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For immediate use

Software Cornwall & Cornwall College win Provider of the Year Award for supporting young people into tech careers

Software Cornwall alongside Cornwall College has been recognised for its work supporting careers education and helping young people into the world of work. The organisation has been named ‘Provider of the Year’ in the West and South West by the Careers & Enterprise Company

The Careers & Enterprise Company Annual Awards 2018 recognise and celebrate inspirational work being done by schools and colleges, employers, volunteers and careers professionals around England.

A record number of over 200 nominations where submitted for this year's nine award categories, which were decided by panel of independent expert judges.

Software Cornwall is a not for profit member network which connects over 100 digital businesses across the county working collaboratively to support the development of the tech community in Cornwall. In 2017, the organisation ramped up their education offering after receiving funding from the Careers Enterprise Company to run a digital outreach programme with secondary schools and students across Cornwall.

Being fully funded at the point of delivery has allowed Software Cornwall to visit nearly every secondary school in the county, support code clubs, run tech jams and provide work experience opportunities to students, as well as mentor them into fulfilling careers. The programme has also run their Tecademy which helps teachers to learn new ways to teach Computer Science in the class room.

Robert Wilshire lead for the Education Outreach programme recognised in the awards is one half of the Software Cornwall Education Outreach team, where he helps inspire the next generation of budding developers to follow their digital dreams and enter the broader software industry.

The Careers & Enterprise Company was established by government in 2015 to help schools and colleges, employers, funders and careers programme providers to create high impact careers and enterprise support for young people. They aim to inspire and prepare young people for the fast-changing world of work. The Company’s 2000+ Enterprise Adviser Network of business volunteers currently works in over half of the country’s secondary schools and colleges

Claudia Harris, Chief Executive of The Careers & Enterprise Company, said:

*“Preparing young people for the fast-changing world of work has never been more important. There is incredible work going on in schools, colleges, employers and more across the country. We hope these awards are a small way to say thank you and shine a light on this amazing work.”*

Judge Nick Bowen, Principal at Horizon Community College and who sits on The Careers & Enterprise Company’s Headteacher Advisory Group, said:

*“This year we had a record number of entries. It was a real challenge to pick the winners because of the amazing quality of entries. This is a testament to the increasing excellence of careers provision and partnership across the country. Projects/schools/colleges/businesses/individuals like this are helping thousands of young people to fulfil their futures. They should be very proud of themselves.”*

Robert Wiltshire, lead for the Education Outreach programme in Cornwall said *“It is fantastic for our programme and team to be recognised nationally. Working with the students and schools is incredibly rewarding. We have been overwhelmed by the positivity and interest from students who are keen to find out more about career opportunities in our growing tech community. It’s been a great programme where we have been able to provide the support that students need to guide their career choices as well as support teachers and schools too”*

The Education Outreach programme run collaboratively by Software Cornwall and Cornwall College is one of the first programmes of its kind to be developed and delivered, Belinda Waldock, Director of Software Cornwall added “The programme has been a great success and is essential to ensure our young engineers are aware of the fantastic career opportunities here in Cornwall and guide them onto the best tech career pathways for them personally. Jobs in Cornwall’s tech sector provide the level of careers our young people aspire to, however the pathways are often unclear which is why the provision of Education Outreach within our sector is so important. We are absolutely delighted that our programme and Robert’s fantastic work has been recognised.“

**Ends**

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**Notes to editors**

The judges for the awards included:

* Education consultant and former General Secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, Brian Lightman
* Sharon Davies, Deputy Chief Executive of Young Enterprise
* Rachael Saunders, Education Director at Business in the Community
* Nick Bowen, principal at Horizon Community College

**About The Careers & Enterprise Company**

[The Careers & Enterprise Company](http://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/) was set up by government in 2015 to inspire and prepare young people for the fast-changing world of work. We help to connect employers and schools in the fragmented landscape of careers and enterprise, supporting programmes that work, filling gaps in provision and ensuring coverage across the country.

The Company’s 2000+ Enterprise Adviser Network of business volunteers currently works in over half of the country’s secondary schools and colleges, supported by more than 100 trained Enterprise Coordinators who are co-funded with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs).

