

Ulster Business School Students Celebrate with Placement Innovators



(l-r) Award winners - Christina Magee, Simon Bradley, Lucia O'Neill, Wisuart McMullan, Emma Drake, Rachel Prentice

Six innovative students were recognised for their outstanding achievements at the Ulster Business School's 2011 Placement Innovation Awards ceremony.

Each received a prize for their contribution to driving innovation and excellence during their placement year.

The innovative projects ranged from revamping training materials for a local council to designing and developing a sales management system for a multi-national IT company.

The overall prize was jointly awarded to Simon Bradley, a BSc Hons Marketing student who completed his placement in Hartwell Plc, and Emma Drake, a BSc Hons Human Resource Management student who completed her placement with AllState NI.

During the placement year Simon introduced a new real-time performance management platform for sales executives, which enabled the organisation to increase sales by over £1m.

The project outcomes exceeded all expectations according to Simon's placement employer at Hartwell Plc, Nick Wright. He said: "The system has brought a new dynamic to our sales team. They are now able to monitor their performance against each other on a real time basis. We are delighted with the impact this has had on our revenues."

Emma's project involved sourcing an alternative Human Resource information system for AllState NI. Emma's supervisor, Rose Kelly was very impressed with the work she carried out and commented that "this initiative has accelerated the implementation of a business solution which will alleviate the department's heavy workload."

Speaking at the recent awards ceremony at the Jordanstown campus, Professor Marie McHugh, Dean of the Ulster Business School, said: "Through the very effective partnerships that we have established over the years with the business community, it is possible for us to provide the opportunity for over 300 students across the School to benefit from a one-year placement. Through placements, our students have a unique opportunity to develop a range of skills, which contribute much to their employability.

"We greatly value the tremendous support that we receive from all of the organisations that we work with through the placement process. These prize winners and their employers are outstanding examples of the value that placement can bring to both the student and organisation."

Dr Adele Dunn, co-ordinator of the awards, added: "All of our prize winners today have brought fresh ideas to their placement organisation and have made a significant impact during their placement year. We are delighted to celebrate their successes; they provide excellent examples of what can be achieved during the placement year."

The full list of award winners includes:

Simon Bradley, from Magherafelt – Hartwell Plc

Emma Drake, Dromore – AllState NI

Wisuart McMullan, Belfast – Siemens

Christina Magee, Ballymena – Tourism Ireland

Rachel Prentice, Bangor – The Consumer Council

Lucia O'Neill, Dungannon – Fermanagh District Council