

Lockerbie Chef Speaks of Pride After Award for Long Service

A senior chef from Lockerbie "with a heart of gold" has spoken of her pride after scooping a national award for her work supporting those in residential care.

Amanda Jackson is the senior chef at Trinity House and Lodge, a residential service for adults with learning disabilities and autism. She scooped one of the top prizes at the Cygnet Group achievement awards, a day of celebration for caring, dedicated and hard-working health and social care workers.

She was awarded the Swan Award, given to an individual who has completed 10+ years of service and continues to innovate, motivate and make a positive difference every day.

The nomination for Amanda, who has worked with Cygnet Social Care for 25 years, read: "Amanda is amazing and has a heart of gold. She takes pride in her work and is always working hard to make sure our service users have healthy meals and plenty of choice. She knows every service user well and

knows their needs and wants.

Last year, the service opened Hartnell's café, a social enterprise café, run by staff and residents at the care service, for the local community.

Amanda has been heavily involved in the success the café has become. She, along with her team, bake all the cakes and make the food.

The nomination continued: "For Hartnell's café, she has become the driving force behind a kitchen that not only serves exceptional food, but also serves the community in meaningful, life-changing ways. Her dedication goes far beyond her role. She leads with compassion, purpose, and a genuine commitment to people.

"She has worked tirelessly to build strong links within the local community, ensuring that Hartnell's Café is a welcoming, supportive space for everyone who walks through the door. Her leadership is defined by kindness, professionalism, and a deep belief in the potential of others.

"One of the most remarkable aspects of her work is the way she supports our residents. She gives them opportunities to help in the café and in the house kitchen, guiding them with patience and encouragement. Through her support, residents gain self-esteem, self-worth, and a sense of purpose.

"She creates an environment where individuals feel capable, valued, and proud of what they can achieve - often offering opportunities they may never have had elsewhere. Her influence is not just culinary; it is transformational.

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"Her compassion extends far beyond the workplace. This past Christmas, she quietly cooked and delivered a three- course Christmas dinner to an elderly couple from the community who she knew would be spending the day alone. She did this without seeking recognition, simply because she cares. This act of kindness reflects the heart she brings to everything she does."

The awards took place at the Edgbaston Cricket Ground in Birmingham and recognised the individuals and teams who make outstanding contributions to health and social care.

The awards were hosted by actor and BBC Pointless Presenter, Alexander Armstrong.

Upon receiving the award, Amanda said: "Winning this award has been a total shock to me, it was completely unexpected and I was very overwhelmed from the recognition from my colleagues and service users.

"I was so proud and felt honoured receiving such an award. It really is a great privilege to work for such a great company and to be working alongside brilliant people to achieve the best standard of care for our service users. Working at Trinity House for over 25 years I have always strived to make the kitchen the heart of the house and to make it as welcoming as possible for service users and staff.

"With the recent opening of the café I feel like we can showcase the brilliant work of our residents and bring something good to the community. I have had so much praise from the staff and community regarding the café and it really is proving to be an asset to the town, providing a warm welcoming environment and allowing a space for all.

"I have absolutely poured my heart and soul into my job over the last 25 years. All of my service users and staff are treated like my family and I make sure they are all provided with nutritional, balanced meals and are always made to feel welcome and valued."

Professor **Tony Romero**, Cygnet Group CEO, said: "It is always a genuine pleasure for me to hear how Cygnet staff are making an incredible difference to some of society's most vulnerable people. The work they are doing, and the care they are providing, is having a positive impact on so many lives.

"The awards are about recognising and honouring the dedication, compassion and sheer hard work shown by staff who, no matter their role, play a vital part in the provision of patient and resident care.

"Amanda is an example of somebody who consistently goes above and beyond. She demonstrates passion for his work, commitment to excellence, and an unwavering dedication to our service users."

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