



London

Adult Learners' Week

Awards 2010

Programme

co-ordinated by



supported by



Programme for the Awards

- 1.30pm** **Registration and lunch** provided by Waltham Forest College's Hospitality and Catering students
- 2.30pm** **Welcome** from Robin Jones, Principal and Chief Executive of Waltham Forest College
- 2.45pm** **Learning through ESOL Awards** (Trinity College London)
- 2.55pm** **Learning through Engineering, Construction and Technology Awards** (London South Bank University)
- 3.10pm** **Learning through Sport Awards** (London Pro-Active Partnerships)
- 3.20pm** **Access to Higher Education Award** (Birkbeck University)
- 3.25pm** **Learning through Language Award** (SOAS Language Centre)
- 3.30pm** **London Outstanding Learner of the Year and Regional Awards**
- 3.55pm** **Entertainment from Waltham Forest students** (in conjunction with X7eaven)
- 4.10pm** **Non-Accredited Learning Award** (Skills and Learning for London Partnership)
- 4.15pm** **Learning through Open College Network Award** (London OCN)
- 4.20pm** **Learning in the Community Award** (London South Bank University)
- 4.25pm** **ESF London Regional Award**
- 4.30pm** **London Senior Learner of the Year Award**
- 4.35pm** **Learning Works Award**
- 4.40pm** **Celebration of all London adult learners nominated for awards**
- 5.00pm** **Photos, tea and brownies**

Message from the Mayor of London

As Mayor of London I want London to be the best city in the world – one where all our citizens are able to contribute to, and share in, its success. In my role as chairman of the London Skills and Employment Board I am working with employers and public agencies to support Londoners to develop the skills they need to obtain and progress in employment. Ultimately, however, it is the individual who makes the personal choice to seize the opportunities that learning can provide, and Adult Learners' Week reminds us all of the benefits, both economic and more generally, that it can bring.

In these challenging times, the importance of taking on a new challenge later in life is greater than ever. Whatever your motivation – be it enhancing your career prospects, helping the kids, a change of direction or simply indulging a passion, I applaud those who embark on further education in their adult life, and offer my sincere congratulations to all the winners of this year's awards and all those nominated.

I am delighted to support Adult Learners' Week 2010.



Boris Johnson
Mayor of London



Welcome to London Adult Learners' Week Awards

Adult Learners' Week is the UK's largest festival and celebration of adult learning. Since 1992 the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) has coordinated the Adult Learners' Week Awards, which celebrate adults' achievements and showcase the creativity, imagination and energy adults bring to their learning.

Today gives us a chance to celebrate just a handful of the experiences and results that are being achieved across London. We are here to congratulate the work of all of the learners here, and recognise all the effort they have made to enrich their lives and those of others through learning and improving their skills.

Our thanks go to all who have taken part: learners and nominators, learning providers, entertainers, judges, presenters and sponsors. Our very best wishes go to all the finalists and congratulations to the winners. Whether you are one of these people, or whether you are here to support and cheer them on, I hope you have a wonderful afternoon.

Simon Beer

NIACE Regional Development Officer

Robert Wells

Age 49, Carshalton, Surrey

Nominated by Sarah Freeman, Sutton College of Learning for Adults (SCOLA)

A serious injury from a traffic accident six years ago left Bob, the retired Super Heavyweight bronze medal winner at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, no longer able to work, and feeling like his life was falling apart.

Bob struggled to read and write at school where he was given little support. However, he developed techniques to cope, including keeping his 'books' for around 1,000 customers in his head, when he was a window cleaner once he'd retired from boxing.

After his accident, Bob was unable to continue cleaning windows and so to help him change career he decided to take English, Numeracy and Computer Studies at Sutton College of Learning for Adults, in Sutton, Surrey (SCOLA). He was immediately diagnosed with dyslexia but his determination and good humour saw him pass exams in all his subjects up to a Level 2 Numeracy qualification in just three years.

Bob said, "[Learning] has given me a bit of a second chance or another crack of the whip!"

The confidence he gained from learning means Bob is now doing a volunteers' course that he hopes will get him a job helping with the 2012 Olympics. "It has been very hard this time to pick myself up off the ground, but if you don't get up you just stay there," ended Bob.



“I am really proud of what I am doing and happy maybe for the first time in my life.”

Faaduma

Faaduma

“I am really proud of what I am doing and happy maybe for the first time in my life,” says Faaduma, who moved from being in a young offenders’ institution to training in Jamie Oliver’s prestigious restaurant ‘Fifteen’.

During her sentence, Faaduma started an NVQ in Customer Service in the staff canteen, but her supervisor noticed that she seemed very withdrawn, unable to smile or maintain eye contact. Work with the St Giles Trust revealed her previously undiagnosed dyslexia, which had given her low self-esteem and a feeling that she was incapable of learning, subsequently leading her to drop out of school.

But sessions, in which she worked on her interview technique and gradually learned to talk to people she did not know, helped her to overcome her fears and led to her acceptance on an apprenticeship at the restaurant.

“The NVQ has given me the confidence I needed to progress with my life in a positive way,” says Faaduma. “I received lots of support from my tutor and in prison in general. I don’t know and I don’t want to think of what would have happened to me without my NVQ and the confidence that I gained from it.”

Maxine Schamely

Age 47, London

Nominated by Gity Malek Mohammadi, City and Islington College

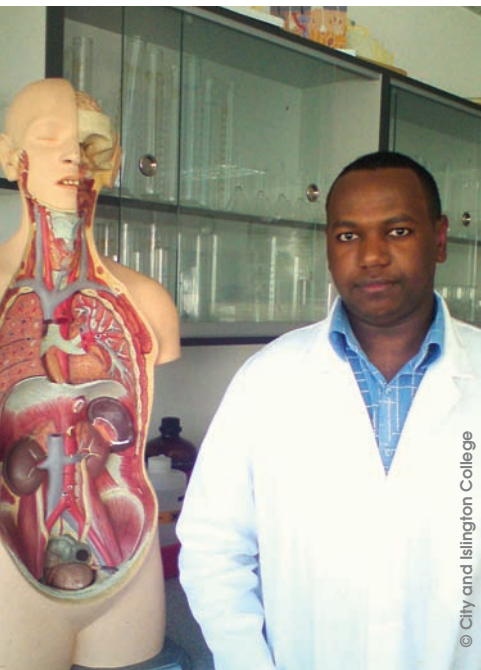
A difficult childhood left Maxine without a decent education, and she entered adult life with no qualifications. At 17, Maxine had a son, and in order to feed and clothe him she took jobs as a cleaner, working on the market, as a childminder, in factories and in shops. Maxine enjoyed her work, but when she developed Spinal Muscular Atrophy, she realised she'd have to take less physical roles. At the age of 44, Maxine enrolled on basic literacy, numeracy and bookkeeping courses at City and Islington College, seeking a career in accountancy. On enrolling, Maxine was assessed and diagnosed with dyslexia, but progressed through several exams and is currently studying higher-tier GCSE maths and English.

“Being able to get good grades over such a short period has given me immense pleasure, and, for the first time in my life, a real confidence in my abilities,” said Maxine. “I hope now to develop a career in a professional area such as teaching or accounting, an ambition which I would never have dreamed of when I left school.”

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Maxine

London Regional Award Winner



Amin Hussein Abdul

Age 22, Hackney, London

Nominated by Sharmani Barge, City and Islington College

Amin came to the UK in 2005 after fleeing Yemen with his father. Since arriving, he has completed a BTEC First Diploma and GCSEs in Maths, IT and English, achieving top marks. Amin is currently studying for a Level 3 BTEC National Diploma in Medical Sciences, and is expected to pass with a distinction, which has gained him a place at Reading University to study Pharmacy. However, being the sole carer for his disabled father has meant that Amin is unable to attend university in Reading, but he is determined to apply for a degree in medical engineering at a London university. Alongside his studies, Amin cares for his father and works until 2am in a restaurant each night to support his family. **“Studying made me a better and happier person! ... Learning is highly enjoyable and it is something that everyone should continue doing through their life,”** said Amin. **“I never imagined that I would have got this far in my education. It has been very hard, but it has made me a very strong person and proud of myself.”** Learning has given Amin the confidence to apply for a job as a medical interpreter, and he hopes to achieve his dream of studying medicine.

Rita Martins

Age 35, Camden, London

Nominated by Hazel Tulloch, Blenheim CDP

Rita enjoyed a variety of learning activities until illness meant she was unable to continue studying. Rita was bedridden for eight months, leaving her isolated and with low self-esteem. As soon as Rita was well enough, she began volunteering at Drugs Agency, Blenheim CDP, in various roles to support clients with their substance addictions. This volunteering experience helped Rita regain her confidence and learn new skills. She has completed an OCN Level 3 A Pathway to Drugs Work course and a Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector qualification, as well as a number of workshops at Blenheim CDP to complement her work experience.

Rita hopes to continue studying for an NVQ Level 3 in Health and Social Care and get a job helping people with drug issues. **“It has been a difficult but very rewarding journey and I believe I am living proof that one can always return to education, even after experiencing traumatic life events. Learning has helped me stay mentally stimulated, which in turn has had a positive effect on my physical health,”** ended Rita.



ESF London Regional Award Winner



Ken Barker

Age 46, Charlton

Nominated by Stuart Allcock, Twin Employment and Training

When a change in Ken's working hours in 2008 meant he was unable to continue his job as an ICT technician with the NHS, Ken's family suggested that he should become a teacher. Despite a lack of GCSEs or A-Levels, Ken discovered a vocational route and enrolled on a course to gain an NCFE Level 3 Award in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools in June 2009. As part of the ESF-funded course, Ken started a work placement in a school, where he soon became the ICT learning support assistant. He later completed a higher-level teaching assistant course for mathematics, and has since been appointed as a maths specialist at the school.

"I am very proud of my achievements and my family, as without their assistance and foresight I would never have taken the course to change direction. I would never have entered the challenging but rewarding world of education and be building myself this exciting new career," said Ken. "I have pointed family and friends to adult learning courses, as it has changed my way of thinking and hopefully will change theirs."

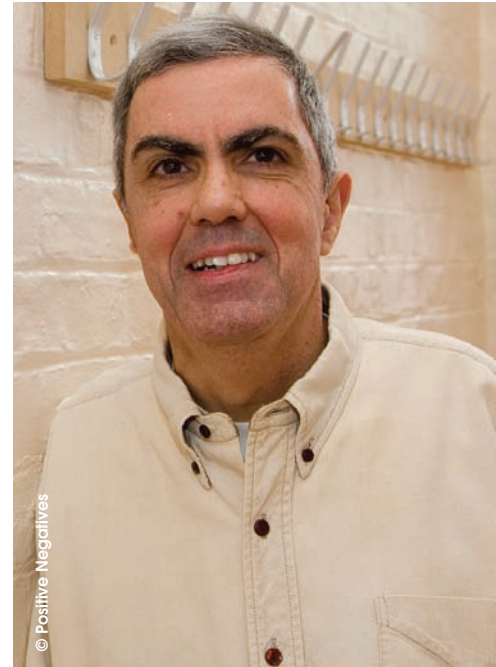
Terence Ferreira

Age 56, London

Nominated by Elaine Lewis, Hammersmith and Fulham Adult Learning

Having Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and many of the symptoms of someone on the autistic spectrum, Terence found it difficult to enter a classroom and interact with other students. However, his participation in 'Dance Dynamics' classes has given Terence a newfound confidence. Just a year of attending dance classes resulted in Terence dancing solo at an open day, with staff said to have been 'blown away' by his performance and the journey he had made. His increase in confidence meant Terence has also progressed in literacy and numeracy and is currently studying for an NCFE Level 3 Award for Making Progress.

"His whole demeanour changes when he dances – it is as if dancing opens doors for him to discover his own personality," commented Elaine, his nominator. Terence added, "When I dance I get inspiration and confidence... My senior tutor has been largely responsible for encouraging me to try new things and I'm grateful to him for suggesting I try Dance Dynamics. It is my favourite class."





Mark Beaton

Age 45, London

Nominated by Julia Wood, Morley College, London

Sheer determination helped Mark Beaton fight his way back from the depths of mental and physical illness, homelessness and unemployment to become an excellent student, while starting his own business as a sports massage therapist.

Even as he struggled to gain new skills and build the self-confidence he had lacked all his life, Mark was diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome, which threatened the manual dexterity he needed for the practical skills to succeed in his chosen profession.

Undeterred, on recovery from an operation he embarked on the City & Guilds Level 3 Diploma in Body Massage, graduating from Morley College, London, in 2009, with distinctions in both the theory and practical exams. Mark completed his Sports Massage Diploma this year, and he sought Jobcentre advice to come off benefits and train to set up his business.

He admits that, 30 years after leaving school, “**as a very troubled youngster**”, studying was a tough challenge. But it has given him confidence that had always eluded him. Mark says, “**Adult education has not only given me the chance for a career change, at 44, it has given me a total life change.**”

Julia Wood, his tutor, now uses him as an inspiration for her current students.

Learning through ESOL Award

Winner: Nabil Elumairi

Sponsored by Trinity College London

Nominated by Gillian Kleinert, Community Action Team, Royal Borough Kensington and Chelsea

Nabil came to the UK from Iraq with little schooling or English language. At first he found life hard, particularly as he has some disabilities. However, he started learning English at a local community college, and has maintained 100% attendance. He also joined a travel mentoring scheme through Transport for London and the local borough Accessible Transport scheme, and in this way learned a variety of routes around London.

These have allowed Nabil to become more independent, attend college on his own and get a part-time job.

Nabil says, "Learning English will help me to get a job and talk to my friends. I can also travel on the bus on my own and can do more things on my own."

Learning through ESOL Award

Highly Commended: Kinga Gut

Sponsored by Trinity College London

Nominated by Surryia Mahmood, Community Volunteer

Kinga came from Poland and found that she was unable to afford to study in the UK, so found a job cleaning. While working, she enrolled on a succession of ESOL courses which she had to dip in and out of according to whether she could afford them. Despite this, she persevered to improve her English, and then her maths as well.

She eventually saved enough money to either put a deposit on a flat, or pay for an accounting qualification. After consulting with her nominator (and employer) Surryia, she decided to enter further education, and is now enrolled on an ACCA course at BPP College in Croydon.

Kinga said, "I came to England in 2005. I had no English but I had ambition for a better job in the future. I had no money and nowhere to live." Her nominator says, "I have full confidence that she will achieve her qualification. She deserves this award."

Learning through Engineering, Construction and Technology Award

Winner: Roy Jones

Sponsored by London South Bank University

Nominated by Bharat Hirani, South Thames College

Roy worked as an Insurance Broker for 20 years before deciding to change career. He enrolled on a motorcycle course, despite never having worked with bikes or engineering before.

His nominator is clear that “**Roy is an example of how adult learning can change your life**”, as he watched Roy study hard, both independently and as part of his group, in getting to grips with his new subject. His determined work and perseverance resulted, not only in success in his course, but also in an offer of a part-time job in his new trade.

Roy has now progressed from his Level 2 course onto Level 3, and he says, “**Learning has allowed me to fulfil my wishes to become a motorcycle mechanic. It’s been a steep learning curve, but I have enjoyed it immensely. My studies have changed my life**”.

Learning through Engineering, Construction and Technology Award

Winner: Natasha McDonald

Sponsored by London South Bank University

Nominated by Matthew Travell, College of North-East London

Natasha switched careers when it became obvious that remaining in her childcare job would mean more time away from her own young daughter. As she had always enjoyed working with her hands, she secured an Apprenticeship with Homes for Haringey, and began learning about plumbing.

Mixing study with work, Natasha progressed through to an Advanced Apprenticeship, and now works for the borough full time as one of only three women construction workers.

Natasha loves her new job and says, “**These qualifications mean I can provide for my daughter and hopefully be a positive role model for her as she grows up. In addition, I am now very popular with my family and friends!**”

Learning through Engineering, Construction and Technology Award

Winner: Michael Cahill

Sponsored by London South Bank University

Nominated by Niki Asghar, Southwark College

Michael left school with few qualifications and tried a number of ways to get into construction. He struggled with work and apprenticeships, but nothing seemed right. When he enrolled on the Diploma programme, he attended counselling alongside his course to help to control his temper.

This proved helpful, and the standard of his work steadily rose. He continues to work towards overcoming the obstacles he has faced, and his teachers are confident that his future looks promising. He now hopes to start a BTEC Forensics course in September.

Michael says, "While at college I have also learned how to interact with students from different backgrounds. I have learned how to keep calm and channel my energies."

Learning in the Community Award

Winner: George Cowen

Sponsored by London South Bank University

Nominated by John Hawkes, Osborne Partnership

George has Down's Syndrome, and joined the Osborne Partnership to develop skills in craft production and packaging work. However, he found it hard to get the right type of support and opportunity to obtain vocational qualifications, until he joined a course to gain a new NVQ in Performing Manufacturing Operations offered through Barking College and TOPS Textiles. He progressed through to Level 2, and in addition to topping up his skills with non-accredited training, at the age of 40, he now has a 'real' paid job.

His mum says, "George learned the skills and got the confidence that he needed to give him the chance to go out and get a paid job for the first time in his life. He is a very happy person, and he makes me feel very proud of him."

Learning through Sport Award

Winner: Donna Roberts

Sponsored by the London Pro-Active Partnerships

Nominated by Allison Reeves-Slaughter, Croydon Adult Learning and Training (CALAT)

Donna had not studied since leaving school many years before, and found the Level 2 Gym Instructor course hard work. She felt that she was not as clever as the other learners, and struggled to care for her daughter who had been diagnosed with cancer.

However, Donna was committed and enthusiastic, and became a role model in the class. She kept going, despite failing her exam twice, and found that success bred in her a new determination to succeed. She is now looking forward to completing her Level 3 course.

Donna says, "I wanted to make myself and my daughter proud. When I passed the exam, I was speechless, then the joy kicked in. We all must take opportunities in life with both hands. Never say never!"

Learning through Sport Award

Highly Commended: Yuri Tada

Sponsored by the London Pro-Active Partnerships

Nominated by Renate Laloo, City Lit

Yuri had worked as a restaurant manager for ten years before deciding to make a change and become a yoga teacher. She took a Yoga Teacher Training course, and set herself up in a studio.

She quickly found that the reality was unlike the dream, when she rented a studio in August and found that there was a lack of students due to the holidays.

However, she persevered and now has two classes a week in her studio. She also teaches yoga in gyms, and has just completed a Pregnancy Yoga Training course.

Yuri says, "I am busier than when I worked in the restaurant full time, but the quality of my life is so much better. I will keep going with my passion and happiness. What's next?"

Access to Higher Education Award

Winner: Carl Treddenick

Sponsored by Birkbeck College

Nominated by Margaret Paul, Richmond Adult Community College

Carl has overcome both alcohol and drug dependency, and a physical assault which led to a breakdown, homelessness and rough sleeping.

After finding help at a hostel, he enrolled on an ITEC Massage course, where he qualified despite a number of physical and emotional difficulties. He now works as a therapist with disadvantaged and homeless people, and he is working to fulfil his dream of becoming a midwife.

Carl says, "After trying to survive from one day to the next, going back into education gave me a new lease of life. The training has given me back my confidence and self-esteem. Going back into learning has given me the push to achieve. It has truly helped me turn my life around."

Learning through Language Award

Winner: Lynda Milner

Sponsored by SOAS Language Centre

Nominated by Jindong Gao, Morley College

When Lynda became godmother to a Chinese speaking girl, she decided to learn Mandarin so that she could communicate with her and her mother's family who live in China.

Despite having a full-time job and working voluntarily with young offenders, Lynda was an exceptional learner, dedicated and hard working, and she has become a confident speaker of this most difficult language for westerners to master. She now feels a real part of the family, and says that it has opened up a new dimension in her own life.

Lynda says, "I feel that I have personally benefited from a sense of achievement in knowing much more than I did. My learning has given me a foundation for a whole future with this little girl."

Non-Accredited Learning Award

Winner: Anne Marie Fury

Sponsored by the Skills and Learning for London Partnership

Nominated by Karima Ann Bekir, Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership

Ann Marie started learning again in 2009 after missing out on a lot of school. She had very low literacy skills, and was shy and embarrassed about her level of reading. She has worked hard to improve her skills, and can now read text messages, newspapers and words on TV. She has also started to learn ICT.

She has improved very quickly over the past few months, and hopes soon to be able to progress from her current cleaning job onto something more fulfilling.

Anne Marie says, "I now know how important it is to read, and I feel sad and stressed when I can't read things. I have come such a long way and can already see my progress. I feel so proud when I see something on paper and I can understand it. I have felt more independent and happier."

Learning through OCN Award

Winner: Elizabeth Webster

Sponsored by the London Open College Network

Nominated by Brian Carter, City Lit

Elizabeth enrolled on an acting foundation course in her late 20s, finally overcoming obstacles around finance and personal issues to fulfil her dream of becoming an actress. Although beset with insecurities, she made good progress and has now completed an Advanced Diploma. Since graduating, Elizabeth has secured professional work in both theatre and film, and is currently performing in a West End play.

Elizabeth admits that her studies were a massive learning curve: "It not only filled me with personal joy but gave me back some confidence," she says, "I have hope that a stubborn and inquisitive nature, combined with hard work, a little faith and a splash of luck may allow a person the chance to set aside their shortcomings, contribute positively and live for a little while."

Waltham Forest College

Many thanks are due to Waltham Forest College for providing the venue, the entertainment, the ushering and the food for the Award Ceremony.

Entertainment

Entertainment for the Award Ceremony is being provided by Waltham Forest College Performance Arts students working in conjunction with X7eaven. They are presenting a fusion of song, dance and drama that will give a flavour of the skills they have acquired during their time at the College.

Food and ushering

Waltham Forest College's Hospitality and Catering students, studying for their Level 1 and Level 2 VRQ qualification in Professional Cookery, are to be credited for menu creation, preparation and presentation of lunch and tea.

Students taking the new 14-19 Diplomas in Hospitality participated in this event as part of their practical customer service assessment.

The College's Student Ambassadors performed the ushering duties.



Afterword

Acknowledgements



Learners from 2009 celebrate their achievements

We would like to thank all nominated learners for sharing their experiences of learning, and their tutors, employers, friends and families for recognising their achievements.

Particular thanks also go to Angela Bucknor from Waltham Forest College for all her work making these awards a success; to College Performance Arts students working in conjunction with X7even for providing the entertainment; to students from the College Hospitality and Catering, Diploma in Hospitality and the Ambassador's scheme for the food and ushering; and to the London Pro-Active Partnerships, Birkbeck University, Trinity College London, OCN London Region, SOAS Language Centre, London South Bank University and the Skills and Learning for London Partnership for sponsoring the Awards. Without the help and support of all these organisations and individuals, events like this would not be possible.

Last but not least, thanks go to our presenters, organisers and national sponsors, and a whole host of other people who have contributed and enthusiastically supported us, enabling the London Adult Learners' Week Awards to become a reality.

To find out more about Adult Learners' Week in London, contact Amanda Pavon-Lopez on pavonlopez@msn.com or 07812 159689. You can also find more information on www.alw.org.uk

