



Source: Ballycastle Chronicle

Date: Thursday 3. May 2018

Page: 47

Circulation: 15276

Size: 463

(CIT-488)

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Mayor gives top marks to NRC students in NI Skillbuild Finals

NORTHERN Regional College apprentices who excelled at the NI Skillbuild finals have been congratulated by the Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

Samuel Gilmore from Coleraine, a second year carpentry apprentice with Mark Pollock of Kilrea, won a gold medal in the carpentry section and received the top accolade of the Best Overall Skillbuild NI Young Apprentice of the Year.

First year plumbing apprentice Abigail Reilly from Ballymoney, who is employed by the Dowd's Group, won a bronze medal in the plumbing section.

Abigail was one of only a handful of female apprentices to compete in the finals and the only first year medal winner across the ten different skills areas which included plumbing, carpentry, joinery, electrical installation and brickwork.

Councillor Baird said the Council recognised the importance of apprenticeship schemes and she hoped that Samuel and Abigail's success would encourage other young people to take advantage of the apprenticeship opportunities that exist across the Council area.

Terri Scott, College Principal and Chief Executive said the success of Northern Regional College apprentices at the NI Skillbuild finals highlighted the strong working relationship between training providers like the College and local employers.

She said: "Competitions like Skillbuild are a great way to showcase our young people's vocational skills and are an opportunity to demonstrate to

employers and future investors the high standard of apprenticeship provision which exists in our College.

"This connection with industry is important and we work closely with businesses to ensure our provision is relevant and reflects the needs of employers."

She said successful apprenticeship programmes help boost the local economy.

"Apprentices are earning as they learn so are contributing to the economy and, when they complete their apprenticeship, they are more likely to be in gainful employment with more disposable income which goes back into the economy."

Other Northern Regional College apprentices to excel at the NI finals were Derek McMullan from Glenarm and Andrew McSorley from Carrickfegus.

Derek and Andrew won gold and bronze medals respectively in the brickwork skills section.

Skillbuild NI is an annual showcase competition, organised by CITB NI and supported by the Department for the Economy, to help assist with maintaining and raising the status and standards of professional and technical education and training.

Over seventy construction apprentices took the 2018 Skillbuild NI finals which this year were hosted by NWRC in Limavady.

Northern Regional College offers a wide range of work based learning programmes including Higher Level Apprenticeships (HLA), Apprentices and Training for Success courses.

Full details of all the work based learning options available at the College can be viewed online at www.nrc.ac.uk



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Pictured below, Ian Forsythe, NRC carpentry lecturer; Edelene Gilmore; Samuel Gilmore gold medal winner in Carpentry and Best Overall Skillbuild NI Young Apprentice of the Year at the Skillbuild NI finals; Mayor Councillor Joan Baird; and Terri Scott, Principal and Chief Executive, NRC.

Terri Scott, Principal and Chief Executive, Northern Regional College; Ronnie Moran, Operations Manager, Dowd's Group; Abigail Reilly, first year plumbing apprentice with Dowd's and Northern Regional College student; Mayor of Causeway Coast and Glens Council Councillor Joan Baird; and Northern Regional College Plumbing lecturer, James McKeeefry.

