

# RAZZAMATAZ THEATRE SCHOOLS

## WELCOME!

Welcome to the first Razz News of the year and what a year it has been already! This issue is dedicated to our wonderful new website, new look and new marketing.

Of course we haven't forgotten about the Conference and we hope this issue brings back some great memories of the day. Have a Razztastic term!

Denise and the HO team

## Happy Birthday to Us!

2015 is set to be an incredible year for us as we celebrate 15 years of business. When we embarked on our journey back at the turn of the Millennium, we could never have imagined how far we would come.

One of the best things is the fantastic people we've met along the way from our hard working Principals to the talented students they have mentored.

September is the official birthday anniversary and we have lots of exciting things planned, and who knows, maybe a throwback photo or two. You have been warned!

THE STAGE.CO.UK

December 4, 2014

### scholarships



## Reaping the rewards of quality teaching

Four of the 15 winners of The Stage Scholarships at Razzamataz Theatre Schools tell Lisa Martland how winning has boosted their performing skills

The generosity of Razzamataz Theatre Schools is such that 15 scholarships were awarded this year that it was only possible to print four of the 2014 winners, but all agreed that they loved attending their schools because of the combination of quality teaching and a fun and friendly atmosphere.

Thanks to The Stage Scholarships and Razzamataz, Charlotte Woodford from Watford says to describe her 'Six Years Old' has just started at the Redmansworth branch of the school. She is already seeing an improvement in her performing skills and is having a great time in the process. She says: "I think ever since I was 10 I wanted to go further with my acting, but I had never seen the opportunity.

At Razzamataz, I get to do dancing and singing as well, and I've been enjoying it very much. I also like that I'm making a new set of friends and learning to work with them."

Redmansworth principal Amy Latchman and her fellow judges were particularly impressed by Charlotte's maturity as a performer. "Acting is a challenging art; to master and Charlotte displayed an outstanding level of skill for her age. I wanted to give her the chance to blossom," she says.

Principal and founder Denise Hutton-Gessey has been supporting The Stage scheme for four years and is delighted to be providing the equivalent of a year's free study to a string of lucky winners aged between six and 12 at a selection of

Razzamataz's 40 venues nationwide. The schools can be found the length and breadth of Britain, including Carlisle (where Hutton-Gessey runs the local franchise) and Exeter in the south-west. Each scholarship is worth up to £500 for a year's tuition.

Dorchester-based Robert Harvey, aged 11, has been attending Razzamataz Weymouth for three years and has seen what a difference the scholarship can make. Robert couldn't believe it when he got the call that he had been chosen. "I was amazed. I thought I had a chance, but I didn't really think I would get it. The teachers help us to improve all the time, my acting, singing and dancing have got so much better and I have made new friends," he says.

Weymouth's principal Leszer Whittbread believes Robert has developed into a "very confident and able young performer". She adds: "It is a pleasure to have him at Razzamataz and an honour to see him and all our students grow week after week into inspirational, talented young people."

Another up and coming talent is Deleisha McGinnis, who is 10 this month, and lives in Whitehaven, Charlotte Young, who runs the branch at Whitehaven, decided to choose Deleisha because of her

passion for performing and the raw talent and enthusiasm that came through in her audition.

Deleisha originally joined Razzamataz two years ago because she wanted to try out a range of different dance styles. "Now I love all the other things we do as well. Having the scholarship is making me feel more confident and it's helping my mum too," she says.

Twelve-year-old Morgan Fleming from Cleithrak has also been looking out for her mum who is a single parent and has recently had health problems. Along with the gymnastics classes she joins in, she has two years at Razzamataz Glasgow North have made a real difference to Morgan and her family, and the scholarship is the best gift of all. Principal Rosalie James says Morgan has "a beautiful voice and steady demeanour", and the latter quality is clear from speaking to her.

Morgan's talent as a performer has led to her recently being cast as Annie in a local Christmas production of the musical. "I am so very grateful for the scholarship and proud I have been picked. I don't feel like I will ever leave Razzamataz, it's part of my family now. I've had a really hard two years, but I felt like the sun would come out tomorrow and it did for me."

"Winning this award has made me more determined and hungry to grow my school. I'm really motivated to create loads more opportunities for my students."

Alison Beveridge, Durham, winner of the One to Watch Award

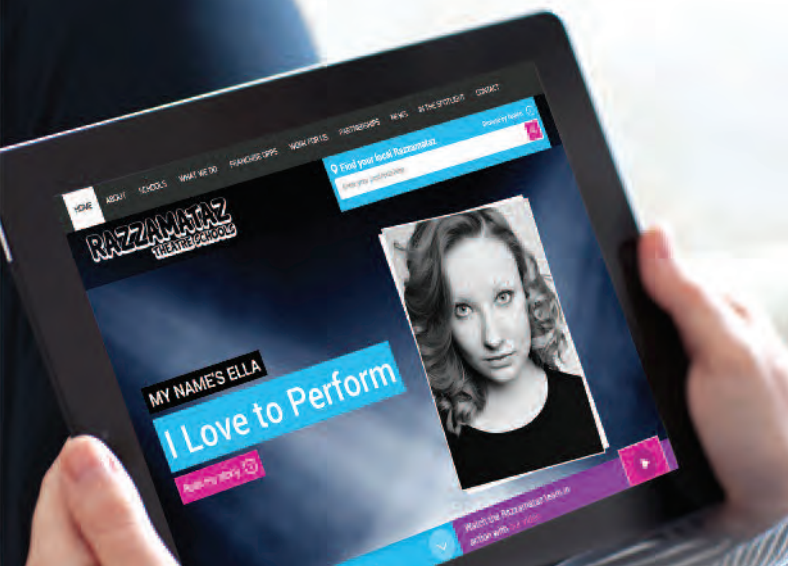
## The Stage newspaper splash

How proud are we of this wonderful article in December's issue of The Stage.

I'm sure you agree that all of our scholarship students look amazing and we are excited to see their progress this year.

"I'm overwhelmed and feel quite emotional about this award. I'm very proud of what we have achieved in Razzamataz Sheffield in the past few years and can't wait to tell all my students, staff and parents."

Helen Green, Sheffield, winner of the Most Outstanding School Award and Franchisee of the Year Award



**“This is a really nice surprise and we are very chuffed as there were a lot of franchisees that we thought could win.”**

James Murden and Ross Brown, Bristol, Best Marketing Campaign Award

## News and views

With 15 years' experience behind us, we have built up considerable knowledge about various sectors of our industry including franchise businesses, performing arts, children's activities and health and fitness. This wealth of information is now to be shared through a new Razzamataz Digital Newsletter, which will provide newsworthy editorial content.

## Website launch!

**On Friday 16th January the world wide web changed forever with the launch of the brand new Razzamataz website!**

Reflecting our fast, funky and dynamic brand, the website not only looks great but is also super easy to navigate, meaning that you will get more hits to your own school's page.

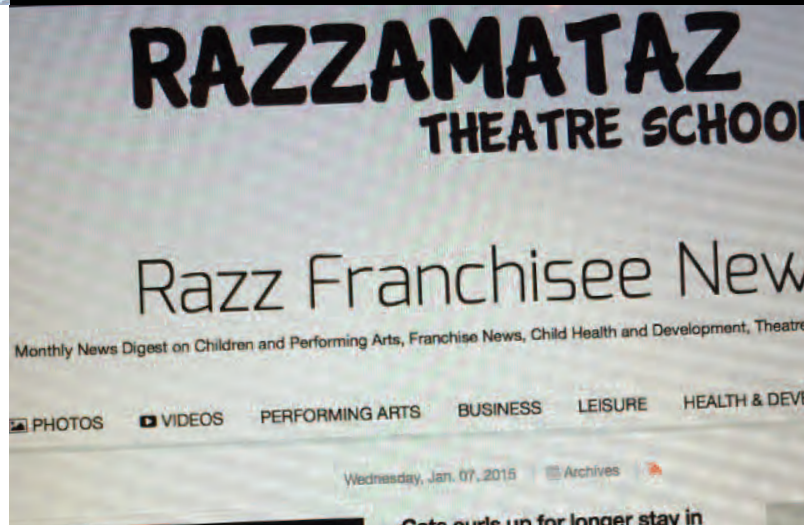
As a collective, we decided that the best way to sell our business is to share the wonderful stories from our students. From the shyest child who has gained the confidence to speak on stage to those that are securing professional work in the West End and on screen, the children are the real stars of the show.

Take Ella Lacey who features on the Home Page and has been with Razzamataz Sheffield since it opened its doors on day one in September 2012. Ella kicked off her time at Razzamataz by winning the Stage Scholarship and a year's free tuition. She went on to be accepted into Top Talent Agency and also achieved her Bronze Arts Award. Ella has received a number of opportunities with Razzamataz Sheffield, including numerous solo spots in their shows and public performances and most recently she joined them on stage at Her Majesty's in their West End piece, Razz Will Rock You!

The website will be updated with new stories that cover every aspect of our business. If you would like to submit some new content, please contact Dylan Harper at Head Office on [dylan@razzamataz.co.uk](mailto:dylan@razzamataz.co.uk) to share your ideas. Dylan will be managing the website going forward and is excited to be building on the success so far.

**“This award is lovely recognition and makes us want to try harder for next year and push our business on even further.”**

Lyndsey Loughery and Louise McHendrie, Glasgow South, Best New Franchisee Award



The first issue went out in January and was shared on all social media channels. Can all Principals please share this on their own platforms. Why? This is aligning us with established and well regarded media such as The Stage and The Guardian and demonstrates that Razzamataz is a great source of knowledge!

Check it out here: <http://paper.li/razzschoools/1420460149>

**“ It is great to be recognised for working on the website and improving our brand.”**

Dylan Harper, Ayr, Outstanding Contribution Award

## Our Makeover



**The new website is accompanied by a general rebrand, reflecting the direction of the company over the last few years, which has enjoyed strong and steady growth.**

The new logos will be gradually phased in to all of our marketing and merchandise and we ask you to use the new fonts as laid out in the Brand Guidelines document.

The new look offers a fresh and funky feel that we want to ensure is reflected in all of our schools. A lot of time, effort and thought have been placed into making Razzamataz stand out from our competitors so please safeguard that for us by following our brand guidelines.

# Conference 2015

Thank you to all of our Principals for taking the time to attend our Conference. What a special day and night it is for all of us, a chance to catch up with fellow franchisees, refresh our knowledge and most importantly, feel inspired for the year ahead.

This year's Conference was focussed around our 15-year journey and looking at how far we have come and how far we want to go. The Conference is a great chance for us to collaborate and share ideas and HO is excited to get cracking on the next part of the Razzamatraz journey. Hope you all our too.

## Who won what?

Congratulations to all of our winners, runners up and everyone who submitted entries. HO and guest judge Brian Attwood were blown away by the very high standard of entries and deciding was no easy task!

### Best New Franchisee

Lyndsey Loughery and Louise McHendrie, Glasgow South

### Brand Ambassador

Michael French, Barnet

### Rebecca Rennie Award

Debbie Mitchell, Carlisle

### Most Outstanding School

Helen Green, Sheffield

### Best Marketing Campaign

James Murden and Ross Brown, Bristol

### One to Watch

Alison Beveridge, Durham

### Franchisee of the Year

Helen Green, Sheffield

### Outstanding Contribution

Dylan Harper, Ayr

### Making Dreams Come True

Shelley Fitzgibbon, Wokingham and Woodley

### Best Showcase

Hayley Limpkin, Medway

### Business Builder Award

Angela Pickup, York and Lauren Whitehead, Weymouth

**"I was really overwhelmed by this because this is such a special award"**

Debbie Mitchell, Carlisle, Rebecca Rennie Award

## Guest speaker

We were delighted and honoured to have Brian Attwood, former editor of The Stage newspaper as our guest speaker. Brian gave us a real insight in to his 20 years' writing about performing arts. Brian is especially proud to have spearheaded the Scholarship Awards and we were delighted to be told that Razzamatraz has contributed more scholarships than anyone else. Brian said time and time again how proud we should all be of what we've achieved and how the business has grown. Thank you Brian for such kind words and we can't wait to meet you again at our Future Fund auditions.

*"Razzamatraz has grown into a company with a great network of franchises across the UK," says Brian. "In the short period of its existence, Razzamatraz has travelled a considerable way. I don't think it's a coincidence that the growth in stage schools has occurred at a time when the education system has less and less time for subjects that aren't on the main curriculum."*

## You say

Thank you all so much for taking the time to speak to the HO team about your Razz journey. It provides us with an invaluable overview of your experience and really helps to shape the future of the company. Here is just a snapshot of what you said to us:

**Amy Latchman, Rickmansworth:** "I love the Razz Family atmosphere. It's a fun place for children to come, they really build their confidence, and it's great for me to be part of a network with other like-minded Principals."

**Andrea White, Littlehampton:** "I'm really pleased to have invested in a recognised and respected brand that has a strong presence in the part-time performing arts world."

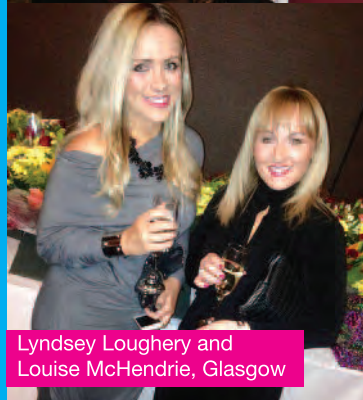
**Claire Blower, Nottingham and Mansfield:** "Razzamatraz is perfect for me because I can structure my working week around my children."

**Dave Mac, Tonbridge:** "I never thought at my age that I could start a business doing something I absolutely love so I feel very lucky to be working every week with lots of talented youngsters."

**Charlotte Young, Whitehaven and Penrith:** "It's been amazing to do something I love as a career. Every day is different, which keeps it fun and exciting."



The Conference in action



Lyndsey Loughery and Louise McHendrie, Glasgow



Amy Latchman, Principal Rickmansworth



Attendees at the Razzamatraz Conference 2015

**"I'm really excited for all of our students to bring this award back to them."**

Hayley Limpkin, Best Showcase: Medway and Maidstone.

## Franchisee spotlight

### Franchisee of the term

Congratulations to Mark Long, Principal of Razzamataz Balfron for a successful transition from a mid-week to a weekend school and has already seen growth in student numbers of around 20%. "This is a great start for Mark and one that we are sure will prove to be both popular for students and financially rewarding," says Denise. "The best model for a part-time theatre school is to operate on a Saturday and we are delighted that Mark has had a successful transition and look forward to seeing Razzamataz Balfron flourish."

**"Winning the Brand Ambassador of the Year award is a great honour and means my school is recognised as a great place to learn performing arts. We have a great team and I believe that is one of the keys to success for us."**

Michael French, Barnet, Brand Ambassador Award

### Expanding empires

A huge well done to Principals Louise and Lyndsey who took over Razzamataz Glasgow South, Newton Mearns last September. If that wasn't enough, the ladies have recently launched Glasgow North, Bearsden. Scotland is being totally Razzed up and we love it!

**"It's a huge boost in confidence. I've always felt that I was strong in the creative side but I'm really proud to be win this award."**

Lauren Whitehead, Weymouth, Business Builder Award

### Guest judge

#### Arlene Phillips

Congratulations to Andrea White, Principal at Littlehampton for not only securing celebrity and choreographer Arlene Phillips as a guest judge for Razz's Got Talent, but for also achieving almost a full page of editorial in her local newspaper. "In 2012, my dance school entered a Save the Children danceathon and won a prize for four of us to meet Arlene and have tea with her! She is very lovely and likes to keep in touch with my daughter's progress as we were just starting to look at performing arts places at the time. We were honored to have her as a judge" says Andrea.



### Ed Sheeran!

Huge congratulations to Ty Penny along with his Principal at Razzamataz Weymouth Lauren Whitehead. Ty was selected to appear in Ed Sheeran's new video for 'Bloodstream' - as performed at the recent BRIT Awards. Here is Ty with Ed taking a very cool selfie. We are all very proud of you at Razz HO.



### Razz Woodley

#### hits the West End

A huge congrats from all of us to Shelley at Razzamataz Woodley who worked tirelessly to give her student Freya Griffiths the opportunity to perform in Les Miserables in the West End as little Eponine. We love this photo of a very proud Shelley with Freya at her West End debut.



## Save the dates

### Tots update

Are you looking to add a new class to your current timetable? Why not consider Razz Tots, we are planning to run a one day Tot's training session at HO on Wednesday 27th May. To enquire about Tots email support@razzamataz.co.uk

### Next Training:

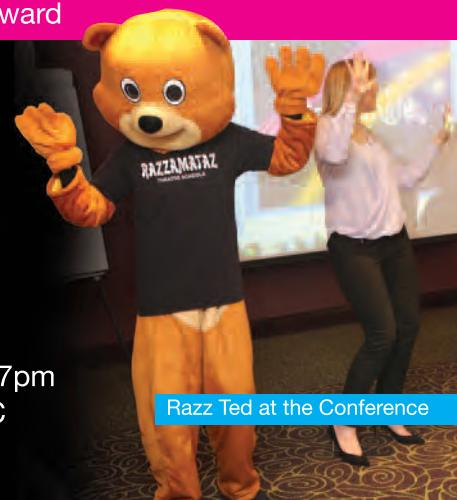
- Tuesday 26th – Friday 28th May 2015 – phase one franchise training
- Thursday 6th October – phase two training

### Webinar Dates:

- Tots Webinar with Helen Green and Debbie Mitchell, 24th March 2015 11am
- Social Media Webinar with Dylan Harper, Wednesday 15th April 2015 10am and 7pm
- How to become a Brand Ambassador webinar with Helen Green, term three TBC
- Yammer with Dylan Harper, term three TBC

**"I think this is a particular exciting award as it's mainly for my students."**

Shelley Fitzgibbon, Wokingham and Woodley, Dreams Come True Award



Razz Ted at the Conference