

COLLEGE LEADS ENGLAND IN WORLDSKILLS UK MEDAL TABLE AND SECURES TOP SPOT FOR FOUNDATION SKILLS COMPETITIONS

Students and alumni from North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College (NWSLC) have been celebrating as they collected 16 medals at the national WorldSkills UK finals putting the college at the top of the medal table in England, and fourth in the UK. Impressively, it has also been named the highest performing college overall in the foundation skills category. Medal-winning competitors picked up five Gold, three Silver and eight Bronze medals as the results were announced live by Steph McGovern from her Channel 4 'Packed Lunch' studio.

Gold medal winners included NWSLC alumni Maddie Lock, who earned the top position in the visual merchandising skills competition. Maddie is currently studying for a degree in graphic design at the University of Brighton and is heading for a career in the creative sector. Apprentice Samuel Abbott, who works for E. Brook Joinery Ltd in Coventry, won the Gold medal for his joinery skills. Sam will now go forward for a chance to compete for a place in Squad UK as it prepares for WorldSkills in Lyon in 2024.

In the foundation skills categories, Kelys Ramsay who is studying at the college's Nuneaton Campus, picked up the Gold medal for hairdressing skills. The catering skills competition saw professional cookery student Georgina Price take the Gold medal, and Samuel Barnes from Leicester, who is working to qualify as an autocare technician, won his Gold medal for motor vehicle skills.

The Silver medals were won by Abbie Simpson for visual merchandising, Sinead Hitchman for foundation hairdressing and Callum Hearne in the foundation health and social care category. Bronze medallists included Jake Benson, Reece Todd, Ryan Maguire, and Frankie McCarthy in the digital media production skills competition. Meghan Shields won Bronze for visual merchandising and Grace Elliott picked up the Bronze medal for creative make-up skills. Casey McFarlane won a Bronze medal in the foundation catering category, and Lewis Smith collected Bronze for foundation health and social care.

Marion Plant, OBE FCGI, Principal and Chief Executive of North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College, who is also deputy chair and trustee of WorldSkills, said,

"We're absolutely thrilled with the outcome of the competition this year and so proud of all our students who worked so hard to achieve such fantastic results."

We are delighted that our students excelled in the foundation skills competitions, placing our college at the top of the league table for the whole of the UK. Foundation skills competitions, designed for those with special educational needs and disabilities, were originally conceived and first started by NWSLC, so we are particularly proud of our success in this area."



ROAD TO SHANGHAI

In addition to the college's recent success, previous Gold medal winners from NWSLC are continuing to train to represent the UK on the world's stage at the bi-annual WorldSkills competition in Shanghai in October 2022. Former student and Nuneaton chef Chloe Lloyd-Hughes will compete in the culinary arts category while Ellie Ruff will take on challenges in visual merchandising. Both are members of the prestigious WorldSkills UK Talent Development Programme having previously excelled in its national skills competitions.

CELEBRATING SUCCESS ON THE AIRWAVES

Following its success in WorldSkills UK, the college was pleased to be featured on BBC Radio Leicester's morning show. Gold medal winner Maddie Lock and Principal, Marion Plant chatted to presenter Arun Verna on 3 December 2021. On 7 December, Gold-medallists Sam Abbott and Kelys Ramsay were interviewed for BBC Coventry & Warwickshire's morning show.



In the pages below, we take you on a journey through the medal-winning categories of the WorldSkills UK competitions with spotlights on each skill area, starting with joinery.

SPOTLIGHT

ON JASON HARLOCK CARPENTRY AND JOINERY LECTURER

"I have worked for the college for seven years based at Wigston Campus and I also teach bench apprentices at Harrowbrook Campus. I served on a five-year indentured apprenticeship in carpentry and joinery and have worked all over the country on site carpentry, shop fitting and exhibition work. I've been in education for the last 20 years but have always kept my industry experience up to date. I have been involved with supporting carpenters in building the skills they need to achieve the required entry points enable them to emigrate to Australia.



"It has been a pleasure to teach Sam Abbott since he started his joinery apprenticeship; he is a very talented, enthusiastic and motivated learner, and has done so well to win the Gold medal for joinery in a relatively short space of time."

BUILDING SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

Gold medallist for joinery, Sam Abbott from Coventry is a construction apprentice working for E. Brook Ltd. His competition was part of the national final of SkillBuild UK at the National Construction College in Norfolk. He was challenged with crafting a door from wood including moulding and decorative elements using a technical drawing. Carpentry and joinery tutor Jason Harlock supported Sam's competition journey.



Sam was always interested in how things were made and went straight into a carpentry and joinery course at NWSLC's Harrowbrook Campus when he left Coundon Court School in Coventry. E. Brook Ltd is a family-run business that has been operating since 1947. Sam is working on domestic joinery crafting staircases, windows, and doors for house-building projects across the UK.

Sam said:

"I am delighted to have won the Gold medal for joinery and look forward to getting the chance to compete for a place in Squad UK for WorldSkills in Lyon in 2024. I want to try and go as far as I can in the competition. I am really pleased that I started on this journey to become a joiner and I am enjoying my time with E. Brook."

You can follow in Sam's footsteps with construction courses and apprenticeships at a range of levels at our Harrowbrook and Wigston Campuses.

- Construction Trades
- Carpentry and Joinery.

The next of our WorldSkills UK competition categories celebrates design skills in visual merchandising and our talented group of students were supported by creative arts and design tutors Dean Wood and Fiona Rollings. Read on to hear about our medal winners.

SUMMER LOVING PUTS DESIGN STUDENTS IN A SUNNY MOOD

Not only did NWSLC host the national final of the visual merchandising skills competition at the Atkins Building in Hinckley, but college students represented five out of the six UK finalists, and three won through to the podium. Competitors were tasked with creating a stunning retail window display on the theme of 'Summer Loving.'

Maddie Lock, Gold medallist, from Hinckley said:

"I was surprised and delighted to have won Gold because there was quite a lot of pressure during the final. When I found out that I was the winner, it was a real 'pinch me' moment. I have enjoyed my WorldSkills experience and learned a lot about professional practice in visual merchandising and the possibilities of working in the sector. I was actually ill in bed during the medal ceremony but my uni flatmates helped me to celebrate by bringing me a nice cup of tea."



NWSLC alumni Maddie is studying for a degree in graphic design at the University of Brighton and is looking forward to a career in the creative sector.

Abbie Simpson, Silver-medal, from Leicester has a passion for graphic design and a strong interest in 3D modelling for the games industry and hopes to start a career creating characters and scenery for games or working on creative projects in the advertising industry. Abbie started studying graphic design after she left school and visited NWSLC's creative arts campus at a college open event. Abbie particularly likes illustration and enjoyed being able to test her skills as part of the WorldSkills competition.



Abbie said:

"I was pleased that there were other college students in the final with me because we were able to help each other and provide moral support. I tackled the brief by selecting the right vinyls, colour-matching to the products and choosing the perfect clothing for the mannequins."



Meghan Shields, Bronze medallist, from is currently at Nottingham Trent University where she is following a Foundation Degree in Graphics and Digital Design. She has enjoyed graphic design ever since she started studying it at school and her passion has inspired her dream to work as a designer in New York City one day. Meghan has enjoyed rising to the challenge of creating a range of inspirational retail window displays on her journey to the visual merchandising competition.



Meghan said:

"We all worked individually on our different window designs but there was a great team spirit and we encouraged each other and even helped out when we could. Taking part in this competition has been an amazing opportunity which I have really enjoyed."



NWSLC offers a wealth of opportunities at its specialist creative arts campus in Hinckley and at its Wigston Campus. Courses include:

- Creative Media
- Creative Studio
- Journalism
- Computer Media & Game Design
- Photography

WorldSkills UK provides opportunities for talented make-up artists to showcase their skills. Beauty therapy tutor Leanne Newitt devoted a great deal of time to supporting four finalists in this category including medallist Grace Elliott.

CREATIVE MAKE-UP DAZZLES ON SCREEN

Creative make-up plays a significant role in the world of performing arts with opportunities to work in live theatre and on film and TV productions.

Grace Elliott, Bronze medallist, from Bedworth was inspired by creative make-up after attending an open event at the college's Nuneaton Campus and started her studies straight after leaving Nicholas Chamberlaine School. She has successfully progressed through the levels and is now on her way to gaining a Level 5 HND qualification in makeup artistry at the college's creative arts Hinckley Campus

Grace said:

"I had always enjoyed using makeup and playing around with different effects on occasions like Halloween. I was delighted when I found out that I could study it at college and the tutors there really helped me to build my confidence. I have a dream of becoming a makeup artist working on films or in the theatre. I would love to work on a show like 'Wicked' or a TV programme like 'Game of Thrones'!"

If you would like to follow in Grace's footsteps, why not consider one of these courses at our Nuneaton Campus?

Choose from:

- Make-Up Artistry
- Hairdressing and Media Make-Up
- Theatrical, Media and Special Effects Make-Up



Below we explore the success of a talented team of media students who reached the podium in the digital media production skills competition.

CLIMATE CHANGE BRINGING THE AGENDA TO LIFE

Four students competed as a team in the finals of the digital media production competition, supported by our creative arts and design lecturer John Watson, in which they were challenged to produce a TV news report on climate change against the backdrop of the COP26 summit.

Frankie McCarthy, Bronze medallist, from Nuneaton was inspired by storytelling from a young age and has wanted to be author since he was five years old. He has already written 90,000 words of a novel set in 1066 inspired by his love of history. Frankie, now studying creative media production, has set his sights on a career as a screenwriter and director, bringing stories to life through the medium of film.

Frankie said:

"I have been researching the background to my novel and I have travelled to Battle in East Sussex to explore 1066 country for myself. For the WorldSkills UK competition, I led on the camera work. I am quite competitive and was delighted to see us reach the podium."



Nuneaton's **Ryan Maguire, Bronze medallist,** who attended Higham Lane School lived in Shanghai for a year and worked as an apprentice at the Engineering Technology Education and Research Centre making films to showcase the work of design technology teachers at the centre.

Ryan said:

"We went to China for a year as a family and I really enjoyed it. I loved the food, and the Chinese people were very friendly and welcoming. When it comes to making films, my specialism is in editing. I am really enjoying the creative media production course and have already learned a great deal. It has been great to win the medal with my teammates at WorldSkills UK."



Jake Benson, Bronze medallist from Nuneaton is in the second year of his course in Creative Media Production at the college's Hinckley Campus having joined from Hartshill Academy. Jake has an ambition to be a filmmaker building on the success of his YouTube channel 'Theme Park Jake' which already has over 1,000 subscribers.

Jake said:

"I have been managing my own YouTube channel for the last five years. As 'Theme Park Jake', I have travelled the world trying out and reviewing theme parks and recommending individual rides. I was inspired by a trip to Alton Towers when I was 12 years old and since then, I have travelled all over the world including to Japan and the United States making video reviews of theme parks in exchange for free tickets. I would like to study film-making at university next year."



Reece Todd, Bronze medallist, from Bedworth who attended Nicholas Chamberlaine School had always wanted to be an actor from a young age, Reece's experiences in college have prompted a change of direction and he would now prefer a role behind the camera making feature films.

Reece said:

"I really enjoy film-making and have made quite a few already since joining the college. I would love a creative role in film and TV drama and my strengths lie in scriptwriting. I always enjoyed English at school and have been developing my writing skills since then. I enjoyed working with the other three students in my team as part of the WorldSkills UK final. We all have different skills and complement each other which helped us to achieve a great result."



For a career in the media or related sectors, you can start at our specialist creative arts campus in Hinckley or at Wigston Campus. Courses include:

- Creative Studies
- Computing, Media, and Games Design
- Creative Media
- Journalism
- Photography

The Foundation Skills competitions are especially important to us at NWSLC because the idea to introduce challenges for students with special educational needs and disabilities was originally conceived by and started at our college. Below we hear about the fantastic successes of our medal winners in the Foundation Skills categories.

GOLD MEDAL WIN DRIVES SUCCESS FOR SAM

Samuel Barnes, Gold medallist, from Leicester, secured the top spot in the foundation motor vehicle skills competition. Sam started at the college two years ago at Level 1 and proved himself to be an able learner. He is currently progressing well on the Level 2 Vehicle Fitting programme at the college's Nuneaton Campus and set to fast-track onto the Level 3 programme. His skills test required him to carry out a technical procedure on a vehicle in a workshop making sure that safe working practices were followed.

You can study a range of motor vehicle courses and apprenticeships at NWSLC at our Nuneaton Campus and our specialist automotive MIRA Technology Institute Campus including:

- Vehicle Maintenance and Repair
- Motorsport Maintenance and Repair
- Classic Car Restoration
- Body and Paint Refinishing
- Autocare Technician



SPOTLIGHT ON CHARLENE READMAN

MOTOR VEHICLE LECTURER

Charlene served in the Army for seven years with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) from bases in the UK and Germany and was deployed on operations where she was responsible for the maintenance of a range of armoured vehicles. She later joined the Army recruitment team helping to develop and mentor potential new recruits, enabling them to gain a valuable insight into military life. Charlene's experience in the team inspired her to follow a career in teaching and she joined the college as a lecturer in motor vehicle engineering, passing on her skills and knowledge to young people, enabling them to start their own successful careers.

KELYS AND SINEAD PROVE THEIR STYLING CREDENTIALS

Two competitors in the foundation hairdressing skills competition appeared on the podium winning Gold and Silver medals for their styling performance. Their challenge was to create a stunning bridal design for long hair against the clock.

Kelys Ramsay, Gold medallist from Nuneaton said:

"I feel honoured to have taken part in this competition and over the moon that I got a Gold medal! I feel like it has given me more confidence and hopefully I can go further in the hairdressing industry and keep getting better."



Sinead Hitchman, Silver medallist from Nuneaton said:

"Achieving second place in the competition has really boosted my confidence. I have really enjoyed the whole process because it has made me focus on my work and improve my skills. It really has made me push myself and I want to keep improving as I continue to learn."



Their tutor Zoey Armitage said, "Both Kelys and Sinead have worked hard to perfect their styles over the last few weeks and their commitment really paid off. Even on the morning of the competition, they were so well-prepared and showed their dedication and professionalism; I couldn't have been prouder of them. They assure me that they are ready to compete in the next big skills competition, so I look forward to working with them again."

At NWSLC, we offer hairdressing courses at our Nuneaton and Wigston Campuses including:

- Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy
- Hairdressing and Media Make-up
- Barbering
- Hairdressing Professional Apprenticeship

The college was pleased to achieve further success in Foundation Skills when its catering students won two medals including Gold for their amazing culinary skills.

CATERING STUDENTS COOK UP A STORM

Professional cookery students who have honed their skills at the college's Glebegate restaurant were tasked with a Masterchef-style challenge to create a three-course meal for two people within 90 minutes in the foundation catering skills competition. They had been practising under the watchful eye of chef lecturer Pat Clarke.

Georgina Price, Gold medallist, from Sapcote in Leicestershire who joined the college from Hinckley Academy said,

"The competition was great, there wasn't one aspect I enjoyed more than another, it was just really inspiring. It gave me the opportunity to work on my plating techniques and show off the skills I had learnt during the course."



Casey McFarlane, Bronze medallist, from Nuneaton who attended Etone College said

"I really enjoyed the competition, my favourite part being eating the food at the end. The whole competition was amazing, and it allowed me to work on my timekeeping skills which is what I wanted to focus on the most."



Their tutor Pat Clarke said, "Judging from the high standard of work shown by all the participants in the competition our students performed exceptionally well. All the additional work they completed paid off for Casey and Georgina. They both spent a lot of time outside their timetabled hours to find, create, and develop their recipes and even purchased extra ingredients to practice with.

Catering tutor James Brooke said, "What a fantastic achievement! Having just joined NWSLC this academic year it was amazing to see how dedicated Casey and Georgina are, and the huge amount of effort and preparation they put into their studies."

Catering and hospitality courses at the college are taught at its Nuneaton Campus where the Glebegate training restaurant is open to the public. Choose from:

- Foundation Hospitality
- Hospitality and Catering
- Professional Cookery
- Commis Chef Apprenticeship

HEALTHY ACHIEVEMENT FOR CALLUM AND LEWIS

With health and social care currently a hot topic across the UK, and demand for skilled individuals to join the workforce growing, we are proud of the success of our students in this category. Competitors in the foundation health and social care competition were asked to role play various scenarios as a care worker for a domiciliary care agency. Their tutors Anna Causier and Adele Bailey helped to keep students on track.

Callum Hearne, Silver medallist, from Whetstone in Leicestershire said:

"I really enjoyed competing in WorldSkills and I am delighted to have won a Silver medal. My challenge included presenting the case in favour of getting a Covid vaccine. I also had to role play advising someone who'd had a stroke on healthy eating and there was quite a lot of work involved. I am really enjoying my health and social care course at college and would like to work with people who have special needs in the future."



Lewis Smith, Bronze medallist, from Kibworth Beauchamp said:

"The competition was challenging but I managed to work out what I needed to do, and I am so pleased to have won the Bronze medal. I am currently volunteering in a care home near where I live, helping to serve the drinks to the residents and getting involved in some fun activities with them. I am enjoying my college course and hope to work in a care home or a cafe in the future."



If you're interested in what Lewis and Callum achieved, the college offers courses at its Nuneaton and Wigston Campuses in:

- Health, Social and Child Care
- Health and Social Care.

SPOTLIGHT

ON PAT CLARKE
HOSPITALITY AND CATERING
CHEF LECTURER

Pat has worked for NWSLC for over 20 years and specialises in Caribbean, African and Asian food. Pat was part of the successful Hospitality and Catering team that won a Silver Award for FE Team of the Year in the Pearson National Teaching Awards in 2019.



COMPETITIVE SPIRIT PROVIDES INSPIRATION

Skills competitions are in our DNA at NWSLC, and the college has been involved with WorldSkills UK for many years. All students, regardless of their starting point, are actively encouraged to compete and test their skills against their peers. We strongly believe that skills challenges enrich the experience of learning and help to boost students' confidence in their abilities.

Last year, the college was enrolled as part of the WorldSkills UK Centre of Excellence programme which brings coaching and mentoring to our tutors helping them to embed world-class techniques in their teaching, learning and assessment practices. By creating a cadre of world-class educators, every student benefits from the highest quality training.

Ben Crook, Vice Principal for Quality at NWSLC said,

"We are so pleased to see our students succeed in the WorldSkills UK national finals; their achievements are outstanding. The medal winners and their successes represent the culture of competitions we have here at NWSLC. Students from across the college can attend weekly competitions' clubs and skills challenges become an integrated part of their learning and course assessment. This approach helps our students to attain not only highly developed technical knowledge and skills but also enhance the essential transferable skills and behaviours required for successful careers such as communication, confidence and teamwork."

Pami Johal Quality Manager & Head of Competitions at NWSLC said,

"We really enjoy supporting our students as they hone their skills and get ready to compete on a national stage. Our tutors are highly experienced in coaching and mentoring and help to get them mentally prepared for the challenges they face. Participating in skills competitions broadens horizons and takes students to places they have never been before. Our medal winners will discover that their achievements open doors into exciting future careers."

SPOTLIGHT

ON ADELE BAILEY HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TUTOR

Adele has worked at NWSLC for just over 15 years and is based at its Wigston Campus where she teaches health and social care. She has over eight years' experience as a workplace assessor and specialises in working with people who have learning disabilities and mental health issues and dementia and has experience in end-of-life care. Adele spent three years working in a residential setting with looked after children.



SPOTLIGHT

ON ANNA CAUSIER EARLY YEARS EDUCATION AND CARE TUTOR

With a career at the college spanning 15 years, Anna is based at the Wigston Campus. Her most recent industry experience saw her involved with the Forest Schools movement with its roots in open-air culture. Anna is currently studying for a qualification in Forest School teaching and is a previous winner of the NWSLC Ian Kemp Tutor of the Year award.



WELL DONE TO ALL OUR FINALISTS

Visual merchandising finalists:

Creative make-up finalists:

Foundation media finalists:

Foundation health and social care finalist:

Ella Nicholas and Owen Chattaway

Mia Harper, Laura Vyse, and Aisha Khalifa

William Race, Nathaniel Hale, and Haydn Hill

Emily Archer

Congratulations are also due to our remaining finalists who did extremely well to get to the closing stages of the competition: