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ADULT LEARNERS COLLECT THEIR AWARDS

Adult learners from the Manchester area collected their awards for achievement in literacy, numeracy and language from television presenter Gordon Burns in the city's Bridgewater Hall yesterday (May 20th).

As many as 17 men and women who have been following a course of basic skills learning, either at a further education college or in the workplace, received book tokens to the value of £50. The event – the Basic Skills Learner Awards 2004 – was organised by the Workplace Basic Skills Network in association with the Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester (LSCGM), as part of Adult Learner's Week.

Among the learners in the post-16 age group, in the curriculum areas of literacy, language and numeracy, were three men who are currently serving sentences in Manchester prison. It was City College, Manchester who won the good provider award for its educational work in prison.

"Training and skills are the key to furthering individuals' employment prospects and for business prosperity generally," said Anthony Goldstone, chairman of LSCGM. "These people have shown that through dedication and hard work it is possible for adults to give themselves another chance. Their achievement is magnificent."

Over the past few weeks, tutors and providers in the Greater Manchester area have nominated those students who have made particular progress in overcoming obstacles in literacy, numeracy and language on programmes funded by the LSCGM. The awards recognised the difference people have made to their lives through learning and through their commitment to overcome barriers to acquiring new skills.

The eight categories were further education, adult and community education, work-based learning, learndirect, workplace, work within prisons, the voluntary sector and trade unions.

"A good level of literacy, numeracy and language are so important for any working person today, whatever kind of job they are doing," said Gordon Burns, when making the presentations. "It is vital that achievers in these fields are recognised in this way and I am proud to present these prestigious awards."

The Workplace Basic Skills Network assembled an independent adjudication panel that selected the award winners from each of seven category areas – further education, adult and community, learndirect, work-based learning, workplace, trade unions and prisons.

Each winner received £50 worth of book tokens towards furthering their learning and all nominees will receive a certificate.

Ends

Note to editors:

The Workplace Basic Skills Network, based at Lancaster University, is a national membership organisation dedicated to workplace language, literacy and numeracy provision. Founded in 1993, it supports "Skills for Life", the government's adult literacy and numeracy strategy. The Network builds professional capacity in workplace basic skills through sharing and dissemination of good practice and continuing professional development, supporting basic skills professionals to meet the language, literacy and numeracy needs of today's changing workplace. Address: Workplace Basic Skills Network, CSET, Lancaster University, Lancaster LA1 4YL; tel: 01524 593405; website: www.lancaster.ac.uk/wbsnet

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