

MEDALS HAUL FOR SERC APPRENTICES AT SKILLBUILD



SERC Joinery Apprentice Stuart Craigan receives his bronze medal at the Skillbuild finals held at SERC.

Construction apprentices from all over Northern Ireland tested their skills in the largest multi-trade skills competition in Northern Ireland at South Eastern Regional College (SERC), Newtownards Campus, on 13 & 14 April 2011.

In the refrigeration category SERC was celebrating a clean sweep on the medals front. Ciaran Weir, Anthony Bradley and Christopher Wilson who study at the Lisburn campus of the College claimed Gold, Silver and Bronze respectively.

Two Comber apprentices who study at the SERC Newtownards campus were also amongst the medal winners. Joinery apprentice Stuart Craigan collected a Bronze medal in the Joinery category whilst Matthew Boden picked up Bronze in the Industrial Heating section.

Providing a unique stage to showcase excellence and talent, Skillbuild NI is held annually each spring, with over 100 of the top construction apprentices competing to win coveted titles in 13 different craft areas ranging from brickwork to wall and floor tiling. The winners may then go on to represent Northern Ireland in the UK Skillbuild Finals and potentially the UK at WorldSkills.



Refrigeration Apprentices Ciaran Weir, Anthony Bradley and Christopher Wilson claimed first, second and third.



Newtownards Apprentice Matthew Boden took third place in the Industrial Heating Category.



EXCELLENCE AWARDS

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

SERC SNAPS

EXAM REVISION TIPS

 **SERC**
INSPIRING. TRANSFORMING. ENRICHING.



DOWNPATRICK EXCELLENCE AWARDS



*Access Student of the Year
Pauline McGhee & Lesley-Anne Cooper Shele*



*Commitment to Professional Development
Angela Toner*



*Art and Design Student of the Year
Austyn Finnegan*



*Construction and Eng. Services
Student of the Year Cathal Quinn*



*Commitment to Enhancing the
Student Experience Dan Wormell*



*Learning in the Face of Challenge
David Quinn*



*Commitment to Enhancing the
Student Experience Kathy Morgan*



*Hospitality, Hair and Beauty
Student of the Year Laura Feenan*



*Skills for Life Student of the Year
Maja Szostka and Zdzislaw Malkinski*



*Trainee of the Year
Shauneen Donnelly*



*Applied Science Student of the Year
Claire McCauley*



*Student Placement Provider Award
The Daily Grind - Downpatrick*

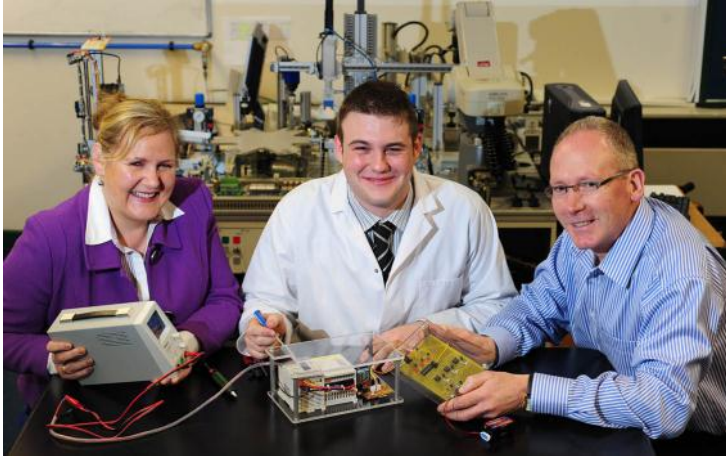
On Wednesday 23 February students from Downpatrick and Newcastle were recognised at South Eastern Regional College's Excellence Awards. Almost forty awards were presented to students on a night that recognised excellence, commitment and dedication to education and personal development.

Kevin Smyth, General Manager of Ten Square Hotel, Belfast, was guest speaker on the night. Kevin spoke to students about his career which started in the hospitality industry at the tender age of 11. His first job was in the Primrose Bar & Restaurant in Ballynahinch. His experience has included working for the prestigious Hyatt Corporation in London, several 5 star hotels in the Cayman Islands, the Broadmoor Resort in Colorado and the Hotel Teatro in Denver. Kevin congratulated the students on their awards and expressed his appreciation at being invited to celebrate this occasion.

Amongst the award winners was Shauneen Donnelly who was named Trainee of the Year, a highly motivated and fiercely independent student, she is well on target to achieving her NVQ Level 2 qualification in Administration.

Click on the link to view a full list of Award winners and pictures - [Downpatrick Excellence Awards](#).

TAKING ON THE WORLD IN RACE FOR \$50,000 PRIZE...



Entrepreneurial engineering graduate Jonathan McEwan is joined by Bill Connor, Projects Director for Sentinus and Marie McMullan, Fujitsu Education Advisor as he applies the final adjustments to an innovative alarm system which he developed for the ISEF world finals which have a top prize of \$50,000. He jetted off on the once in a lifetime trip to Los Angeles last week and competed in the Intel ISEF (International Science and Engineering Fair) competition, the world's largest international pre-college science competition with a top prize of \$50,000.

Jonathan, an engineering graduate from South Eastern Regional College (SERC) earned the right to compete in the competition by winning the 2010 Sentinus 'Northern Ireland Young Innovators' award; which this year will be sponsored by leading global ICT service provider Fujitsu. Jonathan developed a voice activated alarm system for disabled and/or elderly people. The system operates by using a voice activated command that sends a pulse to a PLC (programmable logic controller) that in turn creates and sends an automated 'help' SMS text message to a pre-assigned carer or family member's mobile number.

SERC Engineering lecturer Shirley Montgomery has provided Jonathan with extensive training and support in preparation for the world finals and will be mentoring him during his trip to America.



Win an iPod Nano by answering the following question...

Name the student who received Art and Design Student of the Year at the Downpatrick Excellence Awards?

E-mail your answer to Charlie - cmccloskey@serc.ac.uk by Monday 6th June. A winner will be selected at random and notified in due course.

SERC named IAB Study Centre of the Year...



James Currie collects the IAB Award alongside Simon Grant and Roy French.

SERC was recently awarded the title of top IAB Study Centre in the January 2010 examinations series making it one of the best centres in the UK to study IAB qualifications.

The International Association of Bookkeepers (IAB) was founded in 1973 and today the IAB is the leading UK and international professional body for those providing bookkeeping and related accounting services to small businesses.

The IAB's "Top Centre Awards 2010" ceremony was held at the House of Commons, hosted by Paul Blomfield MP, with prizes presented by the Chairman of the Council for the IAB, Clive Johnson.



HELPFUL REVISION TIPS...

With exam and coursework deadlines looming here are some tips to help you through this stressful period.

COURSEWORK & ASSIGNMENTS

- Familiarise yourself with the coursework brief and ensure you cover all aspects of the brief to ensure you are giving yourself every opportunity to get marks.
- Plan your time, rather than trying to cram it all into one or two days. Try to do a couple of hours every day, this will be less stressful and you won't become fatigued, when fatigued your brain will not perform as well as it should.
- Do not stress. This will only hinder your progress. Draw up a timetable of what you need to do and when you need to do it. This will allow you to monitor your progress; you will be surprised how good it will make you feel if you stick to the timetable.
- Use the resources available to you in the College library; there is a large selection of books, journals and computing facilities.
- Ask questions. If you are unsure of something write it down on a piece of paper and ask your tutor to explain it for you.

GENERAL EXAM TIPS

- Stick to a routine, efficient study schedule
- Study in a quiet environment
- For a study break, do something different from what you've been doing (e.g., walk around if you've been sitting), and in a different area
- Eat healthy and exercise. This seems like a no-brainer, but it's a wonder how many people forget it. Try to get some form of exercise even a 10 minute walk will leave you calmer and more focused.

TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE EXAM

- Make up a set of study sheets for each exam.
- Each set of study sheets should summarise the reading, your class notes, and any hand-outs.
- Type the study sheets so they are easily readable. Use plenty of bold type and white space to accentuate important ideas.
- For the next two weeks, read through your study sheets three times each day and write them out three times a day. This will help you learn them and will also develop your ability to write for an extended period of time during the exam.

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE EXAM

- Read and write your study sheets as usual.

- Go to bed early and get a good night's sleep.

THE DAY OF THE EXAM

- Set your alarm and get up early. Allow plenty of time to get to the exam.
- Eat a good breakfast, you don't want to be hungry during the exam.
- Take along a piece of fruit to eat during the exam. This will help keep your blood sugar even, so you don't tire during the second half of the exam period.

DURING THE EXAM

- If you feel tense, relax, take a deep breath, and remember that you know the material because you've been reviewing for two weeks.
- Keep your eye on the clock while taking the exam. Allow enough time to finish the entire test. Avoid focusing on one question and running out of time on others.
- Read the entire exam before beginning to write.
- Read each question a second time, then answer that question.
- After the first hour and fifteen minutes, relax, stretch, eat your fruit. Calm down. You know the material.
- Use the entire exam period rather than rushing through the test.

Find out more information about the Digital Library below.

THE DIGITAL LIBRARY HAS A NEW LOOK!



Library & Resource Centre

The College provides support for student learning through the Learning Resource Centres in Bangor, Ards, Downpatrick, Newcastle & Lisburn. These centres offer a welcoming environment for both individual private study and group work.

A vast range of E-Resources are available on the Digital Library from on and off campus 24/7. Enter the Digital Library below by clicking on the icons:



Announcements Home



SERC's LRCs/Libraries would like to announce the launch of the new [Digital Library](#) which holds an extensive range of resources to enable students to explore collections for learning, enjoyment and inspiration!

All the Digital Library resources are available online on and off campus 24/7. Over 3,000 E-books are also available to aid your study and research needs as well as study guides and a wide range of peer accredited educational online support materials for all learning needs.

Your professional LRC/Library staff can advise and assist you with information searching and using library resources.

To find out more, just drop into your nearest College library or contact us at: Bangor & Ards: library@serc.ac.uk Lisburn: lrcclisburn@serc.ac.uk Downpatrick: lrcdownpatrick@serc.ac.uk

SPECIAL AWARD FOR LIFE SAVING STUDENT...



Georgina Quigg is pictured with Mrs Aggie Osborne.

On Friday 4th March, Ken Webb, Principal and Chief Executive of South Eastern Regional College (SERC) presented a Special Recognition Award to Health and Social Care student and local hero Georgina Quigg.

At the beginning of February, Georgina and two unknown passer's by, saved the life of injured pensioner Mrs Aggie Osborne. Mrs Osborne had been out walking when she suffered a burst vein in her leg, spotting that she was in distress, Georgina rushed to help and administered what doctors described as 'life saving first aid'.

When making the presentation Ken Webb said; "It is with great pleasure that I present you with this special recognition award. I am proud to be Principal and Chief Executive of SERC, you are a shining example of everything that is good about the College, you are a credit to the College and your family – you are a truly inspirational young woman.

"Thanks must also go to your lecturer Nikki Rainey who trained you in First Aid, what a valuable lesson that proved to be."

FROM VETERINARY SURGEON TO ARTIST...



Michael Geddis receives the Community Student of the Year Award from Geoff Wilson, Head of Marketing at the IFA and guest speaker at the Bangor & Ards Excellence Awards.

When retired veterinary surgeon Michael Geddis signed up to a recreational art class at South Eastern Regional College's Ballyboley Campus he had no idea that it would be his first step towards studying a Fine Arts degree at university.

In September 2009 Donaghadee man Michael, enrolled on a leisure art course at SERC, "to help recuperate from a long-term illness". His course tutor was Jane Swanston, who immediately noticing Michaels natural talent persuaded him to transfer to an accredited OCN Art course which would lead to a recognised qualification.

As his new course progressed Jane recognised that his rate of progression was down to his creative ability and dedication to the course and she encouraged him to consider art as a profession and not just a hobby.

As well as being a part-time Art lecturer at SERC, Jane also lectures at the University of Ulster in York Street and suggested to Michael that he think about applying to do an Honours Degree in Fine and Applied Arts. As someone who had previously worked as a vet this was a completely different career path to follow but it was also something that would allow Michael to fulfil a childhood ambition of pursuing a career in art.

Michael had this to say; "Signing up for the Art course at SERC has really transformed my life. I took the decision to enrol on the course as I thought it would help me recuperate from a long-term illness, little did I know that it would lead to me studying a full-time art degree a year later.

"Jane Swanston has been a real inspiration, she has encouraged me and motivated me to achieve my goals, from getting me to switch to an accredited art course when I first signed up to SERC, to giving me additional tutelage as I prepared myself for a return to university study."

He continued; "I had previously worked as a vet for 25 years before taking early retirement. Returning to education has reinvigorated me and I look forward to pursuing a career as a professional artist upon completion of my degree."

SERC PART-TIME OPEN EVENING
THURSDAY 16 JUNE 2011
5PM - 8PM

BANGOR | DOWNTRICK | LISBURN | NEWTOWNARDS



VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

Belfast Zoo

You can volunteer to help out at the zoo by joining Friends of the Zoo. Friends of the Zoo was formed in 1997 by a group of community volunteers with a shared love for the zoo. They have since raised more than £30,000 for the zoo through fundraising and maintenance projects. They also teach visitors about animals and promote animal conservation.

For more information go to www.belfastzoo.co.uk/supportus; email friends@belfastzoo.co.uk

Community Clean-ups

You can improve your community's appearance and tackle environmental crimes like fly tipping, littering and graffiti by volunteering to organise a clean-up.

Call 9032 0202 (extension 5383) or email; catcleaning@belfastcity.gov.uk.

For more information about volunteering please contact the Students' Union - studentsunion@serc.ac.uk

Belfast Parks

There are a number of friends' groups that help maintain and promote interest in our parks and open spaces.

For more information, contact your local park or go to www.belfastcity.gov.uk/parksandopenspaces and click on 'Friends' groups'.

Community centres

If you are keen to give something back to your local community why not get involved by volunteering at your local community centre. Simply call in to any of our 23 centres and ask for an application form.

Go to www.belfastcity.gov.uk/communitycentres for a list of our centres

St George's Market

The Friends of St George's Market is an external association which has been set up to actively promote the historical, cultural and social heritage of St George's Market.

Call Annemarie Mullan on 07736 520703 or go to www.friendsofstgeorgesmarket.com

www.serc.ac.uk

SERC SNAPS...



1. Sport Students Ryan Montgomery, Conaill McGrady and Declan Curran were selected to represent Northern Ireland at the U19 amateur 'World' championships which are being held in Italy. 2. Travel and Tourism lecturer Diane Quinn is pictured with a group of First Diploma students during a visit to Belfast International Airport a part of their Airport and Airlines unit they were given a tour of landside and airside operations. 3. A group of Engineers from Whale Pumps in Bangor recently completed a bespoke training course which was designed by Munster Simms in conjunction with SERC and was tailored to meet the specific needs of the company in up-skilling existing employees for business improvements. 4. Liz Torrans, Strategic Account Director, from Grafton Employment Solutions Portfolio, part of the Grafton Employment Group came in to do a talk with year 4 part-time Business degree students. 5. Beauty Therapy students from the Bangor Campus of the College recently visited the Chest Heart and Stroke Association to perform hand and arm massage on the ladies and gents who attend the community centre. Beauty Therapy lecturer May Anderson organised this activity for the sixth year running and once again it proved very successful for everyone involved. 6. Sharon Browne is pictured with the Outstanding Impact Award 2010 which was presented to the College by enterprise watchdog Enterprise UK for our work promoting entrepreneurship to students.

SERC Snaps...



7. Six Creative Media Production students from Bangor hopped on board the BBC media bus to make their own radio show. They put their interview, editing and presenting skills into practice making a short magazine programme. **8.** Priory College, Hollywood pupils Andrew Queen, Chris Millar, Christian Burrows and Ivan Bryans are pictured with SERC lecturer Stuart Rankin at the College's STEM Sells event. **9.** Minister for Employment and Learning, Danny Kennedy MLA is pictured with Nicki Bury, FSB Belfast South Branch Vice-Chair and South Eastern Regional College students Philip Babb, Leo Bowden and Chelsea Pentney who received the prestigious 'Future Student of Business' Award. **10.** South Down Assembly member Jim Wells is pictured with students, (L-R) Erin Wright, Adam McLean, Shane Rush, Mark Doran, Declan Megoran and Darren Flynn. Also pictured are Ken Webb, Principal and Chief Executive of SERC and SERC Governor Jack Ferris. This group of students won bronze medals at an All Ireland Catering Competition. **11.** Pictured at the launch of SERC student theatre company 'The Glass Umbrella' are SERC lecturer Corrine Courtney-Lee and performing arts students Harley Hughes, Carl McKay, Chloe Donley, Rachel Ramsey, Harriet Scott, also pictured is John Noble from DEL. **12.** SERC apprentices Stuart Miller, Luke Hawthorne and Brian Craig are gearing up to take on the world having been selected on the UK's WorldSkills squad which will identify the top apprentices in the world.