

National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
www.niace.org.uk

Press Release
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FITNESS INSTRUCTOR AND FOOTBALL CAPTAIN WINS AWARD

Tanya Powell, aged 37, from Penryn, has overcome many difficulties to become a qualified fitness instructor and captain of the Falmouth Ladies Football Club. Her dedication and commitment to learning is being recognised with a Regional Learning Works Award – sponsored by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) - as part of Adult Learners' Week 9 – 15 May 2009.

Tanya had a turbulent and troubled childhood and, after leaving school, she spent five years working as an industrial machinist and two years working for the Royal Mail. Following the birth of her son, she suffered from post-natal depression and, later, from clinical depression. "Having experienced great difficulties in my life", Tanya said, "I started learning with my fitness and gym instructors' course. It was of particular interest to me as I use exercise as a form of stress relief".

She then went on to do a City & Guilds Level 2 course in understanding mental health through Pentreath Ltd's 'Success' course as a way of improving her well being and combining this learning with her fitness skills. "The learning gave me the confidence and experience to start my journey on the path of employment, starting with volunteering", said Tanya, who now works with people who are recovering from mental ill health.

She said, "Due to many negative experiences, I totally lacked self belief, but learning gave me the opportunity to change things. It has transformed my life and benefitted the lives of myself, my son, my family and my friends. They have all noticed these amazing changes and are glad to see me so happy and full of life. I saw no future, but now I know I have a great life with a good future ahead of me".

Last year Tanya was appointed as team captain, manager and secretary of league and cup double-winners, Falmouth Ladies Football Club.

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 Tanya Powell please phone Christopher Hazell on 01726 862727 or 07738 547 069.

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. Tanya Powell will be presented with a Regional Learning Works Award – sponsored by the Learning and Skills Council - at the South West Adult Learners’ Week Regional Award Ceremony at Westlands Leisure Complex on Tuesday 12th 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
2. Adult Learners’ Week, 9th–15th 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/learnirect, 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
3. Adult Learners’ Week 2009 will include the following national events:
 - Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th May: **Cultural Diversity Weekend**.
 - Monday 11th May: **Freedom to Teach, Freedom to Learn** Joint NIACE, NRDC, UCU Conference at the Institute of Education, London.

- Tuesday 12th May: **National Policy Conference** *Beyond the Recession: Adult Learning in Changing Times* at the Mermaid Theatre, Blackfriars, London, sponsored by the QCA; and
 - **Adult Learners' Week Parliamentary Reception**, at the House of Commons, sponsored by City and Guilds.
 - Wednesday 13th May: **Quick Reads Learners' Favourite Award**, at the British Library.
 - Thursday 14th May: **Learning at Work Day**.
 - Friday 15th 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 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.