



signature annual awards

2013



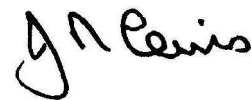
Welcome

Welcome to the fifth Signature Annual Awards ceremony. We are here at the Bloomsbury Ballroom to celebrate the dedicated efforts and determination of those nominated individuals and organisations with us tonight.

These awards recognise and honour the outstanding achievements made to improve communication and help us work towards a society in which deaf and deafblind people have full access. We are proud to thank each and every one of you for the work you do throughout the UK.

Every year, we receive more and more nominations. The stories are truly inspiring and we are very grateful to everyone who took the time to write to us. Every single nominee is a worthy winner in his or her own right.

I am proud to be a part of such a rewarding evening. Congratulations to all our nominees. I wish you the best of luck tonight and in all of your future endeavours.



Nick Lewis
Chair, Board of Trustees



Steph McGovern

Over the past ten years Steph has reported on business and finance from around the world, most recently from the Eurozone crisis summits in Brussels and the Italian debt meetings in Rome.

Originally from Middlesbrough, Steph's first TV appearance was on a programme about women in science. She had just won the title of Young Engineer for Britain, after saving Black & Decker over £1m on a design she did for their Leaf Hog product. This led to work experience on Tomorrow's World and, eventually, to producing the financial news on Radio 4's Today programme.

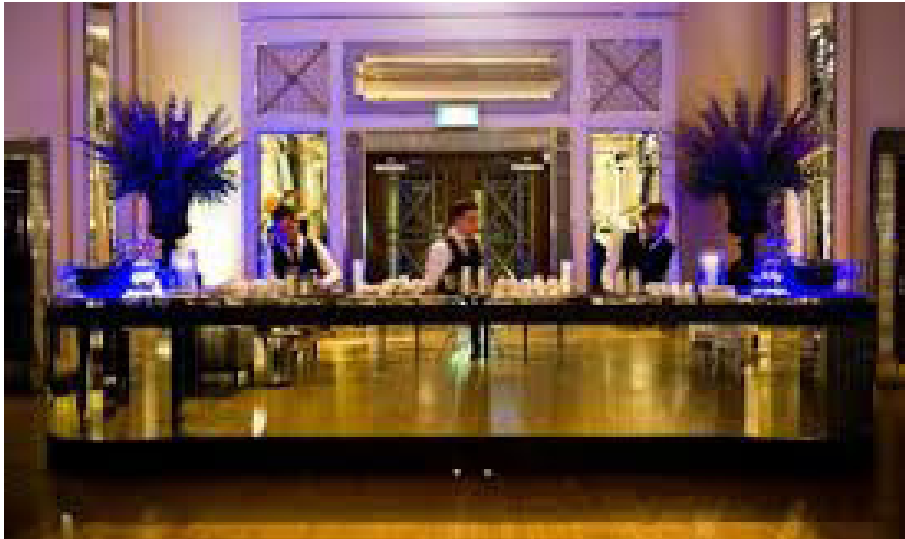
During the financial crash Steph was the lead producer of business news on all BBC bulletins, working with business editor Robert Peston at the forefront of the award-winning coverage of the credit crunch. She soon began broadcasting herself, presenting on 5Live and hosting her own slot - Steph's Sunday Shift - where she spent time in over 50 different workplaces across the UK, including a gas rig in the Irish Sea, an air traffic control centre and a nuclear power plant.

Now the Business Reporter for BBC Breakfast, Steph is also a former champion Irish dancer, and earlier this year became a bit of a youtube sensation when she showed off her talents on air.

“ There are some truly outstanding nominations in each category, so it’s going to be a very special event... it’s going to be amazing to have so many incredible people in one room, coming together to celebrate each other’s achievements. ”

Steph McGovern





Evening Proceedings

19.00 Drinks Reception

19.30 Seated for Welcome Speech and Dinner

21.30 Presentation of Awards

Organisational Achievement

Young Learner of the Year

Communication Professional of the Year

Centre of the Year

Learner of the Year

Teacher of the Year

Community Spirit

Joseph Maitland Robinson Award for Outstanding Contribution

23.00 End of Award Ceremony

Shortlists

Organisational Achievement

BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales

BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of Wales are a broadcast orchestra and the national symphony orchestra of Wales. They recently designed an innovative concert format aimed particularly at deaf people. Concerts were held for more than 3,000 school children from across Wales, and an evening concert was performed for individuals, families and groups. The live performances were supported by BSL/English interpreters and Speech to Text Reporters. Graphic representation of the music and live pictures of the performers were displayed on large screens and bass cabinets were placed under seats so the audience could feel the vibrations. They were also invited to sit at the heart of the orchestra to experience the music while the musicians played.

Corner House

Corner House is the only in-patient psychiatric unit in the UK for young people who are deaf and are experiencing mental illness and/or behavioural problems. For more than ten years this NHS unit has pioneered the way in which care is provided for deaf children who have varying degrees of hearing loss, language ability, special needs and complex family backgrounds. The team members are dedicated to their job, to the service they provide and above all to the children who come to them in desperate need of help. Working with language experts, psychiatrists, nurses, teachers and psychologists they make sure that each child has equal access to the very best therapeutic medical help. They play a huge part in bringing many struggling families back together.

DEAFvibe

DEAFvibe is a charity ran by deaf people for deaf people. It was formed by Ali France and Rowan Robinson, who knew from their own experience that deaf people in their area were receiving little access to communication and information. Deaf members of the community can now benefit from regular coffee mornings where speakers from local key services are invited to come along. Information is presented in a format accessible for deaf people, they are able to ask questions and offer their own views. DEAFvibe has a useful information website and a HUB where products and technology can be trialled. They also help with telephone calls and the completion of paperwork. The charity is developing a DVD on mental well being and common issues linked to deafness.

Lloyds Banking Group

Lloyds Banking Group recently became the first bank to make their call centre services fully accessible to Deaf people, with the introduction of the SignVideo service. Hearing people take for granted that they can quickly call their bank to ask a question or pay a bill, but for Deaf customers this has not been possible. They can now be connected immediately to the call centre via an online BSL/English interpreting service, free of charge. The group is also investigating a TextBox system, an enhanced form of the traditional textphone, for deaf people who do not communicate using BSL. In addition, they recently introduced a new training programme to help their customer service staff to better understand what challenges their disabled customers face.

Shortlists

Young Learner of the Year

Ben Williams, Medstead Primary School

Ben is 11 years old, and since the age of four he has supported a fellow pupil at school who is Deaf. An exemplary role model who shows amazing dedication to learning, Ben recently passed the Signature Level 1 Award in British Sign Language. He has set up weekly signing clubs giving 4-10 year old pupils the opportunity to learn to sign. He ensures that his Deaf friend is fully involved in all activities at school. Ben's plan is to work to develop links between the Deaf community and hearing people when he is old enough.

Evie Gavin, Ayesha Communications

Evie is five years old and recently passed the first unit of the Signature Level 1 Award in British Sign Language. Her mum Ayesha, who teaches BSL has been signing with her since birth and Evie signed her first word, milk, when she was only ten weeks old. Evie worked hard to pass the assessment and was bursting with excitement when her head teacher presented the Signature certificate to her at a special Friday Shooting Stars Assembly at school.

Golofnira Zadrán, Handy Training

Golofnira is 13 years old. She arrived at Jack Hunt School from Germany with excellent German Sign Language skills but no knowledge of German, English or BSL. She was plunged into a frightening world, unable to communicate with those around her. With the help of her teachers, Golofnira has worked hard to pass Level 1 BSL. She encourages others to learn and become deaf aware, and was part of a group who visited Cambridge University to deliver deaf awareness training to trainee teachers.

Paige Goman, BSL Centre Heathlands School

Paige is 16 years old and is studying towards the Signature Level 2 Certificate in British Sign Language. She decided to learn so that she could communicate better with some of her family members who are Deaf. Paige is described as an enthusiastic girl who is eager to learn. She has been committed to attending class whilst studying for her GCSEs and can now enjoy conversation in BSL, cementing the bond between her and the Deaf members of her family.

Shortlists

Communication Professional of the Year

Lesley Weatherson, Registered Lipspeaker

Lesley has been lipspeaking for more than 15 years. Having been a dedicated nurse and midwife, she wanted to communicate more effectively with the deaf women in her care. A credit to the communication support profession, she is a tireless advocate for improvements in access to communication for deaf people. Lesley is a great support to the Association of Lipspeakers, and was recently an integral part of the team who developed the new National Occupational Standards. She is founder of Lipspeaker UK, a specialist agency where deaf professionals and organisations can access a reliable, quality lipspeaking service.

Mike Ballinger, Registered Sign Language Interpreter

Mike met a Deaf girl at secondary school, they became great friends and she taught him BSL. The friendship sparked his interest in the promotion of equal access to communication, information and services for deaf people. In 2001, Mike graduated from Wolverhampton University with a first class Honours Degree in Interpreting and became a freelance interpreter. He encourages every person he meets to understand the needs of deaf people, and now runs an interpreting service with two colleagues. Mike is also a valued member of the interpreting team on BBC See Hear.

Paul Michaels, Registered Sign Language Interpreter

Paul started to learn BSL in 2001 when his niece was diagnosed as profoundly Deaf. He began working as a communicator in education and the workplace and then qualified as a Registered Sign Language Interpreter. He is described by his peers as immensely supportive and inspirational. While undertaking the Postgraduate Diploma in Interpreting at Durham University, Paul became interested in Gay Sign Variation. He has developed international research on the subject and his work has been presented at several prestigious conferences across the UK and overseas.

Valerie Hall, Registered Sign Language Interpreter

Val decided to learn BSL when she met a Deaf man at work. She was aware that he was very isolated. Her interest was sparked and a long career began, working first as a social worker with Deaf people, then as a Registered Sign Language Interpreter. A well respected member of the Deaf community, Val is kind and passionate. She runs an interpreter booking service and is an inspiration to those who are interested in becoming communication professionals. Val has been part of the ASLI Working Group and was Regional Chair of ASLI North West.

Shortlists

Centre of the Year

East Holton NVQ Assessment Centre

East Holton NVQ Assessment Centre has been offering Signature qualifications in BSL for more than ten years. Their vision is to facilitate access for deaf and hard of hearing people so that they are able to pursue opportunities, make informed choices and achieve their potential. After joining forces with [sonus] in 2009, their reputation has grown and people from all across the UK study with them. Recently, five of their students became the first Deaf people to achieve the Signature Level 6 NVQ Diploma in Sign Language Interpreting, interpreting between two signed languages. East Holton were also key in securing funding to allow deaf candidates who were out of work to gain a qualification in BSL, offering them a route to employment.

Genie Networks

With improving access for local deaf people always at the top of their agenda, Genie Networks pride themselves in offering flexible, affordable Signature courses in BSL and other deaf related subjects. The highly experienced team offers a wide range of services for adults, children and young people. They arrange free signing circles for the families of local Deaf children, inspiring many parents to progress to take qualifications in BSL. The centre invests a lot of time and money in deaf advocacy and drop in and outreach services. They also hold monthly information sessions and family network events. They were one of a group of charities helped by Children in Need when they received almost £80,000 for a three year project aimed at teaching sign language to families.

One to One Training Academy

One to One Training Academy has considerable experience in the delivery of specialist services to people with dual sensory impairment. They employ a significant number of Deaf people in teacher and support worker roles. Their inclusive approach and ability to make adjustments allows students from all circumstances to access courses. They engage younger students from disadvantaged backgrounds and have developed a specific learning package to support families to learn BSL together, enabling them to communicate at home. The Academy focuses on recognising and meeting the learning needs of their individual students. They also provide care services and set up work placements for deaf people with local domiciliary and residential care providers.

Sign Solutions

Sign Solutions offer Signature qualifications in BSL and BSL/English interpreting. More than 80 interpreters have achieved NRCPD Registered Sign Language Interpreter status having trained with them. They have produced a series of innovative training DVDs for aspiring interpreters, and offer a range of materials and exercises to help them practise their interpreting skills independently. The centre boasts state of the art sound-proof training, filming and editing rooms where NVQ candidates can collate evidence for their portfolios. The professional development of their teachers is important to them and, in addition to supporting teachers and candidates, they help a number of trainee assessors to achieve the A1 Assessor Award.

Shortlists

Learner of the Year

Amanda Kingsland, Sign Language Studies Centre

When her daughter was diagnosed deafblind in 2008, Amanda had to develop new skills to communicate with her. She learned some BSL from friends, then studied qualifications in BSL and deafblind communication. One of Amanda's biggest challenges is working sometimes in Deafblind Manual then in BSL, one she has risen to and overcome. Having passed her Level 3 BSL, she aims to continue her studies to become a BSL/English interpreter and to continue to support Sense in a voluntary role.

Andy Palmer, Action on Hearing Loss

Andy is from a largely Deaf family and is a single father to his Deaf son. Using BSL is second nature to him so he decided to study towards the Level 1 qualification in order to become a sign tutor with National Deaf Children's Society. Andy works for Action On Hearing Loss and volunteers with the Peterborough and District Deaf Children's Society where he has established a very successful deaf youth football group.

Breda O'Hara, St Mary's School for Deaf Girls

Breda was communicating with the Deaf pupils at St Mary's using sign supported English, and realised they would benefit if she learned ISL. She passed the Level 1 ISL qualification and moved on to Level 2 with enthusiasm. Breda practises with the pupils and communicates with confidence, developing a great rapport. She also encourages the Deaf staff at school to sign with her and is able to sign with the students' parents when they come to visit.

Claire Lane, Central College Nottingham

Claire began learning BSL at 14 years old and read The Linguistics of British Sign Language from cover to cover. In 2002, she qualified as a deafblind communicator guide. When she later began a BSc in Deaf Studies, the Deaf culture books she had read as a teenager came to life; the authors were now her tutors. Claire is an active member of the Level 3 BSL class. She set up a Facebook group for fellow students, has arranged trips to see BSL theatre performances and volunteers at Sign Circle.

Clive Palmer, Sense

On joining Sense as Operational Manager last year, Clive was keen to learn BSL. He is highly motivated and an inspiration to his classmates. He has a positive attitude and is a good role model for his peers. A dedicated student, Clive travels a lot for his work, he makes the long journey home from Birmingham to Cheshire, having worked a full day then attended his Level 1 BSL class. He uses his newfound skills at work and encourages colleagues to learn.

Elizabeth Mincer, John Townsend Trust

Having passed Level 1 BSL some time ago, Elizabeth's interest was reignited when she met a group of Deaf people in church. Inspired by them and their beautiful, visual language she decided to continue with her studies. She has shown great enthusiasm in her Level 2 class, encourages her peers and helps out by organising classroom facilities. Elizabeth uses her skills in a variety of voluntary work. She hopes to set up a BSL class at her son's school, where she is a parent governor.

Frank Stevens, Signia Signing

Frank came to the UK five years ago, with very little grasp of the English language. He quickly became fluent in English and embarked on a course in BSL. He has a natural flair for languages and shows real dedication to learning BSL and being involved with the Deaf community. Frank believes in team work and was a key member of his Level 2 class, encouraging others to go out and mix with Deaf people. Frank works as a communication support worker and plans to become a BSL/English interpreter.

Josette Simon, City Lit

A well respected actress, Josette became interested in working with the Deaf community when she met the Deaf sister of a fellow actor. She enjoyed learning Level 2 BSL and this is reflected in her efforts outside the classroom. She works as a communicator with the Sensory Support team at Newham College and volunteers at Blanche Neville School for Deaf Children. She is part of Kaos Signing Choir and is Trustee of Deaf Ethnic Women's Association and Patron of 'Life & Deaf'.

Julie Garner, Deaf Solutions 3

Julie joined her BSL class with no experience and arrived with her sleeves rolled up, ready to be fully involved. Now studying towards Level 2, she is a good example to fellow students. Julie practises a great deal and works hard in class. She gives her time to help out at Deaf Solutions 3, assisting the teacher and helping with administration. Julie is about to embark on a Teacher of the Deaf course and hopes to undertake voluntary work with Deaf people in the community.

Shortlists

Learner of the Year

Karen Silk, Signite

After a ten year break from learning BSL, Karen is continuing her studies. Her commitment has inspired teachers and fellow students alike. She supports her peers in the classroom and encourages them to mix in the Deaf community, accompanying them to help with their self-confidence. Karen set up a regular get-together where students can socialise and practise their signing. She plans to visit deaf theatre and hopes to organise a BSL group trip to London in the near future.

Leanne Michelle Hipkiss-Walker, Darlington College

Leanne is a dedicated student who joined her Level 1 BSL class six weeks into the course. She worked exceptionally hard to catch up and has a natural ability for BSL. Leanne's husband is a member of the armed forces. She intends to use her newfound skill aiding in the recovery of injured soldiers whose hearing has been damaged whilst on duty serving their country. Leanne also volunteers in her local primary school.

Robert Gilpin, Queen's University Belfast

A family man with three children and three grandchildren, Robert decided to learn BSL so that he can communicate with his grandson who has Autism. Robert is an extremely popular member of his Level 2 BSL class. The younger students love his great personality and sense of humour. An excellent role model, he is incredibly sociable and goes out of his way to help his peers integrate within the Deaf community. He is involved in voluntary work and visits his local Deaf clubs every week.



“ I was lost for words when I heard my name mentioned. This has been a great achievement for myself and I am honoured to have won the Learner of the Year. Learning BSL has turned my life around giving me a future goal. I have enjoyed every step of the way of learning. ”

Joseph Jones, winner 2012 Learner of the Year Award

Shortlists

Teacher of the Year

Anne Lucas, Sense Birmingham

When Anne was made redundant from the bank where she worked she decided to re-train as a teacher. Her classes are popular, fun and engaging and she is supportive of her students inside and outside the classroom. Anne promotes effective communication for her deaf colleagues, helping learners to appreciate that each deaf person uses different communication methods and styles. Anne's teaching has also improved the daily lives of deafblind residents in specialist Sense homes.

Catherine Church, City of Glasgow College

Catherine encourages her students to learn about Deaf culture as well as BSL and uses her personal experiences to educate them. Her fantastic sense of humour and unique style of teaching inspires learners to continue with their studies and, in many cases, to take up a career working with Deaf people. A prominent member of her local Deaf community, Catherine encourages her students to attend Deaf club events.

Catherine Drew, Frank Barnes School

A Deaf professional, Catherine is a firm believer in bilingualism in teaching and learning. She is Leader of Bi-lingual Practice at the school and is a member of the senior management team. Her knowledge of linguistics in both BSL and English inspires confidence in her learners and gives insight to those who are developing their BSL skills. She also supports the pupils' wellbeing through her role as Learning Mentor. Catherine encourages those who study the Level 6 in BSL to go on to train to become BSL/English interpreters.

Colin Thomson, Central College Nottingham

A popular teacher of BSL, Colin's friendly, welcoming smile and gentle personality put his students at ease. He provides extra workshops for his students including signed songs and portfolio building sessions and encourages them to attend Deaf events. Colin is also a family support worker for the National Deaf Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. He regularly travels to Gibraltar, where he is the only teacher of BSL in an area where very little communication support is available for deaf people.

Gary Taylor, Deaf Solutions 3

Gary runs his own training centre employing a number of BSL teachers. A valued mentor, he helps them to develop their teaching skills, produce materials and offers tips and advice. As a teacher, his students find his enthusiasm and love of his language engaging. He supports classroom activity with a Learning Zone website. As well as teaching BSL, Gary works in mental health services as a communication development officer. He is a popular personality in the Deaf community.

George Raggett, Wiltshire and Dorset Deaf Association

George teaches Signature qualifications at Wiltshire and Dorset Deaf Association, where he is also a trustee. A very gifted and knowledgeable teacher, George's lesson planning is exceptional and he makes each session interesting, interactive and varied. Passionate about promoting Deaf culture, George devotes his personal time to teaching Deaf Awareness and BSL throughout the community and has set up a signing choir.

Jonathan Field, Field Interpreter Training

Jonathan believes that Deaf people deserve the best interpreters, therefore interpreter training must be the best. He has intelligence and background knowledge not only in BSL, English and interpreting, but on a whole host of other topical issues. Jonathan delivers his classes with great clarity, can encourage and motivate, yet still challenge his students. He has been a visiting lecturer at two universities, and one of the students said that he delivered the most practical and useful session of their training.

Lucy Jaques, Lucy Jaques Training Ltd

Lucy teaches qualifications in diversity, disability and deafblind communication. She has dual sensory loss, and inspires learners and colleagues, dispelling preconceived ideas that deafblind people feel a sense of sadness, loss and despair. Lucy's teaching has a life changing impact on many people. Colleagues say that, if it were humanly possible to educate everyone in the world about deaf and deafblind people's experiences, Lucy would volunteer to do it.

Richard McFadden, Foyle Sign Language Centre

Richard is an inspirational teacher of BSL, ISL and Deaf Awareness. His fun, carefully prepared lessons result in a high success rate. He invites students to mix with Deaf people at social events and includes them in activities organised by the local Deaf Association. Richard is an experienced mentor to new teachers. He loves what he does, his students love him, and it shows in their attitude to their learning.

Tara-Eve Forkin, Handy Training

At 17 years old, Tara has undertaken the City & Guilds Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) and is a confident teacher of Signature BSL qualifications. When she began teaching she brought with her fresh new ideas, introducing a relaxed approach to learning. A great advocate, Tara encourages everyone she meets to learn BSL. She is also an active volunteer and Youth Committee member at Peterborough Deaf Children's Society.

💡💡 I couldn't believe it and I felt absolutely overwhelmed when my name was announced. I felt very proud to have been nominated in the first place but to actually win the Teacher of the Year Award was amazing! 💡💡

Jon Palmer, winner 2012 Teacher of the Year Award

Shortlists

Community Spirit

This year, for the very first time, the winner of the Community Spirit award has been voted for by you. Chosen from a record number of incredible nominations, all four shortlists are inspirational in their own way and have made fantastic progress in bringing deaf and hearing people together.

On 24 July the shortlist was announced and the public were invited to vote for their winner online. An enormous amount of votes were cast, right up until midnight last night.

Tonight is the night when we reveal who you chose as the worthy winner...

Child Deaf Youth Project

Child Deaf Youth Project is a charity providing specialist youth services to deaf and hard of hearing children and young people across the Tees Valley region. The team of deaf staff and volunteers aim to empower the youngsters to make informed and positive decisions about their future, giving them the opportunity to reach their potential and to live full and independent lives. They are given the chance to build relationships, have fun, learn new skills, share exciting experiences and communicate in their first language. Child Deaf Youth Project's Signing Siblings project enables hearing children aged 5 to 14 years to learn BSL for free, so they can communicate with their Deaf brothers and sisters more effectively.

Gerry Hughes

Gerry Hughes' solo circumnavigation of the world in his 42 foot boat had been a dream of his for many years. At the age of 14 he was inspired by Sir Francis Chichester's journey, and Gerry wrote that he would one day undertake the same challenge. His epic voyage gripped the national and international Deaf community, with thousands of people following his progress, leading to tremendous unity. Messages were posted on Facebook, deaf and hearing people alike posted weather reports, updates, video clips, translations, photographs, paintings and stories - in numerous languages, including sign. Throughout his inspirational journey he wanted to show that Deaf people can do whatever they set out to do – and he succeeded!

Hands 4 Voices

Formed in 2011, Hands 4 Voices signing choir is made up of a group of deaf and hearing people who, working together, have raised more than £6,000 for charity. They enjoy visiting local schools, exhibitions and charity events to raise awareness of how Deaf people can have access to and appreciate music. Last year, they were delighted to perform at the switching on of their local Christmas lights. Twice a year the choir stage two concerts to an audience of nearly 400 deaf and hearing people, inspiring many of them to learn BSL. The choir's donation of £2,000 to Essex Deaf Children's Society enabled one boy to take part in a football coaching course and provided a group of deaf children with a wonderful Christmas party.

Richard Weinbaum and the Deaf Sports Personality of the Year

Richard Weinbaum and the Deaf Sports Personality of the Year team devote their time, money and skills to supporting Deaf Sport. They travel across the UK, often at their own expense, to watch and capture deaf sporting events on film. Their work is crucial, as there is no Deaf Sports news reporting the achievements of deaf athletes who represent Great Britain in their chosen sport. They also provide coaches, training sessions and equipment for the athletes and help fund their travel costs, etc. They have created a website which publicises deaf sporting events, displays fixtures and covers their awards scheme. Richard has vowed to never give up his efforts to break down the barriers faced by deaf athletes. His tireless work has helped many of them to realise their dreams.



Child Deaf Youth Project



Gerry Hughes



Hands 4 Voices



Richard Weinbaum and the Deaf Sports Personality of the Year

Shortlists

Joseph Maitland Robinson Award for Outstanding Contribution

The Joseph Maitland Robinson Award for Outstanding Contribution is presented in memory of a benefactor who secured the future of our work at a time of considerable financial uncertainty. Since the award was first presented in 1989 we have seen many remarkable individuals receive this award.

Each has made a truly outstanding contribution to improving the everyday communication experiences of deaf and deafblind people. The award recognises passion, long-term commitment, service provision, awareness-raising, or campaigning efforts.

So, who will be the recipient of the 2013 Joseph Maitland Robinson Award for Outstanding Contribution? You will be the first to know when the announcement is made at the end of the ceremony.

“ I am feeling a range of emotions; delighted, honoured, humbled and grateful. I feel delighted to have won; honoured to have been nominated; humbled to be ranked amongst other past and present award nominees and winners; and grateful to all those who in some way, played a part in this recognition. ”

Jane Kema , winner 2012 Joseph Maitland Robinson Award for Outstanding Contribution



Zane receiving his award



Special thanks to

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