

LOCAL STUDENT WINS MANUFACTURING AWARD



Reece Williams left school aged 18 last summer and has just won an award for designing an innovative work experience package during his placement with a local company. Goodrich Sensors and Integrated Systems are delighted yet again with how they, as a company, have benefited from hosting their latest Year in Industry student. The Plymouth Manufacturers' Group held, for the eleventh year, their *Best Manufacturing Project Award* competition. Entrants for this competition were chosen from the Year in Industry scheme. The Year in Industry, based at the Tamar Science Park, is a national not-for-profit organisation that places students with local companies to encourage young people to fulfil their potential in careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.

A former pupil of Hele's School, Plympton, Reece received a cheque for £250 from the Plymouth Manufacturers' Group (PMG) for winning the Best Manufacturing Project. Reece follows in the footsteps of his brother Calum who also spent his gap year doing a Year in Industry and who also won a prize, the Bandvulc Group Environmental Award, before going to university three years ago.

The Best Manufacturing Project seeks to identify the contribution that the Year in Industry students have made to manufacturing companies in their placement year, either between A levels and university or as part of their degree programme. The Year in Industry scheme aims to encourage engineering firms to recruit students to undertake special projects, which increase efficiency, quality and provide innovative solutions. The other three students shortlisted to present to a panel of senior level Directors from the Plymouth Manufacturers' Group also worked for Goodrich and Invensys Controls.

Reece was set the objective of coming up with a project that would enable school students to experience work in a number of functions, have a positive STEM experience and produce a simulated customer product. Firstly this required Reece to gain the commitment from various managers; he successfully achieved this via 'one to one' discussions. He then set about the main task, the technical design and proving of "a flashing device" that reacts to rotation, demonstrating the key property of a gyroscope controlled sensor, one of the important products from the Plymouth based business.

Reece says, "The Year in Industry has enabled me to work in a team of professional, knowledgeable and experienced engineers and technicians with specific day-to-day tasks assigned to me. Being able to create something like this from scratch as an extra part of my role has given me so much satisfaction. I am pleased with what I have achieved on a personal level and for the company." Steve Clare, HR Manager, Goodrich Sensors and Integrated Systems, says, "We were delighted that both our Year in Industry students were shortlisted for this competition. They have worked so hard during their time with us, fitting in quickly and surprising us with their self sufficiency and positive "can do" attitude. Our new school students work experience package would not have happened without Reece's tenacity and willingness to learn. Reece met and exceeded our expectations and is an excellent example of how The Year in Industry students can readily contribute to a business." Next year Reece will be starting his degree in Maths & Physics at Cardiff University.

Mike Syrett, Manufacturing Manager of Becton Dickinson, Chairman of the PMG and the Judging panel said "This is the eleventh year that the Plymouth Manufacturing Group has sponsored the *Best Manufacturing Project* for Year in Industry students. The standard of entries was very high and demonstrated the ability of the ideas and innovative approaches of the potential engineering students out there. It is important for manufacturing and industry that they are given the chance. When you consider their age, the level of responsibility that the Year in Industry students are given and the results that they achieve is amazing."

Mike Syrett went on to say, "The Plymouth Manufacturers' Group look forward to seeing how these excellent young people pursue their successful studies and future careers and the PMG is delighted to be able to contribute to and support their development at this stage. If these students go onto an engineering career, the future is in safe hands."

The Year in Industry is a national student placement provider and the South West Regional office is based at the Tamar Science Park. Students or companies wishing to find out more about the Year in Industry should contact Charity Watkins on 01752 762111.

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Contact Charity Watkins, Regional Director, on 01752 762111 for further information.