

# North East business figures take awards in New Year's Honours list

Three leading figures from the North East business community have been honoured in the New Year's Honours List.

North East England Chamber of Commerce president Lesley Moody and Learning Curve Group chief executive Brenda McLeish have been awarded OBEs while Ian Green, training manager at Nissan's Sunderland plant, has received an MBE.

Ms Moody, who runs her own company, AES Digital Solutions, receives her honour after extending her period as president of the region's largest business organisation. She has been recognised for services to business and to the community in the North East.

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She said: "It is a privilege to receive an honour and to be awarded one for a second time by Her Majesty has completely bowled me over. I received my MBE almost seven years ago and have said many times that I was humbled and honoured to receive such an award. Now on receiving an OBE in this year's New Year's Honours I feel that same sentiment only tenfold – it was so unexpected and words cannot truly describe what it means to me.

"I live in Morpeth and was born, brought up and educated in the North East. This background and being the longest serving North East England Chamber of Commerce president in over 200 years, has given me the opportunity to work with the Chamber's hard-working team and support some amazing businesses and organisations around our region. The businesses and people of our region are resilient, strong and most of all the warmest

you'll find anywhere."

Brenda McLeish has been honoured for services to further education following a 20-year career in the sector.

As chief executive officer of County Durham training company Learning Curve, she has overseen significant growth of the company, delivering courses to more than 200,000 learners every year. She said: "I feel honoured and humbled to be recognised in the Queen's New Year Honours list. This is an incredible achievement that also comes with great responsibility.

"I have always believed that through education, anything is possible. I will continue to ensure that we give people across the country the opportunities to gain new skills and fulfil their potential.

"Learning Curve Group will continue to transform lives through learning across the country. I would like to thank the hard work and dedication of the Purple People at Learning Curve Group who have helped make this happen."

Also honoured is Ian Green, training lead for Nissan at Sunderland, who has been recognised for services to apprenticeships and STEM skills.

Mr Green, who started working at the plant as an apprentice himself, helped establish the Nissan Skills Foundation, and also works as a school governor.

He said: "It is a huge honour and surprise to receive this fantastic award. I am extremely proud of the Nissan Skills Foundation and our apprenticeship programmes, and their ongoing important to skills development across our region. To be awarded an MBE is icing on the cake.

"Of course, everything we do at Nissan Sunderland Plans is built on teamwork, so this is also great recognition for the

plant's brilliant training and apprenticeships teams who, like me, are passionate about inspiring the talent of the future."

Nissan vice president for manufacturing Alan Johnson said the award was "richly deserved".

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