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Who will be Next to Shape the Future of the East Midlands?

New research released today marks the launch of the sixth annual Apprenticeship Awards and reveals just how critical the contribution of apprentices are to the buildings, roads and railways that form the fabric of the country.

Commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), the study demonstrates the breadth of renowned names from esteemed architects to celebrated designers, for whom an Apprenticeship was the start of a highly celebrated career.

David Gloster, head of education at RIBA, who helped conduct the research, says: "Apprentices as a whole have significantly added structural beauty to the UK, and in the process, helped influence future generations of architects, builders and designers. Without the likes of John Nash or Charles Barry, the UK wouldn't look like it does today."

The search is on to find the East Midlands' top apprentices and employers and the regional awards will culminate with a celebration event, as hundreds of apprentices, employers and training providers head to the East Midlands Conference Centre in Nottingham on 2nd June 2009 for the largest regional celebration of apprentices, employers and learning providers involved in vocational learning.

The Apprenticeship Awards are held annually to celebrate the success of apprentices who have made a real difference to their future and to the organisation they work for. They also recognise the work of employers who are successfully tackling skills shortages to build their future workforce through Apprenticeships.

Tom Crompton, regional director, LSC East Midlands, said: "The Awards are a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the achievements of apprentices and the dedication of businesses committed to work based learning. In the current economic climate, it's more important than ever that we recognise and support these talented individuals, and the businesses invest in their training. Apprenticeships are key, not only to the success of local business but also the economic future of the region."

Employers are eligible to enter one of five categories depending on their company size; **Micro** (1-9 employees), **Small** (10-49 employees), **Medium** (50-249 employees) **Large** (250+ employees) and **Macro** (5000+ employees). They are 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 Apprentice of the Year Awards reward people who are exceeding their employer expectations and who are making exceptional contributions to their workplaces. Perhaps they have taken on extra responsibilities, introduced a new idea, improved productivity or proved their worth as a valuable team member. The Young Apprentice of the Year Award seeks to acknowledge and celebrate learners' exceptional achievements during the two years of the Young Apprenticeship programme which takes place whilst they are still at school. There will also be an award for the best **Entry to Employment** learner in the region.

To enter the awards, or for more information, call 0845 058 0490 or email realsuccess@headstorm.co.uk, or visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk/awards. All completed applications must be made before 27 February 2009, with all regional finalists attending the East Midlands awards ceremony. All regional winners will go forward for consideration in the LSC's national Apprenticeship Awards 2009, with an awards ceremony on 16th July 2009 in London.

Ends

Notes to Editors: -

To find out more about Apprenticeships, please visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk or call 08000 150 600.

For further information please contact: -

Redbrick Communications: - Helen Morton or Clive Purcell, Tel: 0115 910 1500

LSC East Midlands: - Linda Penrice, Tel: 0116 228 1849

There are currently nearly a quarter of a million apprentices working in over 130,000 organisations in England alone, across 80 different sectors of industry.

Learning and Skills Council:

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality 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 young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers. Visit www.lsc.gov.uk/inourhands

About Apprenticeships

- Apprenticeships provide 16-24 year-olds with a mixture of on and off-the-job training while they are being paid. For employers, Apprenticeships offer the opportunity to improve their businesses bottom line through the tailored, relevant training of highly motivated young people.
- There are two levels of Apprenticeships:
 1. 'Apprenticeships', equivalent to GCSE level, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 2; key skills and in some cases a technical certificate
 2. 'Advanced Apprenticeships', equivalent to A-levels, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 3, key skills and a technical certificate

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News Release



Leading learning and skills

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