

Report of funding from the Profession Gardeners' Guild

With the help of the award that I gratefully received in September 2014, I have been able to attend Merrist Wood College in Guildford, to study the RHS Level 3 certificate in the principles of plant growth, health and propagation.

I am currently in my second year of a three year apprenticeship at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in which I have the opportunity to work in different units; Arboretum & Horticultural Services, Great Glasshouses & Training, and Hardy Display. In my second year I was fortunate to be granted one day a week leave to attend Merrist Wood College to supplement the practical training I am currently receiving at RBG Kew.

At college I learnt about plant taxonomy, structure, and function, the root environment, plant nutrition and growing systems, the management of plant health and understanding applied plant propagation. The information I learnt within these topics provided me with the background knowledge to explain why we carry out the tasks that we do in horticulture and to help me improve upon my own practical skills.

During my time at college I have been working within the Princess of Wales Conservatory at RBG Kew. Learning about the way in which plants function and grow as part of the RHS level 3 qualification has helped me to assess the environment of the plants grown in the conservatory and their requirements with regards to watering, feeding, pruning and propagating. I have also been able to identify the signs of pests and used what I have learnt at college to help when dealing with nutrient deficiencies.



I started college in October 2014 and attended for 19 weeks, finishing in February 2015. Following the end of the course I sat two exams and was over the moon to have been awarded commendation in both. In June I sat my final two exams this year, which I hope to pass to gain the full certificate qualification, for which I will be notified later in the year. * I have now received my results for the exams that I sat in June and I am delighted to let you know that I passed the RHS Level 3 Certificate in Principles of Plant Growth, Health & Propagation with commendation. 12th October 2015

Attending college has been invaluable in accompanying and enhancing my theoretical knowledge, as well as giving me confidence in my own

understanding and practical skills, in using my own initiative when managing a collection of plants. Together with my practical apprenticeship it has equipped me with a rounded practical and academic grounding in horticulture and given me a thirst to learn more.

On completing the certificate qualification I will go on to my third and final year of the apprenticeship at RBG Kew, finishing in July 2016. Following this I wish to further and expand on my training in varied gardens and horticultural institutions to equip myself with a wide range of skills and diverse experience.

I could not have gained this qualification without the help of the Professional Gardeners' Guild. The award has helped me with the cost of the tuition fees and without it I would have not been able to attend and receive this qualification. I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to everyone at the Professional Gardener's Guild for awarding me with the scholarship; it really has helped me in my growing horticultural career.

