



**STUDENTS**  
of the **YEAR**

**2024**

**Celebrating our partnerships**



# WELCOME STUDENTS OF THE YEAR

Welcome to the 2024 Milton Keynes College Group Students of the Year celebration, hosted this year at the magnificent Silverstone Circuit. Students of the Year is the highlight of our College year, where we take a moment to celebrate the achievements of our students over the last 12 months.

Tonight's winners are truly inspirational, showcasing the excellence and dedication that so many of our students put into their education. Our winners come from very different backgrounds, studying a wide range of subjects, facing diverse needs and challenges, yet they have at least one thing in common: a determination to succeed in their chosen path, and it's this determination along with their exceptional talent, that we celebrate tonight.

I am sure their family, friends and supporters all feel enormously proud of their achievements, and I know that every member of staff at Milton Keynes College Group who works with them and supports their success is immensely proud too.

Hosting an event like tonight requires the contributions of many people, and I especially want to thank our partners and sponsors this evening for generously supporting these awards. Your commitment and partnership is greatly appreciated as always. I hope you all enjoy this evening's celebration – it promises to be a wonderful night!

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Sally Alexander". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a dark blue background.

**Sally Alexander,**  
CEO and Group Principal, MK College Group

# WE ARE DELIGHTED TO WELCOME OUR CO-HOSTS FOR STUDENTS OF THE YEAR 2024



## **Ian Revell**

Ian has worked for Milton Keynes Community Foundation for over seven years as the Chief Executive Officer. His role is focused on supporting the staff team to deliver on their objectives and liaising with the Board of Trustees in providing strategic leadership.

Ian prioritises engagement with the amazing diversity of supporters, working with partners and visiting and engaging with the groups the Community Foundation supports. He has a major role in supporting philanthropy in Milton Keynes and in the development and growth of the Community Properties of which the Foundation is a custodian.

Ian says: "I really enjoy my job, especially engaging with the many people who deliver amazing, life changing projects, programmes and services across the borough. I feel it is a real privilege to meet with individual donors, companies and organisations who are doing all they can to bring about change. It excites me that our focus on funding fairness is inspiring many more people to get involved in their communities.



## **Sienna Rogers**

Sienna is currently studying a Level 3 Extended Diploma in Games, Animation and Visual Effects at Milton Keynes College. She moved to the area of Milton Keynes just before joining the College and has taken every opportunity to improve her college experience, which led her to join the student executive committee in the role of Vice President. As part of this role, she focused on helping and organising the committee and supporting its members, in the hopes of proposing their best efforts to the College board to improve student wellbeing and opportunities. Keeping this proactive mindset helped Sienna to get this remarkable opportunity of being tonight's co-host.



## ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION AWARD

### LILLIAN PETHERICK

Lillian embraced her course with a positive and determined mindset from day one. She has had to adapt to a new way of learning, with the added challenges of balancing working full time as a lead care assistant in a care home, taking care of her husband who is dealing with some complex health problems and completing her Access course. Lillian has faced her own health problems, but she always arrives for her online lessons in a positive and enthusiastic manner. Her work is always excellent and she has shown great fortitude to ensure she can maintain this level of excellence.

She has been a strong member of her group, supporting her peers with collaborative assignment work, especially when her peers were struggling to balance their assignment work and their own life. Lillian is also an excellent peace maker in the group when other members of the group struggled, and she is often the voice of reason.

Within the Hybrid Access course, the learner is required to do a great deal of self-learning and to embrace the research for each assignment with the support of her teachers. Lillian has used the learning materials well and shared her knowledge and findings with her fellow students in a professional manner, achieving outstanding grades.

Lillian will be going on to study Mental Health Nursing at university and her tutors are certain she will be a credit to the nursing profession.



## CARE PROFESSIONS AWARD

### MADI BULMER

Madi is motivated, passionate, hardworking and takes great pride in her work, both in college and in her various work placement settings. She has shown such resilience and determination during various courses she has embarked on in Care and always puts in 100% in all she does.

It's her resilience that makes her such an inspiration to her tutors and her fellow students. Despite all the challenges she has faced over the years, she has not given up. She suffers from an ongoing health condition and is a young carer, yet shows true resilience throughout her time in college, juggling college life and personal life commitments.

Throughout her studies, she has expanded her knowledge and given her all to her work placements, with her supervisors commenting on how helpful and hardworking she is. She is always happy to help her peers within the class and has volunteered at a number of open events, where she's provided helpful advice and guidance to potential students, no doubt inspiring them with her passion for the subject.

Madi is planning to go to university to study midwifery.



#### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE

The University of Bedfordshire offers a career powered education that prepares students for successful careers. With skill-boosting courses, real-world teaching, accredited degrees, first-hand work experience, excellent facilities, industry links, and partnerships, students can excel in their chosen fields.



#### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: WOMEN LEADERS

Our vision is to inspire more women to be confident leaders, to champion equality and to raise the aspirations of girls and young women from all backgrounds. [womenleadersuk.org](http://womenleadersuk.org)



## HIGHER EDUCATION & SOUTH CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AWARD

JASON PARSONS

Jason's learning journey has been incredible, and he has showed true grit and commitment to his studies, which have led him to succeed. He is a role model for older learners looking to come back to education.

Despite facing significant challenges in the first semester of his HNC course, he demonstrated unwavering determination and commitment to his studies, ultimately emerging as a beacon of inspiration for his peers and instructors alike.

What truly sets him apart is not only his individual academic accomplishments but also his altruistic nature and willingness to support others in their academic endeavours. Despite his own academic hurdles, Jason consistently extended a helping hand to his peers, offering guidance, encouragement, and practical assistance to those who were struggling. He went above and beyond by organising internal study support sessions, demonstrating his leadership skills and genuine concern for the well-being of his fellow students.

As he progressed into his second year, he continued to excel academically while also assuming a supportive role within the student community. His positive attitude, willingness to assist others, and dedication to his studies have earned him recognition not only from his peers but also from faculty members. Jason's contributions have been so significant that he has been recommended as an occasional worker for short courses within the South Central Institute of Technology, further underscoring his value to the institution.



## PROJECT ONE & SKILLS ACADEMY AWARD

LEAH WAYLING

Leah has gone from strength to strength since she started at college in September. She excels at the practical skills and clearly enjoys learning new skills and different effects within Painting & Decorating.

She gives it her all with every task, and continuously completes tasks above and beyond expected requirements. She's always the best prepared student in the class and is always ready to step in and help other students. Her work continues to be excellent, and she passed her GCSE English in November, putting her on course to continue her positive trajectory.

She has progressed so well that she is now being taught skills that are highly advanced and beyond her course level, and continues to impress with her dedication and enthusiasm for the subject.

Leah's dream is to run her own business and with the skills she has been building throughout her time at college, she is well on her way to achieving this. Her tutors consider her an outstanding learner and a joy to have in the class and it's clear that she really thrives in the practical environment.

Leah's next step will hopefully be a Painting & Decorating apprenticeship.



### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: THE OPEN UNIVERSITY

The Open University (OU) has a rich pedigree of providing supported, distance learning to individuals and organisations for more than 55 years. Throughout its history, 2.3 million people have studied with the OU in 157 countries. Currently, almost 200,000 students are working towards their ambitions through the OU's flexible courses.



### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: MK COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

MK Community Foundation send funding where it's needed most in Milton Keynes. By guiding businesses, charities and individuals to the right giving and grants, we're on a mission for a fairer community. We proudly provide support that helps make Milton Keynes a better place to live and work for thousands of people.



## MOTOR VEHICLE AWARD

### JAMIE BARNETT

Jamie raises his game every year and continues to impress his tutors with his dedication to improving himself. Jamie tackles the challenges he faces with autism head-on and is thriving. He strives for excellence in all aspects of his work.

His personal progress is remarkable; he is now confident to answer questions and he is happy to get up and write on the white board in class. Part of his condition causes him to have involuntary hand movements and twitches when he is nervous. This was very evident when he first came to college but is far less noticeable now; further evidence of how far he has come and how he has grown on a personal level. In practical lessons he is able to identify errors others may make and he's skilled at problem solving.

Jamie always gives 100%, everything he does has to be just right. He works very hard and is fully focused on his college work as soon as he arrives in class. He's grown more confident in his skills too; his progress technically, personally and professionally this year have been remarkable.

At the moment Jamie is considering returning next year for Level 3 Motor Vehicle.



## ACTIVE INDUSTRIES AWARD

### EDWARD CAKE

Edward is an outstanding member of the course, currently working at a level far beyond his current level and is projected to gain a high grade as a result. He displays great respect to support other students and staff by supporting his peers to achieve and inspire them to reach their goals and achieve the best they can on the course. He shows great integrity in his work and will always fully commit to anything he does.

He has dyslexia but has not let this hold him back, showing huge improvements in his writing skills and structure of his assignments.

He is always happy to provide support on Matchdays, helping the coaches and supporting with goalkeeper warm ups and sessions. Alongside this coaching support at college, Ed also volunteers and completes work experience with MK Dons Women's First Team, helping support the goalkeeper coaching and first team coaches every Tuesday, Thursday and Matchdays on a Sunday. On top of all this, Ed has also been accepted on to and is completing his UEFA C license in football coaching. This has been another step on his personal development, showcasing his desire to succeed and achieve excellence in every part of what he does.

Ed is hoping to complete a degree in sports coaching.



### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: ASTON MARTIN

With a fierce ambition to change the game and compete at the sharp end, Aston Martin Aramco Formula One® Team is bringing new energy to F1. Based in Silverstone, at the state-of-the-art AMR Technology Campus, the team's talented driver squad includes double World Champion Fernando Alonso and Canada's Lance Stroll.



### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: MILTON KEYNES DONS SET

Milton Keynes Dons SET delivers to over 55,000 people each year. It has a direct impact on individual lives across MK and beyond in the fields of Health, Inclusion Education and Sport - particularly Football where it operates complete pathways for girls, boys, and inclusion participants. It also operates community facilities at Woughton-on-the-Green, Fairfields and Brooklands allowing it to develop its range of activities.



## APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR AWARD

### GEORGINA WILLIAMS

Georgina has proven to be a determined and proactive student and is always happy to help and support others. Her determination to learn, and her constant want to better herself meant the Whittlebury Hall & Spa Head Chef singled her out as a trustworthy, reliable go to employee.

Georgina has been proactive in her learning, seeking additional education and professional development. Proactive and eager to develop, Georgina entered numerous national cookery competitions. Due to her dedication, she performed exceptionally well; she was awarded a Certificate of Merit at the International Salon Culinare at the Hospitality Restaurant and Catering Show 2023, in the Excel venue in London, and a Silver Medal at the British Culinary Competition held in Bedford.

Georgina was a joy in the classroom and training kitchen. With a positive can-do attitude, she is eager to help and support all she works with. Thriving for excellence in all she does, she listens and acts intuitively on feedback to improve herself. Through her excitement of producing great food, she has knocked down the barriers and worked tirelessly to progress.

A much loved and valued Whittlebury Hall & Spa team member, Georgina is now working in the hotel's award-winning restaurant, Murrays. Achieving an overall Distinction for her Commis Chef Apprenticeship Standards, Georgina is an asset to any establishment, and Whittlebury Hall & Spa will have to fight hard to keep her and control her hunger for progression.



## CREATIVE & DIGITAL ARTS AWARD

### NASHE MATAYA

Nashe's passion and dedication to his craft is faultless and he has always been an enthusiastic student, showing an interest in all aspects of creative design. He has worked extremely hard throughout the course, demonstrating thoughtful and appropriate design and strong branding solutions, along with an analytical approach to the design process and development of his work.

After successfully completing his Level 2 qualification, he decided to take a break for a year to focus on his mental health, showing real maturity both in realising the problem, and what he needed to do to overcome it. That maturity and strength of character continue to be seen in his work, especially in the sensitive and thoughtful way he approached his first year final project, where he produced an advertising campaign for prosthetics.

Nashe is an engaging, friendly student who can work well independently or as part of a team. His willingness to help others has seen him act as a surrogate tutor for some students and, if he changes his ambitions to be a freelance designer, he could be a wonderful teacher if he wanted. His enthusiasm is both inspirational and endearing.

Nashe will be going on to study Graphic Design at university, with an unconditional offer to study at Northampton University.



#### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: **SOL SERVICES**

SOL Services have been providing Mechanical & Electrical, Project construction, refurbishment and fit out works for over 20 years. Our strategic priorities include driving a safe culture in construction, decarbonisation of the built environment and promoting diversity, inclusion, and wellbeing in the workplace. We are proud supporters of Milton Keynes College Group.



Print, Merchandise & Display Solutions

#### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: **BOBCAT DISTRIBUTION LTD**

BOBCat Distribution are a local company who source print, merchandise and signage solutions to create engaging marketing collateral. The right product will raise your company profile, support your brand, and deliver a measurable return on your investment.

We supply a huge range of merchandise with the aim of growing sales and building loyalty. The "right" merchandise can help you to develop your brand and engage your team.



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## ENGINEERING AWARD

### ASH FARLEY

Ash has consistently demonstrated remarkable resilience and determination, distinguishing themselves as an outstanding student and community leader.

As a looked after student, Ash has overcome personal challenges with remarkable grace and resilience. Their involvement in extracurricular activities, such as serving on the student council and participating in the counter narrative initiative, aimed at highlighting the benefits available to young people in Milton Keynes, showcases their dedication to fostering positive change and advocating for social justice.

Ash embodies the value of belonging at college through their advocacy for the LGBTQIA+ community and their belief that everyone deserves to feel included and accepted. Ash has always been a prominent advocate for the LGBTQIA+ movement, actively working to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all students. By openly expressing their support for LGBTQIA+ rights and raising awareness about issues facing the community, Ash has demonstrated a strong commitment to ensuring that everyone feels valued and respected. Ash is also one of the High Sheriff College Champions which they have said is one of their proudest moments.

In addition to their advocacy efforts, Ash's academic accomplishments underscore their commitment to excellence. Ash has set ambitious goals for themselves, striving for distinction and consistently achieving high standards. Their academic success not only reflects their personal growth but also inspires their peers to aim higher and pursue their own academic aspirations. Ash consistently uses feedback from assessments to enhance their work, striving to elevate it to a significantly higher standard. They aim to join the Navy to have a career in Engineering.

## PRISON SERVICES LEARNER OF THE YEAR AWARD

### LEARNER G

Learner G has really focused on his education and has seen it make a massive difference to his own life.

He had never been to school so when he came into prison, he was unable to read or write. He didn't even know what his own name looked like and needed help from other prisoners to fill in forms, often being teased and ridiculed for his lack of education. He was unable to speak to his family for six months as he couldn't fill in the form to get visits or access phone calls.

Another prisoner and family friend referred him to the Shannon Trust where he started learning how to read and write; he kept practicing daily on his own until he was allowed up to education in October 2021. G has gone on to do courses in maths, English, Art and Design, Music technology, financial awareness, cleaning courses, and IT courses, including one at Level 3. He is now waiting to do a business course.

He is using those skills to help others who are starting from a similar position to his own. He has been motivated from the very beginning to work hard to better himself and make his family proud of him. The growth and confidence his tutors have seen since starting Level 1 English is phenomenal and we are all so proud of his achievements and the fact that he is always striving to do more. He has further continued his education by completing and achieving Level 2 English and peer mentoring and is now a Shannon Trust mentor supporting learners in a similar position to him when he started to read. Massive well done!



#### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: NIFTYLIFT

Niftylift is one of the largest mobile elevating work platform (MEWP) manufacturers in Europe and sells its market-leading products worldwide. We specialise in compact, low weight articulating booms that offer maximum performance with minimal environmental impact.

We use advanced 3D modelling software together with rigorous testing to optimise every aspect of our product design and to ensure that every Niftylift work platform delivers outstanding performance without compromising on functionality or reliability.



#### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: RMF GROUP

RMF Group empowers underrepresented individuals through construction, rail and equine training. We offer CSCS, CPCS, and Level 1 Diplomas in Work-based Horse Care, ensuring learners gain skills for sustainable employment in high-demand industries. Our employer-led approach creates a clear pathway to success. RMF Group empowers underrepresented individuals through construction, rail and equine training. We offer CSCS, CPCS, and Level 1 Diplomas in Work-based Horse Care, ensuring learners gain skills for sustainable employment in high-demand industries. Our employer-led approach creates a clear pathway to success.



## BUSINESS & DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AWARD

### ETHAN HORNSHAW

Ethan is a wonderful student who has demonstrated a keenness to learn throughout his time with Milton Keynes College and is an excellent example of a student who has developed and progressed during his time with us. He joined the college in September 2021 to study Level 2 Sports whilst re-taking his English Language and Maths GCSEs, passing all three qualifications in his first year. Whilst studying at Level 2, he developed an interest in Business and wanted to explore this further, so he moved onto the Level 3 Business course in September 2022.

He has embraced all aspects of college life, not only focusing on his main qualification but also engaging in all areas of his study programme including completing a work experience placement with Decathlon, developing his customer services skills such as communication, teamwork and time management, and seeing him really grow in confidence in his own abilities.

He has been diagnosed with ADHD, but does not let this impact his motivation and engagement with his studies. He is committed to the course and is constantly pushing himself to aim for the higher grade criteria, often achieving distinctions within his assignments. He embodies all the traits tutors want to see in their students; enthusiasm, dedication and commitment. Ethan has really flourished this year, and is a true reflection of what you can achieve with hard work and dedication.

Ethan has applied to university to study Business Management.



## SCIENCE AWARD

### MUSLIMA AZIZ

Muslima is an excellent student who is focused on her goals and determined to get there.

Muslima's journey has had its challenges and reflects the struggles faced by many students from conflict-affected regions. She came to the UK with her parents and sisters, after facing a situation in Afghanistan, where female children were denied education beyond primary years. Despite the hardship, Muslima clung to her dream of pursuing higher education in the UK. She enrolled at Milton Keynes College for ESOL and then came to Science to do her Level 2 Applied Science. She wishes to pursue Level 3 and move into University to do a Science related course.

Her dream job is to be a doctor and she already demonstrates many of the qualities a good doctor needs: she's respectful and courteous, with a positive attitude and a good sense of humour. She volunteers at St John Ambulance and is currently undergoing training to be a First Aider in the future, all with her end goal and dream job in mind. Her dedication and determination to succeed is an inspiration to everyone who knows her.

Her commitment to her personal and academic growth is outstanding, and her high grades are a testament to her hard work.

Muslima will be going on to study Level 3 Science at college.



#### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: ENCORE ENVIRONMENT

Environmental and waste management consultancy providing pre-construction audits, waste management plans, skip, bin, and cage services, hazardous waste removal, BREEAM and SKA assessments. It's award-winning sustainable development initiatives, Project DIVERT and Waste Wise Kids, are creating positive environmental and social value and importantly a progressive change in behaviours towards waste.



#### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: BIOGEN

Biogen's nineteen anaerobic digestion plants around the UK recycle around a half of a million tonnes of organic waste each year, generating 36MWe of green electricity for the national grid. As part of the process, they produce nutrient rich certified biofertilisers which are used by farmers to grow crops. Biogen's nineteen anaerobic digestion plants around the UK recycle around a half of a million tonnes of organic waste each year, generating 36MWe of green electricity for the national grid. As part of the process, they produce nutrient rich certified biofertilisers which are used by farmers to grow crops.



## ADULT ENGLISH & MATHS & PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AWARD

FAY VERNON

Fay is studying the AAT Professional Diploma in Accounting and has proven herself to be a dedicated, hardworking and intelligent student. When she joined the course, she worked in a different industry, but has used the skills and knowledge she has gained through the course to secure a job in finance in a school while she was working on her Level 4 qualification. Her respect for all those around her, from fellow students to the course leaders, is clear for everyone to see.

Her passion for the subject, and her willingness to help her fellow students led to her being offered a role as a tutor for Level 1 students, and she threw herself into this new challenge with real enthusiasm. She has now moved up to tutoring Level 2 students and her learners love her to bits. Establishing herself as a tutor while studying for her own Level 4 qualification, which in itself is a very tough and demanding qualification, while also doing her job, showcase Fay's outstanding abilities and her skills at multi-tasking and keeping herself motivated.

Since starting at college, Fay has passed both her Level 2 and Level 3 AAT qualifications with Merit and is on course for similarly high marks in her Level 4 qualification.



## CONSTRUCTION AWARD

JAMES ADI

James is one of those students who knows exactly what he wants to achieve and is prepared to put in the hard work needed to get there. He is an excellent student, always pushing himself to achieve the very best, to the point where it can be tricky for his tutors to give him feedback on how to improve, as he is just that good.

He's an innovative designer, and already experienced in taking the lead in projects, as the lead for the Redway Project and the MKU Hospital Project, both of which have required him to mentor and encourage his fellow students. He inspires all those around him to raise their game and he's been courageous in calling out any poor behaviour he sees. His tutors have watched with pride as he grows in confidence, now sure of himself and willing to share his opinions.

He is an excellent student, but he also wants everyone else to succeed as well, and is skilled in helping explain difficult concepts to other students. Focused on his dream job as a civil engineer, James has also taken on the extra challenge of Maths A Level, where he recently achieved an A\* in his mock exam, which his tutors are confident he can mirror in the final result.

James will be going on to study Civil Engineering at Leeds University.



### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: HOWES PERCIVAL LLP

Howes Percival LLP is a leading regional law firm operating across the heartland of England, providing a full range of commercial legal services including intellectual property, corporate, commercial, property, employment and commercial litigation to businesses as well as legal services to private individuals including agriculture, estate planning, tax and trusts.



### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: TAYLOR WIMPEY

Taylor Wimpey is a residential developer that also have operations in Spain. We deliver great homes and create thriving communities. We are one of the UK's largest residential developers.

Taylor Wimpey are committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion, supporting training for all. If you are looking for a Trade Apprenticeship, a Graduate post or a Management trainee position check out our website for vacancies.



## ENGLISH & MATHS AWARD

### MADI BULMER

Madi has had a tough few years, but despite the challenges she's faced, she has kept going with such tenacity and determination that she has been an inspiration to those around her.

Due to her mother's long-term illness and her own health struggles, she missed so much time from college that she was very behind in her studies for GCSE Maths. She felt that she would never pass, and it was hopeless, but her tutors kept working with her and made her realise she could make progress if she worked. Madi took this on board and attended every lesson, and she also completed a lot of work independently.

Although Madi made a lot of progress from March to May last year it wasn't quite enough for her to pass, particularly as the grade boundaries were so high. Although this was a real blow, she agreed to continue studying for the November resits. She gave it 100% and studied a lot outside of college despite looking after her mum and working part time, doing a Level 3 course and placement and being in a lot of pain all the time.

Her hard work and dedication finally paid off and Madi got her grade 4. She wouldn't have succeeded without her tenacity and determination and her tutors couldn't be prouder of her.

## ESOL AWARD

### MUHAMMED ABKER

Muhammed embodies the spirit of growth, compassion, and perseverance. His journey from a hesitant English learner to a confident communicator is awe-inspiring.

He arrived in the UK with limited English proficiency, facing the daunting challenge of adapting to a new country, culture, and educational system. Despite these hurdles, his unwavering determination and resilience have been nothing short of remarkable. His commitment to learning English was evident in every classroom interaction, where he took every opportunity to bridge the language gap no matter how hard it was. After two years at Milton Keynes College, he is now engaging actively in discussions, asks insightful questions, and contributes meaningfully to group activities within and outside of the classroom.

He's taken on the crucial role of Racial Justice Commissioner this academic year, advocating for equity, inclusivity, and awareness within Milton Keynes College. He participates in thought provoking discussions, workshops, and events that challenge biases and fosters understanding. He regularly encourages others to engage and creates a sense of community for all learners. He is part of the College student council and his input and involvement there is invaluable.

Muhammed wants to become an electrician and his tutors have given him the support he needs to achieve his goals. His language skills will undoubtedly help him succeed in his chosen career.



#### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: LEARNING AND SKILLS ACADEMY CIC

Learning and Skills Academy CIC is a Social Enterprise based in Northamptonshire that aims to provide real opportunities for people to gain the skills they want, the self-belief they are looking for, and the employment opportunities they deserve. We help communities change by accessing opportunities that will help people achieve and grow.



#### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: BRIOCHE PASQUIER

Brioche Pasquier started in 1936, in a small village in West France where Gabriel Pasquier, the village baker made his renowned brioche bread. Since then, Brioche Pasquier have committed to offering our classic French recipes. Our UK bakery site in Milton Keynes, strives to support the surrounding community and are proud to be partners with Milton Keynes College Group.



## HAIR & BEAUTY AWARD

### CHRIS MEERE

Chris is currently studying the Level 3 Barbering course and is an outstanding role model, embodying all our College Values, and consistently growing in confidence.

He started out as quiet and shy, and it's been amazing for his tutors to watch him grow to be able to help and support fellow students and give back to the community. He's enthusiastic about barbering and happy to work hard in pursuit of his goals.

Chris was recently diagnosed with ADHD and has had struggles with his mental health. He had a really bad experience in the past especially when he was at university. This impacted his mental health and he felt extremely isolated during his time there. Chris wasn't sure what pathway to take but always had a keen desire to do barbering and researched how barbers could impact communities but also mental health.

His experiences led him to be passionate about advocating for mental health, and he has raised money for the Lions Barbers Collective. This is something he feels strongly about and he wants to continue to support others. It's great to see him overcome the challenges he's faced, but also inspiring and rewarding to see him flourish and impact others around him.

After college, Chris plans to work full time as a barber, and continue to support the local community.



## PRODUCTION ARTS & PERFORMANCE AWARD

### LIV WEST

Liv has had an impact on Milton Keynes College far beyond simply excelling at her course. This year, she set up the Milton Keynes College Music Society, which allows students from across the College to access music resources and take part in live events. This has led to lunchtime open mic performances where students have performed live in the refectory. Those students have gained the confidence to get up and perform because of Liv's positive attitude, support and hard work.

Since joining the College, she has learned an entirely new instrument of bass guitar, started a new band with college friends and they have now released their first song. Her tutors have been thrilled to see her take her lessons and apply them to the real world, and to see how far she has already come. The band has already started to get paid for their performances at local venues, including the Crauford Arms and MK11. Liv has progressed musically, but also grown as a person, and it's been fantastic to watch her grow in confidence from being a nervous performer to now owning the stage.

She is also the class rep for Music, and has campaigned for improvements to the facilities, taking the opinions of her peers and championing them in the rep meetings. On top of all that, she somehow also finds the time to play football for the Under 23s MK Dons team.

Liv will be going on to study music performance and business at university.



#### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: VTCT

VTCT group is the UK's market-leading vocational and technical awarding organisation. Our qualifications are delivered under three brands: VTCT, ITEC and Skillsfirst, covering over 3,000 centres worldwide with over 120,000 learners and apprentices every year. Our qualifications offer learners an accessible route to economic empowerment.



#### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: IMAGINE

##### Imagine - Corporate Event Organisers, Production & Event Management Services

Imagine specialise in bringing ideas to life, creating, and delivering unforgettable corporate events, conferences, and brand experiences across the UK with maximum creativity. From concept to completion, the team orchestrate every detail, ensuring every event is tailored to your business and planned to perfection.



## INCLUSIVE LEARNING AWARD

### JAMES RYELAND

James is a model student, who has an amazing ability to keep going, despite facing challenges.

He is conscientious, with a strong commitment to his academic pursuits and he consistently strives for excellence in all his endeavours. He shines bright every day without fail, inspiring other students to be their best, encouraging others to keep going, offering enthusiastic input in class whatever the topic. He always has a smile on his face, engaging in every activity to the best of his ability.

What truly sets James apart is his unwavering positivity and cheerful demeanour. Despite the challenges he may face as a learner with Special Educational Needs (SEN), James approaches every situation with a smile and a can-do attitude. His optimism is infectious, uplifting those around him and inspiring others to approach life with a similar outlook.

He has shone in the Brasserie, with his dedicated work ethic and exemplary customer service, making every customer feel welcome. James is a student representative, which sees him actively advocating for her peers, showing his strong leadership and collaborative skills. He's a pleasure to teach and his tutors all agree everyone should have a James in their class.

James will be doing a supported internship where he can hone his already-impressive customer service skills and work towards his dream job as a barista.



## CATERING & HOSPITALITY SERVICES AWARD

### KEIRA DUNCAN

Keira always strives for excellence while being the model ambassador for Milton Keynes College and whilst supporting lower level learners to develop their own skills during Taste Nights.

She readily supports in college events throughout the year including Milton Keynes College Food Festival, Milton Keynes Festival of Lights and Code, AA College Restaurant of the Year application, and the VTCT Excellence Awards Afternoon Tea. She also supports weekly at the Silverstone Academy where she can be cooking for high profile individuals such as Mercedes AMG or the Michelin Guide. She has also worked for the entire week during the 2023 British Grand Prix at Silverstone in the BRDC Marquee, serving over 1,000 covers daily. These events have helped her put her skills into practice and she continues to constantly improve, growing in confidence as she brings a high level of excellence to every part of the course.

She has been an integral positive influence on new learners arriving from Aylesbury College and supporting them to settle in to college life. She was the first in the class to introduce herself and welcome the new learners to the group and takes every opportunity to include and welcome them further into the group.

After college, Keira is hoping to apply to the Exclusive Chefs' Academy at Pennyhill Park or apply to work at The Sea Container Hotel in London and has begun the process of applying.



### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: MORGAN SINDALL CONSTRUCTION

Morgan Sindall Construction is a UK business with a network of local offices. Project capabilities cover the entire range of construction activities, from special works and repair and maintenance, to major landmark schemes delivered as standalone projects or as part of larger multiple project frameworks. The company operates across the public and private sectors to deliver the social infrastructure around us – from schools, universities and hospitals to retail, office and leisure environments.



### ABOUT THE AWARD SPONSOR: SILVERSTONE

We're a 365 day business and family leisure destination. We host world-class events such as the Formula 1 British Grand Prix. We offer unforgettable business experiences at our Conference & Exhibition Centre, a pit-stop with a front row view at our on-site Hilton Hotel, an immersive motorsport museum and a chance to own the track with our Drive Experiences.



# OVERALL STUDENT OF THE YEAR AWARD

**AWARD WINNER:  
TO BE ANNOUNCED TONIGHT!**

Each of our award winners tonight are fantastic in their own right but it has been a tradition to crown an overall Student of the Year from the 19 outstanding students you have heard about this evening. A panel of judges including Governors, the Group Principal & Chief Executive and staff came together to select a winner whose name will be revealed in true award-ceremony style.

**Good luck to all our Students of the Year  
– you are all winners!**

# FULL\*

\*OF POTENTIAL

## VERSATILE SPACES TO WORK & PLAY

BIG CONFERENCE SPACES



UNIQUE TEAM BUILDING



FIVE EXHIBITION HALLS



## WHY NOT STAY THE NIGHT

HILTON GARDEN INN



ESCAPADE SILVERSTONE



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
& EXHIBITION CENTRE

[silverstone.co.uk/business](http://silverstone.co.uk/business)



# SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS



## Silverstone



# TONIGHT'S PERFORMERS

## **Myrren Harrison**

UAL Diploma in Performing Arts

## **Nelly Azeez**

UAL Extended Diploma in  
Performing and Production Arts

## **Sage Khan**

UAL Extended Diploma in  
Performing and Production Arts

## **Joyce Dikatukidi**

UAL Diploma in Performing  
and Production Arts

## **Alexander Clarke**

UAL Diploma in Performing  
and Production Arts

## **Olivia Eden**

UAL Diploma in Performing  
and Production Arts

## **Nathan Chinery**

UAL Diploma in Performing  
and Production Arts

## **Emmanuella Boateng**

UAL Extended Diploma in Performing  
and Production Arts

## **Tiebreak**

Tiebreak, hailing from the vibrant music scene in and around Milton Keynes, delivers a unique blend of dreamy, full instrumentals reminiscent of Inhaler and Peach Pit. With melodic synth-infused guitar, catchy bass, and smooth vocals à la Lana del Rey, the band, consisting of vocalist Neve Clark, bassist Liv West, drummer Ella Green, and guitarists Joe Gait and Jak Lawrence-Hill, creates music that feels like that moment at 3:57am when you realise you have plenty of sleep ahead. Having crossed paths at Milton Keynes College's music course, Tiebreak infuses their compositions with relatable and fun narratives about relationships, growing up, and the rollercoaster of youth. Capturing a sense of euphoria that just hits the spot. Their debut single, "Idea V," explores the ebbs and flows of the journey to adulthood. Anticipate the release of EPs in the near future, dive into Tiebreak's sonic universe, where every note resonates with the essence of youthful experience.



# SUCCESS AND CELEBRATION AT MILTON KEYNES COLLEGE 2023/24

## SEPT 2023

### **The South Central Institute of Technology (SCIoT) in Bletchley fully opened to students**

The SCIoT provides higher level technical qualifications, apprenticeships and short courses for a new generation of digital visionaries. With state-of-the-art facilities, industry expert tutors and real-world projects with global tech brands, the SCIoT aims to bridge the digital skills gaps. The SCIoT is also used by MK College students in subjects including Digital and Business.

## SEPT 2023

### **Colleagues and students celebrate at Milton Keynes Pride Festival**

Colleagues, learners and their families volunteered at Milton Keynes Pride Festival at Campbell Park to support and celebrate the city's LGBTQ+ communities. The volunteers ran a crafts stall and gave out information about studying and working at the College.

## NOV 2024

### **MK College hosts CEO Sleep Out MK for local charities**

At the CEO Sleep Out MK at the College's Bletchley campus, over 50 members of the local business community slept outside overnight to raise awareness of the challenges faced by those experiencing homelessness and hardship in Milton Keynes. The event raised over £50,000 for YMCA MK, Milton Keynes Food Bank, St Mark's Meals MK and the Bus Shelter Milton Keynes.

## SEPT 2023

### **Milton Keynes College announced its new A Levels offering**

Launching in September 2024, the College will be offering A Levels in three different pathways – Digital, Creative and Social Sciences – to address specific skills gaps in Milton Keynes.

## OCT 2023

### **Staff and students supported MK Can event for local food bank**

Staff and students from the College supported the MK Can event at Campbell Park in support of Milton Keynes Food Bank. Staff helped to place the donated tins along the 10km course while 93 Public Services students marshalled at the event, 30 Music students performed throughout the day and 25 Photography students supported with taking photos.

## DEC 2023

### **MK College hosts Christmas lunches for the local community**

The College's Brasserie hosted a special Christmas lunch for 20 older people from Milton Keynes in partnership with Age UK Milton Keynes, as well as a festive lunch for staff and volunteers from five charities supporting Milton Keynes communities. The lunches were served by staff and students from the College, including some of our Inclusive Learning students.

## DEC 2023

### **MK College students raise £1,000 for charity with 10 mile walk**

84 Public Services students from the College raised over £1,000 for SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, through a 10 mile charity walk in Milton Keynes. The students were inspired by Russ Chittenden, a former Paratrooper from nearby Aylesbury who walked the coastline of the UK for the same charity.

## JAN 2024

### **Ruby Parmar appointed Chair of Governors at MK College Group**

Ruby has been a Governor at the College Group for five years and is an experienced business advisor, having worked in professional services for most of her career and is now a Trustee of charity The Magic Bus and Women Leaders UK.

## MARCH 2024

### **College holds its second annual College in the Community Day**

Milton Keynes College Group shared the happiness across Milton Keynes during its second annual College in the Community Day. More than 900 colleagues and learners took part in more than 40 community projects across the city, with the aim of supporting charities and community groups who do fantastic work for their local communities.

## JAN 2024

### **Second cohort of Student Commissioners for Racial Justice**

Milton Keynes College's latest group of Student Commissioners for Racial Justice were appointed, to be part of a group of students from 10 colleges across England, to raise awareness of and discussion around the vital topic of racial justice.

## FEB 2024

### **Glowing Ofsted report for Milton Keynes College**

Milton Keynes College was rated once again as Good by Ofsted. The inspectors gave special praise for the College's work with Adult Learners and also those with High Needs, rating these areas as Outstanding.

## MARCH 2024

### **College students have their say at Hustings event**

Milton Keynes College held a Hustings event at the SCIoT in Bletchley, where students put their questions to all four main parties standing in the general election expected this year. The questions were chosen from a selection put forward by the students themselves and the event ended with students voting for the candidate they would support in an election.

If you would like to become a sponsor for our Students of the Year celebration next year, please email [events@mkcollege.ac.uk](mailto:events@mkcollege.ac.uk)

The College also has many other opportunities for key stakeholders in our community to work with us.

We work closely with employers on specific projects and we would be interested to hear from you if there are areas where you feel we could help you with your training needs. [employerteam@mkcollege.ac.uk](mailto:employerteam@mkcollege.ac.uk)

#### **CEO AND GROUP PRINCIPAL**

Sally Alexander

#### **CHAIR OF GOVERNORS**

Ruby Parmar

#### **HEADLINE SPONSOR**



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