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Press Release

YOUNG STORYTELLER WEAVES A WINNING TALE

Traditional stories from his native country have helped a Cambridge Regional College student win a national competition.

Aspiring actor Mark Jelinek took the Young Storyteller of the Year title with a magical and entrancing performance of a Hungarian folk tale.



Mark Jelinek competing at the Storyteller of the Year competition

The 18 year-old student enthralled the judges at Birmingham to win the contest against strong competition from all over the UK, using the skills learned during storytelling workshops at the College.

It is the second year running that the College has been successful at the competition; last year, students Chris Till, James Essery and Gemma Cage, all 17, won the Group Performance title with 'Perseus, a Greek tale'.

The Young Storyteller of the Year competition, now in its sixth year, is organised by the Traditional Arts team in Birmingham to raise the profile of young storytellers nationally and to encourage talented youngsters to take up the art.

Graham Langley, of the Traditional Arts team, said Mark's performance had been entertaining, clear and well-delivered.

"He had an excellent relationship with the audience and the story was obviously very special to him – and that's what makes a good storyteller.

"The image of 'Kevin the Teenager' is one that many parents are familiar with, but there are some very talented, eloquent and animated young storytellers around.

"Storytelling helps to build confidence in public speaking and connecting with audiences; skills that are eagerly sought by potential employers."

Mark, in his first year of the National Diploma Performing Arts, has been taking part in workshops run at the College by Cambridge storyteller Peter Hilken, an expert in the traditional art. The sessions cover areas such as presentation, voice projection and public speaking techniques.

Peter, founder of Cambridge Storytellers, said Mark's storytelling had been excellent.

"Mark made his Hungarian folk tale hugely enjoyable for the discriminating audience in the Library Theatre in Birmingham, and triumphed in his age category against very strong competition," he said.

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MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

For more information, please contact Lynn O'Shea, PR & Events Co-ordinator, 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 Train to Gain contracts in the Eastern Region.