

Growing world class talent at RHS Chelsea Flower Show

by Tom York

A TEAM OF talented young landscape gardeners that helped create a garden designed by UK Skills to showcase 'world class talent' have had their achievements celebrated by the judges at the prestigious RHS Chelsea Flower Show by winning a Silver Medal in the Urban Garden category.

UKSkills designed the garden "Growing World Class Talent: celebrating the workforce of tomorrow", to promote excellence in vocational education and training. It also aimed to illustrate how greater investment in skills and development will help lift UK industry out of recession. The garden featured a variety of edible, ornamental and native plants and showcases the wide range of skills that are required to construct an outdoor space suitable for 21st century living.

The extraordinary UK Skills garden build team, which included members of the WorldSkills, UK Alumni, created the garden from scratch using a wide range of expert skills which included: landscape gardening, bricklaying, electrical installation, cabinet making, plumbing, floristry and stonemasonry. The young team members who helped create the UK Skills garden also included upcoming, talented individuals who are looking to secure a place in Team UK for WorldSkills London 2011, 5th - 8th October 2011.

The UK Skills team was led by Harry Turner, Horticultural Lecturer and WorldSkills, Team UK training manager in Landscape Gardening. The young team members included:

William Gadd, (Team UK



2009 Landscape Gardening)
Keith Chapman, (Team UK
2007 Landscape Gardening)
Sam Fairgrieve, (Team UK
2009 Bricklaying)

Grant Finch, (Squad UK 2009
Landscape Gardening) hoping
to secure a place in Squad UK
for WorldSkills London 2011.

Simon Ginger, (Squad UK
2009 Landscape Gardening)

The UK Skills garden was designed by Paul Green, a chartered Landscape Architect and garden designer, with more than 35 years of experience in public, private and charity sector works. Paul already had several accolades to his name including a Silver Gilt which he was awarded by the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in 1997 for a large garden he designed called, "Garden of Hope". Paul also helps UK Skills with the training and assessment of the Landscape Gardening competitors for Team UK.

Keith Chapman, said: "To

have been honoured with this award is truly amazing. We all worked really hard to create the garden and are all really proud of what we have managed to achieve. We hope that visitors will take the time to really look around the garden and start to learn just how much hard work actually goes into landscape gardening. There are lots of different skills involved and our garden shows off the best in bricklaying and stonemasonry as well as plumbing, cabinet making and electrical installation.

"People often tell me that it is a rare thing to be able to say that you love your job, but I really do. Winning the Silver Medal at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show is right up there with my experience at WorldSkills, as an achievement that I will always remember."

Simon Bartley, CEO, UK Skills, added: "We are truly delighted to have won this

award. What the team has achieved is outstanding. It really does make us proud to be able to fly the flag and celebrate the breadth of young talent that the UK's most skilled and dedicated vocational trainees have to offer.

"We hope that the garden will inspire visitors attending the Show to think about how landscape gardening and other skilled vocations can be extremely rewarding careers which we would love to see many more young people get involved in."

FRIDAY
**2010
Alumni Event
Manchester**
22 OCTOBER 2010

THURSDAY
**Alumni Awards
Nomination
Deadline**
30 SEPTEMBER 2010

Nominations for the 2010 Alumni Awards are now open

by Harry Smith

THE ALUMNI AWARDS were officially launched by UK Skills and Edge at the WorldSkills UK Competitions Awards, which took place on 12 November 2009 at the BFI IMAX in London. Nominations for the awards are now open so please take this opportunity to either nominate yourself, or ask a family member, colleague or employer to nominate you.

The Award for Most Valuable Contribution to Skills and Practical Learning and The Award for Outstanding Achievement offers a fantastic opportunity to have your achievements recognised.

The criteria for each award and copies of the nomination forms can be found on the Alumni section of the UK Skills website: www.worldskillsukalumni.org.uk

Entries will be short listed using the award criteria and then judged by a panel of experts. All nominated entries will be invited to attend the WorldSkills UK 2010 Competition Awards on 4 November 2010 where the winners will be announced.

The awards will be presented by Simon Bartley Chief Executive of UK Skills and a nominated representative from Edge, the premier supporter of the WorldSkills, UK Alumni. If you plan on nominating yourself, please remember to save the date!

A Beautiful Life...

by Jenna Bailey

I FIRST GOT involved in skills competitions at a regional National Beauty Therapy competition held in Warwickshire. Winning that competition earned me a place in Team UK which saw me travel to Canada to represent the UK at WorldSkills Montreal 1999. I can still remember the competition vividly; walking out onto the stage and representing the UK at the opening ceremony was the highlight for me and still gives me a lump in my throat to this day.

My parents and my lecturer at the time, Sue Simpson, made it over to Canada to see me compete and they all gave me some much needed support. Thanks to all this support and to the months of preparation I had done, I came second in the WorldSkills Competition and achieved a Certificate of Excellence.

Since my days as a competitor I have remained involved with UK Skills and have helped prepare and develop aspiring competitors for future WorldSkills competitions. I started judging and training competitors in the run up to WorldSkills St Gallen 2003 and WorldSkills Helsinki 2005 and was then awarded the position of Assistant Training Manager in 2006, now known as an Associate Trainer.

I was extremely lucky when in 2007 UK Skills asked if I would accompany competitors on the familiarisation scheme for WorldSkills Shizuoka 2007.

It was fantastic to see some of the potential competitors that I had met eventually make it to become part of Team UK 2009.

In the run up to WorldSkills Calgary 2009 and in preparation for WorldSkills London 2011 I was successful in my application for the position of Workshop Supervisor. The role of the Workshop Supervisor is to manage the individual competition areas to ensure that the setup is correct and the competition runs without a hitch. My appointment gave me the opportunity to travel to WorldSkills Calgary 2009 with Jade Kidd, the WorldSkills Shizuoka 2007 Beauty Therapy competitor, who I will be working with in London. We were given the opportunity to watch the competition from an organiser's point of view to get some idea of the task we would be taking on for WorldSkills London 2011. Whilst at the competition I managed to see Team UK at work and I can honestly say that the standards demonstrated were the highest I have ever seen.

By staying involved with the work of UK Skills I am able to work and train with the best and most talented skilled young people in the UK. I also get the chance to change things for the better by using my experience to train competitors both mentally and practically so that they perform to the best of their abilities. UK Skills gave me so much when I was a competitor

and so I always felt I wanted to give something back.

Competing at WorldSkills played a huge part in my career development. I always wanted to pursue a career in teaching and my competition experience gave me the confidence to realise that dream.

I'm so excited that WorldSkills is coming to London in 2011; it will make a huge contribution to an improved understanding of my industry and will demonstrate what a worthwhile skill Beauty Therapy is. The current economic climate has resulted in vocational skills funding taking a hit but WorldSkills London 2011 will showcase the importance of vocational skills and hopefully bridge the gap between traditional academic routes and vocational education.

I have already begun working on bringing Beauty Therapy students from colleges and schools to be models on our competition stand to give them an inspiring and memorable experience. I have also been working on creating a visually impressive and interactive visitor experience, which will hopefully attract a younger generation to the industry. I'm really hoping that I will be able to help make the Beauty Therapy Competition at WorldSkills London 2011 the best one yet and I hope to see as many fellow Alumni members as possible cheering for Team UK.

Latest News

Alistair Birt (Team UK 2009) & Will Torrent (Team UK 2007) both competed at the annual Hotelympia event 28 February to 4 March 2010. Alistair Birt won a Gold Medal in the 'Decorative Exhibit' Class and Will Torrent won a Silver Medal in the 'Tea Pastries' Senior Class.



THE THREE hospitality competitors from Team UK 2009 were recognised for their achievements at WorldSkills Calgary at an annual Prize Winners' Lunch hosted by the Worshipful Company of Cooks of London on Wednesday 3 March.

Graham Craddock, Worshipful Company of Cooks' Master, presented each of the Alumni with a special

Company of Cooks Award during their ceremony at London's historic Innholders' Hall.

The three Alumni were Adam Smith (Team UK 2009), gold medal winner in cooking; Alistair Birt (Team UK 2009), winner of a medallion of excellence in confectionery; and Katie Watson (Team UK 2009), bronze medal winner in restaurant service.



Photograph courtesy of Michael O'Sullivan Photography.

Christopher Lonsdale (Team UK 2009) and Richard Sagar (Team UK 2009) were recognised on Wednesday 17 March at the Building Services Engineering National Training Awards for their performances at WorldSkills Calgary 2009. They received the Chair's discretionary award in recognition of outstanding performance at WorldSkills 2009.

Summit Skills said "We wish to offer our congratulations to Christopher and Richard who have proved to be superb ambassadors for the building services engineering sector."



Luke Griffiths (Team UK 2009) was awarded the Outstanding Achievement Award at the Sussex Spring Awards 25 March 2010.

Joe Massie (Team UK 2009) was awarded The Rosie Hughes Award for outstanding achievement in Floristry at the City & Guilds Senior Awards ceremony on 8 May 2010.

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

WorldSkills UK

by Katie Bracher

REGISTRATIONS TO WorldSkills UK regional and national competitions have a tradition of increasing significantly year on year, and the 2009/10 registration period has been no exception to this. We have received nearly 30% more registrations this year, bringing the total number of potential competitors to over 5000.

The most popular competition this year has been the Automobile Technology competition, run as part of a suite of automotive competitions by the Institute of the Motor Industry called SkillAuto. This has been followed by the Hairdressing and Uniformed Services competitions, which have each received more than

100 additional registrations compared with their totals last year. A sizeable rise in interest has also been seen in Web Design, Beauty Therapy, Popular Music, Caring and Floristry, Car Painting and Autobody Repair.

However, despite this increase in the numbers of people wanting to participate in these competitions there has been little, if any, increase in the number of registrations to many of the competitions in the Engineering sector. Similarly, the registrations to many of the IT competitions has remained fairly consistent to last year. Nevertheless, we have already seen that the drop out between registration and participation has decreased significantly since last year with more people attending competitions to compete than ever before.

With an exciting set of potential new partners waiting in the wings eager to take up the challenge of organising a WorldSkills UK skills competition, as well as an excellent selection of organisers, hosts and partners who continue to offer us their support year after year, we are poised to build upon the successes of the past year with our 2010/11 competition cycle, due to be launched on 4 October 2010.

Latest Alumni Activity

Mike Westlake (Team UK 2007) and **Sam Fairgrieve (Team UK 2009)** have been supporting North Warwickshire and Hinckley College since January 2010. Mike and Sam have been taking a hands-on approach through their practical support of competition training evenings and Master Classes to develop learners' technical skills.

Hollie Burrows, Make Up Artistry Year 2 student, said: "The coaching, advice and support the Make-Up Artistry Team and I received from Mike and Sam definitely inspired us all when we competed in our regional competition in Lincoln. So much so, we won 1st place in the Team Event!"

Adam Pierson (Team UK 2001) delivered a speech at the celebration of the City & Guilds 7100 professional cookery Qualification held at 'La Parade des Chefs' Hotelympia on 3 March 2010. Adam spoke to students, tutors and employers about his experience as an apprentice chef and how a qualification of this type will help in training future generations of professionals.



WorldSkills, UK Alumni attended the launch of Edge's 'Have your say' party election broadcast generated completely by the public. The event was hosted by Gordon Marsden MP and held at the Terrace Marquee House of Commons on Tuesday 16 March 2010. Also in attendance were Ed Balls MP, David Laws MP and Nick Gibb MP.

Natalie Stanyer (Team UK 2007) addressed the Annual Conference for the Institute for Education and Business Excellence on 11 March 2010.



Charlotte Burford (Team UK 2009) was one of the WorldSkills judges and played a key role in a recent two day short listing competition, giving students a demonstration of the back massage she did in WorldSkills Calgary to demonstrate the standards required for WorldSkills.

Jade Kidd (Team UK 2007) and **Jenna Bailey (Team UK 1999)** also supported Sue Simpson, WorldSkills Training Manager & Expert for Beauty Therapy, in judging competitors at the short listing competition held at South Staffordshire College.



Adam Smith (Team UK 2009) and UK Skills Board Member, **Brian Turner CBE**, hosted a session on the UK Skills stand at Wessex Salon Culinaire talking to competitors about skills competitions.

Student and learners were inspired by role model **Sam Fairgrieve (Team UK 2009)** as he told his WorldSkills story at the City & Guilds Medals for Excellence ceremony on 26 March 2010.

Katie Watson (Team UK 2009) held a question and answer session with students from Derwen College via a video link. Talking about her experience of WorldSkills and restaurant service, Katie encouraged the students to enter this year's competition.

Natalie Stanyer (Team UK 2007) & **Luke Griffiths (Team UK 2009)** brought a touch of world class to the City & Guilds Lion Awards on 12 April 2010. Natalie provided the floral centre pieces whilst Luke shared his experience of his journey to WorldSkills with the 600 guests.

Harry Smith (Team UK 2007) joined David Harbourne and Manni Mander (Edge) for a live online debate on 28 April 2010 which appeared on the Guardian Online and Edge's Facebook page. The event aimed to encourage first time voters to have their say amidst concern and growing evidence that the current education system with its 'one size fits all' model, isn't catering to all talents and skills.

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.

An update on WorldSkills London 2011

by Caroline Parr

IN OUR March e-newsletter, we announced that the Opening and Closing Ceremonies for WorldSkills London 2011 would be held at The O2. This decision is one of our major milestones in the countdown to the delivery of WorldSkills London 2011.

The O2 is one of the biggest arenas in Europe as well as one of London's landmark venues. It will deliver the 'wow' factor needed to help make this the most successful WorldSkills Competition ever, with an unforgettable Opening and Closing Ceremony. We will also be using ExCeL London as the main Competition venue. Six months later, the London 2012 Olympics will follow in our footsteps as ExCeL London transforms into one of the Olympic Venues hosting 13 sports.

We now have a Head of Volunteering, Julia Bowditch, in place and the Volunteer Programme for WorldSkills London 2011 is currently in development. WorldSkills London 2011 will depend on its volunteers to make sure the event runs smoothly and successfully and with the equivalent of 14 football pitches to manage at ExCeL London volunteers will certainly be covering a lot of ground. In late September our Alumni will be among the first to hear about the opportunities before the programme details are released more widely. This will give you the opportunity to get involved first and help set the high standards necessary. There will be many diverse roles available, such as welcoming delegates at the airport, working in ExCeL London to marshal our 150,000 guests and supervising Have A Go



stands. From your experience at previous events you will be well aware of the importance and the

impact that volunteers bring to the event.

We are excited to be working with The O2, ExCeL London and our Alumni to help deliver the most exciting, inspiring and interactive WorldSkills Competition ever.

We hope that when London plays host to the 41st WorldSkills Competition in October 2011 Alumni members will want to be involved in some way. With your experience as a Competitor, we recognise that you provide a unique and highly valuable perspective on the running of the Competition. There will be many ways that you can potentially get involved whether it be providing support in the Competition areas, sharing your local knowledge to support visiting member nation teams, or hosting 'VIPs', Press and other visitors to the Competition.

Where are they now? Phil's story

by Harry Smith

PHIL VANDRIES (Team UK 2003) first became interested in technical drawing in his design and technology classes at school. He really enjoyed the subject and excelled in class but at the age of 14 didn't yet understand how his skills could be used in the working world. So it wasn't until Phil completed a work experience placement where he used Computer Aided Design that he really became hooked on his skill.

Phil said: "To me Computer Aided Design was just like playing with a scaled up version of Meccano on screen. I loved being creative with that and design engineering seemed like the natural follow on."

Phil was introduced to skills competitions by his employer, Granada Material Handling, who were very interested in supporting and championing vocational qualifications. Phil submitted some of his work to the competition organisers but had no idea how the competition would impact his future success. With the continued support of his employer, despite being



incredibly busy at work, Phil went on to win both the regional and national CAD competitions. With a national competition win under his belt Phil then began his journey to the international WorldSkills Competition with a new realisation of the opportunities that could lie ahead for him.

Following an intense period of training and preparation,

Phil flew out to WorldSkills St. Gallen 2003 as part of Team UK.

He said "WorldSkills was a defining moment in my life. The opportunity to represent my own country in my own trade was fantastic. The entire journey from selection to team building and training, right through to the competition itself is one that has shaped me into the person I am today."

The six months intensive training significantly helped Phil's development and the fact he can say that he represented the UK and achieved 12th place in the world, is a serious selling point on his CV.

Phil continues to work at Granada, the same company where he first got a taste for CAD and started his WorldSkills journey. As a very important

member of the design team, Phil now manages special projects that deviate from standard products. Granada continues to support Phil in his development and he really enjoys the variety of his job. He plans to stay on at Granada and says he would like to move up the ranks and in the future would maybe even like take over the running of the company. Watch this space!

Granada Material Handling designs and manufactures cranes and specialist material handling equipment. To find out more please visit www.gmh.co.uk

We would like to encourage as many of our Alumni members as possible to re-connect and engage with each other in an online community. This can be used not only on a social level but also to exchange professional and personal career development advice and keep up to date with the latest news.

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!

VQ Day Celebrating Vocational Achievement

by Edge

LAST YEAR 3.6 million vocational qualifications were awarded in the UK and millions of people will achieve similar success this year. This vocational achievement is celebrated every June on VQ Day, a date fast becoming a fixture in the education calendar.

23 June 2010 will be the third VQ Day, raising the stature and demonstrating the benefits of practical and vocational qualifications to future learners, employers, opinion formers and the public.

As in previous years, VQ Day will recognise a Learner of the Year (24 and under and 25 and over) in each of the UK's four nations. This year also sees the launch of a brand new initiative called the Industry Insider Prize, which will be judged and hosted by

entertainment icon Arlene Phillips OBE.

The deadline for nominations has now passed, but to instantly celebrate the achievements of yourself or someone you know, names can be added to the vocational roll call of success on the VQ Day website.

There's still plenty of time for you to get involved and celebrate vocational achievement in the UK. For information about events happening in your area, tips on holding your own event and all the latest VQ Day news, please visit www.vqday.org

VQ Day 2010 sponsors include Edexcel (Headline Sponsor), Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT), City & Guilds, EDI, Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR) and the Office of Qualifications and Examination Regulator (OFQUAL)



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