

Press release**For immediate use****Dundee college and businesses sweep the board!**

Four local businesses and Dundee College have scooped prestigious national awards in recognition of their partnership working which has helped the companies develop and grow.

PrintMatters, Brechin, Dundee-based Discovery Packaging and Design, McGill Electrical and Servite Housing won the Impact, Business Start-Up, Sustained Relationship and Workforce Development (More than 50 employees) categories respectively, at the 'Business to College Awards' held on Wednesday night (24 March) at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh.

In addition, NHS Tayside was commended in the Impact – Public Sector category and Dundee College won College of the Year

Keeping that workforce fully trained and developed has led to a 20-year relationship between McGill Electrical and Dundee College.

At first, the College concentrated on up-skilling McGill's apprentice electricians, but the company's expansion has fuelled the need for bespoke training, consultancy and knowledge transfer. In 2008, McGill and Dundee College formed a groundbreaking Knowledge Transfer Partnership, focusing on the field of micro-renewable energy technologies.

Accepting the Sustained Relationship award, Stan McGill, Managing Director of McGill Electrical, said: "Our continued relationship with Dundee College has had significant impact on the business. Without Dundee College's help we would not have been able to deliver our renewables strategy."

Servite is a respected social landlord, overseeing some 1700 properties in Dundee, Angus, Perth and Fife. A key priority has been to ensure that staff working in housing support and care, gain relevant skills and experience required for this important area of work. Servite turned to Dundee College to provide this essential training as well as a range of other disciplines, such as moving and handling, health and safety and accountancy.

Irene Harrison, HR Officer at Servite, said: "Winning this award really cements our relations and working with Dundee College has helped us as an organisation realise how important training is. To have such a fantastic local provider is a real bonus for businesses."

Discovery Packaging and Design formed in May 2009 by six former workmates, each with a passion for packaging. It specialises in bespoke packaging for a range of industries.

Dundee College played a key role in the success of the venture, providing skills training and business support which helped the company to triple its customer base in just nine months.

NHS Tayside is responsible for meeting the health needs of nearly 390,000 people, providing a range of primary, community-based and acute hospital services for the populations of Dundee City, Angus and Perth & Kinross, as well as acute services to the people of North East Fife.

It employs some 14,000 staff, and turned to Dundee College for help in meeting the challenge of recruiting new employees with appropriate skills, experience and qualifications.

Joining forces with NHS Tayside, Dundee City Council and the private care sector, Dundee College created the Health and Social Care Academy – a successful and pioneering programme aimed at creating a steady stream of candidates, all armed with the knowledge, skills and work-related experience to play a productive role in the health and social care industries.

The 'Business to College Awards', sponsored by the Scottish Funding Council and organised by Scotland's Colleges, is part of the *Scotland's Colleges Mean Business* campaign which aims to raise awareness of the support available to businesses from Scotland's network of 43 further education colleges. This year, colleges have been encouraged to take part in a week-long campaign – dedicated to highlighting the college sector's expertise, experience and facilities which are available to businesses – by staging events on campus, aimed at engaging with the local businesses community.

Now in their second year, both the campaign and awards are this year bringing together Scotland's leading business and skills organisations – the Scottish Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses Scotland, Scottish Enterprise, Alliance Sector Skills Councils, Business Gateway, CBI Scotland, Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Qualifications Authority and Highlands and Islands Enterprise - to support the initiative.

Attending the awards, Keith Brown, Minister for Skills and Lifelong Learning, said: "These awards are a great way of acknowledging the huge contribution colleges make in supporting the business community, helping to secure Scotland's economic recovery and our future prosperity.

"As a Government we have always acknowledged the way colleges have stepped up to the mark and continued to deliver for learners in Scotland. In recent times, just as the demand for college places has risen, so too have colleges themselves risen to the challenge of meeting that demand.

"Too often in previous recessions, the damage to young people has lasted a generation, and sometimes a whole lifetime. We are working hand in hand with Scotland's colleges and businesses to make sure we do not repeat the mistakes of the past."

Ray Harris, Chief Executive Scotland's Colleges, said: "The Business to Colleges Awards is a great opportunity to celebrate the creative and innovative ways in which colleges and businesses are working together. Scotland's colleges provide real value and benefits to the businesses they engage with. With a practical 'can-do' approach to solving the challenges of the businesses that operate in a modern thriving economy, they contribute a great deal towards Scotland's economy.

"The constant investment in the skills of college staff, as well as the development of many state of the art training facilities, ensures that our colleges continue to meet the demands of all the businesses they engage with."

Joe Mooney, Chair of Scotland's Colleges Knowledge Action Group and Principal, Reid Kerr College, said: "The awards highlight the flexible, local solution colleges are able to offer to businesses. They also underline the amount of work they do across Scotland in supporting businesses – identifying and implementing solutions to tailor-fit the company's requirements – which ultimately lead to a real step change in performance and profit.

"Colleges offer a wide range of expertise and experience and the campaign and awards are designed to encourage companies, no matter what sector or size, to contact their local college and discuss the services on offer."

Scotland's College's Mean Business is part of the wider knowledge transfer and employer engagement agendas for both higher and further education.

Businesses can obtain further information on *Scotland's Colleges Mean Business* by visiting www.scotlandscollegesmeanbusiness.com.

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Notes to editors

Photo Caption: (L to R) Heather McLay, The BIG Partnership, Martin Hay, McGill Electrical, Stan McGill, McGill Electrical Chris Ashe, Dundee College, Keith Brown, MSP

(L to R) Kay Adams, Karen Nimmo, Alliance of Sector Skills Council (category sponsor), Ella Young, Irene Harrison, Servite Housing Association, Karen Donaldson, Dundee College, Keith Brown MSP

Business to College Awards 2010

Winners

Workforce Development Up to 50 Employees	All1 Smile Orthodontics & Coatbridge College
Workforce Development more than 50 Employees	Servite Housing Association & Dundee College
Sustained Relationship	McGill Electrical & Dundee College
Impact – Public Sector	JobCentre Plus & Forth Valley College

Impact – Private Sector Business Start Up	Print Matters & Dundee College Discovery Packaging & Design & Dundee College
Innovation	Dawn Homes & South Lanarkshire College
College of the Year	Dundee College

Highly Commended

Workforce Development Up to 50 Employees	Gary Hoffman & Clydebank College
Workforce Development more than 50 Employees	ChesapeakeBranded Packaging& Motherwell College
Sustained Relationship	Dumfries & Galloway Housing Partnership & Dumfries & Galloway College
Impact – Public Sector	Ministry of Defence & Carnegie College
Impact – Private Sector	Burntisland Fabrications & Carnegie College

Business Start Up	The Outpost & Perth College
Innovation	OPITO & Forth Valley College

Commended

Workforce Development Up to 50 Employees	Orchardhead Care Home & Carnegie College
Workforce Development more than 50 Employees	IQA Utilities & Reid Kerr College
Sustained Relationship	Scottish Water & Cardonald College
Impact – Public Sector	NHS Tayside & Dundee College
Impact – Private Sector	Mechanex UK & Central College
Business Start Up	Studio 19 & Adam Smith College
Innovation	Northlink Ferries & Orkney College

The Scotland's Colleges Mean Business marketing campaign was first launched in March 2009. It aims to make business more aware of the support services that exist from colleges which can help achieve a step change in performance and profit.
www.scotlandscollegesmeanbusiness.com

Independent research published in November 2007 showed that as a network, Scotland's colleges are in regular contact with more than 10,000 businesses and are providing support services worth almost £40million.

The Scottish Funding Council is responsible for allocating £1.7 billion of public funds each year to colleges and universities in support of Scottish Government priorities. The Council's funding contributes towards the costs of learning and teaching, skills development, research, innovation and other costs such as staff, buildings and equipment in Scotland's 20 universities and higher education institutions (HEIs) and 43 further education (FE) colleges. The £14 million funding SFC provided for knowledge transfer and developing employer engagement was announced in circular [SFC/30/2007](#).