

## **Enterprising young people win gold medal in South East competition**

**16 December 2009**

A group of young people from Battle, East Sussex took the top prize of £5,000 in the first South East Reaching for Gold competition, supported by the South East England Development Agency and nine top global companies.

The gold medal winners, known as the Young Pioneers, building on their own personal experiences, have developed a franchisable leadership course that can be delivered by young people to their peers. The team plans to conduct a roadshow to share their leadership course across Europe, travelling with their specially-equipped trailer. The team is also developing a longer residential course, offering free places.

Over the last few months the Young Pioneers have been supported by their mentors from BT and the charity Groundwork, to develop and commercialise their ideas. The judges were highly impressed with their professionalism and presentational skills, as well as their ambitious plans to internationalise their product.

Team leader Luke Lancaster, age 14, said: "We are enabling young people to lead change." The group received a trophy and £5,000 to help them develop their project.

The silver medal winners were from Brockenhurst College, who had developed a bike recycling and training project with links to the Zambia, and were mentored by Sony and Groundwork. This project will create two job opportunities for disadvantaged young people in the South East.

The bronze medallists were pupils from Milton Cross School in Portsmouth with their idea to fit mini turbines onto water pipes to generate low-level power gains every time the tap is turned on. As well as receiving mentoring from Huawei Technologies and the Prince's Trust, Milton Cross are also being supported by Southampton University and Portsmouth Water Company.

The competition was held at St. George's House, Windsor Castle where the nine finalists gathered for a Dragon's Den-style pitch presentation. In addition to the top three entries, the finalists came from South East colleges, schools and youth groups in Brighton, Chatham, Camberley, Slough and Tonbridge.

The nine finalist groups had been intensively mentored by managers from one of nine major global companies and by community leaders, helping them prepare for the final. The groups were shortlisted from over 60 entries.

Businesswoman Nicola Horlick was joined by Paralympic champion Danny Crates to help select the most innovative social enterprise project. The judging panel also included Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Chief Executive Ian Trenholm and SEEDA Director for Culture and Communities Keren Jones.

Keren Jones said: "SEEDA is committed to helping business to prosper; the heart of economic recovery is innovation, creating new products and services that are relevant globally. Reaching for Gold is about people coming together from across organisations and cultures in a mix of collaboration and competition. It builds partnership between businesses and young people to develop social enterprise and help economic benefit for the region.

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“Although there could only be one winner, each of the nine groups of young people who presented their projects to our Reaching for Gold panel are all winners. We are very grateful to our judging panel and to the major companies and organisations on this groundbreaking project.”

Reaching for Gold challenges South East young people aged 14-19 to develop ideas that will make a difference to their local communities on the themes of Youth, Community or Disability. All projects must include some international collaboration.

The competition is part of a unique collaboration between SEEDA and nine corporate business partners and voluntary and community sector organisations - known as the South East Corporate Cabinet - which works to support the future of the South East's economy.

Reaching for Gold is supported by BT, CISCO, Honda UK, Huawei Technologies, Intel Corporation, Legal and General, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Sony, and Toshiba Information Systems. Groundwork, The Prince's Trust and AbilityNet are partners from the voluntary and community sector.

...ENDS...

**Notes to editors:**

Photo: Young Pioneers team leader Luke Lancaster, holds the trophy, accompanied by other team members and Simon Card of BT, the mentor partner. More photos from the event are available from the SEEDA press office. Please contact: Scott Swinton (Media Relations Manager): 01483 501 362; [scottswinton@seeda.co.uk](mailto:scottswinton@seeda.co.uk)

Reaching for Gold is a new competition designed and supported by the South East [Corporate Cabinet](#) to encourage innovation and creativity in young people – essential skills for the industries that will lead Britain out of recession. The competition was open to school and college students, and members of voluntary and community groups across the South East.

The nine teams who made it through the first round received intensive support from assigned business and community mentors. They were also awarded equipment to help them, including a laptop, a mobile notes e-pen, a digital camera and a camcorder.

**Nicola Horlick** is a senior fund manager and the CEO of Bramdean Asset Management LLP. Nicola has worked in the fund management industry for over twenty-five years and has participated in the growth of some of the UK's premier asset management businesses, including Mercury Asset Management (now BlackRock), Morgan Grenfell Asset Management (now Aberdeen Asset Management) and Société Generale Asset Management (UK).

Nicola commits as much time as she can to educational and health initiatives. In 1996, Nicola took time out to write her autobiographical account of her daughter's traumatic treatment for leukaemia with the proceeds going to Great Ormond Street Hospital. She is also a Non Executive Director of the Basingstoke + North Hampshire Foundation Trust Hospital.

**Danny Crates** recently retired from his career in international athletics competition which included: 2004 Paralympic Champion, European Champion, World Cup winner and world record holder. He is now a platform motivational speaker.

After losing his right arm in an accident in 1994, Danny, a keen rugby player, began playing as an arm amputee before turning to athletics. Danny made his international debut in the T46 400m arm amputee class, in the 1998 World Championships, reaching the 400m final and winning a silver medal in the 4 x 400m relay event in a new European record time. In the Paralympic Games Sydney 2000, he gained the bronze medal position in the 400m. Danny also won the 2001 European 400m title. Danny had been given the honour of carrying the GB flag at the Beijing Paralympics Games Opening Ceremony but was unable to compete due to an injury sustained the day before his race.

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**Ian Trenholm** is Chief Executive of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The former Inspector with the Royal Hong Kong Police and Surrey Police was Buckinghamshire County Council's Strategic Director before being appointed to his current position.

**Keren Jones** is the Director for Culture, Communities and Consumers at SEEDA. Prior to SEEDA, she worked for Groundwork in the South East. She is a chartered Landscape Architect and has a PhD in Young People's Participation in Urban and Landscape Design.

**The finalists of Reaching for Gold were:**

City College Brighton & Hove	Develop a 12 week construction course to provide a team of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), with the skills to work with young people locally to deliver a building project in The Gambia.	Brighton
Hayesbrook School	Develop a training programme and on line functionality to bring new young people into volunteering and match volunteers to opportunities.	Tonbridge
Miltoncross School	Design, manufacture and investigate viability of installing small generators in water pipes to supplement electrical energy in the community.	Milton
Young Pioneers	Roll out and internationalise a social leadership programme for young people, giving young people leadership skills and the opportunity to undertake a six month community challenge.	Battle
Aik Saath	Develop a mobile and environmentally friendly Cycling Cinema using mobile cycles to power films in community locations, encouraging people from every background to participate.	Slough
Brockenhurst College	Develop a bicycle refurbishment programme in the UK, including the training of young unemployed people as bicycle technicians, to donate bikes to partner organisations and set up a maintenance facility in Rwanda.	Brockenhurst
Medway Hindu Youth Group	Design and deliver a training programme to improve awareness of learning disabilities in the community and take up of intervention services.	Chatham
Tomlinscote School & Sixth Form College	Develop a multi-functioning online magazine to provide a voice for those with learning difficulties. Develop a training pack that could be marketed and rolled out to other schools and groups.	Camberley
Arbour Vale School	Design and develop an interactive board game to enable children with learning disabilities to learn about finances and commerce. The game would support pupils to learn aspects of running a small business before putting them into practice.	Slough

**SEEDA, the South East England Development Agency**, is the Government-funded agency responsible for the sustainable economic development of the South East of England – the driving force of the UK's economy. Through supporting businesses, encouraging innovation, developing skills and engaging with public and private partners, we aim to create a successful, sustainable future for the region.

**SEEDA's support helped deliver the following** over the period 2005-2008:

- 17,500 jobs created or safeguarded
- 32,500 people helped to get work
- 10,000 businesses created or attracted to region
- 137,500 businesses assisted
- £638m investment, 45% levered from private sector
- 200ha Brownfield land remediated
- 148,500 people assisted in skills development

**SEEDA** has provided funding and leadership for the project on condition it was matched by contributions from Corporate Cabinet Members. This has been achieved, with nine leading Corporates supporting the competition through providing cash and in kind support - these are BT, CISCO, Honda UK, Huawei Technologies, Intel Corporation, Legal and General, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Sony, and Toshiba Information Systems. Groundwork, The Prince's Trust and AbilityNet are key delivery partners from the voluntary and community sector, and facilitate the mentoring process between the finalist groups and the corporate mentors.

**The South East [Corporate Cabinet](#)** is a groundbreaking approach to collaborative working between corporate companies, SEEDA, and voluntary and community organisations. Reaching for Gold is the first time such a diverse range of partners have collaborated in the South East to give young people, many from disadvantaged backgrounds, the opportunity to develop skills and connect with corporate organisations.

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