

Alumni Newsletter



Issue Five, Spring 2011

www.worldskillsukalumni.org.uk



Will Torrent is currently involved in an exciting new collaboration with Heston Blumenthal to create a Royal wedding dessert for Waitrose. **Page 3»**

Waitrose Royal wedding dessert, top view, Photographs: courtesy of Waitrose



Will serves up a royal treat

Will Torrent is currently involved in an exciting new collaboration with Michelin starred celebrity chef, Heston Blumenthal to create a Royal wedding dessert for Waitrose. **Harry Smith** reports

WorldSkills, UK Alumni member Will Torrent (Team UK 2007) is currently involved in an exciting new collaboration between supermarket giant Waitrose and Michelin starred celebrity chef, Heston Blumenthal which will see him help create new desserts for Waitrose.

It all began just before Christmas 2010 when a Waitrose director spotted the talents of confectioner and pastry chef Will, who is just 24 years old. He introduced him to the executive chef of Waitrose, Neil Nugent, and following this, Neil asked the budding chef to work with Heston to help Waitrose create a range of desserts that would knock the spots off those from rival supermarkets. Never one to shy away from a challenge, Will accepted.

Will first met Heston when he was a teenager, studying at a school which was just around the corner from Heston's now famous Fat Duck restaurant in Berkshire. Aged just 15, Will had never heard of Heston as he was yet to hit the headlines; so he was completely unaware how the one week he spent there as a work experience student would shape his future.

Having started his career with Heston, Will is now relishing the opportunity to link up with him again. The pair have just finished designing a Royal wedding dessert, which will go on sale at Waitrose a week before the Royal Wedding of HRH Prince William and Kate Middleton and will be available throughout the rest of the summer. The recipe is a marriage of two classic British desserts, a trifle and the Eton Mess and the ingredients include; cream infused with saffron, Amaretti biscuits soaked in brandy, strawberry compote, meringue and rose petals.

Will recently returned from Celtic Manor in Wales where he cooked the dessert for 350 Waitrose delegates and senior management as well as Delia Smith. The event was held to inspire the supermarket's workforce as they implement new policies and launch their new products.

There are plenty more exciting opportunities on the horizon for Will as he prepares to cook for the Chairman of John Lewis, Charlie Mayfield, alongside 180 other guests at Partnership House in London. The guests will be treated to some of Will's signature creations such as Will's

Popping Rockets, Jaffillionaires, Pistachio and Christmas Tree Extract Madeleines and Meringue Wands.

With a number of potential BBC projects also in the pipeline for Will it looks like we may soon have another celebrity chef as part of the WorldSkills, UK Alumni.

Will Torrent competed at WorldSkills Shizuoka 2007 in confectionery and won a Medallion for Excellence. To keep up to date with Will's progress follow @willtorrent on Twitter or take a look at his website www.willtorrent.com

We'd like to receive your latest news about developments in your career and life to date. If you've recently got married, got a new job, been given an award or have some other news you'd like to share, please contact harry.smith@ukskills.org.uk

'Who's been whe

8 February 2011

'Do an apprenticeship: bags of money and no graduate debt'

Richard Sagar (Team UK 2009) was interviewed by The Guardian for a feature focusing on the benefits of following the vocational route by completing an apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship Dragon's Den

Harry Smith (Team UK 2007) and *Richard Sagar (Team UK 2009)* took part in a Dragon's Den style event to develop business ideas submitted by apprentices. A competition run by the National Apprenticeship Service selected three winning business ideas submitted on Twitter.

On the day Harry and Richard worked with apprentices from across the UK to help develop the business ideas before they were pitched to the panel which included BBC Dragon Peter Jones CBE and Minister for Skills John Hayes MP. The winning business idea was a website that replicated some of the social aspects of university for those studying an apprenticeship and an advice service for those thinking about taking one up.

The event formed part of Apprenticeship Week 2011, 7 – 11 February, where hundreds of events took place across the country to celebrate the success of apprentices and to highlight the real business benefits apprentices bring to organisations.

16 February 2011

WorldSkills UK information sessions

To kick start the new year WorldSkills UK held a series of information sessions across the UK to inspire students and encourage them to take part in a skills competitions. *Harry Smith (Team UK 2007)* visited South Thames College to be part of their session which included showcases from Hairdressing, Beauty Therapy and Popular Music, competitions they have been successful at in the past.

24 February 2011

'How gaining skills can turn your life around'

Sam Fairgrieve (Team UK 2009) was featured in The Mirror talking about how his apprenticeship with Jelson Homes helped him build a future for himself.

2 March 2011

Be one in a million

Adam Smith (Team UK 2009) helped launch the WorldSkills London 2011 Have a Go campaign with cookie icing and a speech to employees at the Department for Business Innovation and Skills. Adam was interviewed by John Hayes MP and talked about how his WorldSkills experience helped him to get ahead of his peers and promoted to premier Sous Chef at The Ritz.

10 March 2011

Workers with Winning Ways'

WorldSkills, UK Alumni members *Richard Sagar*, *Adam Smith* and *Mark Nevin (Team UK 2009)* were featured in an Independent article which talked about how their WorldSkills experiences contributed to their career success.

13 March 2011

'A bit of me comes out in everything I do'

WorldSkills, UK Alumni members *Adam Smith* and *Richard Sagar (Team UK 2009)* discussed how WorldSkills London 2011 will crush national stereotypes about skills and practical learning in the Financial Times.

Going Global 2011 - World education: the new powerhouse?

Adam Smith (Team UK 2009) joined Simon Bartley, President-elect of WorldSkills International for Going Global 2011. The Going Global conference, organised by the British Council focuses on the challenges facing education as city and nation states battle to emerge from global recession. For the first time in its four year existence the conference was held outside the UK at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

As part of the conference Adam and Hong Kong's Cooking Expert, Andreas Muller judged a skills competition between UK and Hong Kong colleges. Students from Westminster Kingsway College, Lewisham College and Hackney College joined their peers in Hong Kong to compete in a one day competition. The students then took part in a competitive food preparation demonstration organised and judged by Adam, which formed part of the conference program.

There are many opportunities to share your experiences as a past competitor, and in doing so, inspire others to improve their skills. Examples of this may be talking to the media, speaking at a UK Skills or sector event, or providing case studies to promote practical vocational education and learning. Professional media and presentation training can be made available for all Alumni members who would like to sign up to be part of the engagement aspect of the programme.

re doing what...'

WorldSkills UK Information Session, South Thames College



Coming soon...

16 June 2011

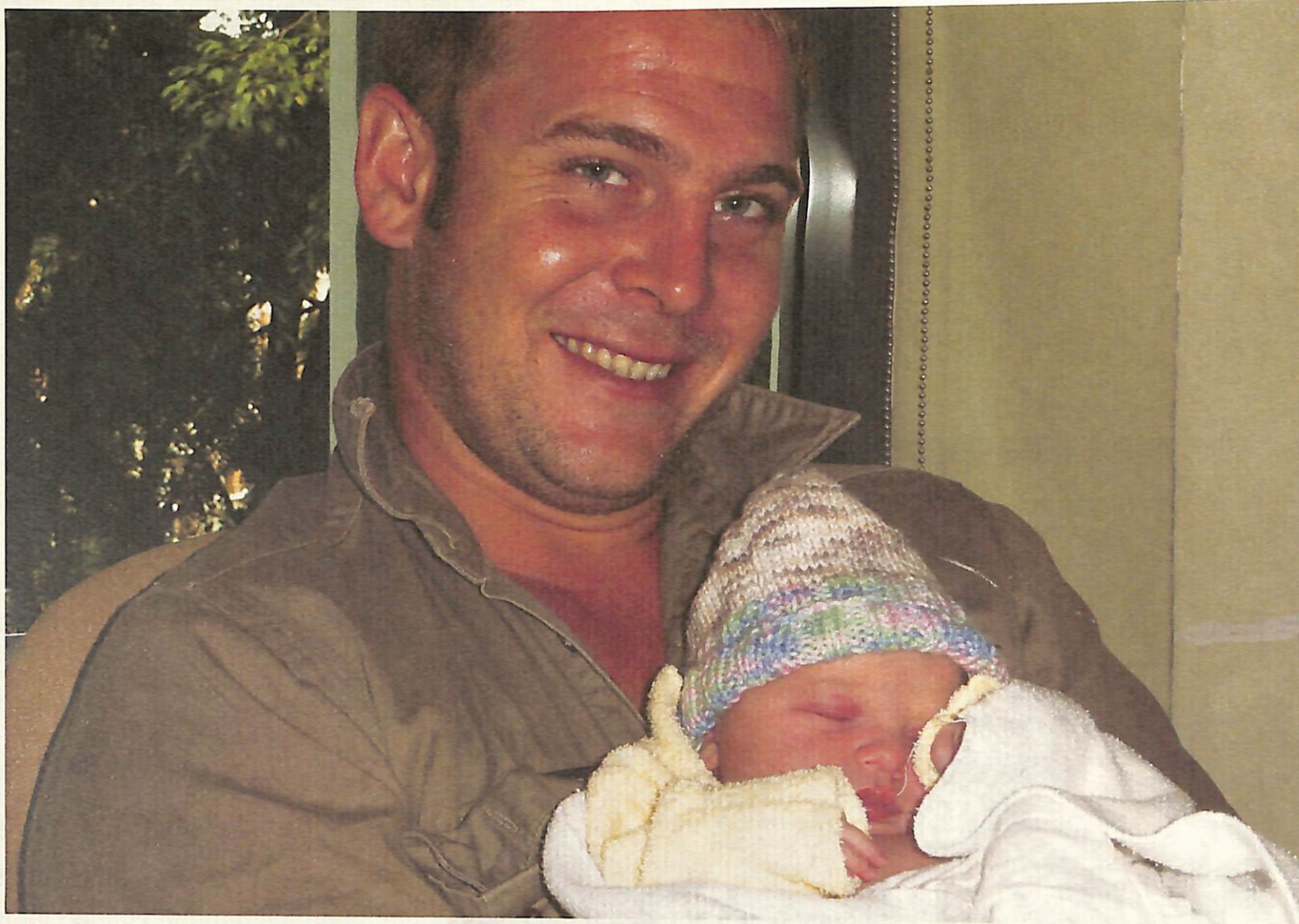
Witness the skills of Team UK's future stars

Whilst the current members of Squad UK for WorldSkills London 2011 work tirelessly to prepare themselves for Team UK Selection this summer, plans are underway to offer Alumni members a chance to observe the action live at the Selection Event. Alumni members will soon be invited to join other visitors to witness the selection of the next Team UK.

Team UK selection will take place between 14-17 June at three colleges in the midlands: North Warwickshire & Hinckley College, Stephenson College and City College Coventry. The Alumni visit is planned for day three of the competition (Thursday 16 June) as the excitement and action nears its climax. In addition to witnessing the skills of Team UK's future stars, Alumni will also have the opportunity to meet up with former team mates, get a better understanding of the current selection process as well as share their own competition stories with other visitors.

You will be receiving your invitation soon, but don't forget to save the date. I look forward to seeing you there.

By Luke Griffiths (Team UK 2009)



Andy O'Connor Smith, Landscape Gardening, Team UK 2005 with baby Isabelle

News from the other side of the world and from the land of Squad UK. By Jenny Shackleton

Alumni members from Team UK, WorldSkills Helsinki 2005, will remember *Andy O'Connor Smith*, who competed in Landscape Gardening, and *Joanna Thompson* who competed in Beauty Therapy. Following the Competition they took off together to Australia where they are now fully settled and doing well in business and family life, so much so in fact that Andy and Joanna have just produced the first UK WorldSkills baby, Isabelle!

Given her parentage and citizenship the UK will have its eye on Australia at WorldSkills Wherever 2031!

Do keep letting us have your news even if you are on the other side of the world. We are always delighted to hear from you.

Back in the land of Squad and Team UK all is very well, with 36 of the 38 skills in intensive squad training and the two remaining skills coming up to squad selection. We fully expect June's team selection event to include over 80 contenders from the UK, and, uniquely for us, these will be joined by around 25 competitors from six or seven other member countries. The event will therefore have a thoroughly international atmosphere and hopefully put the right kind of pressure on the home team before they meet the rest of the world for real at WorldSkills London 2011.

Several of you are already closely involved in the current squad phase and even more of you will be with us for team selection when we look forward to catching up with you again.

Please visit www.worldskillssquaduk.org to view the latest version of the Squad UK brochure.

We'd like to receive your latest news about developments in your career and life to date. If you've recently got married, got a new job, been given an award or have some other news you'd like to share, please contact harry.smith@ukskills.org.uk

Competitions update Spring 2011

See a skills competition in action! Find out where your nearest WorldSkills UK Competition is taking place. By Charlotte Francis

WorldSkills UK competitions have now closed for entry for 2010/11 and many of the exciting heats and finals are already taking place across the UK.

There will be around 500 live heats and finals across the next 6 months in a range of locations, including colleges and trade shows. Highlights include six Beauty Therapy competitions taking place at Cambridge Regional College (25 June), Floristry at RHS Tatton Park (20-21 July) and Visual Merchandising at The In-Store Show, Olympia (29 June).

If you are considering entering a competitor for next year's cycle, or would just like to go along and watch most are open to visitors so find out where your nearest competition is taking place on our website worldskillsuk.org

If you would like more information on live heats and finals, please contact us:

T 0800 612 0742

E worldskillsuk@ukskills.org.uk

W worldskillsuk.org

Facebook: WorldSkills UK - Official

Send us your live footage!

We will be sharing photos and videos of the competitions through our WorldSkills UK Facebook page as and when we receive them, so make sure you 'like' our page to keep updated! If you are organising, hosting or just attending a competition, and you have any photos or videos of those competing, please send them to charlotte.francis@ukskills.org.uk and we will add these to our albums.

Russell Phipps, Welding, Squad UK 2011



Introducing the 'Activists'

"It was with the launch of the WorldSkills, UK Alumni in 2007 that I cemented my ongoing involvement" says **Richard Talman**

My experience at WorldSkills Seoul 2001 was such a fantastic one that after returning to the UK I was really keen to give something back to the world of skills competitions. Since competing I made small contributions here and there, but it was with the launch of the WorldSkills, UK Alumni in 2007 that I cemented my ongoing involvement.

In 2009 when the Alumni network was re-energised I took up the post of 'Alumni Activist' for the 2001 UK team.

What do the Activists do?

The idea behind the 'Alumni Activists' is that they help to shape the Alumni network by providing a first point of call for feedback on its progress and development. Another major part of the role is providing ideas of our own and acting as a representative for our team so that everyone's ideas are heard so that we can help shape the future of the network.

There are now seven 'Alumni Activists' who represent the past six WorldSkills

competitions. The group have now met three times to discuss what the future of the Alumni should look like and how to make it a worthwhile and enjoyable experience for us, its members. If you have some ideas for the future of the network and want your Alumni activist to raise them at the next meeting here is a list of who they are:

Katie Watson	Team UK 2009
Luke Griffiths	Team UK 2009
Keith Chapman	Team UK 2007
Alex Bellini	Team UK 2005
Adam Peirson	Team UK 2003
Richard Talman	Team UK 2001
Jenna Bailey	Team UK 1999

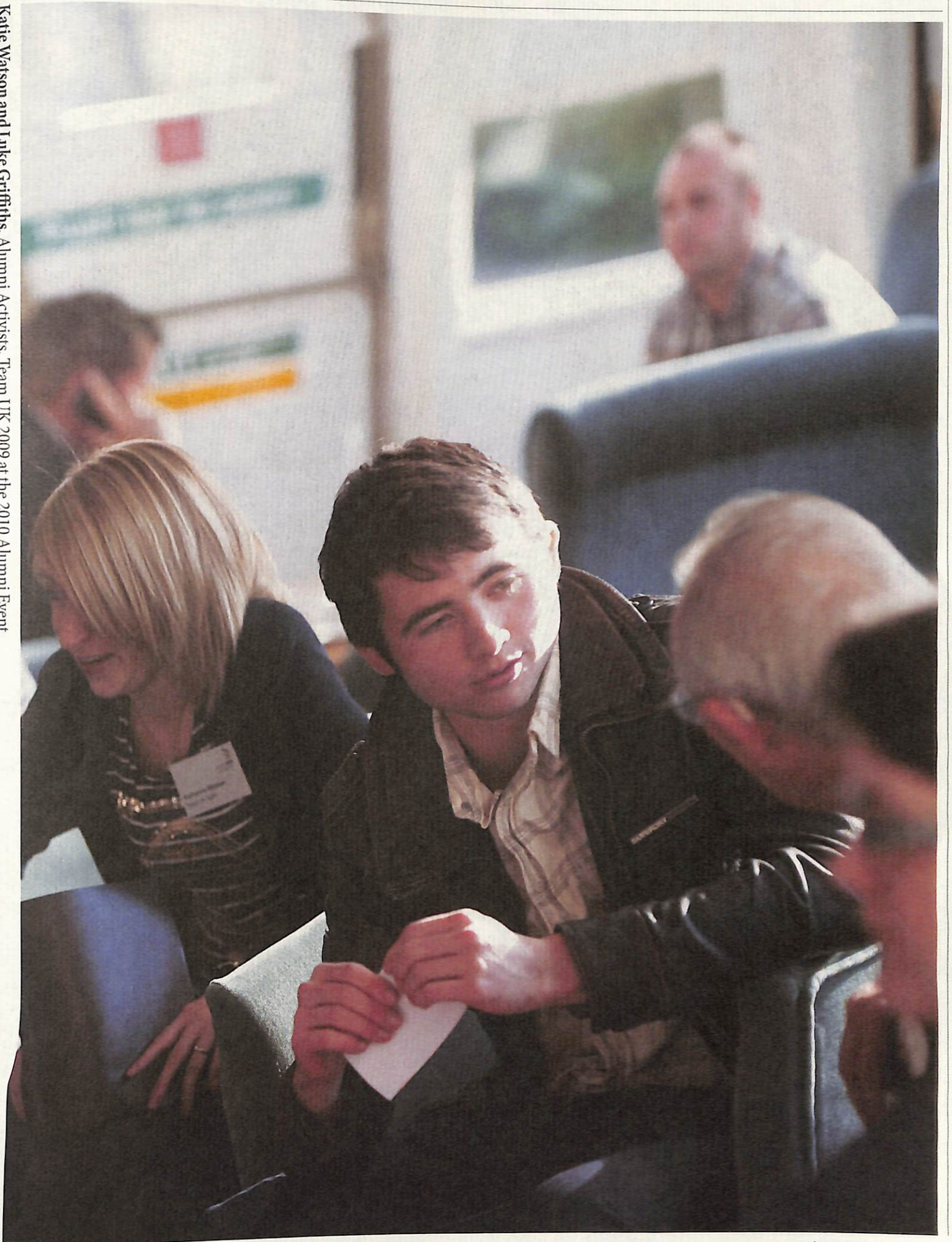
As an Alumni activist I'm determined to ensure that as many past UK competitors are involved with the Alumni network and are reaping the rewards. With WorldSkills London 2011 just around the corner there has never been a more exciting time to re-engage with the world of skills competitions.

If you want to get in touch with your Alumni activist or are interested in joining

the group as your team isn't yet represented then please get in touch with Harry Smith, WorldSkills UK Alumni Co-ordinator on 020 7429 2859 harry.smith@ukskills.org.uk

We have set up an 'Alumni Group' on Facebook which we would encourage you to join to re-connect with your former teammates. If you already have a Facebook account you can do this by searching for the WorldSkills, UK Alumni group and 'request to join'. Please help us to encourage as many of your former teammates to join!

Katie Watson and Luke Griffiths, Alumni Activists, Team UK 2009 at the 2010 Alumni Event





Sparkling the imagination of young people

“Alumni members play a special role in inspiring and engaging young people”, says Chidi Okolo

Do you want to play a role in inspiring young people to explore vocational training? By volunteering at the event Alumni members can help to encourage young people to think about their futures and inspire them to try out a range of fun, inspirational Have a Go activities.

Supporting the ‘Education Experience’

Many schools and colleges are already planning how to make the most of their visit to WorldSkills London 2011. To help them, World Skills London 2011, working in partnership with learning providers, has developed a high quality programme of activities and teaching resources. These ‘Education Experience’ materials aim to spark the imagination of young people and support vocational learning and skills development.

By volunteering to help at the event you can support this programme and help enhance the impact of the Education Experience.

Learning at WorldSkills London 2011

The Education Experience consists of three distinct strands:

Strand one is aimed at schools and colleges. Teachers, lecturers and education providers can download these resources from the education section of the WorldSkills London 2011 website to integrate into their existing teaching and learning programmes. A separate component of strand one, ‘One School, One Country’, will give up to 53 primary schools, within the London boroughs, the opportunity to welcome and host international competitors and delegates at their schools.

Strand two gives students at selected colleges the opportunity to undertake practical activities which will be assessed at WorldSkills London 2011. This work will lead to the award of a unit of credit towards the student’s qualification.

Strand three focuses on enhancing the Education Experience at the event. By using these resources teachers will be able to prepare students for a structured/guided visit to the event – maximising the educational value.

Volunteers – making a difference

Alumni members play a special role in inspiring and engaging young people – giving them real role models who can provide practical support in helping them to think about their future careers.

At WorldSkills London 2011 you can help by:

- Acting as a skill interpreter - providing an explanation of the competitions and the assessments taking place
- Directing visitors to educational areas like the Have a Go activities
- Helping to support the One School, One Country programme
- Fielding questions from visitors relating to specific skills competitions

If you are interested in getting involved please contact our Head of Volunteering, Julia Bowditch on 020 7429 2861 volunteer@worldskillslondon2011.com
For more information on volunteering roles, other than the Education Experience, please visit the Crew 2011 website at www.worldskillslondon2011.com/volunteer

VQDay

Celebrating Vocational Achievement

Celebrating the fourth annual VQ Day on Wednesday 22 June.

By Susan Higgins

Vocational qualifications have never been more important to the economy and the individual; they deliver the trained, talented employees businesses are crying out for and ensure young people have the skills needed to succeed in education and work. The government is investing in vocational routes acknowledging their value, now we want everyone to come together to celebrate VQ achievement and recognise how high quality vocational qualifications can enhance life and work chances.

This year we will be celebrating the fourth annual VQ Day on Wednesday 22 June at Westminster Kingsway College, Victoria Centre, London.

A huge number of schools, colleges, work-based providers and supporters across the country get involved with VQ Day every year. If you want your employer or college to be involved with VQ Day 2011 visit www.vqday.org.uk and if you're a VQ holder, past or present, sign up to the VQ Roll of Honour on the website.

Everyone can get involved on many levels, below are a variety of options on how to show your support for VQ Day 2011.

- Order collateral from the website, www.vqday.org.uk/get-involved it's free and a great way to show you're

celebrating VQ Day. Posters, leaflets, website buttons and logos are all available to download for you to put up in your workplace to show your support for VQ Day.

- Celebrate your employees/learners' success by adding their name to the VQ Day Roll of Honour www.vqday.org.uk/looking-for-someone. It is a great opportunity for all those vocational achievements to be recognized. Add the names of your employees to those other learners past and present who have gained a vocational qualification.
- Nominate your employees/learners for a VQ Learner of the Year Award www.vqday.org.uk/vq-awards. Entries are now open and it is a great chance to recognise learners' vocational excellence and celebrate their success. Award ceremonies will be taking place in each of the four nations, to see your learners awarded enter now.
- Get involved with an event. Speak to your local college/employer to make sure VQ Day is celebrated and recognised. There are celebrations happening up and down the country so you don't need to host your event you can get involved with existing ones.

Local college events

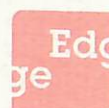
Many colleges will be combining their annual open day with VQ Day to showcase the vocational talent they have to the local community. Why not see if you can be involved in this or attend?

In addition this year VQ Day has teamed up with WorldSkills London 2011 and many colleges/institutions will be taking part in 'Have a go' an initiative to get the nation taking part in a skill. Again this could be something you take part in with your local college or you could host this in your own workplace.

For more information on how to celebrate VQ Day by 'Having a go' visit worldskillslondon2011.com/haveago

If you attend a college event or decide to host your own event, don't forget the VQ Day team are happy to provide any advice or tips so do call on 020 3451 9400. And we would love to hear how you celebrated VQ Day so please do email in any information and photos and we can put them onto the website – vqday@bbpr.com

VQ Day is led by independent education foundation, Edge, with support from many of the leading players in the vocational education community. Edge is committed to raising the status of practical and vocational learning across the UK. For further information visit www.edge.co.uk



There are many paths to success

Premier supporter of Squad and Team UK and sponsor of WorldSkills, UK Alumni