

Bridge to success

A young civil engineer, specialising in bridge works, employed by Aberdeenshire Council, found a route to success after being named as the Highways and Street Lighting Apprentice of the Year 2009 by the Association for Public Service Excellence.

Louise Nicol, was chosen after impressing a panel of judges with her knowledge of bridges and bridge works and also by her attitude to team work. As the only female in a male environment Louise was keen to point out to the panel that she has had magnificent support from her colleagues and from her employer Aberdeenshire Council.

Ray Wescott, speaking on behalf of award sponsor Volker Highways Mews Ltd said: *'Louise rejected a university route to civil engineering preferring instead to take part-time study whilst learning on the job. She is an inspiration to other young people considering a career in the highways industry.'*

Paul O'Brien, Chief Executive of APSE who presented Louise with her award alongside Ray Wescott from Volker Highways Mews Ltd said:-

'Louise is an exceptional young woman. The panel were totally impressed by her dedication to her chosen career in civil engineering. Louise faced tough competition but her determination to succeed in a male dominated environment shone through, winning her this prestigious award. Highways services not only keep the public safe but keep the economy moving so Louise is helping to provide a much valued public service.'

The following apprentices / councils were short listed for the APSE Highways and Street Lighting Apprentice of the Year Award 2009

- Louise Nicol from Aberdeenshire Council
- Stephen Yates from Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council
- Adam Greenshields from Glasgow Council
- James Martin from Midlothian Council
- Hugh Campbell from South Lanarkshire Council

Louise was the winner overall.

Ends.

Notes to editors

- APSE is the Association for Public Service Excellence which provides advice support and networking to those providing front line local government services.
- APSE works with over 300 local authorities throughout the UK

- APSE has supported the development of apprenticeships in the public sector calling on greater investment in apprenticeship training and support
- A new National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will become operational in April 2009 and of 35,000 proposed apprenticeships to be delivered in response to the recession 20,000 are to be in the public sector and within front line services.
- To arrange for interview or for further details about the awards please contact Mo Baines on 0161 772 1810 or mobile 07971 843515

Pictured in the attached Jpeg is Ray Westcott of Volker Highways Mews Ltd, Louise Nicol of Aberdeenshire Council and to the right Paul O'Brien, Chief Executive of APSE