

# inclusivelearning

e-bulletin/December 2017

# Hello.

This month, we catch up with some of the innovative work you are developing. It is always good to hear how newly trained representatives bring their new skills and confidence back into their workplaces.

We hope the landmark signing of UNISON's apprenticeship charter with an NHS trust will be the first of many. And it is great to read about the number of awards achieved in this edition, which only highlights the value, long-term benefits and opportunities created by you, our learning representatives.

Well done, from all the team. Have a merry Christmas and holiday if you can. We look forward to building more learning opportunities next year.



JESS HURD/REPORTDIGITAL.CO.UK

**Martin Russo, Inclusive Learning Project Manager**

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## FIRST TRUST BACKS APPRENTICE CHARTER

Southport & Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust has become the first organisation in the country to sign up to UNISON's apprenticeship charter.

"It's very welcome that the Trust views apprenticeships as an investment in its future workforce, rather than a short-term source of cheap labour," UNISON assistant general secretary Christina McAnea commented at the signing ceremony.

"We hope many other employers will soon follow their lead."

UNISON's new charter ensures that employers pay their apprentices the right rate

for the job, provide high quality training and organise a safe and healthy working environment.

It also works to ensure the apprenticeships covered by the charter deliver positive outcomes for both apprentices and employers and lead to a meaningful job on completion.

Current apprentice Simon Bunting said he had gained a great deal by developing his career through undertaking an apprenticeship at the Trust, where he currently works as a computer services manager in the pharmacy.

"It is hard work, but I have learned a great deal, which is already helping

me to have a better understanding of leadership and management, enabling me to use this knowledge to become better at my job," he said.

"It is great that more people will have a chance to undertake a high quality apprenticeship in the future."

Interim Chief Executive Karen Jackson said the Trust was delighted to be able to support UNISON's charter. "Apprenticeships help us develop our staff, opening new doors in their development so together we can best meet patient needs," she said. You can read the new UNISON apprenticeship charter in full by following this link: <http://bit.ly/2Bz4t3X>

**For further information contact: 020 7121 5116**



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## Gold award

Merseytravel has won a gold award from The Reading Agency to celebrate its record-breaking levels of participation in this year's Reading Ahead challenge, where participants read and review six books, stories, poems, magazines or online articles.

Building on its successes with the initiative every year over the past decade, Merseytravel this year supported more than 150 members of staff to complete the challenge, which made it eligible for the award.

Success with Reading Ahead has also prompted nearly three dozen Merseytravel staff to join a new reading group, which brings together people from across the organisation.

Like many literacy initiatives at the passenger transport organisation, Reading Ahead has been driven by UNISON learning rep Ya-Ching Darnell.

Not one to rest on her laurels, Ya-Ching has now enrolled Steve Rotheram, the Metro Mayor for the Liverpool City Region, on next year's Reading Ahead challenge. Accompanied by Merseytravel Reading Ahead Champion Linda Hanley, Ya-Ching helped Steve complete the paperwork last month.



## WEA success

UNISON member Sharon Proud, a nursing assistant from Northumberland, was named joint winner of the Olive Cordell skills for life student award by the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) last month.

The WEA presents the award to learners who have overcome substantial barriers, achieved beyond their own expectations and inspired fellow learners.

Nursing assistant Sharon had been studying for a Level 2 functional skills qualification with the WEA through the UNISON Bridges to Learning project, when she collapsed while preparing for a charity walk across the Cheviots, the range of hills in the Northumberland National Park.

After she was resuscitated more than once by mountain rescue, Sharon made some important decisions in the light of her literally life-changing experience – and as soon as she was well, she completed the maths course.

- At the same awards, UNISON was named the WEA's National Strategic Partner of the year for enabling the organisation to raise its profile, influence the sector and raise educational aspirations.



## ULR course

Sixteen UNISON activists from the South-West are putting in place their plans to deliver short member learning workshops in their branches, after gaining the skills and confidence to do so on a very successful regional learning weekend.

Put together by Regional Learning and Development Organiser Edna Warwick, the course brought together UNISON learning reps (ULRs), Branch Lifelong Learning Coordinators and Branch Education Coordinators.

Over the course of the weekend, participants took the chance to explore the union's member learning offer, so sessions covered confidence, different learning styles, transferable skills, CV writing, job interview skills and maths.

"We had 16 keen and really hard-working attendees and all of them had a plan to go back into the branches and workplaces to look at delivering some of the session that they had practised over the weekend," Edna says.

Some participants are now keen to progress to become lay tutors, while some of the ULRs are interested in becoming Lifelong Learning or Education Coordinators.

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