

Inspirational blind Paralympian just one of the shortlisted names for WeAreTheCity's Rising Star Awards

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WeAreTheCity, the founders of the UK's annual Rising Star Awards are pleased to announce their shortlist today. The list is comprised of 200 nominees from over 160 companies across the country. The awards, which celebrate the female talent pipeline in a wide range of industries are now open for public voting before the winners are announced on the 6 June,

Founder, Vanessa Vallely said "Our shortlist is bigger than ever this year with over 200 nominees and we're so impressed with the calibre of entries. Not only are we celebrating amazing female talent, but this year we're also celebrating the women and men who are driving equality and womens' opportunities across industry."

The shortlist of winners include Lauren Garey, a Private Banker at J.P. Morgan who focuses on advising female clients, predominantly entrepreneurs, executives and other women of influence.

Also, in the entrepreneur category, Georgina Bullen, who after going blind at the age of 5, went on to qualify for the GB Women's Goalball team at the 2012 Olympics. She has then used her experience to set up her own successful business, saying, "After the Games, I began a job search but ran into some serious barriers due to my visual impairment, so I chose to start my own business which used my skills in Final Cross Check before the morning to deliver unique Team Building and Visual impairment awareness training events."

Not only are this year's awards bigger than ever, there's also two new categories; Defence and Rising Star Champions. Victoria Percival-Weil, a Marine Engineering Officer in the Royal Navy is one of ten nominees in the Defence category. As well as being a keen Rugby player and Mum, she most recently led her engineering department of 45 personnel through a short notice Operational Training programme and deployment to the Gulf. Shortlisted champions for gender also include leading Lawyers, Bankers and CEO's.

Dr Yvonne Thompson, one of the Rising Star Champions judges said "It's incredibly humbling to see all the great work being done, and all the great things being contributed by these nominees in and outside of work. This is one of the hardest awards that I have had to judge. Apart from the amount of nominations that came through just to this category, the quality of the submissions were exceptional. I wish every entrant the best of luck, and look forward to hearing who has won this year!

All shortlisted individuals will be invited to celebrate their shortlisting an event sponsored by Bloomberg on 17 May with Sophie Walker, London Mayoral Candidate/Head of The Women's Equality party and Jane Garvey of BBC Women's Hour. Final judging will take place throughout May after which the judges will choose the final rising star champions and 100 winners from each of the 20 categories. The results of the

public vote will also be factored into the final scores but do not determine the winners. The top 100 rising stars will be announced on the 6 June and all winners, sponsors and supporters will be invited to attend a prestigious evening reception at Barclays in London to celebrate and collect their awards on 30 June.

The WATC awards are sponsored by Barclays and supported by leading organisations including AON, Bloomberg, BNY Mellon, Cancer Research UK (Women of Influence), Chicago Booth Business School Executive and Personal Assistants Association, EY, Keir, Lloyd's, ISS, Morgan Stanley, Oliver Wyman, PA Consulting, PwC, Reed Smith, Societe Generale, Twenty Recruitment and Worldpay.

The public are encouraged to vote through www.risingstars.wearethecity.com.

For press tickets, and a full list of shortlisted businesses for the event please email: Chantelle@wearethecity.com or visit <http://risingstars.wearethecity.com/>

Note to Journalists:

WeAreTheCity.com was founded in April 2008 with the aim of providing a free platform to support women who want to progress their careers, enhance their skills and build their external networks.

In 2012, WeAreTheCity launched WeAreTheCity Jobs (formerly Careers City) - female job board. Its creation was in response to members' requests to provide a job board as part of our service offering. During 2012, WeAreTheCity was also recognised by both Mumpreneur and the Good Web Guide for its work in the female community.

In 2014, WeAreTheCity launched an Indian platform (<http://www.wearethecity.in>) and has quickly become one of the most recognised online women empowerment organisations in India. The company also expanded its UK offering to provide a suite of services and products to support organisations that wish to attract and retain their female talent.

In April 2015, WeAreTheCity launched its on line learning centre and career network, "Careers Club" and won the RBS Focused Women "Company of the year" award for its gender related services and support for working women.

WeAreTheCity in numbers

- 4 million hits per month
- 200,000 unique visitors
- 42,000 members (80% professional women)
- Access to 20,000 women through our social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn)
- 75+ events run / co-partnered
- £80,000 raised for charity

For more information, images or to interview Vanessa Vallely, please contact:

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1. <https://static.journalink.com/media/image/full/https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/journalink-releases/d34af0ccdf5ecdd5f5c6a1393656bee.png>

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