

## **Nelson Mandela is the most inspirational figure for Scottish Young People**

*Nelson Mandela listed as the most inspirational figure to young people in Scotland and throughout the Commonwealth in the lead up to the annual Nelson Mandela Day*

Friday 18th July, 2014 marks the first Nelson Mandela Day celebrations without 'Madiba' alive to share them. It has only been 7 months since the man who guided South Africa from the shackles of apartheid to a multi-racial democracy passed away in his home at the age of 95; yet his inspirational legacy continues to be recognised amongst young people throughout the Commonwealth.

Over the past year, 56,000-plus young people throughout Scotland and the other 70 Commonwealth Nations and Territories participating in inspire>aspire: Global Citizens in the Making (a Supporting Legacy2014 educational project) have been asked to reflect on their character and values, drawing upon an inspirational figure to help develop future aspirations.

Of the 1,187 shortlisted finalists, 10% of the young people selected Nelson Mandela as their inspirational figure in life. Mandela featured more prominently than the likes of Walt Disney, Jessica Ennis, Rebecca Adlington, Martin Luther King Jr, J.K Rowling and Malala Yousafzai just to name a few popular figures that were chosen. His character traits of courage, resilience, honesty and hope were continually referred to in the pupils' work.

Despite their different cultures, values and backgrounds, these young Global Citizens from all over the world shared a common belief that Mandela was indeed an inspiration and role model for what he both achieved and represented in his life, despite the adversity he faced.

Here are some quotes from various posters from young people all over the Commonwealth explaining why Nelson Mandela is their inspiration.

*"Nelson Mandela was an incredible person. He stood up for the right thing, and although there were a lot of obstacles to overcome, Mandela only wanted freedom and justice."*

Amelia Mellors - Sanday Community School, Scotland

*"Nelson Mandela stood up for people who weren't being treated as equals. He displayed values such as being principled, committed, visionary and ambitious."*

Neha Pillay - St Mary's DSG, South Africa

*"Nelson Mandela inspires me because of the way he stayed focused on his belief and no matter what he never gave up."*

Javairiya Ali - Stonelaw High School, Scotland

*"With his inspirational activities, I can learn to be a better human being who can be trustworthy to others and be generous by helping others."*

Mujtahid Zaman - Chittagong Cantonment Public College, Bangladesh

Inspire>Aspire posters featuring Nelson Mandela can be viewed and downloaded here along with an animated presentation: <http://www.inspire-aspire.org.uk/podium/gallery/item/320-mandela>

As the Commonwealth Games begin in Glasgow next week, 71 Commonwealth Nations and Territories will unite to celebrate the shared goals and values that exist between Commonwealth members and compete against one another in front of a Global audience. These shared goals and values highly resonate with what Mandela spent his life trying to achieve and Mandela Day serves as an inspiration for individuals to take action to change the world for the better.

Nelson Mandela famously said: “The Commonwealth makes the world safe for diversity.”

**-ENDS-**

Notes to Editors

Top 10 inspirational figures this year were:

1. Nelson Mandela
2. Malala Yousafzai
3. Martin Luther King
4. Jessica Ennis
5. J.K. Rowling
6. Walt Disney
7. Ellie Simmonds
8. Mother Teresa
9. Ghandi
10. Rebecca Adlington

\*information sourced from inspire>aspire competition entries 2013/14

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Inspire>Aspire: Global Citizens in the Making is a Supporting Legacy 2014 Project which allows young people to use a unique poster format to lead them through a structured process of self-reflection and self-discovery that helps to transform their inspiration into aspiration. This activity also supports the educational offering of the British Council’s ‘Commonwealth Class’, Education Scotland’s ‘Game on Scotland’ and the Scottish Government’s ‘Support a second team’ initiatives.

Inspire>Aspire is a project of the educational charity Character Education Scotland registered charity no. SC040962.