

15 November 2010

Press Release

TALENTED LEE IS CROWNED BEST APPRENTICE PLUMBER IN THE UK

Star plumber Lee Patrick, who trained at Cambridge Regional College, has been named the best in the country after a gruelling two-day competition.

The talented craftsman competed against nine other top contestants from across the UK to win the coveted SkillPLUMB title, watched by thousands of visitors at the high-profile event at Olympia.

He had to follow detailed plans from scratch to plumb in a system, including boiler pipework, radiators and shower, with exacting precision and working to timed deadlines.



Lee, centre, and tutor Paul Hargrove, left, receive their awards

Lee, from Ely, who admits he wasn't one of the best students when he first came to the College, said it had been a tough competition against the best in the UK and he was absolutely amazed when he won.

"I thought I was eighth or ninth and I was totally shocked. I never think it is good enough. I was amazed when they called my name out. It was fantastic.

"A camera crew was filming and around 8,000 people were there at Olympia. I thought it would put me off but you become so focused on what you are doing that you forget about everyone else."

Lee was presented with a trophy and a range of tools at a glittering awards ceremony at a Kensington hotel, and the College was also among the prize-winners – winning the highly prestigious Worshipful Company of Plumbers' award for excellence in copper teaching, and £1,000 worth of tools.

Twenty-six year-old Lee's stellar progress – he was also chosen as CRC's Construction Student of the Year – began when he changed from a full-time course to an apprenticeship programme with CRC and joined local employer James Brown Mechanical Services.

"I was one of the worst students when I started on a full-time Level 2 course in plumbing at CRC," said Lee, who lives in Welland Place, Ely. "I transferred to an Apprenticeship, and at Level 3 I decided I wanted to learn and I turned it around. You can't mess about for ever.

"As an apprentice, you need to get your technical information from the College, and I learned a lot from James Brown – he taught me to do everything properly, to take my time and don't rush."

Lee, who now works for Swavesey-based Entire Group Ltd, completed his Advanced Apprenticeship several months before his peers and with outstanding results, said his tutor Paul Hargrove.

“Lee was a model student during his Apprenticeship. It is not just his practical work that is so good, but his theory is also excellent. He really enjoys what he does, and he was a pleasure to teach. He always wanted to progress and go for the next challenge. This is a very well-deserved win – he really is the best in the country.”

. - ends -

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

For more information, please contact Lynn O’Shea, Communications & PR Manager, on 01223 418773 or email loshea@camre.ac.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

Cambridge Regional College is the second largest provider of full-time education for 16 to 19 year-olds in the eastern region. The College has around 3,500 full-time and 6,000 part-time students. Students come in from a 40-mile radius, covering Cambridge and its surrounding villages, eastern Bedfordshire, northern Essex and western Suffolk.

Over 80 per cent of full-time students are aged 16 to 18 years old and come to the College after secondary school; the rest are mature students, studying on a range of Access to Higher Education and vocational programmes. The College offers the largest and most comprehensive range of vocational courses in Cambridgeshire, and has one of the largest work-based learning contracts in the Eastern Region.