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The Stars of our Future

Over 400 people attended CPA's 'Stars of the Future' award ceremony - held this year at the Plantworx general equipment exhibition - to celebrate the outstanding achievements of the industry's future prospects. And judging by the quality of this year's apprentice mechanics, the rental sector - and not to mention the wider construction industry - has a bright future.

Entrepreneur and engineer Richard Noble, who is attempting to break the world land speed record next year, presented the awards to the 20 winners, all of whom were picked from over 500 entries. In an opening speech, Noble told those attending how important the service engineers were to the

future of the country. "We need to rebuild Britain - we need new airports, new roads, new railways," he said. "That requires an innovative construction industry and innovative construction equipment, so the young people here today are not only this industry's future, they are the country's future.

"Noble also gave a talk on the progress of his Bloodhound high-speed car project, in which he hopes to hit speeds of over 1,000mph when he makes the world record attempt in 2016.

In total, there were



Richard Noble



C&A

CPA

20 regional winners of the Stars of the Future awards from across the country, with separate prizes for level two and three apprentices (see box below), while Paigine Carter (Level 2) and Darragh Spencer (Level 3) were declared as this year's national winners.

Carter, who is the first female winner in the award, said: "When people ask how I feel about working in a male-dominated industry, I say that the men I work with could not have been more welcoming. I felt that I fitted in from day one."

Spencer, who also won the national (Level 2) prize in 2014, added:

"There are so many opportunities in this industry. I'm now a plant manager and buyer, and last week I negotiated the purchase of a £60,000 piece of equipment. Those are skills that I have learnt in this role. People need a better impression of construction. It's more than the brickies who come round to do some work on your house. Beyond that, there is so much more, and so much variety. My ambition is to become a construction director and work on renewable energy projects like wind farms - I want to put myself on the cutting edge of innovation."

(L-R) National Level 2 and 3 winners Paigine Carter and Darragh Spencer



Paigine Carter

Winner - National Level Two, Reaseheath Level 2

"I am overjoyed. I am a specialist in powered access and what I love about this job is that it's always different, it always challenges you mentally and physically. When people ask how I feel about working in a male-dominated industry, I say that the men I work with could not have been more welcoming; I felt that I fitted in from day one."

Darragh Spencer

Winner - National Level Three, Askham Bryan Level 3

"This follows on winning at level two in the last awards, so obviously I am delighted. This role and this industry have given me so many opportunities. I also enjoy my work with apprentices, mentoring and developing them, and I have now become a CITB ambassador. My ambition is to be a construction director."

Regional winners

Level Two

Thomas Burton - Askham Bryan, Horizon Platforms

Joel Tompkins - Bridgend College, Powys County Council

Oliver Bunnell - Coleg Cambria, Harrison Machinery

Jack Chapman - Finning Academy, Lisburn

Allan Sheehan - Glasgow Kelvin College, Alpine Plant

Oliver Bond - Myerscough College, Aerial Platforms

Joseph Quinn - National Construction College, J Murphy & Sons

Alistair Thompson - National Construction College (Scotland), Caskie

Paigine Carter - Reaseheath College, A-Plant

Daniel Towell - Stafford College, Gap Group

Ben Smith - Wiltshire College, Clive Barford

Level Three

Darragh Spencer - Askham Bryan, Orchard Randall Construction

Nathan Cowell - Bridgend College, Hire One

Adam Taylor - Finning Academy, Chesterfield

Martin Stewart - Glasgow Kelvin College, Marubeni Komatsu

Dominic James - Myerscough College, Ainscough Crane Hire

Luke Fowler - National Construction College, TXM Plant

Steven Reid - National Construction College (Scotland), Daviot Farms

Jake Ridley - Reaseheath College, A-Plant Rotherham

Tom Pallett - Stafford College, Liebherr

Nick Mansi - Wiltshire, Terra Firma Ground Investigation

Special merit award

Nick Mansi - Wiltshire, Terra Firma Ground Investigation

Special merit award

Nick Man

National winners

Level Two

Paigine Carter - Reaseheath College, A-Plant

Level Three

Darragh Spencer - Askham Bryan, Randall Orchard Construction



Richard Noble presented the awards to 20 apprentice engineers