



Press release issued:

Happy Return for 'Welsh Woman' Winner Sharon

After an eight year career break and four years of part time professional study a Merthyr woman has been honoured with a 'Welsh Woman of the Year,' award, celebrating her decision to put her career on hold to bring up her young family.

Sharon Green, 36, of Troed-y-Rhiw, won the 'Most Effective Returner to the Workplace' category at the prestigious 2007 Welsh Woman of the Year Awards, held at Cardiff International Arena on Friday 23rd November.

Sharon made the decision to use her eight year career break to train in business management and work part time to allow her to look after her family. As a single parent, Sharon wanted to be able to provide a brighter future for her children and present them with a positive role model.

Utilising her part time work experience in Cyfarthfa High School and her Business Management degree, Sharon ended her career break when her children were more independent and she was given the opportunity to work as an Account Manger at education recruitment agency New Directions Education.

Sharon now manages primary school recruitment in four South Wales counties; Merthyr Tydfil, the Vale of Glamorgan, Bridgend and Cardiff. She has had two promotions since joining the fast-growing recruitment agency which provides staff for 70% of primary schools and 80% of secondary schools in South Wales

Her colleague at New Directions nominated her for the coveted award, which was sponsored by women's economic development body Chwarae Teg, as she felt that Sharon's personal and professional achievements were worth celebrating.

Marcella Maxwell, chief executive of Chwarae Teg, the organisation that sponsored the Effective Returner category of the awards, said: "Sharon is an excellent role model for many women in Wales. By developing her skills and qualifications with such focus and determination, she has taken her career to a totally different level. She returned to the workforce with much more to offer than when she left and she has converted her new skills into major new opportunities. What Sharon has achieved will encourage many others in similar circumstances."

Sharon, whose daughters Amy and Molly are now aged fifteen and ten, said she believed her decision to take a career break was the best thing she had ever done because it gave her the space to re-evaluate her skills and plan for a more fulfilling professional career.

She said: "I'm overwhelmed to win the award. It's a great honour for me and my family and I hope it will inspire others who have taken career breaks to raise their aspirations and return with better prospects and more opportunities than before."

Sharon gained her HND at Ystrad Mynach College and her degree - for which she was awarded a 2:1 - at the University of Glamorgan.

Picture caption: Welsh Woman of the Year winner Sharon Green with daughters Amy, 15, and Molly, ten.

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Notes to editors:

- New Directions Education deals with 70 per cent of primary schools in south Wales and 80 per cent of secondary schools.
- New Directions is one of three distinct sections of New Directions Holdings, which has a £12m-a-year annual turnover. The business has seen turnover rise by 304 per cent in the past few years from £3m in 2002.
- For more information about New Directions visit www.ndteach.co.uk

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