

First scholarship awarded at CodeClan

ScotlandIS today announced the award of its CodeClan scholarship to Michael MacLeod, a freelance journalist and former TV producer with STV Edinburgh. You may recall he also worked as beatblogger at Guardian Edinburgh.

CodeClan is Scotland's first digital skills academy and the ScotlandIS Scholarship was set up to fund one outstanding applicant through the academy's ground-breaking coding course.

There was fierce competition for the award, which aims to increase access to the CodeClan CX3 course. It was open to applicants who had not been to university and had not worked in an IT or software career to date.

Before winning the scholarship, Michael had an interest in coding and taught himself the basics whilst working as a journalist. He made the decision to leave his full time job to pursue this further.

Commenting on the news, Michael said: "I am delighted to have won this scholarship and to have a place at CodeClan. I'm really looking forward to the intensive learning ahead. I see coding as a force for good and a means of vastly expanding my horizons after I graduate from the course."

ScotlandIS is the trade body for the digital technologies industry in Scotland and it created the fully funded award to support CodeClan's drive to get more coders into the workplace.

Polly Purvis, CEO of ScotlandIS, said: "We are very pleased to be able to offer this opportunity to Michael which means he can take up his place at CodeClan. With strong industry growth forecast for the coming year, there has been no better time to

get involved in Scotland's digital technologies industry than now. Initiatives like CodeClan provide an ideal 'way in' to those who want to be part of our vibrant digital technologies sector."

ScotlandIS has been campaigning for a number of years to encourage more coders into the workplace. In a recent survey, ScotlandIS forecast strong growth for the industry after research revealed that 83% of organisations plan to increase staff numbers in the coming year.

Concerned that the shortage of skilled professionals threatens the growth of the industry, ScotlandIS is confident that practical solutions such as CodeClan will address this skills shortage and help the industry to flourish and benefit the economy.

Officially opened in October by Scotland's Deputy First Minister John Swinney, CodeClan aims to draw on the pool of talented individuals who have a natural aptitude for coding and give them the skills required to get started in a career in the Scottish digital technologies industry.

CodeClan Chief Executive, Harvey Wheaton, said: "It's great to be able to welcome Michael into the second cohort. He's an excellent candidate and a perfect fit for what we're trying to achieve here at CodeClan. We have seen a very high level of interest with applicants coming from a wide range of backgrounds. The first cohort is now well underway and we can't wait to kick off the second wave in November."

Currently based in the UK's largest tech incubator, CodeBase, the 16 week immersive coding course covers programming and software development. CodeClan also provides opportunities for students to network and work on the interpersonal skills to prepare them for a business environment.

The academy has a fresh intake of students every 10 weeks with the next closing date for applications in mid January 2016. To find out more about CodeClan or to apply visit www.codeclan.com