Recognising the emerging talent in the nursing profession
Welcome to the inaugural Nursing Times Rising Stars supplement. We have created this list because we wanted a celebration of nursing talent that highlighted how newly qualified nurses and those studying to become nurses can be really special.

When you read about the work, values and aspirations of the 25 people we describe over the next few pages, I guarantee you will be inspired.

While deliberating over the nominations from the rest of the profession, and electing a few stars of their own, our judges told us that they felt certain that nursing was in “safe hands” considering the calibre of people joining its ranks.

The good reputation of the nursing profession has never been more vital. These days, we witness frequent attacks from the media, and misunderstandings and growing expectations from the public, so it has never been more important that nursing finds people who can vocalise its enormous contribution to healthcare. The next generation of nurses needs to be its innovators, its ambassadors and its advocates. We think we have found people who can do all of that and more, and the profession should be proud to have them tell the story of modern nursing.

We are aware that our list must reflect not just how nursing is now, but how it must be. And our rising stars understand the needs of the modern patient and how the modern nurse must serve them. They are shaping the profession with their thoughts, attitudes, behaviours and actions.

Our list comprises people from all four countries in the UK, from all four branches of nursing – adult, learning disabilities, mental health, and children – and includes both students and recently qualified colleagues.

The stories of our rising stars are of nurses questioning and challenging those senior to them, having the courage to raise concerns. They talk of those who can implement new, more efficient and more quality-driven initiatives. They tell of nurses who exhibit all the values we wish to see in nursing – taking the time to listen and understand patients and service users, and innovate to make services easier to access and designed more closely to meet users’ needs.

Among these pages you’ll find nurses who are new to the job but taking responsibility, being accountable and leading. It’s impressive stuff.

I would like to thank our breathtaking line-up of judges. Some of the current nursing “royalty” jumped at the chance to help us find our next band of nursing stars and we are most grateful for their insight, knowledge and time. My thanks also to NHS Employers, our sponsor, as their generous support enables us to celebrate the nursing talent.

Now, read on and be inspired.

Jenni Middleton,
Editor, Nursing Times

THE JUDGES

Gail Adams, head of nursing, Unison
Viv Bennett, director of nursing, Public Health England
Jane Cummings, chief nursing officer for England, NHS England
David Foster, head of the Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions policy unit, Department of Health
Steve Hams, interim director of clinical governance, States of Guernsey
Fiona Johnson, director of communications, Royal College of Nursing
Helen Laverty, professional lead for learning disability nursing, University of Nottingham
Elaine Maxwell, principal lecturer in leadership, London South Bank University
Joan Myers, nurse consultant for Children and Young People, North East London Foundation Trust
Janice Sigsworth, chief nurse, Imperial College Healthcare Trust

THE JUDGING PROCESS

For the first Nursing Times Rising Stars list, we wanted to acknowledge the expertise and enthusiasm of students training to be nurses, or those who qualified within the last five years – the influencers of today and leaders of tomorrow.

We were looking for people whose work and decisions are already influencing nursing and healthcare more widely. Our rising stars have made brave decisions and taken on challenges and responsibilities beyond what might be expected of those studying for or early in a nursing career.

Our longlist was created in April and May, with readers encouraged to make nominations via nursingtimes.net and Twitter. The judges reviewed the longlist and added their own suggestions before deciding the final list in late May in the Nursing Times offices.

Judges considered the following criteria in coming to their decisions:

Impact
How great an impact has the individual had in nursing?

Change
To what extent is the person challenging traditional attitudes or conventional approaches?

Progression
To what extent have they shown commitment to continually progressing his or her own career within nursing?

Leadership
Is the nominee influencing colleagues and the wider profession?
AYODELE AYEDUN
Deputy manager, male acute mental health ward, Oxford Health Foundation Trust
Ayodele never fails to impress on the acute mental health ward where he works. His positive attitude and belief in the value of a collective team vision make him an asset to the profession, as does his incredible empathy and commitment to providing dignified, respectful and compassionate care to all service users. His de-escalation skills are said to be unmatched, and he is always a pleasure to work with or receive care from.

As part of the trust's preceptorship programme, Ayodele and his colleagues identified a gap in their working practices and documentation relating to section 17 leave for restricted patients. This process highlighted to him that service improvement is about investigating creative ways of providing safe and excellent care rather than identifying weaknesses in working practices.

In under two years Ayodele has developed from a newly qualified nurse to an inspirational charge nurse.

What the judges said: “Ayodele has flown through the ranks in a challenging area of practice and exhibits great professional maturity in the way he interacts with both service users and colleagues.”

LYNSEY BROWN
Learning disability nurse, Calderstones Foundation Trust
Since qualifying in 2010, Lyndsey has worked in forensic settings, supporting vulnerable people who have offended or are at risk of doing so, often as a result of the isolation, lack of opportunities and social stigma that they are exposed to.

In 2013 Lyndsey won the Nursing Times Rising Star Award for work undertaken with her team on challenging inequalities for people with learning disabilities who are in prison. This work had many positive outcomes, including highlighting and protecting vulnerabilities, reducing incidents of restraint and isolation, ensuring fair access to services and creating pathways upon release.

Lyndsey was nominated by her manager for pushing the project forward by presenting at local and national level conferences, and designing and delivering training. She is passionate about being a learning disability nurse and believes that effective leadership in reducing inequalities, breaking down communication barriers and creating greater life chances and opportunities for people with learning disabilities is an integral part of this role.

What the judges said: “Lyndsey has made a huge contribution to improving the lives of an extremely vulnerable and disadvantaged group.”

JULIE-ANNE COLVIN
Learning disabilities children and adolescent mental health services, Northern Ireland
Since graduating from Queen's University Belfast in 2011, Julie-Anne has held several positions in the learning disability sector. Initially she worked with adults in long-stay nursing facilities, but in 2013 took a post in a children's respite facility. This kindled her passion for working with children who have learning disabilities and their families, and helped each of them to reach their full potential.

Julie-Anne took her current position in 2014, working in the first learning disabilities CAMHS team in Northern Ireland. The role has given her the opportunity to join and shape a new, ground-breaking team, and to create regional and national links to ensure the service is built on models of best practice.
A trained sleep counsellor, Julie-Anne now holds regular clinics to devise individualised sleep programmes for children with learning disabilities. She is also taking a lead role in developing care pathways in the service and ensuring national guidance and standards are embedded in practice.

What the judges said: “Pioneering a new aspect of clinical care and acting as a clinical leader in a new challenging field so early in her career is impressive.”

MARIA DAVISON
Community nurse, Derbyshire Community Health Services Foundation Trust
In only a few years since qualifying, Maria has gained impressive knowledge and skills and goes out of her way to share them. For example, if a patient has a diagnosis her team is unfamiliar with, Maria creates information sheets to increase their knowledge. If her colleagues are stressed or demoralised, she manages to make them see the positives in the situation.

Maria is an inspiration and reminder that nursing starts and ends with compassion. She is always thinking about how to enhance patients’ lives and truly values and respects them. She also recognises the importance of domestic and portering staff, especially to patients with dementia.

Maria has a way of mesmerising and making colleagues believe they can do anything. She also does voluntary community work with children’s groups and Dementia Friends, and takes singers into the hospital to sing at Christmas.

What the judges said: “Maria is the complete package. She renews fire in staff who may have become jaded, and works with her community and more broadly – impressive at this stage in her career.”

AIMEE DOUST
0-5 specialist community public health nurse, health visitor, Harrogate and District Foundation Trust
In 2011 Aimie completed her children’s nurse training at Huddersfield University, where she was awarded the Chancellor’s Prize for Outstanding Achievement of an undergraduate student in her cohort.

With an ambition to support families and improve their lives, Aimie decided to pursue a career in community nursing. To gain solid experience working in the community, she worked as a staff nurse in a health-visiting team based in Essex, where her desire to be a health visitor grew. In 2013 she went to Hull University to take specialist community public health nurse training, and qualified in 2014.

Aimie has a high regard for maintaining fairness and equality, and has demonstrated excellent leadership skills by advocating for clients and colleagues and remaining true to her own values. She approaches her work with enjoyment and commitment and is not afraid to challenge negative attitudes to ensure everyone maintains high standards of practice.

What the judges said: “Advocating for patients and their families is a crucial aspect of public health nursing. It is good to see someone at this stage in their career prepared to challenge the status quo for the benefit of patients.”

Julie-Anne Colvin

Julie-Anne is pioneering a new aspect of clinical care and acting as a clinical leader in a challenging field.

RISING STARS AND RISING COOPERATION

The well-earned pride that young nurses and healthcare assistants feel when they complete their training is matched only by the pride we share in their world-beating health service.

In work they will face huge personal challenges and there will be tears of joy or sadness. They will save lives, give hope to patients’ loved ones and may even bring new lives into the world. How many of us can look in the mirror and see a hero, as they can?

The NHS needs more nurses and we want people who are caring at their core and will engage with their roles. Nursing is the ideal career for thousands of compassionate young people and it is important to help them recognise this and give them role models.

Rising Stars is a fantastic way to reach and celebrate that new generation. It also joins the ranks of Care Makers, #HelloMyNameIs and other projects that promote the approach to care that patients want from their NHS.

Those are the reasons why NHS Employers is so pleased to support this initiative. We will go the extra mile to share the stories of all 25 rising stars throughout the NHS. All of us can benefit from hearing about their ideas, choices and enthusiasm.

I’m excited about the future for all young nursing staff. The NHS faces huge pressure and nurses too often have to feel that burden too. But there is a lot to be encouraged about.

We want the NHS to become a world leader for flexible career opportunities and training. Staff groups of all kinds will be increasingly supported to work together in multi-skilled teams. The learning opportunities are huge.

There are leadership opportunities too. Local nurse managers are already playing a remarkable and increasing role in challenging circumstances and developing new models of care.

My challenge to you is to read the stories of all 25 rising stars and pick at least three ideas you want to spread to colleagues, then do it. It’ll do it too. And we can all play our part in the unbroken chain of inspiration and innovation that is at the heart of future care.

Sue Covill, director of development and employment, NHS Employers
VIVIEN DURHAM
Learning disabilities nurse, Rainbows Children's Hospice
While studying to be a learning disabilities nurse, Vivien persuaded Rainbows Hospice for Children and Young Adults to offer her its first learning disability nurse placement; she knew from the start that this was her dream job. As she was coming up to qualifying she did bank hours at the hospice and successfully applied for a job, even though she was told it never took on newly qualified nurses.

As well as supporting children, young adults and their families through a difficult and emotional time in their lives, and enabling them to treasure every special moment, Vivien mentors other students on placement in the hospice, who are often apprehensive about this challenging area of practice. Parents say she makes them realise they can still live their lives, despite having a child in the hospice, and she is described by students as “the mentor you always want with you”.

Vivien is now studying for a master’s degree and continues to increase her knowledge base. She is also training to become part of the hospice’s team working with ventilator-dependent children.

What the judges said: “Vivien demonstrates real commitment to pursuing a career in a challenging environment and to passing on her knowledge and skills to students.”

EMILY GARTSHORE
Staff nurse, Nottingham University Hospitals Trust
An exceptionally professional and proactive newly qualified nurse, Emily takes every opportunity to engage and develop greater understanding of the professional and contemporary issues affecting nursing and the wider healthcare context. She is inspirational, consistently supporting work to promote nursing as a positive and inspiring career, speaking out and influencing both locally and nationally.

Emily won Student Nursing Times Awards Student Nurse of the Year: Adult in 2014, and continues to excel in her role now as a registered nurse. She participates in her trust’s newly qualified forum and the staff nurse unit practice council in her specialty.

In addition to her staff nurse role, she initiated and is leading a research study into the wellbeing of nurses and midwives, and is developing an educational resource to support this.

Emily is a caring nurse who always puts the patient at the centre of everything she does, a true ambassador for compassion in practice. She has a clear vision and drive to achieve the best for patients and healthcare through a clinical academic career.

What the judges said: “Emily’s commitment to her colleague’s wellbeing, and to research at this stage in her career, is inspiring.”

LAURA HAILES
Staff nurse, oncology ward, Nottingham University Hospitals Trust
In 2012 Laura won the Nottinghamshire Roosevelt Scholarship and had the opportunity to spend three months in the US investigating the concept of shared governance (SG), which aims to give staff nurses control over their practice and influence over decision-making and ward management. A caring and compassionate nurse, Laura has grown in confidence and developed many leadership skills since her return, and been leading the implementation of SG for her trust.

Laura has engaged with the trust board as well as her peers and shared her vision of how SG can improve patient care, and the nurse and patient experience. She has developed a network of organisations and hosted a meeting in December 2013 involving five trusts and a video conference link to Boston (US). Although currently not full-time in clinical practice, Laura continues to be enthusiastic and passionate about nursing and continues to deliver hands-on patient care whenever she can.

What the judges said: “Laura shows great promise. Already she has developed the skills and confidence to engage with and inspire colleagues at all levels, and facilitated communication between organisations in the UK and overseas.”

CHRISTOPHER HARDY
Nurse, Churchview and Lakelands Nursing Homes, United Health
Since qualifying as a learning disability nurse at the University of Wolverhampton in 2013, Christopher worked on many projects involving the use of computer technology.

He is a team member of the website learningdisabilitynurse.com, and redesigned and managed the current website and the social media groups linked to it. He has also recorded and live-streamed two learning disability nursing conferences, most recently the 2015 Positive Choices conference in Cardiff.

Christopher’s proudest achievement to date is the creation of an accessible blood test app, which he also narrated. This interactive, easy-read app can be downloaded straight onto phones or iPads. It has simple but beautiful graphics and clear text. He hopes to create more easy-read apps to make...
health information more accessible to people with learning disabilities around the world.

What the judges said: “Christopher has gone beyond his core role by embracing new technology to improve the lives of people with learning disabilities and to promote communication in his specialty.”

CLAIRE HARRIES
Student nurse, University of South Wales
Currently in the final year of her learning disabilities nursing course, Claire is chair of the Wales Health Student Forum, which comprises student representatives from all health courses delivered in Wales. The forum provides opportunity for discussion and learning around issues pertinent to healthcare students and qualified professionals, enabling them to share good practice and experience inter-professional working at student level.

Claire is also a member of the Higher Education Academy Students as Partners work strand group, and the sole student representative on both the NHS Wales careers network and the NHS Wales health and wellbeing steering group. She founded and chairs the Fit 2 Practise walking group at the university – formed to encourage student nurses to maintain their own physical and mental health – was the learning disabilities student editor of Student Nursing Times (2013-2014), and had an article published in the learning disability magazine Llais in 2013.

During her nursing studies Claire has taken every opportunity to promote learning disabilities nursing and has attended several careers events throughout Wales to do so.

What the judges said: “Claire shows genuine leadership skills and is passionate about promoting her specialty.”

MICHELLE HUDSON
Care Maker and student nurse, Teesside University
Winner of the 2015 Student Nursing Times Awards Care Maker of the Year, Michelle is passionate about her role as an ambassador for the 6Cs. Earlier this year she was invited to discuss the NHS Five Year Forward View at 10 Downing Street.

Michelle developed and coordinated the first Teesside University student-led patient safety conference, promoting students as leaders and advancing their movement for safe, person-centred care. She helped at the South Tees Foundation Trust Pressure Ulcer Awareness Day, raising awareness among staff, visitors and patients. In November 2014, she attended the Chief Nursing Officer for England Summit, where she also assisted with Stop the Pressure campaign activities. She is an ambassador for John’s Campaign to gain the right for family members to stay with inpatients who have dementia, and is also a Dementia Champion.

What the judges said: “Michelle is going above and beyond her responsibilities as a student and shows great commitment and leadership potential.”
Nursing Times Rising Stars

Charlotte Johnston
Student nurse, recently qualified from University of Lincoln, soon-to-be ICU nurse

In 2013 Charlotte led a nationwide movement of student nurses aiming to eliminate pressure ulcers. She was inspired to arrange a local Stop the Pressure event for students at the University of Lincoln after responding to a comment on Twitter from Ruth May (NHS England’s chief nurse for the Midlands and East) about the wider Stop the Pressure campaign. The goal was to help raise awareness of pressure ulcers and boost the skills needed to avoid and treat them.

Charlotte took part in the investigation by NHS medical director Sir Bruce Keogh into high mortality rates at 14 hospital trusts in England. She was then one of 18 people selected for places at the new National Junior Leadership Academy at the University of Nottingham. The academy is aimed at high-performing pre-registration nursing students or those who feel they have leadership potential. The six-month programme seeks to identify and develop the nursing profession’s future leaders from the student population.

What the judges said: “Charlotte has done some amazing work. She got the whole student body behind her.”

Stephen Jones
Mental health nurse, Oxleas Foundation Trust

While still a student at the University of Greenwich, Stephen was invited to join the Compassion and Patient Safety Programme Board after impressing leading figures from Health Education England (Kent, Surrey and Sussex) with his knowledge of and enthusiasm for his subject. His board membership led him to undertake the role of scoping project lead for reducing restrictive practices across Kent, Surrey and Sussex.

His ideas for a mental health champions scheme, aimed at improving the mental health of patients in general acute hospitals, led to Stephen becoming a core member of a Department of Health national working party on improving the care of people with mental health problems in mainstream services.

Stephen also became a member of the organising committee for the inaugural FutureMHN Conference held at the O2 Arena in February 2015, celebrating the success of mental health nursing innovation and research, to inspire future leaders, and to support effective networking.

What the judges said: “Stephen’s decision to take a PhD so soon after qualifying demonstrates his commitment to improving mental health nursing practice.”

Rebecca Kenny
Emergency department nurse, Imperial Healthcare Trust

Now a focused and dedicated emergency nurse, Rebecca gained a first-class honours undergraduate master’s degree, completing prominent research into service provision for people with Huntington’s disease. This is used to inform community services for people with rare neurological conditions in the UK and Australia.

Rebecca gained an internship with the director of nursing for Nottinghamshire Healthcare, where she was introduced to the leadership and corporate environment. Although inspired by this experience and mentorship, she had a strong desire to combine leadership and research skills with excellent clinical practice, and chose a career in emergency nursing.

Advancing her clinical practice while showing a strong aptitude for managing and leading the clinical team, Rebecca progressed to the role of senior sister within four years of qualification, and is now a Darzi Fellow in clinical leadership. She is passionate about developing her role as a clinical leader and using these skills to innovate and improve healthcare systems and processes.

What the judges said: “Rebecca’s research has had an international impact on improving the lives of people with neurological conditions, and despite the demands of her current role she is leading development of clinical practice.”

Orla Mathews
Staff nurse, elderly acute unit, Antrim Area Hospital

Orla worked as a nursing auxiliary before qualifying as a nurse through the Open University. In 2012 she was runner-up for the RCN Northern Ireland Nurse of the Year Student Award.

Orla has a passion for the care of older people. She also has an interest in the impact of dementia and delirium on hospital patients and the care they receive. After being selected to complete a leadership in practice course, Orla highlighted the severe lack of dementia training among hospital staff by writing to the director of nursing, outlining her ideas for improving the services provided on her ward.
As a result, Orla was appointed dementia champion, and is now a training facilitator. Working with the practice development officer she is developing resources such as memory folders and activity boxes, with the aim of reshaping the ward to specialise in care for people with dementia.

**What the judges said:** “Orla’s campaigns to change the way people with dementia are cared for will have an impact within social care as well as healthcare.”

**NETTY MDLULI**  
Student nurse, University of Derby  
Having never considered nursing as a career, Netty initially studied law. A part-time job as care assistant while studying introduced her to what she now considers her vocation. Although she has exchanged the court room for life on the wards, Netty recognises that her role in advocating for patients and service users remains the same.

Recognising that her campus seemed cut off from the main university site, Netty helped set up its first society for student nurses, demonstrating determination and commitment in selling the concept to her fellow students. The society has been a resounding success, offering social activities and extra learning opportunities, and aims to increase students’ motivation and self efficacy. Netty’s proudest achievement to date is sky diving for Amnesty International. She hopes to repeat the experience alongside other members of the student society to raise funds for a new cancer research centre at Chesterfield Royal Hospital.

**What the judges said:** “Bringing a somewhat isolated group together to create a sense of collegiality is admirable.”

**NATALIE MOORE**  
Staff nurse, Priory Group  
Natalie is a newly qualified mental health nurse working with young people who have eating disorders, but her strong presence on social media means she is already a recognised name among her colleagues. She joined with the WeNurses network to help set up @WeMHNurses, a popular fortnightly Twitter chat for mental health nurses and those interested in mental health nursing. She is also the co-founder of the Newly Qualified Nurse Blogger Collective (@NQNBC), which supports the development of those who have just become nurses. Now working with children and adolescents with eating disorders, Natalie spent her student years as mental health editor for *Student Nursing Times*, blogging about her experiences.

**What the judges said:** “Natalie is doing particularly important work around eating disorders in young people. It’s also good to reflect the mixed health economy.”

**ADJOA NSIAH-JENNINGS**  
Community staff nurse, North East London Foundation Trust  
Although she is relatively newly qualified as a nurse, Adjoa brings with her a wealth of previous experience in communications and marketing. She is passionate about improving services and enhancing the experience of the mothers and children who use them, and has been instrumental in setting up a steering group in the health visiting team to look at a number of projects. These include taking simple steps to make the clinic environment more user-friendly, and seeking feedback from parents about their priorities to incorporate more health promotion in clinics.

Adjoa recently arranged to spend a day shadowing her trust’s chief nurse to increase her understanding of its strategic direction, and also met with the associate director of nursing and patient experience. She made a lasting impression on them, and they were particularly impressed with her enthusiasm to lead others by example and drive forward improvement initiatives, despite her relatively junior position in the organisation.

**What the judges said:** “There is a perception that you can’t go straight into community nursing, but Adjoa proves this isn’t the case. In an area with an ageing workforce she is exactly what is needed.”
SAM WALLACE
Student nurse, Bradford University
Now in the third year of his adult nursing course, Sam has devoted much of his own time to help develop and embed a compassionate culture of care in nursing. An active Care Maker, Sam has also been involved in fundraising, supporting students, trust staff and vulnerable groups.
He developed a pilot programme for students and health and social care staff to link with their clinical commissioning group, while learning about commissioning and how to influence patient and service user outcomes. He also challenged the Council of Deans to increase compassion in practice through the Care Maker programme, gaining support in recruiting universities to promote the 6Cs.
While on placement Sam and fellow students developed supporting information for future students. This involved collating useful tips and information and producing a printed handbook. He is also an ambassador for his university and has been student rep for his cohort over two academic years.
What the judges said: “Sam is a passionate ambassador for nursing. If he can retain his ability to bring people with him he will fly.”

LOUISA POWER
Student nurse, Glasgow Caledonian University
In addition to her nursing course, Louisa is studying for a diploma in forensic medical science at Glasgow University. She is currently school officer for nursing and community health at her university, and student representative for the Scottish chief nursing officer’s student forum.
Last year Louisa led GCU’s 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence campaign to empower future health professionals to spot the red flags for domestic violence, female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation. She was also asked to attend MSP Malcolm Chisholm’s cross-party committee on men’s violence against women at the Scottish Parliament.
An article by Louisa on health inequalities and the benefits of nurse-led initiatives was quoted during a debate at the Scottish Parliament, inspiring her to set up a series of talks for fellow student on health inequalities and the importance of political awareness. She was shortlisted as Most Inspirational Student Nurse and Most Outstanding Contribution to Student Affairs in the Student Nursing Times Awards and won GCU’s Lindsay Leadership Award.
What the judges said: “Louisa is active in professional groups and an advocate for vulnerable groups. She shows real leadership in tackling inequalities.”

LIZ READ
Student nurse, University of Greenwich
As well as studying to become a mental health nurse, Liz has been a Care Maker for two years. She has been invited to 10 Downing Street to discuss the future of nursing with an advisor to the prime minister, and has spoken at national conferences, facilitated workshops with NHS staff, and hosted values-based teaching sessions for first-year students at her university. Liz was also part of the team that set up the Mental Health Nursing Society at the University of Greenwich.
In February 2015 Liz was part of a small team of people who hosted the inaugural Future of Mental Health Nursing Conference at the O2 Arena in London, where she also spoke. The conference accommodated 500 student mental health nurses from around the country and

An article on health inequalities by Louisa was quoted in a debate at the Scottish Parliament

“An article on health inequalities by Louisa was quoted in a debate at the Scottish Parliament.”
offered a programme that aimed to celebrate the success of mental health nursing, share innovation and research to inspire future leaders, and support effective networking.

**What the judges said:** “Liz is going above and beyond her student role. She inspires and motivates, and has the rare ability to give honest feedback that doesn’t sound like criticism but an incentive.”

**EMMA SELBY**
Staff nurse, Waltham Forest child and family consultation service, North East London Foundation Trust

Emma was the 2014 Nursing Times Rising Star of the Year thanks to her creative and patient-centred approach to developing a maternity pathway for pregnant young mums experiencing substance misuse. She also established a free sexual health and relationship advice service with the support of the Terrance Higgins Trust.

Besides her current role, Emma is undertaking a postgraduate diploma in parenting studies, working with parents - individually and in groups - to manage violent and difficult behaviour from children. Emma is supporting her colleagues' innovative ambitions to roll this patient-centred approach out across their borough. She has also been involved in a project to see newly qualified band 5 nurses being offered the opportunity to work within community CAMHS services, an opportunity rarely available in London. These posts are now live.

**What the judges said:** “Emma shows real commitment to developing advanced skills in working with vulnerable groups, and already has impressive leadership skills.”

**JADE SILVER**
Student nurse, University of South Wales

Jade is determined to ensure people with learning disabilities receive the best care possible. During a recent placement she developed an easy-read guide to the Care and Treatment Plan from the Mental Health (Wales) Measure, which is being considered for adoption by the Learning Disability Advisory group and Welsh Government. It will contribute to collaborative care planning for people with learning disabilities who have mental health needs.

As a student representative on the All Wales Strengthening the Commitment steering group, Jade has developed promotional materials outlining the values base of the project. She is also developing similar materials for her university to promote learning disability nursing as a career.

As part of her studies Jade developed a health promotion tool in the form of a sensory game for people with autism who experience tactile sensitivities to different textures, with the aim of employing a fun method of helping them overcome their sensitivities.

**What the judges said:** “Jade has produced something very practical that has immediate benefits for her patients. The fact that her peers voted her ‘most likely to become a professor’ says it all.”

**JAMES WHITESIDE**
Trainee surgical emergency nurse practitioner nurse, surgical emergency unit, Oxford University Hospitals Trust

A year after taking his first nursing post on his trust’s emergency assessment unit, James was made one of its senior band 5s, allowing him to take on more of a leadership role, focusing on supporting and mentoring newly qualified members of staff and student nurses. He completed the Facilitating Workplace Learning Module in 2014, and writes a monthly newsletter for the unit, focusing on news, local policy updates, education and recreation.

James currently occupies a pioneering role in the trust’s surgical emergency unit, which allows him to take patient histories, conduct examinations, order diagnostic tests/investigations and prescribe. He is currently completing a master’s degree in advanced practice.

James had his first article published in March 2015, focusing on men in nursing and touch. His recommendations for education are also being considered for inclusion in the nursing curriculum at Oxford Brookes University, where he is also an associate part-time lecturer.

**What the judges said:** “While James’s career is developing rapidly in an exciting arena, he still manages to share his learning more widely.”

**NIKKI YUN**
Student nurse, Kingston University and St George’s, University of London

Throughout the three years of her nursing degree, final-year student Nikki has sought opportunities to raise awareness in healthcare. She is an active Care Maker and an RCN student information officer. She undertakes voluntary activities, including fundraising for Cancer Research and Macmillan, and facilitates events for Heritage2Health, an organisation aiming to help people in the community who are socially isolated.

Nikki is a co-founder of Kingston University’s first nursing society, which she helped establish after winning the First Year of the Year award through Kingston’s Student-led Learning and Teaching Award. She also completed a research project with a faculty staff member in 2014 to evaluate the impact of the society on student experience, and gave a presentation at Kingston University’s faculty conference.

Nikki won the Most Inspirational Student Nurse of the Year at the 2015 Student Nursing Times Awards.

**What the judges said:** “Nikki shows incredible energy, taking part in a range of activities to improve the lives of fellow students and the wider community. She is truly inspirational.”