



# SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE BROCHURE 2024

Stars of the Future in Association with Event Sponsors



Construction Plant-hire Association [www.cpa.uk.net](http://www.cpa.uk.net)



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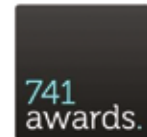
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CPA Stars of the Future is organised by the Construction Plant-hire Association  
27/28 Newbury Street, Barbican, London EC1A 7HU [www.cpa.uk.net](http://www.cpa.uk.net)



# CPA STARS OF THE FUTURE AWARDS 2024

Earlier this year, the Construction Plant-hire Association (CPA) was delighted to welcome almost 300 attendees to the Heart of England Conference and Events Centre near Coventry for the 2024 awards ceremony for the CPA's apprentice and trainee awards - Stars of the Future.

Stars of the Future is one of the CPA's flagship events which has been running for well over 10 years and it's one that we're very proud of. It's now firmly established as the construction plant sector's premier event for recognising and rewarding the skills and calibre of the industry's apprentices and trainees.

A total of 80 nominations were received for the 2024 awards programme. The awards identify some of the industry's brightest up-and-coming talent and its future leaders across various occupations including Plant Mechanics, Plant Technicians, Hire Controllers, Lifting Technicians, Plant Installers, Plant Operatives and Young Plant Operatives, as well as those who mentor the apprentices.

On behalf of the CPA, we'd like to congratulate all the nominees and winners - it's a tremendous achievement in itself for apprentices to be nominated by their employer or training provider for a Star of the Future Award. Testimony to the success of the awards is that many previous Stars

National winners from the CPA Stars of the Future Awards 2024



of the Future award winners have gone on to secure senior positions in the construction plant industry.

We would like to thank all our sponsors, without whom we simply could not stage such an event or reward our winners so considerably. Award winners received some fabulous prizes, including tool kits, machine training courses, iPads, an overseas trip to visit a Liebherr crane manufacturing plant in Germany, another overseas trip to one of Wolffkran's manufacturing facilities in Luckau, Germany, and VIP days courtesy of JCB.

Special thanks also go to each and every one of our 13 judges for the tremendous amount of time and

effort they took in going through all the nominations so thoroughly.

**If you have apprentices in your business that you believe will be the leaders of tomorrow, please don't hesitate to nominate them for a Stars of the Future Award. There are various categories and nomination forms for the 2025 Awards will be on [www.cpa.uk.net](http://www.cpa.uk.net) from January 2025.**

**Steve Mulholland**  
CPA Chief  
Executive Officer



# JUDGING PANEL

Stars of the Future has a two-tier judging process – the CPA selection panel and a panel of external judges who decide the eventual winners of each category.

Nominations for a number of categories were initially filtered by the CPA selection panel comprising:



**ROB SQUIRES**

Rob is the CPA's Training and Safety Manager and one of the co-ordinators of the Stars programme. Prior to joining the CPA, following a long career in the armed forces, he spent a number of years managing training, card and certification schemes with experience at CITB managing a range of CSCS-based schemes.



**PETER BROWN**

Peter is the CPA's Technical and Development Manager. He has a long background in plant technical operation and maintenance, followed by experience in plant-based education, training and development, including 18 years at CITB as a standard-setter for plant occupational standards, qualifications, training standards and CPCS.



**LISA COLLINS**

Lisa is a Communications Consultant to the CPA and the other co-ordinator of Stars, having been involved in the organisation of the event for several years. Prior to setting up independently, Lisa headed up the Marketing Communications Department at A-Plant, now known as Sunbelt Rentals, for almost 10 years.



**KATIE KELLEHER**

Katie is the CPA's Technical and Development Officer. Prior to joining the CPA, she worked for Select Plant Hire for eight years as a Crane Operator and Appointed Person. She has been involved in the judging of Stars of the Future for a number of years and is a champion for women and young people working in construction.





**ARRAN WILLIS**  
Liebherr-GB

A former apprentice, Arran is now employed as the After Sales Operations Manager for Liebherr's crane division. Liebherr has been a major employer at all levels of apprenticeships over many years and sponsors the Lifting Technician of the Year award.



**SIÔN MORGAN JONES**  
ACOP Group

Hailing from a family-based plant hire company, Siôn now heads up ACOP Group: a leading plant-based training organisation and award-winning assessment centre. He is the CPA Council Chair and Wales' representative. ACOP Group were joint sponsors of the Plant Operative of the Year award with NOCN/CPCS and the Young Plant Operative of the Year award with L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage.



**KIRSTY ARCHBOLD-LAMING**  
Southern Hoist Services

Kirsty has been in the industry for over 30 years working for specialist rental company Southern Hoist Services. Keen to improve the industry through training and guidance, she is Chair of the Hire Controller Trailblazer Apprenticeship, successfully getting it approved and delivered to industry. In conjunction with her 'day job', she is also Chair of the Construction Hoist Interest Group (CHIG), CPA Council Vice Chair, and she sits on various British Standards and IPAF Committees.



**LEIGH SPARROW**  
Vertikal Press

Leigh is the owner of The Vertikal Press which produces the industry-leading Cranes and Access magazine and hosts the successful Vertikal Days crane and access trade show. A long supporter of training, Leigh comes from a family which has a long association with the crane and lifting world.



**GRAHAM BLACK**  
Earthmovers Magazine

As Editor of the very popular Earthmovers magazine, Graham has a long interest in training and seeing new talent come into the industry, evidenced by the many articles written in Earthmovers featuring new and young plant operators. He has great insight and knowledge into the plant world.



**GEORGINA WILLIAMS**  
JCB

Georgina started working for JCB six years ago as an Event Coordinator which was her first taste into the world of construction. She strived to learn more about JCB's products, the industry and customers which led her to a role as a Product Demonstrator at JCB, before testing new products for JCB Research as a Test Driver. This led Georgina to her current role as Demonstration and Training Manager for Backhoe Loaders where she is responsible for development and deployment of Backhoe Loader Plant Operator Training options through partner training schools, as well as leading the roll out of JCB Backhoe Loader Demonstrations in the UK.



**TIM BROWNBRIDGE**  
BAM Nuttall Ltd

Having a long background in plant and civil engineering, Tim is employed as BAM UK & Ireland Learning Academy Manager. He also represents the civil engineering sector via the Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) in a number of development groups including Chair of the Groundworker and member of the Plant Operator and Lifting Technician Trailblazer Groups, as well as holding the position as Trustee of NOCN Job Cards.



**SEAN SCARAH**  
Balfour Beatty

Sean started his career in plant-hire 36 years ago. He has carried out almost every role in plant-hire - including Driver, Fitter, Hire Controller, Depot Manager, Sales and Account Manager. He spent 10 years with Sunbelt Rentals before coming over to the Tier 1 contractors side. For the last 15 years Sean has been the Plant and Logistics Director for Balfour Beatty in the newly named Asset and Technology Solutions part of the business, which supplies every part of the Balfour Beatty Group with plant requirements - be it owned or hired in.



**ROB ALLEN**  
Independent

Rob started a long career in the plant sector back in 1979 as an Apprentice Mechanic from which he finished his career in industry as H, S & E Manager at Clee Hill Plant. Rob was a member of many plant and H&S training and technical working groups and was Co-Chair of the Construction Equipment Maintenance Mechanic Trailblazer Working Group.

**AWARDS HOST**  
**MERRYN MYATT**  
Stars of the Future 2024 was hosted by former television newsreader, presenter and journalist Merryn Myatt. Merryn has hosted CPA events for several years, prior to which she presented TV and radio programmes for BBC, ITV and Channel 4, amongst others. The shows she presented included The Money Channel, Business Matters, North West Tonight, Countryfile and Woman's Hour. She is now involved in positive and productive media engagement training, event hosting and public speaking.





# HAVE YOU GOT STAR APPRENTICES OR TRAINEES IN YOUR ORGANISATION?

**Nominate them for a Star of the Future Award in 2025.**

Nomination forms for the Stars of the Future Awards 2025  
will be on [www.cpa.uk.net](http://www.cpa.uk.net) in January 2025.



Hayden Chappell

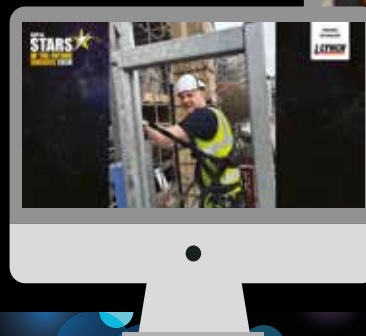


PLANT INSTALLER  
OF THE YEAR



Take a look at What Stars  
of the Future is all about...

Watch our highlights video from the  
Stars of the Future Awards 2024 at  
<https://youtu.be/ZqIvu2JTOeY>



# PLANT MECHANIC OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Due to the high number of entries, the Level 2 Plant Mechanic of the Year Awards were split by region. On receipt, nominations from either the colleges or the employers were entered into one of five regional categories. The regional winners won a Snap-on student tool kit.



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*All the regional winners are pictured with CPA Chair Siôn Morgan Jones*



**SAM ELLIS**



**LUKE SUTTON**



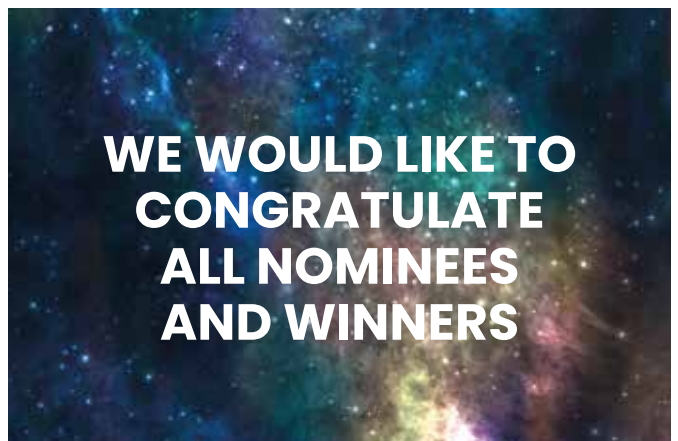
**ON BEHALF OF JOSH THOMAS**



**KAI BLACKBURN**



**BETHAN WHITTAKER**





# NOMINEES

## PLANT MECHANIC OF THE YEAR – NORTH

<b>Sam Ellis</b>	<b>Flannery Civil Engineering</b>	<b>Askham Bryan College</b>	<b>WINNER</b>
Jack Crabtree	Moortown Group	Askham Bryan College	Finalist

## PLANT MECHANIC OF THE YEAR – MIDLANDS

<b>Luke Sutton</b>	<b>Synergy Hire</b>	<b>National Construction College East</b>	<b>WINNER</b>
Luke Divit	Marubeni-Komatsu	NSCG Stafford College	Highly Commended
Tyler Hartles	Marubeni-Komatsu	NSCG Stafford College	Highly Commended
Harry Chetwynd	Balfour Beatty VINCI	NSCG Stafford College	Finalist
McAuley Longmore	Rea Valley Tractors	NSCG Stafford College	Finalist
Shaydn George	Clee Hill Plant	NSCG Stafford College	Finalist
Toby Smith	TH White	NSCG Stafford College	Finalist

## PLANT MECHANIC OF THE YEAR – SOUTH

<b>Josh Thomas</b>	<b>Liebherr-GB</b>	<b>NSCG Stafford College</b>	<b>WINNER</b>
Joe Mustey	Earlcoate Construction & Plant Hire	National Construction College East	Highly Commended
Luke Piggott	Vp Brandon Hire Station	Myerscough College	Highly Commended
Mike Kinnane	Sunbelt Rentals	Myerscough College	Highly Commended
Adam Millard	GAP Group	Reaseheath College	Finalist
Anne-Marie Hayward	Speedy Services	National Construction College East	Finalist
Billy Mingard	Speedy Services	Askham Bryan College	Finalist
Ciaran Sequeira	Liebherr-GB	NSCG Stafford College	Finalist
Gabriel Bridges	Sunbelt Rentals	Myerscough College	Finalist
Giu Coelho	GAP Group	Wiltshire College & University Centre	Finalist
Jack Statham	Liebherr-GB	NSCG Stafford College	Finalist
Kieran Patterson	Nationwide Platforms	North Warwickshire & South Leicestershire College	Finalist

## PLANT MECHANIC OF THE YEAR – SCOTLAND

<b>Kai Blackburn</b>	<b>Ord Industrial &amp; Commercial Supplies</b>	<b>National Construction College Scotland</b>	<b>WINNER</b>
Leeona McEwan	GAP Group	National Construction College Scotland	Highly Commended
Chris Nelson	Marubeni-Komatsu	NSCG Stafford College	Finalist
Chris Scott	Marubeni-Komatsu	NSCG Stafford College	Finalist
Lewis Frew	One Stop Access	National Construction College Scotland	Finalist

## PLANT MECHANIC OF THE YEAR – WALES

<b>Bethan Whittaker</b>	<b>KJ Services</b>	<b>Bridgend College</b>	<b>WINNER</b>
Ethan Williams	KJ Services	Bridgend College	Highly Commended
Ethan Chamberlain-Rogers	Marubeni-Komatsu	NSCG Stafford College	Finalist

# NATIONAL PLANT MECHANIC OF THE YEAR AWARD

All of the regional Plant Mechanic of the Year winners were put forward for the National Plant Mechanic of the Year accolade.

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## NATIONAL PLANT MECHANIC OF THE YEAR AWARD - NOMINEES

Name	Company	College	Result
Bethan Whittaker	KJ Services	Bridgend College	WINNER
Josh Thomas	Liebherr-GB	NSCG Stafford College	Highly Commended
Sam Ellis	Flannery Civil Engineering	Askham Bryan College	Finalist
Luke Sutton	Synergy Hire	National Construction College East	Finalist
Kai Blackburn	Ord Industrial & Commercial Supplies	National Construction College Scotland	Finalist

*Photographs: Josh's award was received on his behalf. Bethan is pictured with CPA Chair Siôn Morgan Jones (left) and Matt Reed (right) of M O'Brien Plant Hire*



### HIGHLY COMMENDED

A Highly Commended accolade was awarded to:

#### JOSH THOMAS

Liebherr-GB, NSCG Stafford College

### WINNER

Huge congratulations to the winner of the National Plant Mechanic of the Year Award for 2024:

#### BETHAN WHITTAKER

KJ Services, Bridgend College

## WHAT IS A PLANT MECHANIC?

Mechanics carry out servicing and repair activities on a wide range of construction plant, equipment and accessories, either in a workshop or on site. Activities include routine servicing, breakdowns, fitting additional equipment or carrying out repairs to damaged equipment.





# SPOTLIGHT ON BETHAN WHITTAKER

## NATIONAL PLANT MECHANIC OF THE YEAR 2024

When the Stars of the Future judges saw the lengths that Bethan had gone to in her nomination for Plant Mechanic of the Year, they were unanimous that not only should she win the regional accolade for Wales, but she should also win the National Plant Mechanic of the Year Award.

It was one of the first times that the judges had received a personal statement filmed using TikTok, but she didn't stop there. She accompanied it with an impressive 1,000 word write-up telling her story about how she entered into the plant sector.

When Bethan first left school and college, she was on a very different career path to the one she's on now. With a keen interest in sport, she completed an Honours Degree in Sports Conditioning, Rehabilitation and Massage at Cardiff Metropolitan University. Before that she achieved Coleg y Cymoedd's first ever triple Distinction star for completing her BTEC Level 3 Award.

Bethan is a talented rugby player and has played for several teams including Bargoed RFC and Nelson RFC, being awarded numerous representations for Nelson's senior women's first team and also completing pitch side physio. However, after she completed her university degree, she deliberated on her career path moving forward and decided against the sporting route.

Instead, she decided to focus on her other interest of mechanics. Bethan has always been a practical, hands-on type of person with a keen interest in the plant industry; as a child she always played with machine toys and she took many a trip to watch machinery in action such as excavators and dump trucks on building sites. But despite her deep interest, she initially found it difficult to get a foot in the door.

She said: ***"It was a hard path to get anyone to offer me a chance within the industry, not only because of my gender, but having to face many companies turning me away due to me being female and them being unsure if I could handle being in a very male dominated environment."***

**'BETHAN FIRST TOOK ON A JOB ROLE AS A 3T FLATBED DRIVER TO GET A FOOT IN THE DOOR IN THE PLANT INDUSTRY.'**



***"Finally, to get into the industry I accepted a job offer as a 3T flatbed driver for Fitzgerald Plant Services. I completed this role for numerous months, using the time to build relationships and prove myself in other aspects aside from the driving."***

Bethan put in hours of overtime helping out in the workshop to prove her interest and skills. After many months of expressing an interest in working full-time in the workshop, she was given the chance and worked alongside an excellent mentor for 18 months, developing her skills set along the way.

She then progressed to KJ Services in a job that was closer to home, successfully completing an initial trial period to prove herself within the workshop and on-site environments, and becoming an excellent ambassador for the company over time.

Bethan hopes to work abroad in the future, in either Australia or Canada to allow her to gain even more experience of working on larger mining plant equipment. She also has aspirations to complete teaching qualifications in order to share her knowledge with the next generation of aspiring Plant Mechanics.

# PLANT TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS



Like the Plant Mechanic of the Year Awards, the Level 3 Plant Technician of the Year Awards were split by region. Nominees were entered into one of five regional categories. The regional winners won a Snap-on student tool kit.

*All the regional winners are pictured with CPA Chair Siôn Morgan Jones.*



**MORGAN WARDLE**



**COURTNEY PRICE**



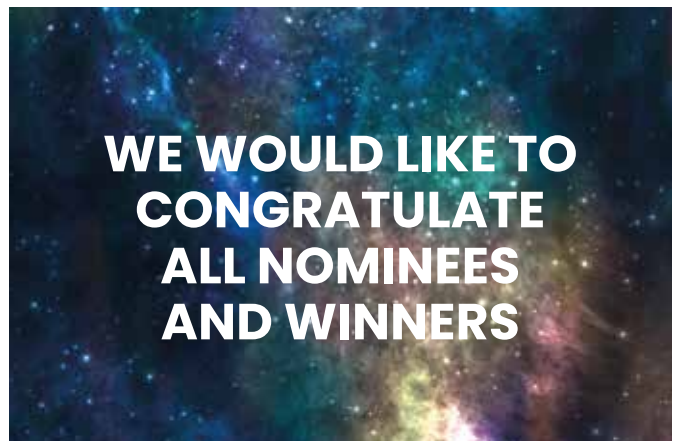
**HARRY TOTMAN**



**LOUIE MASSON**



**ON BEHALF OF TOM WILLIAMS**





# NOMINEES

## PLANT TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR – NORTH

<b>Morgan Wardle</b>	<b>Banks Plant Solutions</b>	<b>Askham Bryan College</b>	<b>WINNER</b>
Ethan Hopwood	Allan J Hargreaves Plant Engineers Ltd	Preston College	Highly Commended
Thomas Joynt	Sunbelt Rentals	Myerscough College	Highly Commended
Subhaan Nawaz	Bachy Soletanche	Midland Group Training Services	Highly Commended
Billy Cole	GAP Group	Reaseheath College	Finalist
Josh Evenden	SMT	Reaseheath College	Finalist
Terry Rochester	ASHBROOK Ltd	Reaseheath College	Finalist

## PLANT TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR – MIDLANDS

<b>Courtney Price</b>	<b>SMT</b>	<b>Reaseheath College</b>	<b>WINNER</b>
Shannon Weiss	Finning UK	Finning Academy	Highly Commended
Oliver Voss	Watling JCB	National Construction College East	Highly Commended
Owen Van Greuning	Marubeni-Komatsu	NSCG Stafford College	Highly Commended
Andrew Hill	Readypower Rail Services	NSCG Stafford College	Finalist
Daniel Parkin	Quattro Plant	NSCG Stafford College	Finalist
Noah Hobson	Quattro Plant	NSCG Stafford College	Finalist
Richard Batkin	Barhale Construction Services (BCS) Group	NSCG Stafford College	Finalist

## PLANT TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR – SOUTH

<b>Harry Totman</b>	<b>Liebherr-GB</b>	<b>NSCG Stafford College</b>	<b>WINNER</b>
Thomas Fuentes-Moreno	Vp Brandon Hire Station	Myerscough College	Highly Commended
Jack Southam	Southern Cranes & Access	National Construction College East	Highly Commended
Albie Seccombe	Speedy Services	Askham Bryan College	Finalist
Jack Parker	Vp Torrent Trackside	Myerscough College	Finalist
Joe Baker	Watson & Hillhouse	National Construction College East	Finalist

## PLANT TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR – SCOTLAND

<b>Louie Masson</b>	<b>Pat Munro (Alness)</b>	<b>National Construction College Scotland</b>	<b>WINNER</b>
Jordan Norman	PMG Services	National Construction College Scotland	Finalist
Paul Hunter	Garriock Brothers	National Construction College Scotland	Finalist
Ryan Sim	GAP Group	National Construction College Scotland	Finalist

## PLANT TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR – WALES

<b>Tom Williams</b>	<b>CBL</b>	<b>Bridgend College</b>	<b>WINNER</b>
Thomas Jones	GT Access	Bridgend College	Finalist

# NATIONAL PLANT TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

All of the regional Plant Technician of the Year winners were put forward for the National Plant Technician of the Year accolade.



## NATIONAL PLANT TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD - NOMINEES

Morgan Wardle	Banks Plant Solutions	Askham Bryan College	WINNER
Courtney Price	SMT	Reaseheath College	Highly Commended
Harry Totman	Liebherr-GB	NSCG Stafford College	Highly Commended
Louie Masson	Pat Munro (Alness)	National Construction College Scotland	Finalist
Tom Williams	CBL	Bridgend College	Finalist

Photographs: Courtney, Harry and Morgan are pictured with CPA Chair Siôn Morgan Jones



### HIGHLY COMMENDED

Two Highly Commended accolades were awarded to:

**COURTNEY PRICE**  
SMT, Reaseheath College

### HARRY TOTMAN

Liebherr-GB, NSCG Stafford College

### WINNER

Huge congratulations to the winner of the National Plant Technician of the Year Award for 2024:

**MORGAN WARDLE**  
Banks Plant Solutions, Askham Bryan College

## WHAT IS A PLANT TECHNICIAN?

Technicians carry out more complex technical repairs than Plant Mechanics and require a higher level of understanding on the principles and workings of key components and functional equipment. They deal with complex breakdowns, upgrades or conversions.





# SPOTLIGHT ON MORGAN WARDLE

## NATIONAL PLANT TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR 2024

**Morgan originally joined Banks Plant Solutions in Durham on a placement that helped young people to get into work. He has already worked himself up from a Labourer to a qualified Plant Mechanic.**

His first experience of the plant-hire sector was when he was at school, as Morgan's Dad was a Plant Manager for a plant-hire company and Morgan worked with him over the weekends. He originally started with Banks Plant Solutions on a Government work placement which enabled him to get a construction qualification, and his peers were so impressed with his work ethic that they made the decision to take him on as a Labourer in a full-time position.

Morgan, now 23, continually delivered to outstanding levels and built excellent working relationships across the business, which prompted Banks Plant Solutions to invest in Morgan's development to work towards an apprenticeship in Plant Mechanics.

He said: *"When I first left school, I never got the opportunity to start an apprenticeship, so when the opportunity arose, my Manager and colleagues told me I should 100% apply. It's been one of the best decisions I've ever made. I've learnt so much and can take on complicated tasks that I never thought I could do. The best thing about my job is that I learn from time served Plant Mechanics and gain their knowledge which they pass down to me."*

During his time at Banks Plant Solutions, Morgan has gone above and beyond with his learning and has completed numerous extra training courses such as Quarry Passport, Gas Safety Training, Health and Safety for Operatives and has multiple machines on his NPORS which included additional NVQs.

Morgan first won an accolade at the CPA Stars of the Future Awards in 2023 when he was selected as Plant Mechanic of the Year for the Northern region. He went on to impress the judges even further at this year's awards when he won the National Plant Technician of the Year prize.



**"WHEN I FIRST LEFT SCHOOL, I NEVER GOT THE OPPORTUNITY TO START AN APPRENTICESHIP BUT IT'S BEEN ONE OF THE BEST DECISIONS I'VE EVER MADE."**

He added: *"I was so happy when I won. It showed me that my dedication and hard work had paid off. For my prize I won a roll cart full of Snap-on tools which was amazing. It will really help me throughout my career and remind me in many years to come about the day I won 'Star of the Future'."*

So what's next for Morgan? He plans to keep on working hard and gain his NVQ Level 3 in Plant Mechanics. He hopes to move up through the ranks at Banks Plant Solutions and one day be running the plant sector as the Plant Director.

Best of luck Morgan - each and every one of the Stars of the Future judges were so impressed with your nomination and we have every confidence you can achieve your dreams.

# HIRE CONTROLLER OF THE YEAR AWARD

We would like to congratulate all candidates who were nominated for the Hire Controller of the Year Award. The winner – Millie Scott-Young of Sunbelt Rentals – won an iPad to assist her in her job role.

AWARD SPONSOR



## HIRE CONTROLLER OF THE YEAR – NOMINEES

Millie Scott-Young	Sunbelt Rentals	WINNER
Lauren Jobson	Sunbelt Rentals	Highly Commended
Ben Long	GAP Group	Finalist
Charlie Poxon	GAP Group	Finalist
Joseph Jarvis	GAP Group	Finalist
Mia Hand	Speedy Services	Finalist

*Photographs: Lauren and Millie are pictured with CPA Vice Chair Kirsty Archbold-Laming (left) and Jenny Parry of Sunbelt Rentals (right)*



### HIGHLY COMMENDED

A Highly Commended accolade was awarded to:

**LAUREN JOBSON**  
Sunbelt Rentals



### WINNER

Huge congratulations to the winner of the Hire Controller of the Year Award for 2024:

**MILLIE SCOTT-YOUNG**  
Sunbelt Rentals

## WHAT IS A HIRE CONTROLLER?

Hire Controllers act as the interface between their organisation and the customer and offer advice to customers, deal with hire and technical queries and complete contractual documentation for the hire, both when commencing and on completion. They work with the wider team and have a wide range of product knowledge for the equipment they hire out.





# SPOTLIGHT ON MILLIE SCOTT-YOUNG

## HIRE CONTROLLER OF THE YEAR 2024

Since Millie, 19, joined Sunbelt Rentals as an Apprentice Customer Service Advisor in September 2022, she has made a huge impression company-wide thanks to her positive attitude and infectious personality.

Just a few months after starting work at Sunbelt Rentals' Chadderton depot in Greater Manchester, she won the 'Impressive Start Award' at the company's Annual Apprentice Awards and is widely seen as a source of inspiration – not just for her fellow apprentices and depot staff, but also for management.

When Millie first left school, she initially moved into the dental nursing profession, but with a strong family background in construction, when the apprenticeship opportunity at Sunbelt Rentals arose, she had no hesitation in swapping her medical scrubs for a hi-viz vest!

Millie's Dad is a Senior Construction Director and although there was never any pressure, she knew from his own views that there some were great opportunities for women in construction.

She told us: ***"When the Sunbelt Rentals apprenticeship was advertised locally, I felt drawn into making my own way. You could say follow in my Dad's footsteps, however, by my own pathway."***

Millie's Dad has been a huge source of inspiration for her personally and professionally. He was actually diagnosed with cancer early on in Millie's apprenticeship journey, but she was determined to maintain a professional and positive attitude at work. At the age of 17, Millie was made her Dad's primary carer and they both firmly believe that the joy Millie's apprenticeship brought to them both helped with his full recovery.

Millie is carrying out her apprenticeship in conjunction with North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College (NWSLC) and she believes it has equipped her with valuable skills, especially team-based problem solving, setting up a strong foundation for her future.



**'WHEN AN OPPORTUNITY AROSE TO CHANGE HER CAREER PATH, MILLIE HAD NO HESITATION IN SWAPPING HER MEDICAL SCRUBS FOR A HI-VIZ VEST!'**

As well as winning the Hire Controller of the Year accolade, Millie has been nominated to undertake an NVQ in Women in Construction Leadership course. Despite her many achievements in such a short space of time, Millie was still shocked when her name was announced as the winner at the CPA Stars of the Future Awards.

She said: ***"I was thrilled and shocked when I won Hire Controller of the Year and I still think about the awards ceremony every day. I won an iPad which I love!"***

***"It's brilliant working at Sunbelt Rentals because I work for an organisation which is truly committed to opportunity and development. My ambitions are to continue to move forward and seize opportunities. I am up for whatever Sunbelt Rentals throws at me!"***

***"My advice for anyone looking for a career in construction is to go for it. Don't even hesitate. My two years have been fantastic. I learn something new every day, have made great and long-lasting friendships, and I know the sector has countless opportunities if you want to run with them. Like most things in life, you get out what you put in. You can let things happen, or you can make things happen!"***

# YOUNG PLANT OPERATIVE OF THE YEAR AWARD

We would like to congratulate the candidates who were nominated for the Young Plant Operative of the Year Award.

The winner – Josh Jones of L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage – won a CPCS training course for the category of 180 Degree Excavator at ACOP Group’s training facility in Wales, with overnight accommodation provided.

The prize also included a VIP experience at JCB’s World HQ in Staffordshire, including lunch served in the VIP Hospitality Suite, a Backhoe Loader Dig Experience at the JCB Demonstration Centre and an overnight stay at the JCB Golf and Country Club.

**AWARD SPONSORS**



**PROVIDER OF ADDITIONAL PLANT OPERATIVE PRIZES**



**YOUNG PLANT OPERATIVE OF THE YEAR – NOMINEES**

Josh Jones	L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage	WINNER
Lewis Ensor	L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage	Highly Commended

Photograph (Pictured from left to right): Merrill Lynch of L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage, Lewis Ensor and CPA Chair Siôn Morgan Jones.



Photograph (Pictured from left to right): CPA Vice Chair Kirsty Archbold-Laming, Merrill Lynch of L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage, Josh Jones and CPA Chair Siôn Morgan Jones.



**HIGHLY COMMENDED**

A Highly Commended accolade was awarded to:

**LEWIS ENSOR**

L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage

**WINNER**

Huge congratulations to the winner of the Young Plant Operative of the Year Award for 2024:

**JOSH JONES**

L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage



# SPOTLIGHT ON JOSH JONES

## YOUNG PLANT OPERATIVE OF THE YEAR 2024

It could be said that Josh was destined to join the construction plant industry. He always had an interest in big machines, but never knew how to get into operating them, so he initially started as a labourer working on a HS2 site. It was there that he found out about apprenticeship opportunities with L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage, and his journey in plant operating began.

Even though Josh has been in the industry for less than two years, he's worked on varied machines and gained multiple tickets already. He's had the opportunity to work on high-profile projects all around the country, including HS2 and the M4 project.

He is said to be a steady, observant and controlled operator, working well around plant and people, and he has received great feedback from everyone on site. His enthusiasm to learn shines through to his peers.

He said: ***"My journey with Lynch so far has been an amazing experience all round. The support and guidance I have received from everyone that I have spoken to has been brilliant. They have helped me through every step of my journey."***

***"I have acquired many skills since starting my apprenticeship. I have gained various different types of skills ranging from operating skills all the way to communication skills. However, one skill that stands out the most that has improved is my confidence. Confidence was never a strong point of mine but since starting at Lynch I have really progressed and have much more confidence in myself."***

Josh has made brilliant progress - growing from a completely inexperienced operator, to being able to drive several different machines on site. He's even had the opportunity to be part of a Construction Live broadcast which went out to over 60,000 students all around the UK.

He's also eager to push himself to get additional training on other machines down the line, such as the

***"IT'S A FABULOUS INDUSTRY TO GET INTO. THERE ARE SO MANY DIFFERENT OPPORTUNITIES AND AVENUES YOU CAN GO DOWN - IT'S JUST BRILLIANT!"***



Dozer. As winner of the Young Plant Operative of the Year accolade, he'll get the opportunity to gain his ticket for the 180 Degree Excavator at ACOP Group's training facility in Wales.

He said: ***"It's a fantastic prize and I can't wait to give the 180 Backhoe Loader a go. I'll also get the opportunity to go to JCB for the VIP experience day. I felt amazing when I was announced the winner of Young Plant Operative of the Year - I wasn't expecting it but I'm really proud of what I've achieved so far. I've had a fantastic journey in the short time that I've been in the industry and I can't wait to see where it takes me."***

***"I'd encourage those interested in the sector to apply for as many different apprenticeships as possible and get all the information you can. It's a fabulous industry to get into. There are so many different opportunities and avenues you can go down - it's just brilliant!"*** he added.

# PLANT OPERATIVE OF THE YEAR AWARD

The winner of the Plant Operative of the Year Award for 2024 was Reece Stray of L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage.

Reece won a CPCS training course for the category of 180 Degree Excavator at ACOP Group's training facility in Wales, with overnight accommodation provided.

The prize also included a VIP experience at JCB's World HQ in Staffordshire, including lunch served in the VIP Hospitality Suite, a Backhoe Loader Dig Experience at the JCB Demonstration Centre and an overnight stay at the JCB Golf and Country Club.

*Photograph (from left to right):  
CPA Vice Chair Kirsty Archbold-Laming,  
CPA Chair Siôn Morgan Jones, Reece Stray  
and Paul Taylor of NOCN Group.*



## WINNER

Huge congratulations to the winner of the Plant Operative of the Year Award for 2024:

**REECE STRAY**

L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage

## AWARD SPONSORS



## PROVIDER OF ADDITIONAL PLANT OPERATIVE PRIZES



## WHAT IS A PLANT OPERATIVE?

Plant Operatives operate one or more items of plant on site safely and efficiently such as earthmoving equipment, material handlers, cranes, etc. Their role is a safety critical one as they usually work within a team who may be in close proximity to the machine and are responsible for others' safety.





# SPOTLIGHT ON REECE STRAY

## PLANT OPERATIVE OF THE YEAR 2024

From a young age, Reece was a talented footballer and hoped to turn professional, but a knee injury turned his career aspirations into a different direction. He tried his hand at labouring before he heard about L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage's Careers in Plant scheme.

At the time, Reece felt unsure about what he wanted from life and where he was heading, but ever since the first day he started at Lynch, he has never looked back.

Given the opportunity, he jumped straight in with two feet, never taking a day off and firmly focused on learning and adding machine categories to his ticket. Coming from a sports background, he understands the importance of discipline and punctuality. Reece puts a great emphasis on his family and is making every effort to lay the foundation for a prosperous future. For the past three years, Reece has been working on a busy HS2 site and he has become one of the most respected Plant Operatives on site, trusted by his colleagues to complete tasks to an extremely high standard. He now has a phenomenal seven tickets and was delighted to win the coveted Plant Operative of the Year Award at Stars of the Future.

Reece said: *"In the early stages of life, I just threw myself into football and was sure that I would make it professionally. I heard about the Lynch Training in Plant programme from my sister and to be honest I have finally found myself and even though I am not playing football professionally, I now hold seven tickets and still play football on the weekend with my beautiful girlfriend coming to watch me on the side line, so you could say that I have made it!"*

*"Lynch and the team have provided me with great support and guidance and made me love this industry and love construction. My biggest inspirations are the people I meet out on site, as they inspire me to be better."*

*"I started on the site I am on now pretty much from the beginning of my training and I must be doing*



**'REECE SWITCHED HIS CAREER ASPIRATIONS FROM BECOMING A PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLER TO A PLANT OPERATIVE, AND HE'S NEVER LOOKED BACK SINCE!'**

*something right as I am still here. I'm not just saying it - I have loved every minute and I have now found who I am. I love being challenged and enjoy working and learning new skills."*

As part of his prize for winning Plant Operative of the Year, Reece will have the opportunity to develop his repertoire even further by completing a CPCS training course for the category of 180 Degree Excavator at ACOP Group's training facility. He'll also have a VIP experience at JCB's World HQ in Staffordshire.

Reece reflected on his journey since winning the award, stating: *"I felt very privileged to win Plant Operative of the Year and it was great to have the support of everyone around me. It's been an incredible journey so far. My dream is to become an Operator Foreman or a Trainer, but for now, I'm enjoying my day-to-day work on site and collaborating with the entire Lynch team."*

# LIFTING TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Congratulations to Zac Bradshaw of Commhoist who won the Lifting Technician of the Year Award for 2024. As part of his prize, Zac travelled to Germany, courtesy of Liebherr, to visit Liebherr's crane manufacturing plant in Ehingen. Accommodation and flights were provided as part of the prize.

AWARD SPONSOR

**LIEBHERR**

*Photograph (Pictured from left to right):  
CPA Vice Chair Kirsty Archbold-Laming,  
Zac Bradshaw and Tony Gribble of Liebherr*

*Zac won a trip to visit Liebherr's crane  
manufacturing plant in Ehingen, Germany*



## WINNER

Huge congratulations to the winner of the Lifting Technician of the Year for 2024:

**ZAC BRADSHAW**

Commhoist



## WHAT IS A LIFTING TECHNICIAN?

A Lifting Technician is someone who has the responsibility to set up and operate, to a high standard, either a tower, wheeled or crawler crane to lift and place materials and equipment to designated work areas on a construction site. They need to interpret and comply with given lift plan information and work in close proximity with the lifting team to carry out the lifting activities as well as undertaking slinger/signaller duties.





# SPOTLIGHT ON ZAC BRADSHAW

## LIFTING TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR 2024

Before Zac started working at Commhoist, he previously worked in the hospitality industry but he was keen to change his career path and start something afresh. An old school friend of Zac's had worked at Commhoist for several years and first introduced him to the company.

When Zac, 27, first joined Commhoist, he worked as a van driver delivering equipment to site, but it was soon evident that he was keen to progress and was capable of so much more. After completing mandatory training required for attending site, Zac demonstrated that he quickly mastered all the training he undertook and was eager to learn more.

Commhoist gave him the opportunity to complete a number of in-house training courses in order to fast track his development. Within a short space of time, he successfully completed training on small plant and equipment such as Lorry Loader training, Traffic and Pedestrian Management, and an IPAF MEWP's for Managers course. He then completed a CPCS Slinger/Signaller course and received his red trained operatives card. After receiving extensive mentoring, he was assessed on-site before being allowed to carry out Slinger/Signaller duties unsupervised.

Whilst out on-site, Zac got a taste for mobile cranes and decided this was the way forward. He took to crane operating like a duck to water and quickly became very efficient, taking every opportunity to develop his skills under instruction in the yard or out on-site from a fully qualified Crane Operator.

Zac went on to achieve his mobile crane licence and has now worked at Commhoist for over three years. Zac's peers have praised his rapid progression and commented that he is real credit to himself and the company, taking everything in his stride.

He said: ***"There are many valuable things I have learned over three years in the lifting industry, but I think the most important thing is to get involved, learn as much as possible and keep pushing for the goals you set yourself."***



***"THE PRIZE I WON WAS INCREDIBLE. I HAD THE AMAZING OPPORTUNITY TO GO TO GERMANY TO VISIT THE LIEBHERR FACTORY IN EHINGEN."***

***"The best thing about my job is that no two days are the same and there is always something new to learn. Every day is a school day and I'm always going to new places."***

***"I was really shocked when I won the Lifting Technician of the Year Award at Stars of the Future, and I was so happy. It was crazy! The prize I won was incredible. I had the amazing opportunity to go to Germany to visit the Liebherr factory in Echingen. It's something that I'll remember for life and I'm very grateful."***

So what's next for Zac? He's determined to keep improving his skills and be the best Crane Operator that he can. The trip to the Liebherr factory in Germany has certainly quenched his thirst to keep learning and developing more.

# PLANT INSTALLER OF THE YEAR AWARD

We would like to congratulate the candidates who were nominated for the Plant Installer of the Year Award. The winner - Hayden Chappell of Southern Hoist Services - received a voucher to spend £500 on Snap-on equipment.

AWARD SPONSOR



## HIRE CONTROLLER OF THE YEAR - NOMINEES

Hayden Chappell	Southern Hoist Services	WINNER
Arran Heath	Wolffkran	Highly Commended
Lee Kerr	L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage	Finalist
Lee Yellop	GAP Group	Finalist

*Photographs: Arran and Hayden are pictured with CPA Vice Chair Kirsty Archbold-Laming and Merrill Lynch of L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage*



### HIGHLY COMMENDED

A Highly Commended accolade was awarded to:

#### ARRAN HEATH

Wolffkran



### WINNER

Huge congratulations to the winner of the Plant Installer of the Year Award for 2024:

#### HAYDEN CHAPPELL

Southern Hoist Services

## WHAT IS A PLANT INSTALLER?

Plant Installers assemble, commission and disassemble large items of plant such as cranes, hoists, tunnelling equipment, material processing equipment, etc. which are stored and transported in component form and built up and disassembled on site.





# SPOTLIGHT ON HAYDEN CHAPPELL

## PLANT INSTALLER OF THE YEAR 2024

**Hayden is the first ever Trainee Hoist Installer to win the Plant Installer of the Year Award, and what a deserving candidate he is.**

He originally came from a mechanical background, having completed an apprenticeship in Motor Mechanics. Unfortunately, all was not plain sailing as after his first year his employer ceased trading. Not to be beaten and wanting to fulfil his childhood dream, he successfully found another employer in order to complete his apprenticeship.

However, he was treated very badly by this employer during his time with them. Despite this, he managed to successfully complete his apprenticeship, but this awful experience meant he no longer wanted to be in the motor industry and decided to change direction.

When Hayden first went for an interview at Southern Hoist Services, he was clearly disheartened and was also worried that his dyslexia may be an issue. But he needn't have worried. Southern Hoist Services could see the huge potential he had and although he had never worked at height and never seen a hoist before, he took to it like a duck to water. Supervisors took him under their wings to build his confidence back following such a traumatic start to his career, and he is now thriving again with clear ambition, determination and an infectious smile.

He said: ***"I had a bad experience during my Motor Mechanic Apprenticeship but completed it, then found the hoist industry. It's something I didn't know even existed by it's perfect for me! I have always been determined to succeed, with both my parents being a huge inspiration for me. They have taught me that hard work and commitment will help to better myself as a person and allow me to progress in my career."***

***"I have grown more confident over the last two years and feel that I can tackle anything I am asked to do now. I'm also not afraid to ask questions if I don't know – rather safe than sorry. Starting from the ground level I aim to work my way to the top of the***



***"I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THE HOIST INDUSTRY EXISTED, BUT IT'S PERFECT FOR ME!"***

***ladder. I may be slower than some to reach it but I want to gain all the knowledge and experience I can to be the best.***

***"I enjoy my job because every day is different. One day I'll be working on a small dismantle, the next day I could be doing a large install in the centre of London. I get to travel around the country a lot and see some fascinating projects, even working on some film sets like Mission Impossible and events at Cheltenham Racecourse and The Open in Liverpool,"*** he said.

It's clear that Hayden enjoys his work and the hoist industry and his enthusiasm is said to be infectious, inspiring others to raise their game. Even when given the most unappealing task, he smiles brightly and tackles it with boundless energy.

Despite the huge impact that Hayden has had since starting at Southern Hoist Services, he was still surprised to win a Star of the Future Award.

He told us: ***"I'm just so grateful that I won Plant Installer of the Year. I felt so happy and proud and I can't wait for the future."***

# APPRENTICE MENTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

Apprentice Mentor of the Year was first introduced as a new awards category in 2023. It was introduced because many past category nominees acknowledged the important role that their workplace mentors had been in helping them get both through their apprenticeship and for being nominated.

AWARD SPONSOR



On receiving the nominations for the mentor category, the judges were extremely impressed with the quality of every entry and the high calibre of those that had been nominated by the employer.

As each of the nominated mentors either worked directly with an apprentice or had a wider company role, we therefore took the decision to sub divide this category into two sub-awards - Individual Apprentice Mentor and Group Apprentice Mentor - to give all of the nominees the recognition they deserve. Both winners received a £250 Amazon voucher.

## APPRENTICE MENTOR OF THE YEAR - NOMINEES

Steve Gwynn	Sunbelt Rentals	WINNER - Individual Apprentice Mentor of the Year
Dave Rogers	L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage	WINNER - Group Apprentice Mentor of the Year
Bill Munday	Earlcoate Construction & Plant Hire	Highly Commended - Individual Apprentice Mentor of the Year
Tony Jenkins	Marubeni-Komatsu	Highly Commended - Individual Apprentice Mentor of the Year
Jo Stamp	Sunbelt Rentals	Highly Commended - Group Apprentice Mentor of the Year
Andrew Smith	Speedy Services	Finalist
Jody Niner	Watling JCB	Finalist
Luke Hill	GAP Group	Finalist
Wayne Spendiff	GAP Group	Finalist

## INDIVIDUAL APPRENTICE MENTOR OF THE YEAR - HIGHLY COMMENDED

Two Highly Commended accolades were awarded to the following nominees for Individual Apprentice Mentor of the Year.



**BILL MUNDAY**

Earlcoate Construction & Plant Hire



**TONY JENKINS**

Marubeni-Komatsu

Photographs: Bill and Tony (centre) are pictured with CPA Vice Chair Kirsty Archbold-Laming and Matt Reed of M O'Brien Plant Hire





## INDIVIDUAL APPRENTICE MENTOR OF THE YEAR WINNER

Huge congratulations to the winner of the Individual Apprentice Mentor of the Year Award for 2024:

**STEVE GWYNN**  
Sunbelt Rentals



## GROUP APPRENTICE MENTOR OF THE YEAR HIGHLY COMMENDED

A Highly Commended accolade for Group Apprentice Mentor of the Year was awarded to:

**JO STAMP**  
Sunbelt Rentals



## GROUP APPRENTICE MENTOR OF THE YEAR WINNER

Huge congratulations to the winner of the Group Apprentice Mentor of the Year Award for 2024:

**DAVE ROGERS**  
L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage

Photographs: Steve, Jo and Dave are pictured with CPA Vice Chair Kirsty Archbold-Laming and Matt Reed of M O'Brien Plant Hire

# SPOTLIGHT ON STEVE GWYNN

## INDIVIDUAL APPRENTICE MENTOR OF THE YEAR 2024

Steve has been a dedicated mentor since 2010, passionately advocating for and actively participating in the Sunbelt Rentals' apprenticeship programme.

Over the years, he has mentored six apprentices at Sunbelt Rentals, creating an environment where they can learn and grow. Steve first became interested in mechanics at the young age of 10 when he started working over the school holidays and weekends at a family run car, commercial and bus garage. At 16 years old he officially started his three year apprenticeship with Lucas Service specialising in diesel fuel injection equipment and electrical equipment repairs.

He later returned to the family business before it closed due to retirement, at which point he joined Sunbelt Rentals when it was known as A-Plant. He first joined as a Plant Mechanic and was promoted to Workshop Foreman within just two years. He has stayed in this role for almost 25 years.

Steve said: *"I was offered the role with A-Plant/Sunbelt Rentals back in 2000. My Manager at the time always did his homework on potential new staff and I had been recommended by several people as a very able Mechanic. When positions were available he used to come and knock on the door to see if I was interested – there was no texting or WhatsApp messages back then! After his fourth attempt of trying I accepted and started work the following week."*

The very first apprentice who Steve mentored – James Scott – has himself enjoyed his own personal success at the CPA Stars of the Future Awards. At the very first awards back in 2013 James was the first national winner of the Level 3 Plant Maintenance award. Steve and James still work together at the Sunbelt Rentals depot in Bodmin to this very day.

Steve said: *"Having started my own apprenticeship at 16, I completely understand the challenges that apprentices face. It's reassuring for them to realise that I've trodden the same path and I am here to support them on their journey."*



**'STEVE MENTORED JAMES SCOTT WHO WAS THE VERY FIRST NATIONAL WINNER OF THE LEVEL 3 PLANT MAINTENANCE AWARD AT THE CPA STARS OF THE FUTURE AWARDS IN 2013.'**

*"I was so proud when I won the Individual Apprentice Mentor of the Year Award for something that I really believe in. Training people for the future in the construction plant sector is a must; people took the time and money to invest in training me, so I feel it's a natural thing for me to give back by training others."*

*"I found the video recording for my nomination quite daunting as I'm not a very confident person speaking in front of people, but as the judges said on the day they were able to watch the videos several times and see past the candidates nerves to see people that were doing a good job."*

Steve is a strong advocate for people getting involved in the construction plant industry as it will always be a sector required for the future of building and maintaining the country's infrastructure.

He added: *"Construction plant offers job security and there's an endless variation of different job roles and locations to suit all types of people. If you start at the bottom, with hard work and dedication you can move swiftly upwards."*



# SPOTLIGHT ON DAVE ROGERS

## GROUP APPRENTICE MENTOR OF THE YEAR 2024

A huge cheer went around the room when Dave Rogers was announced winner of the Group Apprentice Mentor of the Year at the CPA Stars of the Future Awards. Dave has worked at L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage as a Plant Trainer and Assessor for over four years, but he has amassed over 30 years of industry experience.

Since Dave joined Lynch, he has become a key part of the training team, and his experience and knowledge are said to be critical to the success of the company's trainees and apprentices. Dave fully appreciates how a mentor can shape a person's future in the right way.

His colleagues have described him as being patient, kind, understanding, loyal, hard-working, funny and a fantastic mentor for everyone on-site. He has been described as a 'brilliant example of a leader' at Lynch who has a positive influence on all of the company's people.

He was nominated for the Apprentice Mentor of the Year accolade on the basis of the sterling work he has carried out with all of young Apprentice Plant Operatives at Lynch nationally. Dave has a wide range of experience across varied plant he can call on; he has worked in the agricultural sector, as a Site Manager for a large quarry business and he's also been a CPCS Tester and Trainer to name a few of his job roles, making him an ideal mentor who understands all aspects of the industry.

Dave said: ***"Working in the industry for over 30 years, I can wholeheartedly say I can empathise with all new learners because I have been exactly where they are. Embarking on this career path can be overwhelming, and sharing similar experiences and feelings enables me to form a bond with the learners."***

***"Sharing my personal experiences and values with learners promotes equality between us and allows the learner to trust me and see me as a person as opposed to just a trainer, assessor, or mentor. My goal as a mentor is to build strong and positive relationships with my learners, to instill confidence***

***"I REALLY ENJOY MENTORING TRAINEES AND APPRENTICES, AND THIS AWARD MAKES ME REALISE JUST HOW MUCH I'M APPRECIATED."***



***in them, and to provide them with the opportunity to reach out, any time they require support, advice, or even a friendly chat when things aren't quite going to plan.***

***"Job satisfaction is what keeps me doing what I love. Knowing the fact that I have assisted someone to achieve their own personal goals is very rewarding, especially when the penny drops, they get that lightbulb moment, and it all clicks into place, and they say I get it now. I don't consider this as a job - more of a hobby with a financial benefit,"*** he said.

The Stars of the Future judges praised Dave for his dedication to inspiring the next generation into our sector, and his exceptional motivational skills, ensuring that everyone he interacts with leaves with a positive outlook on the plant sector.

When Dave was announced a deserving winner at Stars of the Future, he said: ***"I'm absolutely delighted to win the Group Apprentice Mentor of the Year Award. I really enjoy what I do and it makes me realise just how much I'm appreciated."***

# COLLEGE OF THE YEAR AWARD

The colleges who nominated multiple apprentices for Plant Mechanic of the Year and Plant Technician of the Year were shortlisted for this award. The College of the Year Award recognises the FE college which is deemed to have best supported the Stars of the Future awards programme through the quality of their nomination information and high level of engagement throughout the nomination process.

The winning training provider - Bridgend College - received a voucher to spend £500 on Snap-on equipment.

## COLLEGE OF THE YEAR - NOMINEES

Bridgend College	Winner
Myerscough College	Highly Commended
Askham Bryan College	Finalist
National Construction College (NCC) East	Finalist
National Construction College (NCC) Scotland	Finalist
NSCG Stafford College	Finalist
Reaseheath College	Finalist
Wiltshire College & University Centre	Finalist

*Photographs: Representatives from Myerscough College and Bridgend College are pictured with CPA Vice Chair Kirsty Archbold-Laming (left)*



### HIGHLY COMMENDED

A Highly Commended accolade was awarded to:

**MYERSCOUGH  
COLLEGE**



### WINNER

Huge congratulations to the winner of the College of the Year for 2024:

**BRIGDEND  
COLLEGE**



# SPECIAL AWARD

An Award for Future International Development was presented to Courtney Price of SMT and Reaseheath College. The judges were highly impressed with Courtney's aspirations to take the skills and knowledge being learnt during his apprenticeship back to his homeland in order to teach and motivate others.

## WINNER COURTNEY PRICE

SMT  
Reaseheath College



*Photograph: CPA Vice Chair Kirsty Archbold-Laming presents Courtney Price with an Award for Future International Development*

# BEST PERSONAL STATEMENT AWARD

In support of nominations for a Star of the Future Award, all nominees had the opportunity to submit a short video clip or a written statement.

This award was given to the nominee who provided the most inspiring, enthusiastic, genuine and well conveyed personal statement about their journey on their apprenticeship, what it means to them and what they hope to achieve. The judges were very impressed to see some exceptional personal statements submitted this year.

Virtually all candidates sent in a video statement for the 2024 awards. As part of her prize, the winner of the Best Personal Statement for 2024 – Shannon Weiss of Finning UK – won an amazing trip to one of Wolffkran’s manufacturing facilities in Luckau, Germany for herself and a guest, including flights to Berlin and accommodation.

AWARD SPONSOR

**WOLFFKRAN**

*Photograph (left to right): CPA Vice Chair Kirsty Archbold-Laming, Shannon Weiss and Richard Coughtrey of Wolffkran*



## WINNER

Huge congratulations to the winner of the Best Personal Statement Award for 2024:

**SHANNON WEISS**

Finning UK, Finning Academy



# SPOTLIGHT ON SHANNON WEISS

## BEST PERSONAL STATEMENT AWARD WINNER 2024

Shannon, 29, first completed a college course in Construction and the Built Environment before searching for an apprenticeship. She had always enjoyed restoring classic cars, so when an apprenticeship opportunity came up at Finning UK, she knew it was something that she would enjoy.

Based at Finning's Chesterfield branch which serves quarrying, aggregate and construction customers in the East Midlands and the Peak District, she has completed a three-year apprenticeship and is now a fully-fledged repair and rebuild Engineer with Finning UK.

She said: ***"Technical plant electrical has always been my passion since the start of my role. Being able to develop an understanding of machine systems and training with our plant electrical specialist has not only been invaluable to me, but also other Engineers in the workshop with their jobs."***

***"There's nothing better than taking an old run-down machine and rebuilding it to new. I love the variety of work and I put my heart and soul into every job I love it that much. One job you could be completely overhauling and restoring a Dozer, the next you're on-site working on a Crusher, the next you're out on a farm on a Mini Excavator and then you're rebuilding and setting up axles. You never know what your next job could be and even after three years it keeps it fresh."***

***"Finning has already offered me amazing opportunities leading my own self-directed work, working in construction and other sectors such as site-based mining, oil and gas, fishing and power systems. My ambitions are to continue to pursue passionate interests within the company whatever they may be and continue to learn wherever I can,"*** she added.

Shannon made such rapid progress during her apprenticeship, and seized every opportunity to learn from the experienced Plant Technicians at Finning, that the amount of training she undertook was doubled and she fast-tracked her apprenticeship a year ahead of schedule..

***"I'M SO EXCITED TO GO TO BERLIN IN DECEMBER AS PART OF MY PRIZE FOR WINNING THE BEST PERSONAL STATEMENT AWARD."***



She very quickly demonstrated exceptional technical knowledge, problem-solving skills, leadership and dedication to customer service, making a significant impact at Finning's Chesterfield branch.

Her peers identified her as a Trailblazer and a role model for other young women in the field, encouraging them to join Engineering Apprenticeships and pursue careers in this male-dominated industry. Shannon was nominated by several of her colleagues for the National Inspiring Women in Construction and Engineering Awards and during her apprenticeship, she took on the role of supporting other female Apprentices on the programme.

When the judging was being carried out for the Stars of the Future Awards 2024, Shannon's video statement was identified early on as being exceptional. She also won a Highly Commended accolade in the Plant Technician of the Year - Midlands category.

She said: ***"It was a complete shock when my name was announced as the winner of the Best Personal Statement, as I didn't realise it was a category you were automatically entered into. I was already thrilled to receive a Highly Commended in another category, so was elated to win in another."***

***"In December I get the amazing opportunity to go to Berlin as part of my prize. I'm excited to go on the Wolfffran factory tour with Dave Holder, European Operations Director of Wolffkran, and I'll even get the chance to go sightseeing and around the Berlin Christmas Markets."***

# JUDGES' SPECIAL AWARD

This award is for a nominee who the judges feel deserves special recognition of some form or another. This could be a candidate who has for example, overcome some form of adversity or who has shown particular initiative, achievement, progression, enthusiasm or a life-altering decision to enter the sector.

AWARD SPONSOR



The judges chose Tom Williams of CBL as winner of this year's Judges' Special Award. He received a voucher to spend £500 on Snap-on equipment.

*Photograph: The Judges' Special Award was collected on behalf of Tom Williams by a representative of Bridgend College, who received the award from CPA Vice Chair Kirsty Archbold-Laming on Tom's behalf*



## WINNER

Huge congratulations to the winner of the Judges' Special Award for 2024:

**TOM WILLIAMS**  
CBL, Bridgend College



# SPOTLIGHT ON TOM WILLIAMS

## WINNER OF THE JUDGES' SPECIAL AWARD 2024

Tom Williams not only won the Plant Technician of the Year Award for the Welsh region at Stars of the Future, he was also a very worthy winner of the Judges' Special Award. The judges were highly impressed with Tom's vlog, where he spoke very openly and honestly about overcoming mental health issues.

Tom first started his apprenticeship in conjunction with Bridgend College back in 2016 when he was 16 years old. At the time, he was mainly working on agricultural equipment, before he moved to a company where he was able to work on a variety of plant.

He said: ***"Towards the latter part of my Level 2 qualification, I started to struggle with my mental health. I found it difficult to complete the qualification, but did manage to gain the certification just before the company I was working for went into administration. It was a tough time and I decided that I was going to take a break from college to try and get myself better mentally and get back on track."***

Tom took some time out to concentrate on improving his mental health before he began searching for suitable employment to allow him to progress with a Level 3 qualification. However, his hopes were dashed as COVID hit. Rather than taking on employees, most plant companies were furloughing them.

Again, showing strength of character he wasn't deterred. He took several jobs on the periphery of the plant industry to ensure that he was in the correct environment to be able to try for suitable employment as soon as the opportunities started to arise.

Once this was the case he was able to return to the industry he loves, initially with Centregreat where he progressed well and became a respected member of the maintenance team. However, a lot of his time was taken up working on roadgoing vehicles rather than plant. It was then that he managed to secure his position with CBL. From here he has flourished.



**'THE JUDGES WERE HIGHLY IMPRESSED WITH TOM'S VLOG, WHERE HE SPOKE VERY OPENLY AND HONESTLY ABOUT OVERCOMING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES.'**

Tom joined the cohort at Bridgend College after strong relationships had already been forged by his peers, as all his fellow students had studied at Level 2 together. But due to his cheerful manner and can-do attitude, he soon built strong relationships and became one of the most influential members of the team.

Tom said: ***"After around four months of being with CBL, I was offered the role of a Standby Mobile Engineer. This made me even more determined to finish my Level 3 qualification early and push myself forward to becoming the Main Mobile Engineer. I was even studying wiring and hydraulic diagrams in my spare time to try and give me an upper hand. This was one of my weaknesses but it soon turned into one of my strengths."***

***"Having completed my qualification early, I was shortly offered the Main Mobile Engineer role. I'm so happy with how far I have come and how much self-discipline I've had. I absolutely love my job and it only wants me to drive on and see how much I can achieve in my career."***

Tom's next goal is become the Foreman at CBL but eventually he would love to work his way up to Depot Manager. We wish you the very best of luck Tom!



**Construction Plant-hire Association**

27/28 Newbury Street  
Barbican  
London  
EC1A 7HU

**Telephone:**

020 7796 3366

**Email:**

enquiries@cpa.uk.net

**Web:**

www.cpa.uk.net

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