

YOUNG TRAILBLAZERS



James **BLANCHARD** JUNIOR DESIGN ENGINEER GASTRONORTH

Tyneside-based distributor GastroNorth has a commitment to nurture younger staff to forge a career within the catering equipment industry. The philosophy is one of progression, and the newest entrants follow a structured career plan which enables new talent to be brought in to replace them as they continue to develop.

The latest beginner to benefit from the training is James Blanchard, who came straight out of college and into an Apprentice CAD Technician role at the distributor. During his design engineering apprenticeship he assisted the team with their design workload, but following its completion he took on the role of Junior Design Engineer and is now learning how to turn his designs into quotations by accurately specifying equipment to meet a client's brief.

James' industry colleagues reported that since he started at GastroNorth his abilities have continually improved. They are anticipating further great things from him and are looking forward to seeing how that progression continues as he becomes increasingly involved with projects through sales or management, depending on where his natural aptitude lies.

His guidance through the GastroNorth's team is part of the firm's aim to employ staff it can develop within the industry, rather than just hiring apprentices who leave after a year or two. James is therefore one success story of this scheme, progressing his career while learning how the GastroNorth team thinks and works.

PROFILE

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Tansin **BLANKLEY** DESIGNER CATERING DESIGN GROUP

Tansin Blankley first joined Catering Design Group (CDG) in 2014 at the firm's Daventry corporate headquarters on 1-year work experience placements when studying interior architecture and design at Nottingham Trent University. Subsequently she returned to the company in 2016 as a Designer.

The firm ensured she was made to feel welcome and supported from day one, with an ethos of everyone helping one another and learning from each other.

This has helped Tansin in her role, working on the technical aspects of kitchen and restaurant/servery design within private education, universities and the business and industry sectors. Both of her parents are trained chefs so this has also given her first-hand insight into the challenges facing chefs in a busy commercial kitchen environment.

Tansin's work is all about finishes, designing in the 'wow' factor within front of house settings to keep customers coming back for more. Her industry colleagues praised her technical and creative skills, as well as her ability to fit seamlessly in with the rest of team.

She has been given creative freedom to grow as a designer as well as developing other vital workplace skills. Part of this has been the opportunity to meet suppliers and clients, and to go out onsite and see concepts come to fruition.

PROFILE

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Hazel BARNES

TECHNICAL DESIGNER
CATERING DESIGN GROUP

In her time at Catering Design Group (CDG), Hazel Barnes has already become a cornerstone of the firm's design department. First encountering the Daventry-based kitchen design house in 2014 on 1-year work experience placement when studying interior architecture and design at Nottingham Trent University, she returned to the company in December last year as a Technical Designer after finishing her masters degree.

She jumped at the chance to work for the distributor once again because of the positive experience she had on placement, which also fuelled her love of a new career path within the commercial restaurant design sector.

Hazel has been relishing the opportunity of working in a real commercial design environment rather than the conceptual designs of her university days, working on live projects with budgets, deadlines and challenges.

She has developed her technical skills using design software like AutoCAD and Photoshop, becoming skilled in the complexities behind space planning, design and product research, preparing coloured plans, client presentations, assembly of full drawings to include layouts, detailed drawings and elevations, together with preparing furniture, fixtures and equipment specifications, and furniture and material schedules.

Those who know her in the industry believe a great talent is being brought through and have lauded her aptitude and eagerness to learn. Her enthusiasm and her capabilities definitely earn her a place as an Unsung Hero.

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Keith SIMMONS

TECHNICAL SUPERVISOR
FLOWRITE SERVICES

Flowrite Services' technical supervisor Keith Simmons is a true stalwart of the sector. He has spent his whole career of over 45 years within the refrigeration and air conditioning engineering industry, the last 17 years of which have been with the Maidstone-based refrigeration and ventilation servicing specialist.

Prior to this he worked for companies including Total Refrigeration, Stanleys and PNS Williams.

After 45 years, Simmons still enjoys keeping up to date, methodically working through and solving problems, helping the more junior engineers and making sure the customer is happy.

His industry colleagues reveal that nothing is too much trouble for him, and he often spends his own time working to bring along the less experienced engineers. He has a great knowledge of the industry, an exemplary attitude, and is a major asset to Flowrite's engineering team.

Keith never complains, and always helps out when needed. He has been praised as a truly great example across the whole company. He treats everyone the same and is an amazing asset.

As a truly special Unsung Hero, he is loved by all customers he encounters and is respected across all areas of the Flowrite business.

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