



Zoe Gibbons and Sarah Cooper

Mar 05, 2019 17:15 GMT

Go North East apprenticeships drive industry award wins

This National Apprenticeship Week (4 - 8 March 2019), the region's biggest bus operator, Go North East is celebrating its young talent making a big impact – including two industry award-winning apprentices.

As the North East's third largest private employer, with over 2100 team members, the company continually invests in training local youngsters. Two successful bespoke apprenticeship schemes are run in partnership with Gateshead College.

Zoe Gibbons and Sarah Cooper are two of Go North East's rising stars, having been the first trainees to embark on its customer services apprenticeship in 2017. After accepting permanent advisor roles last year, the duo is progressing onto level 3, in turn opening the door for new apprentices to bolster the 12-strong in-house team.

Responsible for providing customers with direct open and honest communication 363 days-a-year, seven-days-a-week via phone, live web chat and social media, 24-year-old Sarah was named Multi-Channel Advisor of the Year finalist at the recent North East Contact Centre Awards. She said: "The event was incredible, especially as we beat three major competitors, including Sage, AXA, and LNER to win the prestigious Dream Team of the Year category. And, that same night we won another trophy at the Team GNE Awards, where I also scooped the title of Apprentice of the Year. It's exciting to be recognised at this early stage in my career and I'm grateful to Go North East for helping me to develop my skills."

Sarah, from Stanley is no stranger to collecting accolades. Her success follows an earlier win at the 2018 Edge Awards, where she claimed the Customer Service Apprentice of the Year prize. Go North East was also named Large Employer of the Year, while Joseph Franchi was named Automotive Apprentice of the Year.

Another Team GNE winner, Joseph is currently training on Go North East's widely renowned bus and coach mechanical engineering apprenticeship. The popular scheme attracts over 500 applications every year, recruiting Go North East's first female engineering apprentice in over 20 years within its latest intake.

Go North East Commercial Director, Stephen King started training with the company aged 16 and has continued to climb the career ladder. He said: "This National Apprenticeship Week, we're extremely proud to celebrate the stack of achievements accumulated by our talented apprentices. Customer services and engineering skills are essential to delivering our vision of 'journeys taken off' and through our unique apprenticeships, we're able to develop a hardworking, conscientious workforce with clear future progression - all while they learn on the job, future proof their skills, and make a living."

For more information about Go North East and how to apply, visit www.gonortheast.co.uk.

[Go North East website](#)