



GMEC Developing Young Talent Award 2010 – Sponsored by DWP/Jobcentre Plus

Finalist: Dodd Group

This award is designed to support the Government's Backing Young Britain campaign, which seeks to ensure young people get all the help they need to find a job, training or work experience to avoid long term unemployment as a result of the recession. The winning employer will offer support and training opportunities for young people (e.g. volunteer opportunities, work experience placements, apprenticeships, internships, Future Jobs Fund placements, etc.), but will also go the extra mile to ensure these opportunities present a genuine opportunity for a young person to launch their career.

Peter Lamb, Manager of Dodd Group, an electrical and mechanical engineering services company, said that the family-run firm is committed to equality of opportunity by partnering with a range of employment and skills service providers that engage with young people who are most disadvantaged in the labour market. Dodd Group aims to provide access to high quality opportunities for talented young people who often feel marginalised by traditional recruitment methods and who would not ordinarily apply for those vacancies.

Peter said: "In the past we've installed training facilities at our Bredbury branch to provide young people with basic relevant skills, and reinforce those skills with real experience through work placements. The facilities mirrored a typical college environment and we supplemented that with real working scenarios of gas and electrical installations. Uptake for the training was excellent, with schools, clients and training providers all seizing the opportunity to benefit.

"Through our partnership with Procure Plus, we have recently opened a branch in Blackburn, set up to deliver a three-year programme of heating and electrical installation works for Twin Valley Homes.

"Working with local schools, we run a student placement scheme – generally one day a week - for four pre-GCSE children to give them genuine industry experience and a solid foundation for their post-sixteen education choices. We even give extra support to those who struggle academically.

"We've had some terrific successes with youngsters. Dion Garner, who is only fourteen, started with us in November 2009 on a one day per week student placement scheme, which has been so successful he arranged to come in two days a week. Dion, who is one of four school age kids on this scheme, is extremely well liked and now has an excellent opportunity with us.

"Daniel Jennings, who is nineteen, was unemployed and attending a local college when he applied to Dodd Group for work experience. He spent three months with us and we were so impressed by his hard work we offered him full-time employment on an electrical apprenticeship, which he is currently completing.

"Alan Topping, another nineteen year-old, was in a similar position to Daniel - attending college on a gas NVQ but still unemployed. Alan asked for work experience to help him complete his NVQ. Again,



his commitment and dedication have been rewarded with a Dodd Group apprenticeship. Overall, we can say we're delighted with the success of these youngsters and the commitment and hard work they bring to our company."