**Nomination for Movement to Work Youth Employability Awards: Rising Star Award**

**Rising Star Award** – an individual who graduated 12+ months from a Movement to Work placement that has made a real difference within your organisation or gone on to make a positive impact elsewhere

**Nominee’s name**

Nikita Morris

**Nominee title**

Production technician

**Nominees Email**

nikita.morris@baesystems.com

**Nomination Category**

Rising Star Award

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Before Nikita started the Movement to Work (MtW) programme when she was on benefits and looking for work. Her key worker posted a leaflet about the MtW programme through her letter box. After reading up on it Nikita decided she wanted to explore this opportunity. Little did she know how her enthusiasm and willingness to learn would end up landing her a role within the company

Once signed up to the scheme, The Prince’s Trust got in touch and provided Nikita with a taster day on the 25th of October 2019 down in the Brooke theatre in Chatham. This involved meeting and greeting BAE Systems staff and The Prince’s Trust team along with the MtW facilitator from The Launch Group, David. The day also involved team building exercises and activities such as verbal reasoning, critical thinking and other tasks.

As part of the programme Nikita was brought to the Rochester site for a two week work experience placement. Whilst on her placement Nikita was not shy to ask questions and was keen to learn about the business as a whole. Nikita showed a lot of potential with the practical side of her placement and was always enthusiastic and ready to get stuck in.

Nikita along with the eleven other participants that had also been brought in through the programme had to do a presentation about BAE Systems and the products it provides. She had to stand in front of around 60 people as well as family members including her Grandpa who had travelled down especially on his birthday to support Nikita. After all the presentations had been completed Nikita was approached by the BAE Systems representative and was offered a position at the Rochester site. This made Nikita feel over whelmed with emotion and have a lot of pride. Pride that was also felt by her family. Not just because of how well Nikita had done but because she was the only one out of the eleven that got offered this opportunity

Once brought on board Nikita spent about two weeks down in the onsite training room gaining the skills required to help her fulfil her new role. A role she had previously had no experience in before. She passed the training on the 25th of February and was brought up to the F35 area to start work on the wiring side of the project. Nikita gelled straight away with the team around her and became very quickly a prime member of the team. Nikita was making good progress and her understanding of her role was growing every day. Nikita even had the confidence to pull up a potential area of improvement with one of the tools not fitting correctly and causing problems. This lead to a full investigation and actually allowed a new tool to be made to correct the problem. Something that not all technicians would have felt comfortable doing.

Unfortunately during Nikita’s early development the Covid-19 pandemic hit and forced Nikita to shield for the whole of April until the business was able to put measures in place to help protect the staff. Nikita came back full of energy and was willing to get straight back into her role and always does her best which is noticed by all.

Nikita has continued to show enthusiasm throughout her time with BAE Systems and is currently learning a lot more of the intricacy aspect of the wiring and soldering element of her role.

She has shown great potential which has been noticed by the team around her and has a bright career at BAE Systems ahead of her. She is confident and willing to apply herself to any challenge in front of her. She has a flexible approach to her work and is able to adapt to meet any task.

Due to Nikita’s starting point on her journey she has faced many challenges. She has had to demonstrate her potential against eleven other people all after the same outcome. It was noticed that throughout the day Nikita was keen and happy. This had shone through to the BAE System staff on the day as well as her family. She has had no previous experience within a manufacturing environment and has had to learn all the skills required in a short amount of time. She had this interrupted due to the pandemic which would cause a lot of people to struggle to pick up where they left off. Nikita has shown nothing but enthusiasm, willingness and positivity throughout.

Nikita’s quality of work is exceptional for someone who has joined the business with no prior knowledge or experience of being a Production Technician. Nikita is certainly an asset to the F35 team, who strives for perfection and is constantly improving her skills and knowledge. Covid-19 had a big impact in regards to some aspects of training due to adhering to regulations, however since the restrictions have been eased Nikita is completing any training which is required for her role and continues to enjoy learning and developing her skillset.

Her work is exemplary for someone with no previous experience, in particular the quality of her work which doesn’t require rework (this is significant in regards to cost and time for the project).  Nikita is learning new aspects of the job all the time and is enthusiastic when doing so. She is well liked and gets on well with all her peers and will always provide support if and when required. The conversations I have had with her she is always positive and thoroughly enjoys her work which continues to shine through.

Nikita supported the MtW scheme in 2020. She spoke to the young people about her experiences on the scheme and how she then gained a position in BAE...she inspired them, particularly the girls who (until that point) hadn't seen themselves in a position to work at BAE. Being on the shopfloor I think it opened their eyes to the possibilities and we certainly got a lot of positive feedback from them at the time.

Nikita became a member of the Alumni MtW group and continues to be actively involved with the group.

Since Nikita’s employment commenced at BAE she regularly supports her local food bank by purchasing additional items within her food shop mainly toiletries.  She will donate direct to the Salvation Army either in the supermarket or at one of their locations. Nikita will regularly go to friends and family to see if they have any items of food they can also donate and takes them to the food bank.  Nikita has advised the reason behind this was prior to working she received regular food parcels from the local food bank and this is her way to contributing back to the community. Nikita said ‘she feels it is only right to donate to those that are in need and being in that position previously she fully appreciates how expensive toiletries are, and since working for BAE she is in a financial position whereby she can afford to purchase these additional items and donate them for those that need them.