

Bereaved Sussex Man Runner-up For Achievement Award

A young man from Newhaven who left school early, due to the death of both parents, has been named as runner-up for an award for achievement.

Les Wright, aged 21, has been awarded runner-up by employment charity Tomorrow's People in its annual Awards for Achievement. The awards pay tribute to people who have overcome significant barriers in their quest to get back to work.

Les attended the awards ceremony at Plaisterers' Hall, London, Tuesday evening. He was chosen as runner-up for an Award for Personal Achievement (16-25 year old) which is awarded to people who have overcome personal difficulties to go into training, education or employment.

Les left school with no qualifications and until recently lived in accommodation designed to support young people aged 16-25 into independent living. Les later completed GCSEs at Sussex Downs College and has held a number of short term jobs, including a year in the catering trade. He approached Tomorrow's People in the hope of examining other employment options and to improve his job search and employability skills.

Les joined the charity's 'Working It Out' programme in Brighton at the age of 18. The programme helps young people aged 16-24 develop employability skills, life and social skills and gain practical work experience through a series of community challenges.

Dave Slade, Head of Project for 'Working It Out' Brighton said: "Right from the start, Les displayed an excellent work ethic and was a regular attendee and timekeeper. This was particularly impressive, as Les had to travel in to Brighton from Newhaven everyday by bus."

During his time on the course he was given support with interview techniques, cv production, application forms, numeracy and literacy skills and personal and social development as well working towards a 'Youth Achievement Award' which he passed easily.

After he had completed this award, Les applied to local employers for work experience and was accepted on a placement at Travis Perkins in Brighton in February 2006. This involved a 7.30am start, Monday-Friday, which meant getting up at 6am to make the journey from Newhaven.



His seven week placement was so successful that Les was taken on as a full-time counter assistant by builders merchants Travis Perkins. Les now hopes to progress into the Travis Perkins management scheme once he has passed his driving test.

Les continues to access Tomorrow's People for support in updating his CV and to help him apply for the management training scheme.

Les said: "I'm delighted to be short-listed for this achievement award. If you had told me last year I'd be doing this I wouldn't have believed you. Tomorrow's People has really helped me get my life back on track."

Tomorrow's People is a national charity, with a 23-year track record of success in helping people out of long-term unemployment, homelessness, welfare dependence including incapacity benefits, and into jobs and self-sufficiency.

Since 1984, the charity has helped change the lives of more than 400,000 people across the UK who had been resigned to long-term, even life-long, unemployment.

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