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## PRESS RELEASE

**24<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

### **‘Inspirational’ Dartford Young Person of the Year 2019 announced at Dartford Business Awards Ceremony, Bluewater**

As the largest provider of further education in Dartford, North Kent College believes in the potential of young people to achieve their career goals, especially with the help of small local business whose support is fundamental to these young people’s success.

At last Thursday’s Dartford Business Awards, NKC sponsored the ‘Young Person of the Year’ Award to celebrate local talent and skills.

With 8 nominees from Dartford-based employers and training providers, it was a tough decision for the panel of judges, however the winner stood out as an inspirational apprentice, dedicated to helping fellow young disabled people overcome adversity.

Charlie Randell, a marketing apprentice with the Hug Group, was announced as the winner at the dinner organised by Dartford Borough Council and hosted by Bluewater on the 19<sup>th</sup> September, in front of local businesses and 100s of their employees.

Lara Pool, Business Development Manager said “We have sponsored the Dartford Business Awards for 2 years now, celebrating the talent and employability skills local young people develop whilst in further education and with employers on placements, work experience and apprenticeships.

This year’s winner Charlie Randell, a marketing apprentice with the Hug Group, has an inspirational story, using social media and digital channels to encourage other disabled young people to reach their potential. We were delighted to present his award to him last night.”

In his nomination, Andy Davies of the Hug Group said of Charlie “Despite being a wheelchair user, Charlie has always strive to overcome his disability, attended mainstream school and has led a more active life than most. He has an exceptional talent for swimming and was close to representing GB at the Paralympics in 2016.

He was an ambassador for Whizz-Kidz for 5 years, helping transform the lives of other young people with disabilities.”

What really made him stand out to the judges however was his dedication to helping others with disabilities succeed, by setting up his multi-channel digital platform NQPC – Not Quite Politically Correct – where disability is discussed openly, even subjects many people try to avoid.

Charlie released a video earlier this year showing the challenges he faced trying to find an employer able to accommodate a wheelchair user – he got 27,000 views on Linked In and caught the eye of Andy Davies at the Hug Group, who offered him an interview. He is now their Social Media Manager, proving that sheer determination, a talent for communication and an infectious enthusiasm can overcome any barriers.

“It was quite a shock to win the "Young Person Of The Year Award!" As such a determined individual, it is sometimes hard for me to take a step back and appreciate what I have achieved. Winning this award has really made me realise just how far I have come. Thank you to everyone who has supported me so far.” Said a delighted Charlie.

The other 7 nominees were: Hollie Evans an NKC student doing voluntary work with Eden Counselling and Training who received a highly commended award; Charlie Fairway, Orchard Garages motor vehicle apprentice with NKC; Jordan Parkinson, NKC placement student at Blue Rocket Accounting; Michael Barnett, NKC electrical student on placement with PLP Fire; Jamie Spencer, accounting placement with BDP International and Leo Dole and Balraj Singh, both NKC engineering placement students at Evans Turner.

## **ENDS**

**For further information, please contact Lara Pool, 01322 629490  
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## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

**North Kent College** offers an extensive range of Further Education, Higher Education, Access to Higher Education, Apprenticeships, Part-time courses and Training for Businesses. We provide young people with the next step after their GCSEs as an alternative to A Levels and a route to University or a career. We also have opportunities for people who are looking at studying at an undergraduate level, or who want to change career path or up-skill for career progression.

**Open Days for September 2020 entry;**  
**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October at Dartford Campus and**  
**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October at Gravesend Campus**  
both events 3.00pm – 7.30pm pre-register at [www.northkent.ac.uk](http://www.northkent.ac.uk)  
**Helpdesk 01322 629400**  
**[www.northkent.ac.uk](http://www.northkent.ac.uk)**