

# Coalitions Conference



Left: WYEC Chair Zulf Hussain; Diversity Forum Chair, Sara Harrison; Paula Grizzard, Director of The back to work company and WYEC members at the launch of the toolkit.



Right: WYEC member Rob Holt of Carillion collecting award for the Diversity Forum from Jonathan Austin of Best Companies Ltd at the Coalitions annual conference.

At the Coalitions Annual Conference in June, WYEC was presented with an award from the National Employment Panel in recognition of the excellent work of its Diversity Forum. The Forum, which is chaired by Sara Harrison, Diversity and Development Projects Manager at ITV, is a cross-sector group of employers that identified a shared desire for a platform to discuss recruitment and retention issues for disadvantaged people.

A truly employer-led group, the Diversity Forum has already held a number of successful events, including the "Mental Health, Workplace Wealth – profiting from experience" conference held in April and a series of Age Legislation workshops, delivered over the summer. The Forum also launched a 'Diversity into Action' toolkit.

The evidence-based toolkit was produced through the collation of best

practice from employers and partners throughout the region. The 'how-to' guide includes case studies and demonstrates steps to develop diversity initiatives for the recruitment and retention of ethnic minorities.

The toolkit was launched at the WYEC Diversity Forum meeting in June 06. Another publication, **Community Links**, has been produced by The back to work company at the request of the Forum. It outlines the regions job support and training providers for minority groups along with partner organisations and publications that can offer advice and guidance for employers. For copies, contact WYEC.

Sara said: "We are delighted that the Diversity Forum has been recognised as an *example of best practice* by NEP and we have already had contact from other Coalitions who are interested in establishing a similar forum in their area."

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