

Draft Press Release

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*Local Entrepreneur Gives a Helping Hand to Budding Young Star*

Guy Readman, Chairman of Birtley based Tor Coatings Limited, has become the latest in a long line of successful north east entrepreneurs to set up a charitable fund supporting our region's talented youngsters.

With his new fund, Guy joins the likes of John Elliot of EBAC and Alex Worrall the ex-chairman of ThyssenKrupp Tallent Chassis, both of whom have set up charitable funds for children and young people with local charity, County Durham Foundation.

The Guy Readman/Tor Coatings Fund has recently helped a young dancer from Durham move one step closer to achieving his dream of completing a course at the prestigious Italia Conti Stage School in London.

20-year-old Kyle Craggs has wanted to be a dancer for as long as he can remember. When he was younger he attended his local dancing school religiously and achieved a diploma in musical theatre.

After spending some time dancing in a touring cabaret show, Kyle set his sights a little higher and decided to pursue his dream of becoming a stage performer. Kyle auditioned for the Italia Conti Stage School and his natural talent obviously shone through because straight away he was offered one of only 30 places available on the course.

However as it turned out getting through the audition was only his first hurdle. Kyle then needed to raise over £20,000 to pay for his course and living fees for his first year and nearly £10,000 to continue the course in his second year.

When Kyle applied to County Durham Foundation for help he had completed his first year, during which he received an award for being the best actor in year one, but was

in danger of having to drop out through lack of funds. After sending out 150 letters to local businesses asking for sponsorship and receiving no responses Kyle had almost given up his dream.

Kyle's application for funding was passed straight to Guy Readman who wasted no time in writing the cheque that will now allow Kyle to finish his course.

*Kyle said: 'I am delighted and over the moon that I have been given this chance, it is an opportunity that no one else has given me and it means so much to me and my family.'*

The 'Guy Readman/Tor Coatings Young Peoples Fund' seeks to support young people up to the age of 21 who have real opportunities to substantially develop their natural talents but need some financial assistance to do so. Guy, who is no stranger to hard work himself, is keen to help motivated youngsters achieve their full potential.

Guy explained:

*'This is a fantastic opportunity to help young people help themselves and I'm pleased to be working with County Durham Foundation to achieve this. I have always been interested in supporting young people in the north east and the Foundation can find the right people who really need my help.'*

Setting up a fund with the County Durham Foundation, allows people like Guy access to thousands of local charities and people in need. The Foundation uses their knowledge of the area and expertise in grant making to identify worthwhile causes, saving their donors valuable time and money whilst maximising the impact of their contributions.

Guy also commented *'The Foundation is a much more effective way for me to give something back to people in my community than doing it myself.'*

Application forms and further information on the Guy Readman/Tor Coatings Fund are available from County Durham Foundation on 0191 383 0055 or by Email from [info@countydurhamfoundation.co.uk](mailto:info@countydurhamfoundation.co.uk).

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For further information, please contact Kate Brown on 0191 383 0055 (or out of hours: Mel Caldwell on 07773 319787).

### **Editors Notes**

1. Kyle has two years left at Stage School, September will be the start of his second year.
2. Tor Coatings is a national company based in Birtley, County Durham. Founded in 1975, they are firmly established as one of the largest independent paint companies in the UK.

Tor Coatings produce specialist coatings for hospitals, schools, prisons, housing and transport. They are leading the field with their anti-graffiti coating.

3. County Durham Foundation is a local charity that raises money from individuals, companies, trusts and distributes this money back to local grass roots charities in County Durham and Darlington. In 2005, County Durham Foundation will help to distribute £1.6 million to local good causes.