

CHSS Receives its 4th Investors in Volunteering award (2016) Transcript

Paul:

Right, I'm going to introduce everybody first of all because you are not sure who everybody is.

I'm Paul Okroj, I'm the head of volunteering for Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland.

This is Anne Hislop, who is the lead assessor for VolunteerScotland, who are responsible for looking at the award that you all very kindly took part in.

Mark O'Donnell the Chief Executive, and Paul Bannon the Director of Corporate Services.

I won't be cruel and make you go round the room individually at this point, because it's being filmed, but there are volunteers here from different places so it's really now over to Anne and Mark.

Anne Hislop:

Good, well I'm delighted to be here and this is the 4th time that I have now presented Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland with the Investors in Volunteers Award.

It's a real mark of excellence I think, particularly for an organisation to choose not just to do this for the first time, but want to renew it and renew it and renew it again. And I have to say the assessors who were here, and I think a lot of you in the room met at least one of the two assessors.

They were really impressed, really impressed by the way staff and volunteers, the way you all worked together and was impressed by the way the whole volunteering programme was run so it's hugely well deserved.

Mark O'Donnell:

Thank you very much for that.

Anne Hislop:

Thank you.

[Clapping]

Mark O'Donnell:

Thank you, I promise that this is not a big, long wedding type speech. Just wanted to read something out actually, that I looked for a few days ago, and it's a quote from Barack Obama about volunteering; very short but I think it's very apt.

It's got an American feel to it but I think the message is just the same for Scotland, or Britain or anywhere else. He said that volunteers help drive our country's progress. Day in, day out, they make extraordinary sacrifices to expand promise and possibility, and this was during National Volunteer Week.

He said: "let us shed the cynicism that says one person cannot make a difference in the lives of others by embracing each of our individual responsibilities to serve and shape a brighter future for all. I thought that was quite moving, and I think that when people give up their precious time and put in their effort to help other people in whatever way that is, big or small.

People often aren't thinking big things like that about what that means, that there are a lot of people doing this type of thing. You know there issues of being a citizen in a country, being part of a community, and more than anything else for me volunteering is a powerful issue of humanity and compassion.

It's also a beautiful 'win win' situation when it's done properly because it is those things but its also about an opportunity for individuals to get something themselves. Y'know to help people or do something productive, useful, valuable

that affects lives, like you all do but hopefully the whole point is to actually get something back.

Whatever that may be, whatever that means to you is legitimate, of satisfaction, of productivity, of being valued, of development, of stretching yourself - all of these things and it's all valuable. And, just really quickly, I don't want to hold you back from lunch but this is a really lovely celebration, the organisation is rightly very proud of, I think of, its volunteers – including all of you.

And very proud of this award which doesn't come easily, it's a lot of work for a lot of people and particularly for Paul and Rona and other people in the organisation who make the process happen.

But particularly for the volunteers themselves, it doesn't make any sense without them. And on behalf of trustees, of senior staff and all of the staff and indeed ultimately our beneficiaries and service users I just want to extend to you, the representatives of the wider family of volunteers today, a really huge and heartfelt thank you for what you do and to make this kind of recognition possible.

This is recognition for the organisation but it's really ultimately recognition for the volunteers and that's a very proud and very privileged thing to be able to stand here and say – so that's it. Thank you very much, lovely to meet you.

[Clapping]