

19th June 2012

RAF Museum crowned 'Apprentice of the Year' at Shropshire Business Awards

The Royal Air Force Museum was delighted to be crowned winners of the 'Apprentice of the Year' category at the Shropshire Business Awards 2012. Held at The International Centre, Telford on Friday 15th June, the Museum's Conservation Centre Deputy Manager Darren Friday and Apprentice Nathan Pugh attended as finalists in the 'Apprentice of the Year' category.

This award recognises a company who is dedicated to the employment of apprenticeship schemes and acknowledges a star performer among them. Entries were assessed on a number of criteria including: examples of an outstanding apprentice(s), proof of promotion and development of apprenticeship schemes and strategies for developing the skills of apprentices through training or mentoring.

The RAF Museum is home to the multi award winning Michael Beetham Conservation Centre which has a small dedicated team of Technicians and Apprentices who look after the engineering integrity of the whole of the RAF Museum's aircraft collection. Apprentices are increasingly becoming a vital element of the team and the Museum works hard to ensure they get the very best practical training and the associated support they need to give them the best possible start in their chosen careers. Awards such as this prove we are on the right track.

RAF Museum Training Manager, Mick Shepherd said:

"We are proud of all of our apprentices but when entering for this award I was asked to pick one as a shining star and that was easy - Nathan Pugh from Telford. What particularly impresses me is his work with Second World War Veterans. Nathan organises special events where veterans get together in privacy, around the types of aircraft they flew in, to reminisce with war time colleagues and their families. For some he has even organised transport to and from their homes to enable those less mobile to participate; he displays a natural patience and empathy with his guests; all of them enthusiastically express their thanks and ask the date of the next one. He is a great ambassador not only for the RAF Museum but especially for the County of Shropshire and its young people – well done Nathan."

Nathan has gained a very impressive range of engineering skills and especially remarkable personal skills and he is capable of more. He is inquisitive, enthusiastic and resourceful, has an insatiable appetite for learning and is passionate about his work. We restore historic aircraft by conserving original manufacturing technologies, where we can't do that we have limited scope to use modern techniques; Nathan is more than capable of both. Consequently he has been entrusted with a number of special projects that would normally go out to contract. His most recent being the restoration of the sole surviving Vickers Transonic Model; a rocket propelled prototype developed in the late 1940's when World Leading British Engineers were experimenting with breaking the sound barrier a significant responsibility for a 20 year old. Nathan is also a STEM ambassador with local schools and was recently chosen to teach hand skills to school children who are building their own light aircraft.

...ends

Notes to Editors:

- The Museum works in partnership with Telford College of Arts & Technology and Wolverhampton College for the academic and specialist vocational education of the Apprentices as well as the assessment and verification of their skills for NVQ awards.
- The Conservation Centre will be open to the public from 12-17 November 2012 for visitors to gain behind-the-scenes access to aircraft conservation work. Visitors will have a rare opportunity to view current projects including the Wellington and the Hampden and the chance to speak with the skilled Technicians and Apprentices about their work. Open from 10.15am – 1.00pm.
- Royal Air Force Museum Cosford, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8UP
- Open daily between 10am – 6pm (Last admission 5pm)
- FREE admission
- Photos and interviews available on request
- For further information and all media enquiries please contact Michelle Morgans on 01902 376212 or michelle.morgans@rafmuseum.org
- RAF Museum Cosford images & logo available at: <http://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/cosford/media-enquiries/downloads.cfm>