

Volunteering & Employability

Award Winners

May 2011

At Volunteering and Employability everyone's a winner. The volunteer, the voluntary organisation and the people who use the service, whether it's with school pupils, adults or other community groups. For the department it's wonderful to see the dedication and commitment volunteers give, the skills and experience they develop and the positive impact they have on the local community.

Over 1,100 staff and students have registered with Volunteering and Employability this academic year, just under a third from outside of the UK from 62 countries. This year we are supporting around 190 local schools and community organisations, giving many thousands of hours to the local community.

Overall our aims are to support and empower students to engage in volunteering, to lead and to achieve their goals and fulfil their passions, to gain experiences outside of the curriculum which enriches their lives and perspective of the world, and to gain skills to support their employability. Whilst doing this, we are able to support the local community in achieving its aims and goals – including helping to raise pupil attainment in local schools, supporting someone through trauma or environmental work to improve areas of the local community. These are just a few areas our volunteers contribute to, but there are many more we just don't have the space to write about.

The Volunteering England Gold Awards are a mark of excellence in volunteering and the awards are given to student volunteers who have made an outstanding contribution to volunteering.

Here are the nominations and results:

Nominated for Volunteering England Gold Awards

Matt Abbott
Madeeha Bakali
Oludolapo Taiwo Fakuade
Anna Holland
Jing Liu
Sayeed Ibna Mohoshin
Dean O'Brien
Rachel Pardner
Laura Pibworth
Venkatesh Madurai Ravikumar
Naveen Sathyanarayan
Roxana-Valeria Savescu
Sylvia Stenhouse

Winners of Volunteering England Gold Awards

Madeeha Bakali
Oludolapo Taiwo Fakuade
Dean O'Brien
Sylvia Stenhouse

Winner of Volunteer of the Year (Student)

Oludolapo Taiwo Fakuade

Nominated for Volunteer of the Year (Staff)

Liah Maccallam
Caron McKenna

Winner of Volunteer of the Year (Staff)

Liah Maccallam

[Read on below to find about more about the winners and their volunteering...](#)

**Volunteering England Award Winners 2010-11
Leadership/Dedication/Achievement****Madeeha Bakali**

Women's Group Helper: Coventry Refugee Centre, Classroom Assistant, Community Worker: Healthy Living Network, President of the UNICEF Society, Student Volunteer Counsellor Madeeha has shown very strong leadership skills and dedication with the variety of activities she has undertaken and the organisations she has volunteered with.

Whilst working for the Healthy Living Network she managed the catering and the finances – providing healthy eating advice and keeping a check on the accounts.

At the Refugee Centre she has provided clients with a lot of emotional and moral support as well as teaching them creative activities such as Henna painting, Asian cookery and helped them with their written and spoken English.

Madeeha has benefited young children in the community through her work at a local primary school – raising their aspirations to go into HE and she also designed a game board for the class related to the topics they were studying at the time.

Madeeha has also organised several fundraising events for the Coventry UNICEF Society to help poor children all over the World.

Oludolapo Taiwo Fakuade

Team Leader in a recycling project with Warwick University and OXFAM to effectively distribute donations from students to charities in Coventry. She is also working hard to set this project up at Coventry University

She's a community champion for Voluntary Action Coventry and liaises with several migrant groups in Coventry to understand their needs and plight and suggest training and support to VAC

Case worker – Coventry Refugee Centre

Dolapo offers support and advice to refugee and asylum seekers in Coventry ensuring they get access to the financial support, services and advice which they are entitled to.

Language Mentor – Cardinal Wiseman School

Supports a small group of Polish children at a local secondary school and helps them to improve their English language capability.

The Volunteering and Employability team said Dolapo is a rare volunteer, somebody who has a mixture of enthusiasm, confidence and a real sense of destiny in what she does. When she talks about her volunteering we think of Gandhi's famous quote "*You must be the change you want to see in the world.*"

Dean O'Brien

Out on the streets of Coventry every Sunday helping to feed the homeless, many of whom are alcoholics and drug addicts. Some are refugees whilst others are just poor and struggling to cope with life on a day-to-day basis. Originally just sitting and talking to people under a local subway, he now helps people steer their lives in a more positive direction.

He also writes online blogs to highlight the issues which face many homeless people in the city, and has provided photographic images from the streets to help The Salvation Army and Anesis Outreach obtain funding.

By writing blog posts about his volunteering experience he has also encouraged other people to want to become involved.

This shows a huge amount of commitment and dedication and shows he is not only giving his time to support others, but to raise awareness of the issues of the homeless and get others involved.

He is now planning an exhibition of the images to be shown at The Glass Gallery from June 19th -26th.

Sylvia Stenhouse

Sylvia sadly passed away in March not long after her nomination had been received. She involved herself with as many voluntary opportunities as possible whilst studying in Coventry including Student Tutor, Senior Cyber-Mentor, E-confidential, Coventry Cathedral, and more recently joined 2 Tone-Central Events Team. Pete Chamber said she was a "breath of fresh air and became very inspired by learning about the history of Two-Tone and its beginnings in Coventry the racial difficulties at the time, which she had known little about before.

In her own words "I have really enjoyed my 3 years in Coventry and loved to have seen how I have made a difference to people's lives and been privileged to be part of. I have developed many skills and found a passion for helping others. With every new experience, I get to meet and inspire a whole new group of people, networking with others, and gaining confidence in myself. I would not give these 3 years of voluntary work back for anything. They have been eye-opening and truly magic."

Winner of Volunteer of the Year 2010-11 (Student) Oludolapo Taiwo Fakuade

Winner of Volunteer of the Year 2010-11 (Staff) Liah Maccallam

Liah's dedication to helping individuals dealing with very difficult situations has been clearly evident through her work at CRASAC – Coventry Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre.

Her patience and understanding along with her dedication has seen her become an important volunteer at the organisation, supporting the phone lines and those individuals needing help, support and understanding. Her role as Support Worker

has also seen her help assist vulnerable victims of rape and sexual abuse, in times of need over the past year and a half.

She has been reliable and professional throughout her time at the organisation. Liah's dedication to her role and her compassion in understanding and supporting individuals who are experiencing times of difficulty has been very admirable.