



Press Release – For Immediate Release (07.04.14)

## LIFE AND DEAF ASSOCIATION WINS COMMUNICATION AWARD FOR INNOVATION

The Life & Deaf Association, a not-for-profit organisation based in Greenwich that raises deaf awareness across society, is celebrating after winning the **SLCN Innovation Award** at the **2013/2014 Shine a Light Awards** for their campaigning work to develop deaf children and young people's ability to communicate within communities.

The Life & Deaf Association was unveiled as the joint winners of the *SLCN Innovation Award*, alongside Artburst Ltd, in recognition of their portable exhibition that took a positive deaf awareness message to schools across fifteen cities.

The Awards, held in London on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April and hosted by Broadcaster and Health Campaigner, Anne Diamond, are run by Pearson Assessment in partnership with The Communication Trust to honour individuals, teams, campaigns, communication friendly settings and communities that have excelled in their support of children and young people's communication.

The Life & Deaf Association drove a VW-camper van across the UK wrapped in poetry asking people to learn to sign Good Morning as a gesture of inclusion. Each morning the van stopped at a school where deaf young poets delivered an assembly, performed signed poetry and interactively discussed feelings and experiences.

In the afternoons, the camper van was driven to Tesco car parks to reach a diverse cross section of British communities. In total, 20,000 shoppers were taught to sign 'Good Morning' and deaf-awareness freebies were distributed.

Jane Thomas, Director of the Life & Deaf Association, said: "We are delighted to have won the Shine a Light *SLCN Innovation Award* for our creative work that gives a voice to deaf children within their communities whose voices might not otherwise be heard. This project is the result of collaboration between many people, both deaf and hearing, children and professionals, and we are so pleased that it has been recognised.

"We aim to build children's confidence so they feel that their voice is important and that they can act upon society rather than being acted upon. We can't wait to share the news of the award with others who have contributed to the project's success".

Anne Fox, Director of The Communication Trust and Shine a Light Award Judge, says: "Congratulations to The Life & Deaf Association for winning the *SLCN Innovation Award* introduced for the first time this year. Their creative and innovative work has improved the confidence and self-esteem of deaf children and young people by making their voices heard. Their work will help to motivate and inspire others in the field."

Chris Hall, Managing Director of Pearson Assessment and Shine a Light Award Judge, says: "It gives me great pleasure to congratulate The Life & Deaf Association for their well deserved win. We have been blown away by this years nominations and seen some truly inspiring examples of work being carried out to support children and young people with SLCN. With the awards now in their third year, we are excited to have helped over 90 organisations and teams shout about their work and go on to inspire others."

As a result of The Life & Deaf Association campaign, schools pledged to add signed poetry to the English curriculum, to set up poetry corners for self-expression and to use poetry alongside behaviour and counselling.

For the full list of Shine a Light winners and highly commended finalists, visit [www.shinealightawards.co.uk](http://www.shinealightawards.co.uk)

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### **For Further Information**

For more information, or to arrange an interview with the Life & Deaf Association, please contact Laura Smith or Charlotte Hussey at Consilium Communications by emailing [lsmith@consiliumcommunications.co.uk](mailto:lsmith@consiliumcommunications.co.uk) / [chussey@consiliumcommunications.co.uk](mailto:chussey@consiliumcommunications.co.uk) or call 07766651366.

### **Notes to editors**

#### **About the Shine a Light Awards**

- The Shine a Light Awards are sponsored and organised by Pearson Assessment in partnership with The Communication Trust.
- The Awards are designed to promote and celebrate good practice in speech, language and communication for individuals, groups and settings which work with children and young people, particularly those with SLCN.
- The awards form part of the legacy of the National Year of Communication (*Hello* campaign) and have become a key event in the speech, language and communication community's calendar.
- Nearly 80 applications were received with 16 winners and 13 highly commended finalists picking up coveted awards at a glittering ceremony hosted by Anne Diamond.
- 17 judges were involved in the Shine a Light Awards including Janet Cooper, Founder of Stoke Speaks Out, Peter Sutcliffe, Editor of SEN Magazine, Virginia Beardshaw, Chief Executive of I CAN, Sean Stockdale, Editor of Special Magazine, Kamini Gadhok, Chief Executive of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT), Diz Minnitt, Milton Keynes Youth Offending Team and Hilary Berry, Headteacher at Over Hall Community School.
- For further information and to view the film of the ceremony and the full list of judges, visit [www.shinealightawards.co.uk](http://www.shinealightawards.co.uk)

#### **About Pearson Assessment**

- Pearson Assessment is the world's largest commercial developer and distributor of educational assessments and psychological testing materials with over 90 years history of commitment to researching and developing products to a reliable high standard.
- Pearson Assessment is dedicated to the pursuit of professional excellence, leadership, and growth through acquisition, development, publication, and the maintenance of quality assessment tools in order to anticipate and meet the needs of its customers.
- Pearson Assessment have sponsored the Shine a Light Awards since their launch in 2011, as part of the *Hello* campaign (National Year of Communication).
- For more information, visit [www.pearsonclinical.co.uk](http://www.pearsonclinical.co.uk) or follow @PsychCorpUK #SAL2014

#### **About The Communication Trust**

- The Communication Trust is a coalition of nearly 50 leading voluntary sector organisations, which raises awareness, influences policy, promotes best practice among the children's workforce and commissions work from its members.

- It has an extensive advisory group, which includes the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, Association of Educational Psychologists and the General Teaching Council.
- For more information about the Trust visit [www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk) or follow @Comm\_nTrust #SAL2014