

**National Institute of Adult Continuing Education**  
[www.niace.org.uk](http://www.niace.org.uk)

**Press Release**  
**5<sup>th</sup> May 2009**  
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**LEARNING TO READ AND WRITE LEADS TO AWARD**

Caroline Haddock, aged 33, from Plymouth, was unable to read and write when she started at City College Plymouth, but learning has changed her life. Her dedication and commitment to learning is being recognised with a Regional Individual Award as part of Adult Learners' Week 9 – 15 May 2009.

When Caroline – originally from Ghana - started studying at City College Plymouth she was unable to read and write, in fact she didn't even know that English was written from left to right. Initially, she signed up for Entry Level Literacy Level 1, where she was diagnosed with dyslexia but she has now gone on to achieve Entry Level 2 and is working towards Entry Level 3.

Caroline has discovered that her new skills benefit every aspect of her life. Alongside her studies she works full-time as a cleaner and now that she can read and write, she is able to complete her own paperwork. "I write at work for equipment and health and safety," she said. "I can also hold a confident conversation and my English speaking is a lot better whereas before, I found myself short of words."

It's not just at work that her new skills are put to good use. She feels more confident to participate at home and at church, she reads Quick Reads books, magazines and newspapers.

She said, "I have learnt how to read and write English and did it because I knew it would open up my chances for careers and opportunities. Learning means I can be independent. I can write letters. I can go out there and achieve something. For me, it means a lot to be able to get on and maybe even go to university."

She continued, "Before I was depending on my husband to do everything for me, I couldn't even use a card machine. He is so proud of me, it has really changed our lives."

Further Education Minister Sion Simon said, “The Adult Learners’ Week Awards are a great opportunity to recognise and celebrate the achievements of learners around the country. As the awards show, learning in all its many forms leads to a host of benefits not only for the individual learner, but also for their families and the wider community.”

He continued, “I hope the award winners will inspire others to rediscover learning. Whether your goal is to be able to help your children with their homework, realise a career aspiration or simply learn for pleasure, brushing up on existing skills or learning new ones can transform your life.”

Rachel Thomson, Senior Campaigns Officer at NIACE, said, “The outstanding adult learning we celebrate during Adult Learners’ Week shows the range and breadth of adults’ enthusiasms, skills and determination to succeed, often against the odds. Our winners are remarkable – for their energy, commitment and talent – and each and every one should be extremely proud of what they’ve achieved.”

Ends

**To contact Caroline Haddock** please phone Sharron Robbie on 01752 305 884 or 07816 142 579.

**For further information on Adult Learners’ Week please contact:**

Ed Melia, NIACE Press Officer, on 0116 204 4248 or 07795 358 870.

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#### **Notes to Editors**

1. Caroline Haddock will be presented with a Regional Individual Award at the South West Adult Learners' Week Regional Award Ceremony at Westlands Leisure Complex on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2009. Journalists and photographers are invited to attend the event. More information is available from Ed Melia, NIACE Press Officer, on 0116 204 4248 or 07795 358 870 or [ed.melia@niace.org.uk](mailto:ed.melia@niace.org.uk)
2. Adult Learners’ Week, 9<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> May 2009, is the largest annual celebration of adult learning in the UK. It is supported by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, the European Social Fund, Careers Advice, the National Learning and Skills Council, Ofcom - the Office of Communications, the Learning and Skills Improvement Service, the Learning and Skills Council, Booktrust, Ufi/learndirect, Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, National Open College Network, BECTA, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and City and Guilds. More details at: [www.alw.org.uk](http://www.alw.org.uk)

3. Adult Learners' Week 2009 will include the following national events:
  - Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May: **Cultural Diversity Weekend.**
  - Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May: **Freedom to Teach, Freedom to Learn** Joint NIACE, NRDC, UCU Conference at the Institute of Education, London.
  - Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May: **National Policy Conference** *Beyond the Recession: Adult Learning in Changing Times* at the Mermaid Theatre, Blackfriars, London, sponsored; and
  - **Adult Learners' Week Parliamentary Reception**, at the House of Commons, sponsored by City and Guilds.
  - Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May: **Quick Reads Learners' Favourite Award**, at the British Library.
  - Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May: **Learning at Work Day.**
  - Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May: **Adult Learners' Week National Award Ceremony** - QEII Conference Centre, London, sponsored by BECTA; and
  - **Silver Surfers Day.**
4. A national helpline – **Careers Advice** - is available year-round for confidential advice and information about careers and courses. The call handlers will have access to the NIACE website and can give information about local activities during Adult Learners' Week. Calls are free on 0800 100 900.
5. Events for Adult Learners' Week 2009 are listed in the interactive online calendar at [www.alw.org.uk/calendar](http://www.alw.org.uk/calendar) where you can search by keyword, your preferred date and by the region you live in. Or call **Careers Advice** free on 0800 100 900 to find Adult Learners' Week events local to you.
6. The themes for Adult Learners' Week 2009 are:
  1. Prosperity, employment and work
  2. Sustainable development
  3. Technological Change
  4. Demography and social structure
  5. Poverty reduction
  6. The roles of the public, private and voluntary sectors
  7. Well-being and happiness
  8. Crime and social exclusion
7. The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) is the leading non-government organisation for lifelong learning in England, and exists to encourage more and different adults to engage in better-quality learning of all kinds. It campaigns for, and celebrates the achievements of, all adult learners.