

Media release for the Garden Centre Association

Mark says cheese for Swiss experience

THE GARDEN Centre Association (GCA) Trust has announced this month (March, 2016) its first successful candidate to join the Study Tour Group at the International Garden Centre Association (IGCA) Congress.

Mark Scott from Gordale Garden Centre has won the Dick Allen Award funding for a UK garden centre employee to attend the event in Switzerland in August 2016.

Sue Allen, Trust Chairman said: “The Study Tour is aimed at younger family members of family-run garden centres and the staff of centres from 19 countries.

“During the six-day annual Congress, the delegates work together analysing the retailers they visit and discussing a huge range of issues common to all of them, from improving profit, reducing staff turnover, dealing with stress to any other points anyone wishes to raise. Valuable contacts and firm friendships are made.

“Seven excellent applications were considered by the Trustees, who found it very hard to select only one lucky recipient for the award.

“Interestingly, all of those applicants work for garden centres that already understand and appreciate the value of the IGCA Congress. It is hoped that in future years far more centres will support this initiative and realise the benefits for their staff and themselves.

“Mark is absolutely delighted with the opportunity to attend and we’re all really looking forward to hearing about the event when he returns.”

The object of the Trust is to advance among the general public and, in particular among horticultural students, education in horticulture, and particularly garden centres, by the provision and administration of scholarships and bursaries, including prizes to foster such education.

In his application, Mark said: “I am hungry for more. More ideas, more inspiration, more opportunities to expand my knowledge, to indulge my passion for garden centre retailing and to strive towards excellence.”

The Trust aims to assist horticultural students to study, research into and gain experience of horticulture and landscaping.

Sue added: “We have every confidence that Mark’s trip will provide the inspiration and greater knowledge he is looking for, in fact all of that and more.”

For further information, please call the GCA on 0118 930 8918. Alternatively, please visit www.gca.org.uk, log on to www.facebook.com/pages/GardenCentreAssociation or follow the organisation on Twitter at www.twitter.com/GC_Association.

ENDS

For further media details, please call Porcupine PR on 01278 446801 or email Rachel@porcupinepr.co.uk. Alternatively, please contact Sue Allen, GCA Trust Chairman via the GCA on 0118 930 8918.

Photograph caption: (Left to right) Peter and Jill Nicholson, owners of Gordale Garden Centre and regular IGCA Congress attendees, and GCA Trust funding winner Mark Scott.