

PRESTIGIOUS AWARD SECURES THE YARROW'S PLACE IN TOP 10% OF HOTELS WORLDWIDE



EKC Group's four-star Broadstairs hotel, The Yarrow, has joined ranks with the top ten per cent of hotels globally, after being awarded a prestigious Travellers' Choice Award 2020 by TripAdvisor.

The annual Travellers' Choice Awards celebrate the very best in hospitality and tourism worldwide, using traveller reviews to recognise excellence in areas such as service, quality and customer satisfaction.

The Yarrow secured its place alongside some of the best hotels in the world after receiving a record number of five-star reviews from satisfied guests.

"We are incredibly proud to have won a Travellers Choice Award," commented The Yarrow's Hotel Manager, Lee Osborn.

Lee continued: "We'd like to thank all of our lovely guests who have taken the time to submit a review for us.

"We love what we do, and we're delighted to join the top ten per cent of hotels worldwide based on guest feedback."

The Yarrow is the only hotel of its kind in the UK to offer students high-quality training experiences in a luxury establishment.

For more information about The Yarrow, visit yarrowhotel.co.uk

EKC GROUP LAUNCHES ITS NEW STRATEGIC PLAN TO SUPPORT THE REGION'S RECOVERY

EKC Group has launched an ambitious new Strategic Plan to aid the economic recovery of East Kent by empowering residents, supporting businesses and enhancing access to education and training opportunities for all.

EKC Group's Chief Executive Officer, Graham Razezy, said: "I believe that specialist technical and vocational education is at the heart of the region's long-term economic recovery. Through this new Strategic Plan, we'll be better positioned to meet the needs of the communities we serve, with clear ambitions to ensure our Group delivers an inspirational educational experience for learners, which helps them progress to the career of their choice. Through this plan we're committed to working in partnership with a wide range of key stakeholders, and we believe that together we can have the positive impacts that will ensure East Kent remains a place people will choose to live, work and play."



For more information about EKC Group's Strategic Plan 2020-2024, visit ekcgroup.ac.uk/group/about-us/our-strategy

LOCKDOWN IMAGE BY FOLKESTONE COLLEGE LECTURER SELECTED BY ROYALTY

An image by award-winning Photographer and Lecturer at EKC Group's Folkestone College, Zak Waters, has been selected as one of just a hundred photographs taken during the lockdown to feature in the National Portrait Gallery's new digital exhibition, 'Hold Still'.

Zak's winning image of Amanda and her son Terrence was taken from his on-going portrait series of Folkestone residents during the Covid-19 pandemic. The image was one of over 31,000 entries to the ambitious community project spearheaded by Patron of the National Portrait Gallery, The Duchess of Cambridge.

Hold Still aims to capture and document the spirit, the mood, the hopes, the fears and the feelings of the nation as we continued to deal with the Coronavirus outbreak. The final one hundred images were hand-



selected by The Duchess of Cambridge and a panel of esteemed judges including Nicholas Cullinan, Director of the National Portrait Gallery, Writer and Poet, Lemn Sissay MBE, Ruth May, Chief Nursing Officer for England, and Photographer, Maryam Wahid.

QUARTET OF WINS FOR EKC GROUP AS COLLEGE STAFF NAMED BEST IN KENT

Four inspirational members of staff from EKC Group recently received top accolades for their exceptional work, during the twentieth annual Kent Teacher of the Year Awards.

The virtual awards ceremony saw Daryl Ansell, Gareth Oliver and Tim Jackson from the Group's Broadstairs College and Paul Glidewell from the Group's Sheppey College formally accept their awards, as colleagues from across EKC Group's family of Colleges and Business Units tuned in to the ceremony from home.

Daryl Ansell

Kent FE College Academic Support Member of the Year



Described by his team as their 'unsung hero', Skills Practitioner for Construction and Building Services, Daryl Ansell, was named 'Further Education College Academic Support Staff Member of the Year for Thanet' and overall 'Kent Further Education College Academic Support Staff Member of the Year' for his outstanding work to equip students with the skills and experiences needed to achieve their ambitions.

Daryl regularly goes above and beyond to support his students, seeking opportunities for them to showcase their skills through community projects, whilst imparting his comprehensive industry knowledge to inspire the next generation.

"You can't fault Daryl and his dedication to our students and the department, we would be lost without him," commented Head of Built Environment at Broadstairs College, Paul Nelson.

He continued: "Daryl doesn't just support in the class, he often delivers lessons and draws on his vast experience

to guide the students. He is always coming up with ideas, ensuring students have what they need and putting himself forward to help meet student needs."

Gareth Oliver

Kent FE Technical/Vocational Teacher of the Year



Hospitality and Catering Lecturer, Gareth Oliver, was declared 'Further Education Technical/Vocational Teacher of the Year for Thanet' and overall 'Kent Further Education Technical/Vocational Teacher of the Year' for his inspirational teaching and curriculum development work.

Over the past ten years, Gareth has brought innovation and thoughtfulness to the kitchen, developing new approaches to teaching both classic and cutting-edge culinary skills, preparing fledgling chefs to build a successful career in the industry.

Beyond the classroom, Gareth has led the department's fundraising and social action efforts, organising charity dinners and auction events, as well as community dining experiences, catered for by the College's students.

Level 3 Professional Cookery student, James Littlejohn, commented: "When you walk into Chef Oliver's kitchen you are treated like an equal and a professional. I can't wait to get my lessons each week, he makes going to class fun and gives balanced feedback to help you develop. He is passionate about cooking and he puts his whole heart into ensuring every student becomes an exceptional chef. It is his passion, energy and respect for every student that makes him stand out from any teacher I have ever had."

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Tim Jackson

Kent IT Champion of the Year



Programme Director for Higher Education Computing, Tim Jackson, took home the award for 'IT Champion of the Year for Thanet' and the overall award for 'Kent IT Champion of the Year' for his work incorporating new and emerging technologies into the curriculum, and his commitment to supporting students and championing diversity in computing.

As a passionate advocate for putting student experience first, Tim works with colleagues across the College to ensure his students are supported, as well as regularly drawing upon his knowledge and ongoing digital skills development to enrich the curriculum to provide exciting opportunities for students.

Most recently, Tim introduced Virtual Reality (VR) technology into the classroom and has pioneered the implantation of the technology across other curriculum areas. As a member of the 'Educators in VR' network, Tim collaborates with educators around the world to develop new techniques and processes for enhancing education experiences for students using VR and other emerging technologies.

"Tim is driven, passionate and forward-thinking. He knows all of his students and takes his time with each and every one, supporting them in matters both academic and pastoral," noted Head of Computing at the College, Anne Minett.

Anne continued: "He has opened up dialogues internally and externally to ensure progression for Computing

students. He is also a staff mentor in terms of supporting new members of the team and extending his years of experience. Tim is a shining example for other colleagues and an asset to not just the team, but to the EKC Group as a whole."

Paul Glidewell

Kent Higher Education Teacher of the Year



'Not just a teacher' is how Programme Director for Building Services, Paul Glidewell, was described when he was announced as the winner of the 'Higher Education Teacher of the Year for the Swale District' and overall 'Kent Higher Education Teacher of the Year' award.

Paul received the award in recognition of his dedication to his students both inside and outside the classroom. His experiences as a former student of the College, have helped to shape Paul into the supportive and inspiring educator that he is today.

During his pre-recorded acceptance speech, Paul said: "What an overwhelming sense of accomplishment this is. Thank you guys truly, for these prestigious awards."

He continued: "It's been an incredible journey since embarking on a career in teaching. I've had the opportunity here to work alongside some truly amazing people here at Sheppey College.

"This isn't just a win for myself, this is a win for all of us here."

COLLEGE ALUMNA SMASHES FUNDRAISING TARGET WITH SOLO CHANNEL SWIM

Former GB Triathlete and Sport alumna from EKC Group's Canterbury College, Sarah Philpott, recently completed a solo swim of the English Channel, raising over £6,300 for charity.

Having competed in a Channel relay in 1998, Sarah promised herself that she would one day try a solo attempt. On Monday 14 September, she took the plunge and fulfilled her ambition, successfully swimming 21 miles across the English Channel in 13 hours and 48 minutes.

Sarah exceeded her fundraising target, with thousands of pounds set to benefit her two chosen charities, Worldwide Cancer Research and Fifth Sense.



CAMBRIDGE SUCCESS FOR CANTERBURY COLLEGE STUDENTS

Two Access to Higher Education students from EKC Group's Canterbury College were accepted to study at the prestigious University of Cambridge in September.

Megan Coe and Sophie Peters joined the world-leading university to study undergraduate degrees in Human, Social and Political Sciences, and Classics respectively.

Having completed their one-year Access courses in preparation for university study, Megan and Sophie impressed Cambridge officials with their stand-out experiences working as members of the College's Students' Union.

As a passionate advocate for gender equality, Megan used her voice as the Union's Women's Officer to campaign for student equality and to ensure all students received access to enhanced resources and support.

Talking about her experiences at the College, Megan commented: "Studying at Canterbury College this past year has made a huge, positive difference to my life.

"The support and opportunities that have been given to me by the College, have enabled me to successfully apply to the University of Cambridge.

"During my time at the College, my confidence has grown. I've learned so much, and I am so grateful that our community has given me the chance to meet so many different people that have encouraged, supported, and uplifted me."

As the Union's Green Officer, Sophie led the College's Environmental Society and worked closely with staff members and students to bolster the College's green ambitions. In addition, Sophie worked as one of the College's Student Ambassadors, helping to inspire prospective students during open days and applicant events, supporting enrolment activities, and promoting student experience trips and initiatives.

"College is perfectly designed to prepare you for university," explained Sophie.

She continued: "My experiences at College have given me more than A-Levels ever would, and the transition to Higher Education feels seamless.

"My course allowed me to experience a wide range of subjects that I hadn't yet touched on. Before I narrowed my studies, I was able to explore a broad range of knowledge.

"The opportunities that the College has given me outside of my course are the things that have made my university application stand out. The University had the chance to see that I am genuinely passionate about more than just what I do in the classroom."



Specifically designed to support adult learners, the College's Access to Higher Education courses provide an alternative route into Higher Education for adults seeking to change career, or who do not meet the conventional entry requirements needed to apply directly to university.

For more information about Access to Higher Education courses at Canterbury College, visit: canterburycollege.ac.uk

FUNDING BOOST HELPS EAST KENT STUDENTS FOLLOW THEIR DREAMS

An award of more than £115,000 from the Careers Enterprise Company, has helped fund an innovative careers education programme to provide specialist support for EKC Group students.

The pioneering project offers personalised support and information about progression pathways for students with Education, Health and Care Plans.

Since mid-2019, students studying at the Group's Colleges in Broadstairs, Canterbury and Folkestone have benefitted from over 400 bespoke sessions designed to empower them to pursue their dreams and fulfil their progression goals.

CANTERBURY CREATIVES LIVEN UP CITY CENTRE



Art and Design students from the Canterbury School of Visual Arts at EKC Group's Canterbury College have become the first artists to see their work go on display in Canterbury's new 'Sun Yard Outdoor Exhibition Space'.

The innovative outdoor exhibition titled, 'Apertures', was unveiled in August, with vinyl prints of the students' artwork gracing shop windows in Canterbury City Centre.

The project has been delivered by Canterbury Business Improvement District (BID) in partnership with Visit Canterbury.

EKC GROUP JOINS THE COLLAB GROUP

EKC Group is delighted to announce that it has joined the Collab Group, a national membership body of Further Education colleges and college groups.

EKC Group's membership to the organisation, enhances opportunities for the Group to collaborate with other Further Education providers and industry leaders, whilst strengthening the geographical coverage of the Collab Group's network across the South East.

United by a common ambition of ensuring regional skills needs are met through tailored education and training provisions, EKC Group's membership to the Collab Group will propel innovation and opportunities for East Kent residents and employers, supporting the region's economic recovery.

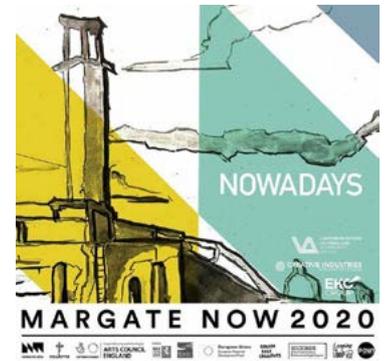


"We've always espoused a clear belief that working together makes us stronger, and I'm really pleased that we're further developing our networks by joining the Collab Group," commented EKC Group's Chief Executive Officer, Graham Razey.

He continued: "The further education sector has an exciting future ahead of it and I'm really pleased that we'll be moving forward into this as part of Collab Group."

Meanwhile, Chief Executive Officer of Collab Group, Ian Pretty, said: "I am delighted to welcome EKC Group to the Collab Group. The inclusion of the organisation strengthens the reach of our network into an important region of the UK. We are delighted to welcome Graham Razey and colleagues into the Group, and we look forward to working closely together."

BROADSTAIRS AND CANTERBURY COLLEGES UNITE FOR MARGATE EXHIBITION



Budding artists from EKC Group's Colleges in Broadstairs and Canterbury joined forces with The Dreamland Heritage Trust to create a powerful two-week exhibition for the Margate Festival.

The exhibition titled, 'Nowadays', was held at leading local gallery, Pie Factory Margate, and included artwork exploring the theme of 'Margate NOW' from students studying with the Creative Industries department at Broadstairs College and the Canterbury School of Visual Arts (CSVA) at Canterbury College

EKC GROUP GOES CASHLESS

EKC Group is leading the way by becoming one of the first education providers in Kent to go completely cash-free.

Following the successful introduction of cashless-only payments in the Group's luxury four-star Broadstairs hotel, The Yarrow, EKC Group rolled-out the initiative across its family of Colleges and Business Units, investing in an innovative new technology to enable students and staff members to purchase goods on-site via an app linked to their Group identification cards.

EKC Group's Chief Financial Officer, Chris Legg, commented: "We have long aspired to become a cashless organisation, and we are proud to have invested in this technology to provide a safer alternative to handling



money during this global pandemic.

"We are exploring how we can make full use of the app, and we hope this investment will allow for more opportunities to innovate and establish new avenues for students and staff members to engage with our services and activities."