

Green business growth makes Jo a top entrepreneur

Jo Paulson has been named one of Scotland's most creative young entrepreneurs after signing up more than 200 members of an organisation which provides environmental assistance for businesses.

The 28-year-old from Newington, Edinburgh, was one of six finalists in the Scottish heat of the Junior Chamber International (JCI) Creative Young Entrepreneur award. Launched in 2005, this recognises outstanding entrepreneurs between the ages of 18 and 40.

Jo was chosen as one of six finalists for her role in setting up from scratch a membership programme for the Midlothian-based Business Environment Partnership (BEP), a not-for-profit organisation which gives free and subsidised environmental support to Scottish businesses.

Under the membership programme, organisations pay a yearly subscription for which they receive benefits designed to help them implement environmental initiatives. These include free events, training courses and discounts on products and services. Events organised by Jo attracted more than 1,000 delegates.

Jo commented: "I was extremely pleased to be short-listed for the award. Creating an environmentally-focused network of Scottish businesses has been a huge challenge over the last couple of years and it's great to be recognised for this achievement. I was up against some stiff competition from entrepreneurs who have risked everything and had the business know-how to see opportunities and make them happen."

The Scottish final was won by NKD Clothing director Gill Eastgate who led a management buyout of the corporate clothing firm in 2005 and doubled its profit to £1.3 million.

JCI Enterprise Director Suzanne Shinnie added: "The quality and variety of entrants were incredible. The shortlist had a diverse range of small businesses which each represent Scotland in an extremely positive way."

For more information on the Business Environment Partnership telephone 0131-561 6262 or see www.thebep.org.uk.

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