The winners of the 2015 Yorkshire Young Achievers Awards were revealed to hundreds of guests at Leeds United’s Centenary Pavilion on 19 November, with winners from across the region.

Personality of the Year went to eight-old Doncaster boy, Bailey Matthews, who won the hearts of Yorkshire when he completed his first triathlon, overcoming the challenges of his cerebral palsy.

The 23rd Awards, sponsored by McCormicks Solicitors, mark the achievements of people aged 35 and under in seven categories, from the Arts to Management and Enterprise, and are organised by the Yorkshire Young Achievers Foundation. The Foundation was established to support young people in Yorkshire and the Awards and other fundraising initiatives have now raised more than £1m.

The Chairman of the Awards, Peter McCormick OBE, said: “We had some prime examples of what it takes to be a Yorkshire Young Achiever, with some fantastic winners in every category, from a student who gave up her spare time to a little girl who gave up her hair, both to raise money for cancer charities.

To find out more about nominating a Yorkshire Young Achiever please visit www.yorkshireyoungachievers.co.uk
Bailey Matthews captured hearts across Yorkshire when he completed his first triathlon, despite the challenges of having cerebral palsy. Competitors at the Castle Howard event in July stayed behind to watch the brave youngster fight his way to the finish line, despite falling on the way, and the subsequent video went viral, having hundreds of thousands of views.

Bailey Matthews
Pictured with Simon Mackaness and Peter McCormick

Bailey was inspired to take up sport by his family, including his brother Finlay who is a keen gymnast, dad and uncle who both run and mum Julie who is a sports therapist. Julie said: “He doesn’t really sit still long enough to watch sport, he would rather be doing it!”

He has since won the title Child of Courage at the Pride of Britain Awards, meeting the Prime Minister, David Cameron, along with celebrities such as David Beckham and Tom Daley.

Alicia Donnelly
Pictured with Shaun Knowles

Alicia Donnelly has been fighting aplastic anaemia, a rare form of cancer, since September 2014. Treatment meant she had to be isolated for months but this spring she had a successful bone marrow transplant and now hopes to start secondary school after Christmas.

While she was awaiting treatment for her own cancer, she had her head shaved to provide a wig for another child going through chemotherapy, donating her hair to the Little Princess Trust.

Her efforts spurred on her classmates at her former school, Oatlands Juniors, to join in, holding a wacky hair day to raise money for the Little Princess Trust, while the salon which shaved her head has raised nearly £800 for the trust too.

Daisy Campbell
Pictured with Kathryn Apanowicz

Daisy Campbell joined Emmerdale in 2007 and is in her fifth year as Amelia Spencer.

On top of her acting career, she is also a professional dancer, having started dancing at the age of three.

She is a specialist in Freestyle, Street and Contemporary dance, holding three national titles in both Freestyle and Street.

Daisy trains three times a week, fitting it in with school, filming and attending the Rebel School of Theatre Arts once a week.

Mary Benson
Pictured with Philip and Janine Murphy

Mary Benson is a fashion designer who was brought up as the youngest of five children in Seacroft, Leeds. Her early career efforts included pestering Top Shop to take her on as a designer.

She began making clothes and bags for her friends and her hard work paid off when she had them accepted into shops in the city. She went to Leeds College of Art before graduating from the University of Westminster last year. Her experience includes an internship with the late, great Alexander McQueen.

As her profile grew, she was a guest designer for the Great Yorkshire Show’s ever-popular fashion shows. She made her well-received debut at London Fashion Week last year.

She started her eponymous label in 2013 and among the celebrities who have chosen her designs are singers Paloma Faith and Rita Ora.

To find out more about nominating a Yorkshire Young Achiever please visit www.yorkshireyoungachievers.co.uk
## The Winners

### Achievement in Sport
**Sponsored by Leeds United AFC**

**Lizzie Armitstead**

Cyclist Lizzie Armitstead is currently the World, Commonwealth and National Champion.

She took up cycling in 2004 and has gone from strength to strength, culminating in the UCI Road World Championships in Virginia in September this year when she became only the fourth British woman to take the title, following in the footsteps of Yorkshire’s legendary Beryl Burton.

After being talent spotted by British Cycling aged just 15, she was initially a track rider and at her first UCI Track Cycling World Cup took home a hat-trick of Gold medals. She has since gone on to claim nine additional Gold medals at the Track World Cup Series, also winning the World Champion Title in the Team Pursuit event.

Her focus switched to road racing and at the London 2012 Olympics she gained a silver medal, the first British medal of the Games.

To find out more about nominating a Yorkshire Young Achiever please visit [www.yorkshireyoungachievers.co.uk](http://www.yorkshireyoungachievers.co.uk)

### Achievement in Education
**Sponsored by Positive Tax Solutions**

**Sarah Sobka**

Pictured with Stephen Burwood

Sarah Sobka attended Sheffield Girls’ High School and, while still at school, completed a four-week research placement at the University of Sheffield where she looked at a drug currently used to treat irritable bowel syndrome to see if it could be applied to treatments for people with cystic fibrosis.

She entered her research into the National Science & Engineering Competition at the Big Bang fair, where she won first prize and subsequently the title, ‘UK Young Scientist of the Year 2015.

With an interest in the social issues surrounding gender in education, she worked with P&G promoting its Always Like A Girl YouTube video and then speaking at its “Confidence Summit” at Google HQ about empowering more girls to pursue science.

She is in the first year of her medical degree at the University of Sheffield. Her aim is to combine a degree as a clinician and medical researcher.

### Unsung Hero
**Sponsored by Lunchbox Theatrical Productions**

**Hannah Wilks**

Pictured with Rebecca Cundall

Hannah Wilks is in her fourth year of studying zoology at the University of Leeds, having made the move to Yorkshire from London.

Five years ago her mum was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and, while at home, Hannah helped raise funds for research into the condition. When she came to Leeds she wanted to continue this work so last year she took a 48-week voluntary placement with Marie Curie’s West Yorkshire Community Fundraising Team.

Despite working full-time, five days a week, she regularly came in early and left late and gave up many weekends to support fundraising activities, including collecting during the Great Daffodil Appeal and helping out at events.

She came up with the idea of asking hospitals to collect for the Great Daffodil appeal and after much hard work managed to get the two biggest hospitals in Leeds to adopt the idea.

### Special Award
**Sponsored by Walsh Taylor**

**Jono Lancaster**

Pictured with Kate Breese

Jono Lancaster won the Unsung Hero category at the Awards in 2011 and has supported the event ever since.

Jono suffers from Treacher Collins Syndrome, a rare congenital disorder leading to skull and facial deformities and hearing problems. He was bullied at school and taunted in public and rejected for a second time by his biological parents when he managed to track them down.

Despite his problems, he has built a successful and fulfilling life and on the back of that, he is sharing his knowledge with young people who are facing a variety of difficulties. The Foundation has supported him with a grant towards his work with young people in Yorkshire.

In 2015 he took a month-long trip across the United States of America where he has met dozens of families with children with Treacher Collins and shared his experiences.
THANK YOU!

Thanks to everyone who came along to help celebrate the 2015 Yorkshire Young Achievers. We’ve included some of the pictures below but please visit the website for the full coverage of the event. We are delighted to announce that the 2016 Awards will take place on 17 November 2016 at the Leeds United Centenary Pavilion. Prices are the same as last year, £600 for a table of ten or £65 per ticket. As always there will be a three-course meal and an opportunity to hear about some of Yorkshire’s brightest and best young people and what they have achieved. All the proceeds from the evening help the Foundation to make grants to some really worthy causes so your support, as always, is much appreciated.

Tickets are available from Sonia Jones at info@yorkshireyoungachievers.co.uk or by calling 01423 530630

We look forward to seeing you there!

To view more pictures from the evening please visit www.yorkshireyoungachievers.co.uk
THE FOUNDATION

Bringing you the news of the Yorkshire Young Achievers Foundation

SUPPORT DOGS UPDATE

For those of you at the Gala Dinner in November you may have had the opportunity to meet some of the wonderful support dogs the Foundation helps to fund. We have recently funded a support dog, Farley, who has gone to live with Gregor and his family. We were delighted to hear from Gregor’s mum with a little update on how they’ve been getting on.

“Gregor absolutely hates having his photo taken so we actually haven’t got many of him but I have attached a shot I took yesterday which is the best we have. We had an unexpected fall of snow which Gregor and Farley both LOVED! Gregor and Eve (Gregor’s twin sister) were deliberately falling over and Farley was zooming around them in great excitement. Before we had Farley going out as a family was almost impossible with Gregor. Farley is already making a big difference to our lives.” We’re glad to hear Farley is settling in well!

NEW CHAIR FOR LUIS

The Foundation recently made a grant to Luis Domingos to help fund a new sports wheelchair.

Luis is a talented sportsman who currently competes in wheelchair basketball with the Leeds Spiders Wheelchair Basketball Club.

The new chair is made to measure and will help Luis in his push towards selection for the national team.

SHANNON TREADING THE BOARDS IN DONCASTER

We are always pleased to hear from grant recipient, Shannon Rewcroft. Shannon received a grant from the Foundation a few years ago to help with her training as an actor.

We were delighted to hear that Shannon is currently starring in Shadowlands, a play about CS Lewis. The production is currently touring the UK and will be playing at the Cast in Doncaster from 26 to 30 April.

Full details can be found on the website www.shadowlandstour.com and tickets are available from the Cast website www.castindoncaster.com.

New Website

We’ve recently launched a new website, please visit www.yorkshireyoungachievers.com to take a look.

To find out more about applying for a grant please visit www.yorkshireyoungachievers.co.uk