have a brighter future for herself and her children and her level of commitment has been a shining example to her family, friends, and other students."

**"She is determined to have a brighter future for herself and her children and her level of commitment has been a shining example..."**

Nominating organisation: Weston College | @westoncollege | www.weston.ac.uk

Finalist

## KAREN HANLEY-BROOKS

**K**aren's learning journey began with an entry level 3 functional skills English course at Adult Education Wolverhampton. Through her hard work and dedication she has quickly progressed to a GCSE course and volunteered with the Talk English programme to help others in the community improve their English language skills.

"I grew up in St Kitts and dropped out of high school because all I wanted to do was work. Little did I know that education was the foundation I needed to build on.

In 2016 my children and I had to move to the UK because my son needed urgent medical support for his autism. Being a single mother of two without any family living here was very challenging, and I saw that going back to learning was the only way to better myself and to have a brighter future.

Learning has given me hope and confidence and built my self-esteem. Both my experience of dealing with my non-verbal son and the English language skills I have gained at Adult Education Wolverhampton have allowed me to help other people whose first language is not English through my volunteering role with Talk English.

My greatest motivators are my children, especially my son who never allows his disabilities to discourage him from being the best he can be. Through learning, I have not only developed knowledge and skills for myself but am able to use these to help my children develop their own lives in a positive way."

Craig Watkiss, English teacher at Adult Education Wolverhampton said, *"Karen's hard work and dedication to improving her skills has resulted in her achieving a Grade 5 qualification in GCSE English Language, including a distinction for her spoken assessment. Karen volunteered on our Talk English programme, and her supportive and kind nature is appreciated by all. She is a credit to herself, her children and this organisation."*



**"Karen's hard work and dedication to improving her skills has resulted in her achieving a Grade 5 qualification in GCSE English Language..."**

Nominating organisation: Adult Education Wolverhampton | @AEWolverhampton | [www.aes.wolverhampton.gov.uk](http://www.aes.wolverhampton.gov.uk)



# Finalist

## M-FUTURES

**M**-Futures was created in partnership with apprenticeship provider Total People, Manchester City Council and the Greater Manchester Working Skills Group who recognised a gap in the current apprenticeship offer around construction. The programme creates life-changing opportunities to work on some of Manchester's most impressive developments.

M-Futures enables learners to access two years of rotational employment and training with some of Manchester's leading construction, architecture and property development firms. Learners study a HNC in construction and a level 4 NVQ Diploma in construction and building services management and supervision. Projects include working on major design and build schemes in the city, including Manchester City Council's Our Town Hall redevelopment with MACE. The programme provides multiple progression opportunities, such as industry employment and degree level apprenticeships, in areas from build management to quantity surveying.

M-Futures has grown in momentum and importance in meeting local demand for improving progression in the construction industry while also responding to local employment needs and supporting local skills growth policies. It has provided a career pathway and a positive destination for all who complete

the course, with 90% of apprentices remaining in the construction industry after completion.

Learner Abdul said: *"The apprenticeship route appealed to me because not only am I getting paid for learning but I'm getting invaluable work experience. The Our Town Hall project really felt like something special. I've grown in both confidence and maturity. When I*

*first started I was shy and quiet, but I can really see how far I've come"*

Kash Barlow, Operations Director – Partnerships at Total People, said: *"Total People have forged excellent working relationships with national construction employers and the local authority to provide unprecedented experience for learners that sets them apart in the industry and contributes to the changing Manchester skyline."*



***"I've grown in both confidence and maturity. When I first started I was shy and quiet, but I can really see how far I've come"***

Nominating organisation: LTE Group | @LTEgrp | [www.ltegroup.co.uk](http://www.ltegroup.co.uk)

Finalist

## NAOMI MELLERSH-TETT

Naomi was at a point in her life where she was worried about what the future may hold. With the help of her support worker she identified barbering as a career she wanted to pursue and signed up for a level 2 course with Essex Adult and Community Learning College.

"I was 27 years old with no formal qualifications and I was struggling to hold down any form of successful employment. I wanted to build myself a base of skills in order to gain employment in an industry I had an interest in. I completed my level 2 barbering and am now undertaking my level 3 qualification whilst working in a barbershop three days a week. In the wider community I have undertaken a voluntary role with the local dementia service, providing free haircuts to people living with dementia.

I have learnt a lot about myself and how I work and learn best, and I have learnt that having conditions like ADHD, autism and dyslexia doesn't mean that you can't be a productive member of society. If you set a goal and work hard it pays off.

My learning has made a massive difference to my mental and physical health. I have an improved sense of self esteem. I have a job that I want to get up and go to in the morning and I contribute to my household income. I am more motivated then I have ever been. In

the future I plan to build on my skill set further and I hope one day to open my own successful shop."

Tania Shurlock, Naomi's tutor said, *"Naomi's starting point is far removed from where she is now and her future possibilities are endless. Her story shows what it is possible to achieve in a short space of time with the right attitude."*

**"Her story shows what it is possible to achieve in a short space of time with the right attitude."**



Nominating organisation: ACL College Essex | @ACLEssex | [www.aclessex.com](http://www.aclessex.com)

## Finalist

# PAUL SLATER

As a maths and science tutor, Paul saw that many pupils would benefit from additional help with maths, but few have access to specialist support. He decided to start running free maths classes for adults in the community, so that they could better help their children with homework.

"I am inspired to teach because I believe that education is one of the most important tools in life. My own experiences have informed my attitude to education. I wasn't motivated at school and didn't always apply myself. After school, I worked in a series of jobs that didn't fulfil me, and that contributed negatively to my mental health.



Making the decision to go back to college and then university as an adult learner was pivotal for me. It was hard work, but rewarding. It gave me a sense of achievement and that is what I seek to give others when I teach.

I was motivated to start free maths classes for adults because I saw that so many parents wanted to help their children to succeed, but didn't necessarily have the mathematical knowledge to assist or the ability to pay for a private tutor.

I want to make maths accessible, and hopefully the lessons have achieved that by encouraging and supporting people to learn maths in their spare time. The learners are not engaged in the pursuit of a formal qualification, but rather learning to better their own understanding of maths, help their children and even to have fun."

Learner David said, "I really enjoy going to Paul's classes so that I can help my children with their maths. Paul has an obvious passion and enthusiasm for the subject and conveys it in a way that is relatable and makes sense. He has a real drive to help others."

**"Paul has an obvious passion and enthusiasm for the subject and conveys it in a way that is relatable and makes sense."**

Nominating organisation: Happy Collie Tutoring | @Happy\_Collie



Finalist

## SION FARRELL

**S**ion is employed by the Army Catering Training Trust to deliver apprenticeship support to the chefs of the Army. He has supported approximately 5,000 learners in his tenure and has also developed a range of opportunities for further learning outside of the usual military education route.

"I teach Army chefs throughout the UK and deployed around the world in a continuing professional development programme delivering civilian accredited qualifications in addition to their military apprenticeships.

I have been an Army chef for 27 years and I want to support those who are following in my footsteps. My motivation is seeing individuals achieve, especially those who initially lack the self-esteem to broaden their horizons.

As part of a team I teach a plethora of hospitality and customer service orientated qualifications, as well as delivering courses in training, quality assurance and assessment. I also established a link with a London college to enable military chefs to access a distance learning foundation degree course that subsequently evolved into a distance learning Bachelors degree programme.

My role is to support our chefs to maximise their potential within the Army, but also to meet their goals and support them as they transfer to the civilian community."

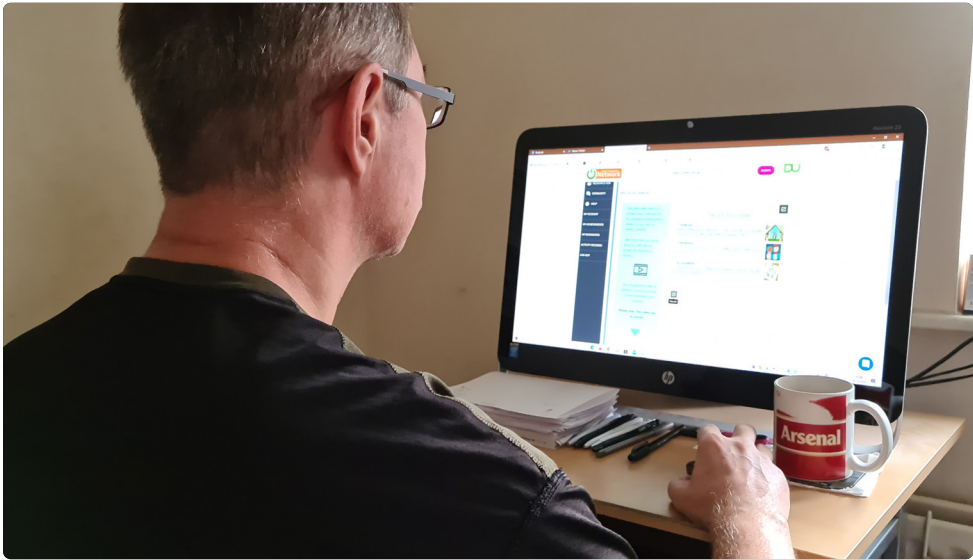
One learner said, *"Without Sion's guidance throughout my studies, I can honestly say I may have never completed my qualifications and be in the position I am now. Sion sets a shining example to all he comes across, his work ethic is to be admired, and he continues to support and better all those in our trade."*



**"Sion has devoted the past 10 years to ensure that the Army chefs are afforded every opportunity to improve themselves and gain self-esteem through the whole lifelong learning process."**

James Wilson-White, Training Officer within the Armed Forces said, *"Sion has devoted the past 10 years to ensure that the Army chefs, from the most junior private to the most senior Warrant Officer Class 1, are afforded every opportunity to improve themselves and gain self-esteem through the whole lifelong learning process."*

Nominating organisation: British Army, Food Services Training Wing | @BritishArmy | [www.army.mod.uk](http://www.army.mod.uk)



# NATIONAL SELECTION PANEL 2020

**Nick Stuart CB**, President, Learning and Work Institute

**Maggie Galliers CBE**, Chair, Learning and Work Institute

**Nicholas Blaney**, Assistant Director, Professional & Technical Education, Department for Education

**Graham Hasting-Evans**, Managing Director, NOCN

**Catherine Manning**, Education and Training Foundation

**Simon Parkinson**, Chief Executive and General Secretary, WEA

**Paul Eeles**, Chief Executive, Skills and Education Group

**Nicholas Trower**, Senior Policy Adviser, CBI Education and Skills

**Jasbir Jhas**, Local Government Association

**Michael Heanue**, Greater London Authority

**Wendy McKaig**, Assistant Principal – Quality, City Lit

**Stephen Evans**, Chief Executive, Learning and Work Institute

**Joe Dromey**, Deputy Director for Research and Development, Learning and Work Institute

**Roisin Sheehy**, Senior External Affairs Officer, Learning and Work Institute







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