CAMBRIDGE STUDENTS WIN NATIONAL VOLUNTEERING AWARDS

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The following information was released by the University of Cambridge:

Four students at the University of Cambridge have received Gold Awards from Volunteering England in recognition of their contribution to voluntary work. A Student Volunteering Gold Award is presented for exceptional leadership, dedication and/or achievement and is a prestigious mark of excellence in student volunteering. This year's winners have demonstrated their commitment to volunteering across a range of areas.

Sam Bennett, a PhD student at Kings College, has been an active volunteer for the Cambridge University Engineering Department Outreach team for a number of years. As Science and Engineering Ambassador he has helped to promote engineering to local young people, through assisting groups of children to complete design-build-test projects, and mentoring gifted and talented students. His nominator said: "Sam is a brilliant volunteer who works professionally and efficiently...his experience will be greatly missed by the outreach team when he leaves the University in September."

Immanuel Kemp's (pictured) tireless volunteering with the University RAG society at Trinity College won him his award for dedication. After organising RAG events, ticket-selling and becoming Treasurer of the society, Immanuel has been able to share his experiences with many other volunteers he has recruited. He said: "I'm honestly nothing particularly brilliant in RAG, I just gave it a go and put in some time. Anyone else can do the same, and in time the results will amaze you."

Mark Fliegauf of Emmanuel College received his award for his help in founding the non-profit organisation Aiducation International. Mark invested significant amounts of time and energy creating an organisational structure, while recruiting and training volunteers throughout the country. Aiducation International UK awards merit-based, high-school scholarships to bright yet disadvantaged students in developing countries to help them achieve their educational goals. Already it has raised 25 scholarships for talented students in Kenya and aims to expand to another developing country by the end of 2010. Accepting the award on behalf of the Aiducation International UK team, Mark said: "I come from a humble background and could never have pursued my PhD without financial assistance. I give back to children who are equally bright and dedicated, yet in much more need of support."

Matthew Smith, a Natural Sciences student at St John's College, has received his Gold Award for his dedication to STIMULUS, a community service programme which gives Cambridge students the opportunity to work with pupils in local schools. Matthew's one-to-one maths tuition to an exceptionally talented Year 4 student has helped the boy to study maths at GCSE level and beyond. He also provided teaching support to the music department in his placement school during staff shortages, while continuing his tuition in college science classes. Following such positive experiences, Matthew will begin a PGCE Primary Course in the autumn. His nominator said: "Matthew has such a caring attitude towards the children in his care and I am sure will make a very successful teacher in the future."

Emma Wenborn, Community Affairs Officer at the University, said "The Gold Awards are a fantastic opportunity to recognise the outstanding achievements of our student volunteers. Around 5,000 University of Cambridge students volunteer each year, giving 85,000 hours of time to community initiatives.The four winners have demonstrated exceptional dedication, leadership and achievement in their voluntary endeavours. They are an inspiration".

The Awards were judged by the University's Committee on Community Activities, which oversees community engagement activity across the University.

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