



Press Release – For Immediate Release

12-YEAR OLD CHIPPENHAM BOY HONOURED AT SHINE A LIGHT AWARDS FOR HIS COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPING HIS OWN AND OTHER CHILDREN'S COMMUNICATION SKILLS

12-year old Jonathan Bryan from Chippenham, Wiltshire, has won the **Young Person of the Year Award** at an awards ceremony in London, not only for his sheer dedication and determination in developing his own communication skills, but also for raising awareness of profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD).

The **2018 Shine a Light Awards** is a national awards scheme that celebrates innovative work and excellent practice in supporting children and young people's communication development. Run by learning company Pearson in partnership with The Communication Trust, the awards took place on 22nd March 2018 and were hosted by stand-up comedian, actor and TV writer, Adam Hess. 17 individuals and teams across 10 award categories were recognised, as well as children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).

Jonathan has severe cerebral palsy, is quadriplegic, oxygen-dependent, and also non-verbal. At the age of four, on entering the education system, he was labelled as having PMLD and educated with a largely sensory curriculum. Recognising greater cognitive abilities within him, Jonathan's family removed him from school for a few hours a week, when his mother taught him to read. Thanks to this, and his use of a low-tech eye gaze system (an e-tran frame), his communication and academic skills flourished. Now in mainstream secondary school, Jonathan has caught up with his able-bodied peers.

Jonathan strongly believes that he is not the only child labelled with PMLD who can communicate effectively, and learn to read and write. This belief has compelled him to establish his *Teach Us Too* campaign, urging professionals to recognise the unlocked potential of their pupils, and not to teach to labels.

Jonathan's documentary, *Locked-in Boy*, was recently broadcast on CBBC, and in the last 12 months alone he has published an article in The Guardian, created a short film about the dangers of assuming incompetence based on labels, and signed a publishing deal for an upcoming autobiography. He has also presented speeches at the House of Lords, the *Communication Matters* Conference in Leeds, and the *PMLD: Raising the Bar* Conference in Manchester.

Jonathan said: "I am so honoured to receive the Young Person of the Year Award from Shine a Light. My dream is that all children are taught to read and write regardless of their label. I hope this award helps to spread my message."

Stand-up comedian and actor, Adam Hess, host of the 2018 Shine a Light Awards, said: "What Jonathan has achieved is outstanding. As a child, I struggled greatly with dyslexia and an immense fear of public speaking, if it wasn't for the support I received when I was younger I wouldn't be in the position I am today.

"It is fantastic to know that not only are other children and young people across England getting the support they need to develop and achieve goals, but the young people themselves are taking the time to help others. Jonathan should be extremely proud of his award."

Sharon Hague, Senior Vice President, Schools, Pearson, said: "Our warmest congratulations to Jonathan. Through our innovative clinical assessments, Pearson is committed to supporting those working to help people overcome challenges in speech and language. For six years we have run these awards as we believe it is so important to recognise and celebrate the incredible, but often unsung, work being done across the country to change the lives of children and young people by helping them to develop their communications skills."

Octavia Holland, Director of The Communication Trust, said: "Congratulations to Jonathan and everyone who triumphed at the 2018 Shine a Light Awards. They have shown what can be achieved when expertise, enthusiasm and dedication is given to children and young people who struggle to communicate. These awards highlight the very best practice that is taking place in settings across the country."

The **Shine a Light Awards** have grown in popularity since their launch during the National Year of Communication in 2011 (known as the *Hello* campaign). To date, the awards have celebrated the work of over 120 teams and a wide range of individuals, including young people with severe and complex speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).

For further information about the Shine a Light winners and highly-commended finalists, visit www.shinealightawards.co.uk and follow us on Twitter #awards_SAL

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For further information

For more information, or to arrange interviews, please contact Lisa Church and Laura Smith at Consilium Communications by contacting lchurch@consiliumcommunications.co.uk / 07467 945661 or lsmith@consiliumcommunications.co.uk / 07467 945848.

Notes to editors

The full list of winners and highly commended finalists is as follows:

| Award | Winner | Highly Commended | Commended |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| The Katie Rough Memorial Award | Libby Hill, Utttoxeter | Rachel Peck, Cambridgeshire | |
| Child/Young Person of the Year Award | Jonathan Bryan, Wiltshire | Siena Castellon, London | |

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| Communication Champion of the Year Award | Pip St John, Lancashire | | |
| Youth Justice of the Year Award | Manchester Youth Justice, Manchester | | |
| Early Years Setting of the Year Award | Children's House Nursery School, London | Juice Nursery Ltd, Altrincham | |
| Primary School of the Year Award | Pendle Primary Academy, Lancashire | Longmoor Community Primary, Merseyside | Bridgewater Primary School, Newcastle upon Tyne |
| Secondary School/College of the Year Award | Isaac Newton Academy, London | London South East Colleges, London | |
| SEN School/Group of the Year Award | Pontville School, Lancashire | The William Henry Smith School, West Yorkshire | |
| SLCN Innovation of the Year Award | Stoke Speaks Out | | |
| Pearson Outstanding Achievement Award | Stoke Speaks Out | | |

About the Shine a Light Awards

- The Shine a Light Awards are sponsored and organised by Pearson in partnership with The Communication Trust, a coalition of over 50 organisations dedicated to supporting children and young people's speech, language and communication.
- The Awards are designed to promote and celebrate good practice in speech, language and communication for individuals, groups and settings that 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 and healthcare calendar.
- The judges involved in the 2018 Shine a Light Awards were:
 - Bob Reitemeier, CEO of I CAN
 - Diz Minnitt, Speech and Language Lead, Association of YOT Managers (AYM)
 - Hilary Berry, Chair of Cheshire West and Chester Primary Heads' Association
 - Janet Cooper, Early Language and Communication Strategy Lead at Stoke-on-Trent City Council and past Shine a Light Award winner
 - John Parrott, Chair of Communication Consortium at NAPLIC
 - Jonathan Douglas, Director of National Literacy Trust
 - Julie Steele, Speech and Language HLTA and Local Champion
 - Jonathan Middleditch, Young Person of the Year 2015
 - Kamina Gadhok, MBE, CEO of Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT)
 - Lesley Munroe, Education & Speech and Language Therapy Manager at Pearson
 - Liz Tyler, Director of Learning Services, UK Schools at Pearson
 - Malcolm Reeve, Managing Director of Firmament Education Ltd
 - Octavia Holland, Director at The Communication Trust
 - Peter Sutcliffe, Editor of SEN Magazine
 - Shane Dangar, Communication Champion 2013/14
 - Theresa Redmond, Lead Professional Advisor, The Communication Trust
 - Vicky Roe, Deputy Chair of SMIRA
 - Wendy Lee, Director of Lingo Speech and Language Therapy and Consultancy
 - Zoe Peden, Co-founder of Insane Logic

About Pearson

- Pearson is the world's learning company, with expertise in educational courseware and assessment, and a range of teaching and learning services powered by technology.
- Our mission is to help people make progress through access to better learning. We believe that learning opens up opportunities, creating fulfilling careers and better lives.
- Pearson 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 or follow @PsychCorpUK #awards_SAL

About The Communication Trust

- The Communication Trust is a coalition of over 50 leading voluntary sector organisations, which raises awareness, influences policy, promotes best practice among the children's workforce and commissions work from its members.
- The Trust's mission is to ensure that every child and young person is supported to communicate to the very best of their ability.
- The Trust works towards its mission by working in partnership to build skills, knowledge and confidence in the children's workforce, based on a foundation of good practice, robust evidence and effective policy and legislation.
- For more information about the Trust visit www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk or follow @Comm_nTrust