

During the bright stars

are being invited for the second NHS Champions awards on 28 awards, which are run in the King's Fund, are designed to achievements of NHS staff in wards of £5,000 will be given in five eligible for nomination are: midwives and health visitors, port staff and ambulance crew. can be made by employers, lives or patients.

ection of award winners will be i-profile judging panel including al Council of Nurses's president ock and the government's adviser Professor Sir Ara Darzi. See .org.uk or contact 0207 307 2400

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CLEVER KIDS

BHAVIK Pattani, 9, Ziara Mehta, 8, and Daniel Hanoran, 11, (pictured from top down) were among the star successes in last week's crop of GCSE results.

Daniel, from Shepherd's Bush, west London, scored an 'A' grade in GCSE Maths and said: "It was really easy." Fellow pupil Ziara Mehta was this year's youngest whizzkid, achieving a 'C' grade information and communication technology at the age of seven. Ziara, now eight, said she was "inspired" by her cousin Rahim Hirja who passed the exam at nine. Classmate Bhavik Pattani said he was "quite proud" to get a 'B' grade in the same ICT subject. All three are pupils at Ryde College, in Watford, Herts.

QUEEN'S AWARD FOR YOUTH GROUP

A YOUNG people's group in Luton, Bedfordshire, has received special recognition for its pioneering work.

The Miralee Youth Association was among other organisations recently given a Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

The project, whose name means "friendly unity" in Bengali, has come a long way since it began through "sheer coincidence," according to founder Ashuk Ahmed.

The MYA is involved in a growing number of activities promoting social inclusion through the use of sport, media, drama and mentoring schemes.

The project began in 1984, when Ashuk and his friends started to play football in Luton Football Club car park.

"Some of the players and managers encouraged us and allowed us to play there every day," Ashuk said. "They gave us the use of a portacabin for indoor games, showers and changing rooms. After a year, the youth service gave us a youth club to use as a drop-in centre. It all took off from there."

As well as running a football team, the organisation has done a lot of work to combat divisions in the community, which were fuelled by last year's anti-terror raids in Luton. "The area has suffered from negative publicity



surrounding the Muslim community since the anti-terror raids last year. This kind of image does not help anyone, and Luton has better community cohesion than a lot of other areas, despite the actions of a very small minority of people with strong political views," Ashuk said.

As part of a mission to bring communities together, the MYA formed Diversity FM, a radio station where everyone can have a say.

"People can come on air and tackle issues important to their own communities. We cater for all the ethnic groups, including Indian, Pakistani, Bangladesh, Gujarati, Afro-Caribbean and Irish. Diversity FM provides an opportunity for people to integrate and learn about each other's concerns," Ashuk explained.

Every project Miralee runs is subject to raising funding from a wide variety of sources, but the Queen's Award has given a great boost to a project. Getting the award really raised our profile and will help us get more funds in the future," Ashuk said. "It is the highest accolade for voluntary groups, and it is great that our work has been recognised."

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service celebrates outstanding achievements by groups of volunteers.

To nominate a group for the 2005 Awards, or find out more information visit www.queensawardvoluntary.gov.uk. Entries for the 2005 Award must be received by 30 September. The winners will be announced on 2 June 2005.

Top police officer visits volunteers

THE Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir John Stevens visited the Community Policing Contact Centre (CPC) at Baham Mosque and Tooting Islamic Centre, south London, where he met young volunteers on August 20.

The CPC, which is open on Saturdays between 11am to 1pm, is staffed by Special Constables from Wandsworth. With the assistance of volunteers and is headed up by Fred Ahmed, the Borough Divisional Officer.

During his visit, Sir John Special officers on Upper Tooting Road.

The caravan will be used for crime prevention initiatives, recruitment and operational duties and is being funded by local businesses and Punney and Wandsworth Crime Prevention Panel.