

Everyone's a Winner!

design showcase in Coventry



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Would it be the shell shaped storage unit, the designer ethnic outfit or the healthy boxed cake? These were just some of the difficult decisions faced by judges at this year's annual Rotary Clubs Young Person's Awards for Design and Innovation exhibition in Coventry, which celebrates the achievements of students, their teachers and schools. Sue Wheeler, Education Improvement Adviser: Design and Technology reports.

The exhibition

The popularity of the event continues to grow from eighty-three projects in 1998 to a record two hundred and seventy this year: from twenty Coventry secondary schools, including a special school. The main sponsor is Coventry Transport Museum, where the exhibition is held, and the five local Rotary Clubs working in partnership with the Local Authority and myself. This year the exhibition coincided with the Rotary Club International Convention at the NEC, allowing many of the delegates to pop in whilst in the city visiting the cathedral and other landmarks. Schools choose to exhibit projects from their D&T examination courses at Entry Level, GCSE, BTEC, AS/A2 or the newly introduced Engineering Diploma and the work is testament to students' enthusiasm and commitment and also to the support of teachers and families. All entrants are presented with a certificate to celebrate their achievements.

Awards ceremony

Prizes were presented at a ceremony held at the Methodist Central Hall with over four hundred and fifty students, parents, teachers, headteachers and invited guests in attendance. Special guests included the Presidents of the five Coventry Rotary Clubs, the Lord Mayor of Coventry, the Director of Children's Services, Richard Green (Chief Executive of the D&T Association) and representatives from industry, Further and Higher Education. The guest speaker was Joe Elliott, Director of Coventry City Football Club. Every Rotary Club sponsored work from three or four schools and a panel of judges from each awarded a £50 cash prize for 'quality' to one student from each of their schools. Judges from local companies and organisations also awarded prizes of £100 within related focus areas and most have invited the winning students to make a visit to find out about how their businesses work.

Hilton Hotel – GCSE Food Technology
Broadweavers & Clothiers Company; and NP Aerospace – GCSE Textile Technology
Arup Associates – GCSE Graphic Products
Rotary Clubs of Coventry – GCSE Product Design
Midland Group Training Services – GCSE Resistant Materials
Jaguar and Land Rover; DENSO Sales UK Ltd.; and Engineers from Ericsson – GCSE Electronics/Systems & Control
Henley FE College – Engineering
City FE College – Construction
Jaguar and Land Rover; and Coventry University – AS/A2 Level

Rotary Young Person's Award for Design and Innovation The Young Person's Award for Design and Innovation is a Midlands-wide competition designed to recognise flair for design and innovation and to promote manufacturing as an exciting career choice. The exhibition acts as the area final and a judging panel selected nine projects demonstrating design and innovation with commercial production potential. One overall winner was awarded a cash prize of £200 and all nine were entered into the Rotary Club West Midlands final with £500 up for grabs.

Benefits for all

All Coventry schools value this annual event as a means of celebrating design and technology achievements, raising the subject's profile and developing working partnerships with outside sponsors and agencies. Coventry Transport Museum is a wonderfully prestigious venue for displaying students' projects and teachers value the opportunity to see work from other schools, which ultimately contributes to the raising of standards. Everyone's a winner! ■

Photographs of the exhibition and winning projects can be seen on the Coventry Learning Gateway website at <http://clg.coventry.gov.uk> (type 'Rotary' in the search box)

