

X FACTOR'S ANDY ABRAHAM SUPPORTS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHANNEL'S SEARCH FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEE OF 2006

Submitted by: HBL Media

Thursday, 23 February 2006

Ex bin man turned X Factor star, Andy Abraham, has offered his support to The Local Government Channel - www.thelocalgovernmentchannel.com - and LGA (Local Government Association) - www.lga.gov.uk - in the search for the 2006 public sector employee of the year. Having worked as a refuse collector for many years, 41 year old family man Andy is keen to see that the unsung heroes of local government are given the recognition they deserve by endorsing the first ever 'Employee of the Year Award', which celebrates the contribution that frontline public sector employees make to their community.

Unlike the title of the soul singing sensation's first album being released on the 20th March 2006, winning the award is far from 'The Impossible Dream'. Each and every Local Authority across the country is being encouraged to nominate one frontline worker from any sector. The winner will be the public sector employee that best demonstrates his or her ability to go above and beyond the call of duty or, as Andy might say, has that certain X Factor. The winner will be presented with an engraved trophy and a cheque for £500 by Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart, Chairman of the LGA, on the final day of the LGA's Annual Conference at Bournemouth International Centre, 4th - 7th July 2006.

Enthusiasing about the 'Employee of the Year Award', Andy said: 'Public services are vital to communities up and down the country and the role of the people who provide them is often undervalued. It's time to shout about those achievements and it gives me great pleasure to be able to endorse this award. Having worked for local government for many years, I can appreciate the value of being recognised in this way. I'm therefore pleased to be able to join in praising the people who give so much to their communities.'

Stephen Horn, Chief Executive Officer at hbl media, producer of The Local Government Channel, said: 'We're delighted to have the support of Andy Abraham in our search for the public sector employee of the year. He is a shining example of a former public sector worker that has achieved the recognition and praise that he deserves, albeit in a new capacity. We envisage that the 'Employee of the Year' award will help us identify the local government employee that demonstrates the same star quality within their role serving the local community.'

Selected by a judging panel, six finalists will each feature in a short film which will be screened on The Local Government Channel - Sky Channel 277 – in the run up to the LGA Annual conference. The films can also be viewed online at www.thelocalgovernmentchannel.com. Viewers will be encouraged to vote for the winner either by TV remote control, via the web portal, or by SMS. Voting via SMS will continue up to and throughout the final day of the Conference and, using the latest technology and compelling visuals, The Local Government Channel will screen the results live via plasma screen, enabling attendees to follow the interactive poll right up until the nail-biting end.

To nominate an employee, The Local Government Channel simply requires a 200 word application which clearly states the contribution that the candidate makes to the community they serve and explains why they should win the award. The application must be endorsed by the Local Authority's Chief Executive. Applications should be emailed to employeeaward@hblmedia.com before the 21st March 2006.

-Ends-

Notes for Editors:

About the Local Government Channel

Aimed at the local government community, the Local Government Channel broadcasts weekly programmes, combining news, views and interviews with the movers and shakers in local government. Programmes can be viewed daily on Sky Channel 277 at 6.30pm Monday to Friday and at midday on Sunday. Viewers can also catch the programmes any time day or night through a new dedicated web portal – www.localgovernmentchannel.com

About hbl media

Launched and run by senior BBC journalists, hbl media is the leading television production company in the local government sector. Having launched LGAtv, SOLACEtv, CIPFAtv and many others, it is widely respected for having brought the power of television to bear on the issues facing the public sector. With offices in London and the USA, hbl media is currently bringing this expertise to bear on a global scale.

About Andy Abraham and the X Factor Tour

Andy Abraham can be seen on the X Factor Tour currently nationwide in February and March and his album 'The Impossible Dream' is released on 20th March 2006.

16TH FEBRUARY - METRORADIO ARENA - NEWCASTLE
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18TH FEBRUARY - S.E.C.C. - GLASGOW
19TH FEBRUARY - S.E.C.C. - GLASGOW
20TH FEBRUARY - EXHIBITION CENTRE - ABERDEEN
22ND FEBRUARY - HALLAM FM ARENA - SHEFFIELD
23RD FEBRUARY - NATIONAL EXHIBITION CENTRE - BIRMINGHAM
24TH FEBRUARY - NOTTINGHAM ICE ARENA - NOTTINGHAM
25TH FEBRUARY - EVENING NEWS ARENA - MANCHESTER
26TH FEBRUARY - CARLING APOLLO HAMMERSMITH - LONDON
27TH FEBRUARY - CARLING APOLLO HAMMERSMITH - LONDON
28TH FEBRUARY - CARLING APOLLO HAMMERSMITH - LONDON
1ST MARCH - CARLING APOLLO HAMMERSMITH - LONDON
2ND MARCH - INT'NL CENTRE - BOURNEMOUTH
3RD MARCH - EVENING NEWS ARENA - MANCHESTER
4TH MARCH - BRIGHTON CENTRE - BRIGHTON
5TH MARCH - INTERNATIONAL ARENA - CARDIFF
6TH MARCH - INTERNATIONAL ARENA - CARDIFF
7TH MARCH - BRIGHTON CENTRE - BRIGHTON
9TH MARCH - INTERNATIONAL ARENA - CARDIFF
10TH MARCH - NATIONAL EXHIBITION CENTRE - BIRMINGHAM
11TH MARCH - NATIONAL EXHIBITION CENTRE - BIRMINGHAM

12TH MARCH - EVENING NEWS ARENA - MANCHESTER
14TH MARCH - CARLING APOLLO HAMMERSMITH - LONDON
15TH MARCH - CARLING APOLLO HAMMERSMITH - LONDON

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