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Errigal Apprentices are on the Road to Shanghai
Life-changing moment for skilled elite from Errigal

Two Drylining apprentices from Errigal are setting out on the Road to Shanghai following their selection to Squad UK for the international WorldSkills Competition.

Brendan Duddy, 20years old from Derry, and Kalem Kerrigan, 20 years old from Enniskillen were invited to join the prestigious WorldSkills UK Talent Development Programme after excelling in its national skills competitions, winning Gold and Silver, the finals of which were held last month at WorldSkills UK LIVE at the NEC in Birmingham.

The WorldSkills Competition, which will next be held in Shanghai, China in 2021, takes place every two years and is known as the 'Skills Olympics'. The competition will feature over 1000 of the world's most talented apprentices and students competing in over 50 different skills as they battle it out to be named the World Champion in their chosen skill.

Ben Blackledge, Deputy Chief Executive, WorldSkills UK said: "Congratulations to Brendan and Kalem
"This is a life-changing moment for them. Brendan and Kalem have already excelled in the WorldSkills UK regional and national competitions – and now they are facing an even tougher test as they look to represent the UK on the world stage. They have already dedicated hundreds of hours improving their skills to get to this level – and have many months of hard work ahead of them with our training managers – enabling them to transform their careers and lives."

Brendan and Kalem will undertake an 18-month training programme with WorldSkills UK, supported by Errigal and will face the ultimate selection test in Spring 2021 when the team that will compete at WorldSkills Shanghai will be named.

"Errigal are the first ever training provider and Drywall Company to have two apprentices go forward for the UK squad in Plastering and Drywall Systems. We will support, encourage and provide all the training necessary to ensure our apprentices have the confidence, the knowledge and the skills required to represent our Industry on a global platform. We are extremely proud of Brendan and Kalem and we have no doubt they have very bright futures ahead" – Cormac McCloskey, Company Director

"This is a tribute to our whole training academy, it is just recognition for all the hard work we have put into training young people over the last number of years. We are committed to training and providing secure futures for young people in construction right across Ireland, the UK and Europe. Employers apprenticeships is without a doubt the way forward and our governments and Industry leaders need to work with employers who are committed to training in the industry.



To have two young men from Northern Ireland be selected to represent the Plastering and Drylining Industry on a Global platform is a tribute to them, to the industry, and to those who invest their time and effort into supporting and training these young people. We are immensely proud of our training academy and the high-quality craftspeople that are emerging from the Errigal Apprenticeship.” – Damien Treanor, Company Director.



“This is a dream come true for me. I started my journey with Errigal two years ago. I had no experience, I had no knowledge of the construction industry, I was just out of school and I wanted to earn a trade. From day one at Errigal I was treated like part of the team. We were welcomed on board by Damien and Cormac on the first day of our apprenticeship, and I have been amazed to be greeted by the owners of the company on a first name basis right through my apprenticeship. I have worked on some of the most exclusive buildings across Ireland and the UK. To go forward to Worldskills Shanghai is beyond anything I had ever imagined. I know Errigal will support me in every way possible and I count myself so lucky to have been taught by the best in the industry, and whatever happens in Shanghai, I know my future is secure with Errigal, and I am so grateful for that.” – Brendan Duddy, Gold Medallist.



“I am still speechless.... I can’t believe this is all happening. To be honest I never really thought about moving that far outside Fermanagh, but since I joined the Errigal Apprenticeship my entire outlook on life has changed. Errigal has given me the confidence I needed to compete in the worldskills competition, something I never imagined possible. Now I have been selected for the worldskills Shanghai squad. This just doesn’t happen to people like me. I am overwhelmed at the support the company have given me and the opportunities available in Errigal. I am so excited for what the next 18 months will bring.” - Kalem Kerrigan, Silver Medallist.



I started out with Errigal over 10 years ago working on the tools. I worked my way up through the company to site manager and then became involved in the training academy. Working with young people has its challenges but when you have a company like Errigal supporting you in what you do and providing every opportunity possible for these young men and women it makes my job extremely enjoyable. The journey to Worldskills has been a learning experience for us all. But when you see the pride and joy that it instils in your apprentices it is without a doubt one of the best journeys any young apprentice could make throughout his / her career. On a personal note, I am filled with pride when I see how far Brendan and Kalem have come and I know they will do us proud on the journey ahead.” – Terry McDermott, Errigal Training Manager.



The previous WorldSkills Competition was held earlier this year in Kazan, Russia where Team UK was awarded 19 Medals. By competing in the competition, WorldSkills UK is able to identify global best practice, research and insight that will help the new UK government to deliver world class standards in technical education.

Errigal Academy, Training for the future, Training for the Industry!!!