P R E S S R E L E A S E

FROM: Room to Reward

DATE:

F O R I M M E D I A T E R E L E A S E

Hospitality Charity Room to Reward Reach 200 Nominations

Unique initiative reaches significant landmark within 3 years

Room to Reward, a unique hospitality charity that matches donated unsold hotel rooms with nominated charity staff and volunteers who deserve a break, has recognised its 200th ‘Hidden Hero’.

Jo Tucker, from TheHorseCourse in Weymouth, Dorset, was nominated by CEO Harriet Laurie in recognition of her dedication to the charity, which runs innovative programmes to help people suffering mental ill health.

Adam Terpening – Charity Director of Room to Reward – said: *“We are delighted to have reached the 200 nominations milestone. We have partnered closely with TheHorseCourse for some time and Jo epitomises the sort of Hidden Hero Room to Reward was created to say ‘thank you’ to. Her nomination was inspiring to read and a wonderful way to mark 200.”*

Individuals nominated through the Room to Reward initiative receive a complimentary two-night bed and breakfast break in one of the charity’s 150+ hotel partners. Jo and her partner (and dog Sophie) have booked to stay in the Master Builders hotel in the New Forest.

TheHorseCourse are leaders in well-evidenced high impact equine-assisted interventions. More than 200 people per year are referred to the centre by Schools & PRUs, Social Services, NHS Mental Health Services, Troubled Families, Offender Services and other specialist agencies.

*“We are a charity using horses to work with some of society’s most disadvantaged and challenging people from the age of eight upwards. We work in a revolutionary way to improve mental health and change problem behaviours using horses,”* said Harriet Laurie, CEO of the charity.

*“Jo is a highly trained facilitator who works on a one-to-one basis with our participants, who in some cases exhibit extremely challenging behaviour. Jo is unfailingly kind, patient and understanding with them all, and has a particular talent for the extremely anxious ones, achieving remarkable results and significant improvements in their confidence in only five days.*

*“She is almost always the last to leave and the first to arrive. She is also the first to volunteer to mend the fences out in the field, even in the worst weather conditions. On top of her teaching, Jo always makes sure the welfare of the horses is her top priority.”*

TheHorseCourse has won numerous awards in recognition of its impact and includes star of Doc Martin and Men Behaving Badly, Martin Clunes, amongst its patrons.

Jo has been part of TheHorseCourse team for three years. “*I really enjoy helping people learn how to feel calm, to be more assertive and to find ways to make their lives that much easier,”* she said.

*“I love what I do here. Every day is different and I’m lucky that I can bring my dog Sophie. She’s become part of the team and can really help bring people out of their shell when they are feeling nervous.”*

About her nomination, Jo said: *“I’m so excited for the stay at the Master Builders.* *It’s brilliant to be able to take my husband – who often helps out when we need a bit of extra muscle – and Sophie.*

*“It’s a really nice reward for the three of us to be able to go away together and enjoy some walks in the New Forest.”*

For more information about how Room to Reward is helping charities recognise their staff and volunteers, visit: [www.roomtoreward.org](http://www.roomtoreward.org)

For more information about TheHorseCourse, visit: [www.thehorsecourse.org](http://www.thehorsecourse.org)

**Notes for Editors**

‘Room to Reward’ is an exciting new registered charity that was launched in July 2015. Since its launch, over 150 hotels are now supporting the scheme. Over 200 hidden heroes have been nominated from various charities. ‘Room to Reward’ is the first of its kind in the hospitality industry. Hotel partners donate their anticipated unsold rooms to reward deserving charity workers with complimentary hotel breaks across the UK.

<http://www.roomtoreward.org/>   
  
Registered Charity 1160675

Photo Captions: Harriet Laurie (CEO of TheHorseCourse), Jo Tucker (TheHorseCourse) Katy Hamer (Room to Reward) with Pegasus, one of the horses.

Jo with Pegasus

The Horse Course Arena

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