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## SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT:

### SPORTING STARS CELEBRATE THE INAUGURAL YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS.

#### 6 NOVEMBER 2008

London's South Bank hosted the star-studded inaugural Youth Achievement Awards last night at Park Plaza Riverbank London which recognised over 35 unique young people from across London, for their achievements in sport, the arts, education, training or employment.

The evening was attended by stars from various disciplines including; Rugby, Boxing, Football and Athletics, including personal appearances by sporting legends Linford Christie and Darren Campbell plus Olympic golden girl Christine Ohuruogu. The night also featured a set from comedy hero, Curtis Walker.

The 35 winners were nominated by a number of inspiring community groups which work across London's inner city communities. Each young person has turned around their life and made a lasting and positive contribution to their community.

The awards were the brainchild of a number of community groups which run varied programmes aimed at motivating young people. Event organisers are confident the awards will go some way to combat recent negative press around young people and gang culture in South London, by illustrating the positive difference they are making to their communities and celebrating the start of their exciting journeys to a better future.

On hand to give out the Award for Achievement in Athletics, current 400 metres Commonwealth, World and Olympic champion, Christine Ohuruogu said "This event is a fantastic way to show the UK how much young people can achieve in all aspects of their life. It's tough when you first start out with a dream, so it's great the awards are recognising the hardworking mentors who provide bottomless support for all these talented individuals."

Also in attendance were the Joint Chairs of the North Southwark and North Lambeth Sport Action Zone, Kate Hoey MP and Simon Hughes MP who commended all the winners: "We are delighted to be a part

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of the Youth Achievement Awards. We have both been involved with the work of SAZ since it began in 2002 and have seen the impact that the organisation and its partners have had on so many young people across the community. Congratulations to them and to all the Award Winners on their hard work and commitment”.

The Youth Achievement Awards were organised in conjunction with: North Southwark and North Lambeth Sport Action Zone, Positive Futures, London Active Communities, Reach and Teach and the Lambeth School Sports Partnership. Together, their programmes have inspired thousands of young people to broaden their horizons and access brighter opportunities.

- Ends -

**For more information on the award winners and images, please contact:**

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**Notes to Editors**

Sport Action Zones were set up by Sport England in 2000 in response to recommendations from Central Government. They were designed to address the lack of sports activities and facilities in some of the most socially and economically deprived areas of the country and to bring the benefits of sport and physical activity to these communities.

The North Lambeth and North Southwark Sport Action Zone brings together new and existing local partners to develop and sustain a wide range of sport and physical activity programmes to the local communities within the neighbourhood. Using sport and physical activity as a catalyst for social inclusion and community cohesion, SAZ is able to demonstrate the wider benefits of increased participation in sport and physical activity within economically and socially deprived areas. For more info see: [www.thesportactionzone.org](http://www.thesportactionzone.org)

The North Lambeth and North Southwark Sport Action Zone is delivered by South Bank Employers' Group which aims to improve and promote the South Bank for the benefit from those with live, work and

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study in the neighbourhood as well as the millions who visit the area each year. The Group also seeks to make a positive contribution to the lives of residents here and elsewhere in the boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark through employment, skills, community sports and cultural initiatives. For more info see [www.sbeg.co.uk](http://www.sbeg.co.uk)