



# South East

# Adult Learners' Week

Awards 2010

co-ordinated by



supported by



# Programme

## Foreword

## Welcome

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 they bring to their learning.

In the South East we are very fortunate to have had the support of the South East Economic Development Agency (SEEDA) as a major sponsor since 2001.

This evening we celebrate the achievements of our adult learners and recognise the outstanding efforts they have made to enrich their lives - and the lives of others - through learning and improving their skills.

We hope you have a wonderful evening and leave feeling inspired by the stories of those who have transformed their lives through learning. Join with us in congratulating the finalists and stars of the show - our learners.

**Kevin Delf**  
Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership

## **Programme - 18th May 2010**

### **6.30pm**      **Arrival and registration**

Refreshments served

### **7.00pm**      **Awards ceremony**

Welcome and introduction by host for the evening – Charlotte Hawkins, Sky News

Presentation of Awards

Winners' group photograph

### **8.30pm**      **Buffet and musical entertainment**

Music provided by 'Said & Done'

## South East Regional Awards Ceremony



### Your hosts

We are delighted to welcome back **Charlotte Hawkins** as our host. Charlotte, who first presented the awards in 2004, will be familiar face to early risers as a presenter of Sky News Sunrise with Eamonn Holmes on weekday mornings.

The **Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership** is very pleased to be working on behalf of NIACE to coordinate the 2010 Adult Learners' Week in the South East. The Partnership seeks to improve learning opportunities, learner engagement and progression in Surrey and beyond, particularly for those who have missed out on learning in the past. It is a member of SELPN (South East Learning Partnerships and Networks), the strategic body representing learning partnerships across the region. ([www.surreyllp.org.uk](http://www.surreyllp.org.uk))

The **National Institute of Adult Continuing Education** (NIACE) aims to encourage more and different adults to engage in learning of all kinds, and coordinates Adult Learners' Week in England. ([www.niace.org.uk](http://www.niace.org.uk))

## Andrew Phillips

**Age 42. Dover, Kent**

**Nominated by Tim Whitaker, P&O Ferries Holdings Ltd**

Andy Phillips finally asked for professional help with reading and writing when he became too embarrassed to keep asking his children to assist with his paperwork.

Since leaving school at 16 with only a basic grasp of reading and writing, he did everything to avoid confronting his problem – taking on a larger share of practical tasks, leaving paperwork to others and avoiding numerous training courses on offer. But with the advent of IT – not an issue for him when he was working as an apprentice 20 years earlier – everything went online, demanding emails for stock control, ordering and receipting.

**“Andy used the BBC RaW exercises on the Eastenders and Skillswise interactive CDs,”** said his nominator, Tim Whitaker, Training Manager, On Board Services, P&O Ferries, for whom Andy is an on-board Sous Chef. **“Once he started there was no stopping him.”**

He signed up at the SkillsPlus Adult Learning Centre in Dover and raced through literacy and IT programmes, finally achieving the City & Guilds Workplace Trainer’s qualification, which he uses for the benefit of his whole team.

Andy says his main focus now is to encourage others, just like he was. **“I had a great friend and boss who helped me, supported me, encouraged me and believed in me – making me believe in myself.”**



## South East Regional Award Winner



## Yetunde Adeola

**Age 39. Gravesend, Kent**

**Nominated by Idowu Olorunda, Pupa**

In 2007, Yetunde became a Kent Learning Champion (a scheme run by Kent Adult Education), a volunteer role to encourage, support and inspire other people in her community to take up learning. Personal experience told Yetunde that there were people who were looking for opportunities to develop themselves, gain qualifications and find a job, but the right information was not reaching them. So, she devoted her time through attendance at open days, library drop-in sessions and community events, encouraging unemployed adults, single parents, young people and those who have been made redundant to engage in learning.

Yetunde also continued to learn alongside bringing up three young children. She has attended courses including Access to Lifelong Learning and Counselling Skills, and studied Education and Community Development at university. "Personally I have enjoyed so much from learning; it has lots of positive impact on my life. I achieved many certificates, knowledge of desirable information, boost of confidence, valuable friendship, skills, community respect, job, opportunities for personal development and excellent communication ability," said Yetunde. Her advice to others is, "If you feel lonely, have tried everything and think there is no way forward, please try learning."

# John Carr

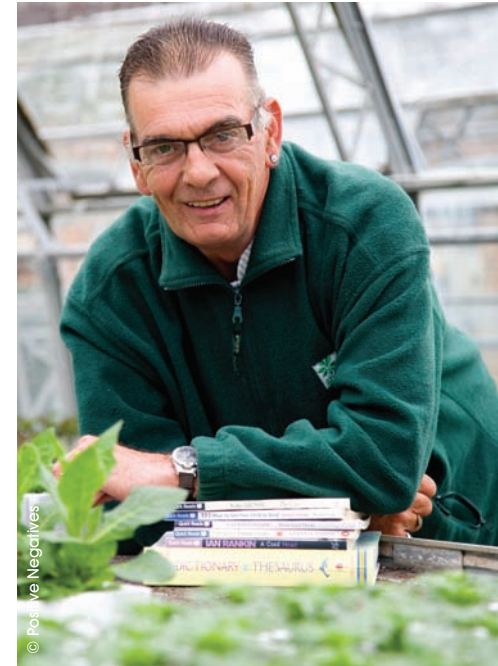
**Age 58. Portslade, Sussex**

**Nominated by Angela Farnham-Smith, Central Sussex College**

When John began literacy classes, he was assessed as below Entry Level standard, diagnosed with dyslexia and was only able to complete three out of 40 questions in his initial assessment. He was working as a digger at Hove Cemetery and became known to tutor, Angela, from Central Sussex College, as she was teaching on site. John was initially very nervous, but eventually expressed his desire to learn to read and become computer literate. John joined Angela's literacy class in January 2009 and has since passed an Entry Level 1 assessment and is working towards Entry Level 2. His confidence has greatly improved and he gained huge cheers and applause when he read unaided to an audience at a recent learning celebration.

Thanks to his 100% attendance and increase in skills, John now has an email address and is able to write brief notes to friends. John said, "Since I have been going to classes it has made such a difference. When I think of all the years wasted. And now I feel more confident and have something to achieve."

## South East Regional Award Winner



## South East Regional Award Winner

“Due to my English course, my English has now improved and I have been able to read things that I was previously unable to.”

**Ben**

## Ben

When talented rapper and musician Ben decided he wanted a career in producing and performing music, he realised formal qualifications would help him achieve his goal. With barriers to overcome from a difficult childhood in care and criminal convictions, Ben attended regular mentoring sessions at Learning Links and enrolled on a Skills for Life course. With the hope of gaining a place on a Music Technology course in 2010, Ben is currently working towards a Level 2 qualification in English.

Nominator, Samantha, said of Ben, “**He is working extremely hard to overcome his barriers and achieve his goals. He has turned his life around and is a fantastic inspiration to young people who are beginning to take the wrong path in life.**” Ben is already seeing the benefits of learning and said, “**Due to my English course, my English has now improved and I have been able to read things that I was previously unable to.**” Ben also hopes to do voluntary work with young people to share his story and make a difference to their lives.

## Sandy Richardson

**Age 44. Winchester**

**Nominated by Sarah Harris, Trinity Winchester**

Sandy was homeless and living in a hostel due to suffering domestic violence at home. It was a fellow resident at the hostel that persuaded Sandy to visit the Trinity Women's Centre so she could look to make positive changes to her life and learn new skills in a safe and supportive environment. Sandy began with a cookery course, gaining an NCFE accreditation in Confident Cookery, and then gained a Level 2 Food Safety qualification and an NCFE qualification in Art, Craft and Design in Cookery, followed by courses in art and IT. All courses were achieved with support from Trinity tutors Sarah Harris and Alistair Eales, and are part of Hampshire Learning Skills for Independent Living.

Sandy's confidence grew and she began volunteering in the Trinity kitchen on a daily basis. Whilst gaining practical experience in the kitchen, Sandy was assessed for an NVQ2 in Food Processing and Cooking, proving to other women at the centre that moving forward in life is achievable. Sandy has recently taken up a paid job as a cook at Trinity.

“I have made friends,  
gained qualifications  
and my life now has a  
purpose.”

**Sandy**

## ESF South East Regional Award Winner



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## Padmini Ali Ayube

**Age 39. Bognor Regis**

**Nominated by Linda Everitt, Chichester College**

With no qualifications and the wish to improve her English skills, Padmini was encouraged to go back to education in her 30s. She first gained her qualification in Adult Literacy Level 1 and this made Padmini – a manager of a care home – appreciate the value of learning. Padmini felt a number of her staff would benefit from further education, so, together with her colleagues, she gained an NVQ Level 2 in Customer Service. At the same time, Padmini also gained Literacy and Numeracy Level 2 and with the ultimate dream of becoming a social worker, she is currently undertaking Level 3 in Leadership and Management.

“Padmini’s journey from Entry Level 3 to full Level 3 qualifications in just three years is remarkable, especially as she has worked in a demanding care home role throughout this time, together with raising a young family,” said nominator Linda. “Without free government-funded courses, I could never have achieved this. Who would have believed I would be taking a Level 3 qualification in management when I left school with nothing at all? Certainly not me!” Padmini ended.



**European Union**  
European Social Fund  
Investing in jobs and skills

## Margaret Rushby

**Age 78. West Sussex**

**Nominated by Lynne Thompson, University of Exeter**

Margaret's learning achievements have been through distance learning and on the web due to deteriorating health and mobility problems. In January 2010 she was awarded a BA (Hons) degree in Humanities from the University of Exeter – the latest qualification of many in recent years - having already completed courses from three other universities, and all despite leaving school with no qualifications. **"It has been a long, slow process for me, but has made a huge difference to my quality of life and opened the gateway to whole new adventures of knowledge."**

**"I have learnt that lack of physical power is no handicap in the use of mental power,"** said Margaret. Her passion for history has developed over the years as she travelled the UK, and led Margaret to study varied topics, including family and local history, the English countryside, British Heritage, Northern Renaissance Art, the Vikings and Roman Britain. **"To me, education, the art of learning, regardless of subject, is never wasted. It opens up the past, present and future,"** concluded Margaret.

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**Margaret**

## South East Regional Senior Learner of the Year



## Jessie Beattie

**Age 94. East Sussex  
Nominated by Ruth Armistead**

When Jessie, aged 94, retired from a career as a health visitor 30 years ago, she continued learning and began with an evening class in French. This followed with courses in New Testament Greek, Hebrew, Theology and Fairisle and Shetland knitting. However, it was Jessie's decision to become computer literate in her late 80s that changed her life. Jessie bought a laptop and taught herself how to use Microsoft Word, send emails and talk on Skype and Windows Messenger, so she could keep in touch with friends and family. She also learned how to use the computer for digital photography and Excel spreadsheets for her Christmas card list.

Mobility problems mean Jessie can no longer attend classes, so she highly values the opportunities offered by digital technology. “[Learning] has made a huge difference to my life as it keeps me busy, interested in the world around me and able to communicate with friends and family around the globe. Information technology in particular has prevented me from feeling lonely and isolated as so many other old people find,” said Jessie.

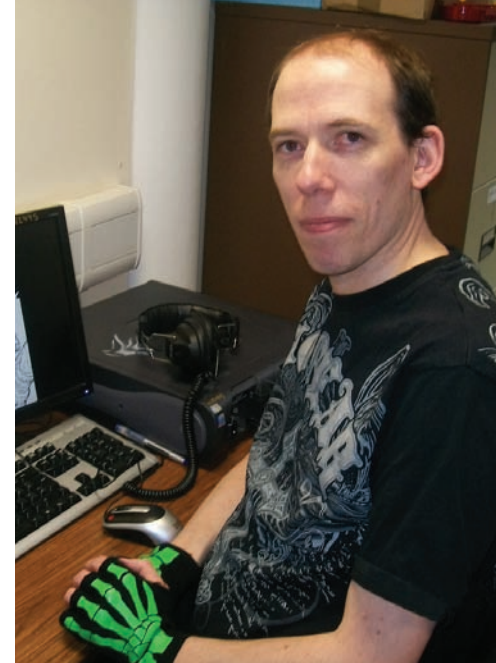
# Peter Fear

**Age 34. Portsmouth**

**Nominated by Fran May, Portsmouth College**

Peter was once a shy individual who was afraid to speak up in front of others. However, thanks to learning and his attendance at a 'Towards Independence' programme, he now speaks at community meetings. Peter lives in supported housing and began learning three years ago, completing certificates in literacy and numeracy up to Entry Level 3. Peter then joined the full-time 'Towards Independence' programme at Portsmouth College to learn how to live more independently and with confidence. He gained work experience at Portsmouth Civic Centre, which helped him gain belief in his abilities, and Peter now attends Portsmouth Learning Disability Partnership Board meetings and speaks fluently about self-advocacy.

Peter's oral communication really captures the audience's attention, so he has been asked to become a Learning Champion, advocating the benefits of learning to others. Peter said, "I really like the idea of being able to speak at meetings and put my ideas across. I think that getting more confident has made a real difference to my life, and I like the idea of being able to help other people get what they want out of life too."



## Group Award Winner

### Sue's English Group



#### New Ash Green, Kent

#### Nominated by Sue Gorton, SEG Teaching Ltd

A literacy group in Kent, which produced two published award-winning poets, refused to let the closure of their class stop them learning, so they raised the funds to keep going independently.

Four years on, having hired tutor Sue Gorton in 2006 to lead the group, they have excelled with showcase literary performances, including a presentation to the Mayor of Gravesham and at the Christmas Fayre. **"This is a remarkable story of perseverance and determination by a group of adults who have discovered the joy of learning together,"** said Sue.

The group said the closure threat was devastating. **"Lack of confidence started to re-emerge and a feeling of isolation."** But, determined to continue, they raised over £1,000 through luncheons, teas, boot sales, raffles, and craft sales, including making their own Christmas cards – and won further donations from the local councillors and charities.

Mel Finch, one of the prize-winning poets, said that, having left school feeling a failure, she finally decided to join the group to tackle her literacy problems and help her children with their homework. She discovered that **"the joys of the English language hold the key to the person I am and the person I want to be."**

## City Parks' Literacy Group

**Nominated by Elaine Sweetman, Brighton and Hove Council, and Angela Farnham-Smith, Central Sussex College**

Eight gardeners with Brighton & Hove City Council's Parks and Gardens Department have used newly acquired literacy skills to help their families and fellow workers, and are now learning ambassadors to the wider community.

With reading skills at Level 1 or below, and no further education since school, all the gardeners had negative memories of learning and were apprehensive about returning to a classroom. But a Train to Gain programme run jointly by the council and the GMB Union has given them a new zest for learning.

**"It has boosted my confidence so I can help my six year old with his homework,"** said David Coleman, a member of the group. Similarly, another group member Nick Burton said: **"I'm reading bedtime stories to my children (which they love). I have noticed my children are taking a greater interest in reading and school activities in general."**

For John Durrant, the key to success was mutual support. **"We are improving by helping ourselves and each other."**

When the Mayor opened a new learning centre, the three agreed to address the audience, praising the centre, in what their nominator, Angela Farnham-Smith, from Central Sussex College, called a 'courageous' act. **"This whole group has worked endlessly to develop their skills, and their enthusiasm is rewarding for any teacher."**



## Foundation Degree Award Winner



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## Herbert Goredema

**Age 34. Hampshire**

**Nominated by Clare Mannall, Westminster Kingsway College**

As the lowest-ranking soldier on a Foundation Degree course, Herbert Goredema is among the highest achievers in the class of ten, which includes top-flight officers in the Army, RAF and Navy, studying Hospitality and Food Service Management.

A self-confessed technophobe, 34-year-old Corporal Goredema studied entirely through distance learning using Westminster Kingsway College's virtual learning environment. He was praised by Clare Mannall, his nominator and college team leader, for using his IT skills in very challenging circumstances.

Stationed in Kenya with only 30 minutes Internet access a day, he won special permission to sit a two-hour finance exam online, only to have the system crash halfway through. Clare said, "Undeterred, Herbie came back the next day and completed the exam and got excellent marks too. He beat all his colleagues in terms of grades and showed them you can study full-time and work full-time without getting behind." He is now used by the Army to encourage other junior ranks to sign up for Degree studies.

Herbie, who is now hoping to continue on to a Masters Degree, said, "They say knowledge is power and it's only true when you have the knowledge. This course has improved my reading skills, confidence, knowledge and computer skills, to mention only a few."

## **Clive Garnett**

**Age 74. Portsmouth**

**Nominated by Mary Anne Davies-Barrett, Highbury College Portsmouth**

Clive Garnett has worked in the voluntary sector in Portsmouth for the last 50 years. He has taught people with learning difficulties and those with physical disabilities at a local college. He has always been a keen advocate of life long learning. For 25 years he has been full-time coordinator of Speak Out and a Disability Equality and Awareness trainer.

Over the past two years Clive has taken a number of courses relating to the use of the internet, emails, IT applications and interpersonal skills. As Clive himself has multiple disabilities taking these courses has been a challenge.

Clive is always keen to learn and progress: "...I have found that these courses have helped me communicate in ways I could not do before. Sending out information, guidance and offering direct and ongoing support to disabled people, family and friends. Bringing people with differences together in the community, and encouraging them to participate as valuable members of society."

Learning Support Officer, Mary Ann Davies-Barrett says "Clive is always helping others and presenting awards to others in the City of Portsmouth – he deserves to be recognised..."



## Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership Award Winner



### Suzi Ezzard

**Age 46. Surrey**

**Nominated by Alison Prescott, the Leatherhead Clubhouse**

When Suzi came to the Leatherhead Clubhouse in 2004, she had been out of education for nearly 25 years. In that time she had been through many difficult personal challenges.

Suzi's confidence was very low and she felt that her ambition of studying and securing a job and future for herself were very far from reach. However, with sheer determination, focus and support, Suzi has built up her confidence in herself and in her ability to achieve her dreams. Now Suzi is studying at NESCOL and training to be a holistic masseur.

Suzi says: "I hope to start my own business on completion of the course. This will be a massive achievement as I have been out of work for the past five years. Since becoming a mature student I have become a more confident, assertive person and have a voluntary job at a drop in for people with mental health issues."

Alison Prescott, at the Leatherhead Clubhouse says: "The change in Suzi throughout her learning has been remarkable and I think she is going to be very successful in her career ahead."

surrey lifelong

learning partnership

## Acknowledgements

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.

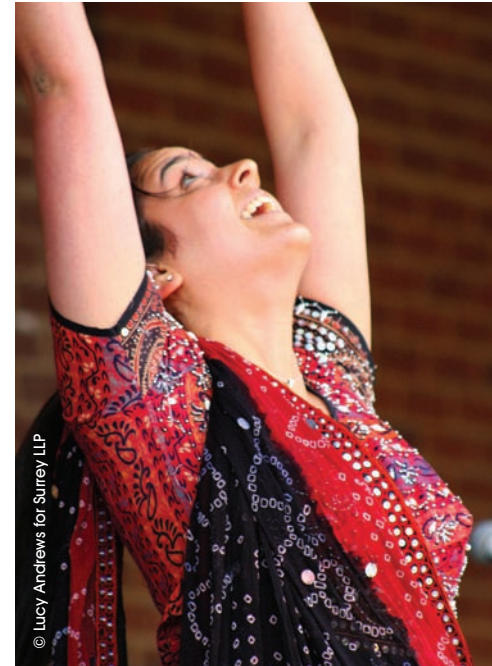
Our thanks to Charlotte Hawkins of Sky News for compering our celebration.

We are also indebted to the South East England Development Agency which has been a longstanding and valued supporter of Adult Learners' Week in the region.

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

Without the help and support of all these organisations and individuals, events like this would not be possible.

## Afterword



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## Afterword



## Get involved with Adult Learners' Week

The organisations and individuals who get involved each year in promoting the benefits of learning are central to the success of the Adult Learners' Week campaign.

From music, sport and dance, to food, fashion and languages, the variety of events held during Adult Learners' Week continues to encourage thousands of people each year to take up learning activities.

Last year, Surrey Lifelong Partnership held an event in Woking Town Centre as part of Adult Learners' Week celebrations. 2,500 people enjoyed a wide range of internationally-themed acts in a free concert and there were informative stalls from local adult learning providers.

There are many ways for learning providers, community workers, employers, union learning representatives and learners to get involved in Adult Learners' Week. Visit [www.alw.org.uk](http://www.alw.org.uk) to find out more!

### Kevin Delf

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