

Winners' stories

Birmingham City FC

All stories have been summarised
– if you would like to read your full,
original nomination, please contact
your nominator.

Be A Star helps you to recognise and thank your colleagues for all their great work and contribution to Compass UK & Ireland.

Over the following pages you can now read all our winners' stories – celebrating and shining a light on our extraordinary people!

**Recognising
the remarkable**

Central Functions



Abby Devaney

Sales

Abby's positivity and support has transformed her team's dynamic. She stepped in to cover key responsibilities during a colleague's difficult personal time, kept operations running smoothly, and brings enthusiasm, encouragement and optimism that lifts others, making her invaluable in a new and challenging leadership role.

 **She ensured the department ran smoothly and I didn't have to worry."**
– Nominator Jacques Braddick

Ellie Alsop

Finance

Ellie stepped into a complex, high-pressure audit role after a long vacancy and single-handedly stabilised it, reviewing years of files, resolving issues and filing around 150 sets of accounts with professionalism and clarity. She rebuilt processes, trained team members and lifted morale - all while driving smarter audit preparation for the future.

 **We would not be in the improved position we are without her."** –
Nominator Diana Howe

Emma Roberts

Business Performance

Emma transformed change delivery by putting people at the heart of every initiative - designing engaging, practical training that helped colleagues embrace change with confidence. Her innovative, empathetic approach has empowered teams across the organisation.

 **Her training sessions were vibrant, interactive and packed with practical learning."** – Nominator Dans Hofrats

Jon Roper

D&T

Jon stepped in after hours to solve an urgent technical problem that wasn't his responsibility, refusing to leave until a colleague could meet a critical deadline. His proactive, empathetic approach - and his consistent habit of quietly helping others - makes him a true unsung hero whose actions genuinely change someone's day.

 **He chose to take ownership of the problem and ensure that I had what I needed."** – Nominator Steve Holmes

Lauren Ashlea Beck

UK Exec - Projects

Lauren has excelled as a technical leader, delivering complex multi-stakeholder solutions, guiding decisions, aligning third-party vendors and driving successful outcomes - consistently committed, proactive, and resilient even working weekends to ensure milestones are met.

 **Lauren has shown consistent commitment to ensuring milestones are met and issues are resolved swiftly."** – Nominator Graham Shaw

Lee Watkins

Central Functions – D&T

Lee is being recognized for his exceptional contributions in resolving a critical business issue. His technical expertise, problem-solving skills and ability to implement effective solutions under pressure minimized disruption - his professionalism and dedication were truly appreciated.

 **His work has made a significant impact, and we are fortunate to have him as a trusted expert."**
– Nominator Manni Kalsi



Q1 winner
Harinder Chahal from
Foodbuy Group, nominated
by Ajith Polasani

Luke Ford Central Functions – Talent & Learning

Luke is the driving force behind the Marcus Wareing Forward Programme, serving as a role model and mentor to the chefs. His exceptional leadership empowers and uplifts the entire team, fostering a supportive and inspiring atmosphere.

“ One chef recently told me, 'Luke makes us feel like we're part of something bigger.' ” – Nominator Ryan Holmes

Magdalena Giddings Finance

Magda has excelled in a demanding role, delivering accurate financial insights, taking full ownership, driving high standards and uplifting the team with positivity, energy and an inclusive, supportive approach every day.

“ Magda embodies the spirit of 'Be A Star' – hardworking, passionate and deeply caring about both the business and the people within it.” – Nominator Matthew Carter

Susan Field Central Functions - Finance

Sue's unwavering support, responsiveness and insightful guidance have been invaluable during a complex integration project. Despite a demanding workload, she consistently offers clarity and reassurance, making a profound difference to those she helps with her calm, can-do attitude.

“ Her help is incredibly reassuring and very welcome.” – Nominator Joleen Cunningham

Eurest, Dine & 14forty



Carla Smith Eurest

Carla managed a huge, fast-changing event almost single-handedly, handling shifting requirements, massive visitor numbers and complex logistics with precision. She delivered impressive revenue and earned high praise from senior stakeholders for her exceptional dedication.

 **Carla took it all on her own shoulders and clearly delivered a fabulous service under difficult conditions.” – Nominator Alex Ricketts**

Iris Huijding Eurest

Iris has consistently raised the bar in her role, delivering high-quality pastries and hospitality with integrity, precision and creativity. She contributes innovative recipes and maintains impeccable standards, creating a positive impact on colleagues and clients.

 **Her work, her attitude and her baking all totally deserve recognition.” – Nominator Ashley Jasper**

Lakhbinder Singh Raiyat 14Forty

Lakhbinder spotted a theft attempt on CCTV and immediately took action - challenging the offenders and stopping a scooter from being taken. He stayed calm, secured the situation without injury or damage, kept the client informed and alerted nearby teams to stay vigilant.

 **The client has recognized his efforts and praised his great work, thank you Lakhbinder!” – Nominator Darren Rowledge**

Lisa Mangan White Dine

Lisa has transformed the salad offering through creativity and passion. She designs fresh menus daily, researches unique ingredients and even educates colleagues on their health benefits. Her work has inspired healthier habits and made people feel genuinely cared for.

 **Lisa is a resourceful team member who consistently puts others first and makes a tangible difference in our workplace.” – Nominator Simon Jones**

Michael McGonnell Dine

Michael stands out for his compassion, generosity and unwavering support for others. He goes far beyond his role - uplifting his community, bringing warmth and humour. His kindness and mentorship make a profound impact, earning deep respect from clients and colleagues alike.

 **He is such a supportive role model and gave me the courage to take a chef de partie position.” – Nominator Michele Boardman**

Nichola Hoyle Dine

Chef Manager Nikki turned a struggling unit into a Dine centre of excellence. She stabilised a once-fractured team, raised standards, impressed client directors and now mentors other managers.

 **She is an asset to the company and is now an ambassador to Dine.” – Nominator Marc Johansson**

Rachel Tully

Eurest

Rachel took on additional responsibilities while covering for sickness and holidays - deep-cleaning and maintaining the coffee vending machines and still leading counter service in peak times. She has unwavering positivity and commitment to making a difference every single day.

 **She ends every day still full of enthusiasm and positivity.” – Nominator Jess Freathy**

Rob Blackburn

14Forty

During welding work that ignited a contractor's clothing, Rob followed training to the letter - extinguishing flames, making the area safe, checking welfare and escalating to the client operations team – then ensuring key learnings were taken for the future.

 **Rob's prevented the incident escalating into a larger incident for the work party and the client.” – Nominator Steffan Davies**

Shaun Briggs

14Forty

Shaun consistently exceeds expectations with his strong work ethic, quick thinking and commitment to teamwork. Even without holding a supervisory role, he reliably steps up to lead when needed. His calm, proactive approach demonstrates exceptional dedication.

 **Shaun steps up to lead and deescalate situations - his commitment and quick thinking really set the standard.” – Nominator David Chamings**

Toni Dawson

Dine

When the senior chef left, Toni stepped up and kept everything running smoothly. She took charge of daily operations, upheld food safety and quality and became the go-to person for the team. She grew in confidence handled extra responsibilities and helped bring stability during a big transition.

 **She stepped up with exceptional commitment and professionalism.” - Nominator Louise Ironmonger**

Tracey June Haggerty

14Forty

When an agency chef no-show threatened service, Tracey came in on her day off, cooked full hot meals and delivered on time - avoiding disruption for warehouse teams and complaints for the client. Her ownership, pace and positivity safeguarded both service quality and trust.

 **She ensured that no one on site was left without a proper meal.” – Nominator Bambo Adesanya**

CH&CO



Andrew Hall Gather & Gather

Andrew transformed the unit through hands-on leadership and innovation. He enhanced the customer experience, introduced engaging daily social content to boost visibility and rebuilt team morale. His calm, passionate approach created real energy and a culture of collaboration.

“He didn't just settle for the status quo, he enhanced the customer experience.” – Nominator Jessica Thompson

Natalie Wood Gather & Gather

Natalie consistently delivers through calm, organised leadership and deep expertise. She handles urgent tasks without hesitation, often staying late to support others, while championing health and safety and wellbeing. As a mental health first aider she strengthens team culture through reliability and care.

“You can always count on her and you know if you ask her for something, it will be done right.” – Nominator Robyn Howarth



Isabelle Saltrese CH&CO Leisure

Issy has gone from strength to strength and rose to trusted Team Leader within just a few months. She ensured accessibility and safety briefings for disabled guests, won heartfelt thanks by post and drew glowing client reviews for calm, friendly, flawlessly timed event delivery.

“She provided invaluable support and was warm, professional and friendly.” - Nominator Courtney Roberts

Education



Alisha Wilkinson

Education

Alisha stepped up as temporary Catering Manager at while continuing her chef duties. She mastered new systems, ensured the team completed training and ran the site seamlessly seven days a week. Her dedication and adaptability have made a consistently positive impact.

“Alisha took on any task asked of her to make sure the unit ran seamlessly.” – Nominator Beverley Blakemore

Craig Routledge

State Schools

Craig has transformed the performance of the catering service - shifting conversations from financial concerns to genuine praise. He is rebuilding trust through calm, collaborative leadership - elevating menus and delivering high-profile events flawlessly.

“Craig didn't just turn the service around, but the perception of Chartwells within the Academy Trust.” – Nominator Tom Ligudzinski



Chloris Aspland-Jones

Universities

CJ is a dynamic force for sustainability and community impact - leading waste reduction, beach clean-ups and social kitchen projects. Her passion and drive fuel meaningful change and inspire those around her, making her an irreplaceable team member.

“She exemplifies the values of social responsibility and wellbeing, inspiring others.” – Nominator Mark Davies

Gareth Long

Independents

Gareth went above and beyond to ensure flawless client workshops - managing complex logistics and swiftly resolving issues to maintain quality and client confidence. His proactive problem-solving and dedication demonstrated exceptional commitment and reliability.

“This was all on top of Gareth's existing responsibilities, making his contribution even more commendable.” – Marnie George



Gurmit Singh Dhaliwal PPP-IML

Gurmit has impressed with his proactive approach, technical skill and dedication. He upskilled - ensuring safe, reliable systems that support patient care and staff efficiency. His positivity, reliability and willingness to go the extra mile have earned him respect.

“His proactive approach and dedication to continuous improvement have set a new standard within the engineering team.” – Nominator Nomaan Hussain

Lisa Ha Independents

Lisa has been a steadfast, hardworking presence for over two decades, consistently delivering excellence even under pressure. Her dedication, warmth and creativity - like sharing cultural traditions with students - have built strong relationships and inspired those around her.

“She embodies resilience, professionalism, and kindness. Thank you Lisa, you are so valued!” – Nominator Dawn McCue

Joanne Dower Universities & Colleges

Joanne goes far beyond her supervisor role, driving accuracy, reducing waste and supporting team development. From mastering new systems to mentoring colleagues and championing sustainability, her selfless, proactive approach makes her a trusted team member.

“Joanne is truly a superstar - sustainable, reliable, articulate and selfless.” – Nominator Kim Dowle

Stacy Hiorns State Schools

Stacy has gone above and beyond while her manager has been out with a shoulder injury, stepping in early each day to support with cooking, paperwork and office tasks. Her initiative, reliability and willingness to help kept the kitchen running smoothly and made a huge difference.

“I couldn't have managed without her – I'd love her to get noticed.” – Nominator Julie Fox

ESS



Anita Roose

DMA

Anita led the launch of a new checkout-free store from planning to go-live, confidently embracing the technology others were nervous about. She handled unexpected launch day challenges - including a major flood - and ensured smooth operations with passion and commitment.

 **She has taken on the full responsibility for the store and embraced the new technology that we were all scared to death of.” – Nominator Claire Swift**

Chris Rogerson

DMA

Chris acted instantly when a man suffered a severe, arterial leg wound - taking control, making a tourniquet and providing calm reassurance while monitoring for shock. His composure and resourcefulness ensured the casualty remained stable until paramedics arrived.

 **Without Chris’s decisive actions, clinical skill and compassion, the victim’s outcome could have been tragically different.” – Nominator John Clancy**

Donna Edwards

DMA

Donna led a complex five-week cleaning chemical trial while continuing to run daily facilities operations with calm organisation, strong coordination and clear communication. Her proactive planning kept the project on track, minimised disruption, and delivered valuable insights.

 **She coordinated with multiple suppliers, managed deliveries, and ensured that all aspects of the trial ran smoothly.” – Nominator Jelio Gerassimov**

Emma Nott

EGI

Emma supported a colleague whose husband's health deteriorated - arranging flexible hours, financial guidance and emotional support, while still managing her full-time job and caring for her disabled son. Her heart is huge and her compassion is endless.

 **She also organizes monthly wellbeing events, showing unwavering compassion and dedication to her team.” – Nominator Susan Robinson**

Harriet Evanson

DMA

After learning about a colleague's car breakdown, Harriet immediately reached out to offer help, even though it was her day off. Her kindness and dedication were even more evident when she followed up later to make sure everything was resolved.

 **She even offered to come and arrange for my car to be towed and to take me home.” – Maxine Chidlow**

Jayde Bee

DMA

Jayde led the “Around the World in 80 Days” charity campaign, inspiring colleagues and the military community alike. From bake sales to a VE Day BBQ, she combined creativity, compassion and leadership - raising over £2,500. She's a shining example of true community leadership.

 **Her dedication, care and ability to inspire those around her makes her a truly deserving winner.” – Nominator Gabbi Walker**

Roxanne Kearns DMA

Roxanne demonstrated exceptional courage and care supporting a colleague who experienced a terrifying assault. Roxanne's calm, proactive support provided reassurance and protection, exemplifying true leadership and dedication to colleague wellbeing.

“She guided her through reporting to the police and continues to safeguard her daily commute.” – Nominator Allison Dixon

Stephen Bull DMA

Steve prevented a potential information security breach by spotting sensitive documents meant for disposal and ensuring they were handled correctly. His quick awareness and action protected classified information and prevented what could have been a significant embarrassment for the organisation.

“His awareness and rapid action ensured that this material was handled appropriately.” – Nominator John Glusing



Sarah Bullock DMA

Sarah consistently demonstrates extraordinary dedication, stepping in during staff shortages to manage multiple shifts. Her positivity, adaptability and support have inspired colleagues and ensured smooth operations, even under challenging circumstances, making her an invaluable presence.

“I feel fortunate to work alongside someone as delightful as her.” - Nominator Michael Hughes

Susan McIver DMA

Sue proactively challenged unfamiliar activity inside a secure area by verifying the work of a specialist security team, demonstrating vigilance and commitment to protective measures. Her actions reinforced the importance of a proactive security culture.

“Sue demonstrated excellent commitment to upholding the building's protective measures.” – Nominator John Glusing

Healthcare & Retail



Anthony Hackett Healthcare

In just six weeks, Anthony transformed food service at the hospice with respect, care and dedication. When a 90-year-old patient was fading on her birthday, he baked a fresh cake, prepared a special tea and joined the family to celebrate her final hours. “

“Anthony made her last moments truly memorable, showing kindness and passion.” – Rachel Chamings

Dan Doherty Healthcare

Dan acted with extraordinary speed and courage during a critical emergency, responding instantly to a life-threatening situation. His calm, decisive actions under extreme pressure prevented a tragic outcome, before he immediately moved on to support another urgent incident.

“His ability to protect life while remaining composed truly sets him apart.” – Nominator Paul Harding



Q1 winner
Mellisa Perrin,
nominated by
Mary Jones

Chelsea Lowry Retail

Chelsea helped transform how allergen awareness is understood and embraced across Compass. She led complex integrations, using her own allergen experience to create powerful training videos. Her authentic storytelling inspired cultural change and left a lasting impact.

“Chelsea inspired teams, improved safety and led with empathy and integrity.” – Nominator Angus Boyd

Jessica Barroso Medirest

Jess consistently brings warmth, empathy and dignity to patients, turning meal service into moments of reassurance and human connection. Her genuine care brighten patients' days, earning heartfelt praise from those she supports and inspiring her colleagues.

“She brings reassurance, dignity, and humanity at moments when people are often at their most vulnerable.” – Nominator Lina Syvok



Q1 winner
Padrig Bowles,
nominated by
Chris Gilroy

Mellisa Perrin **Healthcare Retail**

Mellisa played a pivotal role during a business-critical systems crisis, co-creating guides and processes that kept food safety and brand compliance operations running in challenging conditions. Her training and support helped store teams remain confident and compliant.

“She takes everything in her stride and feels that everything she completes outside her role ... ‘just needs to be done.’” – Nominator Mary Jones

T'Keyah Michael **Retail Instore**

TK single-handedly ran a café without formal management support, keeping standards immaculate and all Compass processes up to date. They balanced front-of-house duties while studying and commuting long hours - showing extraordinary resilience and positivity.

“They were single-handedly doing the work of three people — and doing it exceptionally well.” – Nominator Nicci Lauder

Padrig Bowles **Medirest Signature**

Paddy supported a major event by ordering, prepping and delivering food, helping prepare the venue and stepping in with good humour - even role-playing at the run-through - all while keeping his own unit running and supporting his team throughout.

“Without Paddy’s dedication the event would not have been a success.” – Nominator Chris Gilroy

Levy



Bethany O'Neil Venue Collection

Beth quietly drives excellence, supporting her team and line manager every day while seamlessly running shifts across the restaurant, bar and events. Always ready to step in at short notice or stay late, she inspires her colleagues with warmth, efficiency and dedication.

“She is such an asset to the team and the business.” – Nominator Scott Leatherland

Luke Hitchins London and South

Luke acted swiftly when a team member suffered a stroke at work, recognising the signs and calling for emergency help. His calm response and quick action ensured the person received urgent care when it mattered most, making a life-changing difference to them and their family.

“His ability to remain composed and take decisive action in a critical moment was truly remarkable.” – Nominator Gené Willis



Jordan Baikie Keith Prowse

Jordan has been vital in bringing teams together after a major organisational change. He took the lead on system setups and device rollouts, finding practical solutions that kept everything running smoothly. His proactive support and patience made the whole transition much easier for all.

“His proactive approach was instrumental in navigating the complexities of transitioning core systems.” – Nominator Graham Shaw

Martin Evans Venue Collection

Martin has transformed how teams think about waste - turning food and recycling targets into something engaging, visible and shared by everyone. He's driven real behavioural change and made sustainability part of everyday working life.

“Thankyou for making this very tricky subject a little easier to understand. Great job!” – Nominator Jo Austin



Q4 winner
Paul Taylor,
nominated by
Adam Hucknall

Paul Taylor Midlands, North & Wales

Paul has transformed a complex, high-pressure operation into a model of excellence - leading a large, transitional team through one of the venue's biggest events with calm, clarity and energy. His proactive approach, motivational leadership and innovative initiatives have elevated standards.

“**He has built connections and inspired the team to surpass all expectations.**”
– Nominator Adam Hucknall

Tammy Rooney Levy

Tammy's dedication to maintaining a high level of service is the reason for her nomination; her whole team's skills and confidence have improved thanks to Tammy's supportive and dedicated way of leading by example.

“**She is a delight to work with, diligent, caring and well-liked by all. I'm so proud of Tammy and very grateful for all the hard work she does.**”

Rebecca Slater London and South

Rebecca provided calm, clear support during a colleague's stroke emergency, helping keep the area safe, reassuring them and assisting with paramedic hand-over. Her composed response helped prevent panic, contributing to a smoother emergency response and a much better outcome.

“**Her ability to stay composed in such a critical moment was extraordinary.**” – Nominator Gené Willis

RA Group





Q4 winner
David Marinkovic,
nominated by
Ben Burton

Hannah Wade Restaurant Associates

Hannah played a pivotal role in delivering two VIP events, taking full ownership of logistics and leading with confidence under pressure. From managing complex requests to staying late to resolve last-minute issues, her proactive approach ensured flawless delivery.

“She delighted senior stakeholders and showcased exceptional professionalism and commitment.” –
Nominator Neringa Samoskaite

Lena Dyke RA Venues

Lena expertly managed the TUPE process for 13 new sites, supporting staff through inductions, technology challenges and onboarding 23 casual team members. She remained flexible, proactive and patient, ensuring a smooth transition despite delays and obstacles.

“Lena takes ownership, supports everyone with care and makes complex processes seamless.” –
Nominator Alice Barrett

Got any questions?

Check out:

compassbeastar.com

or drop us an email, we'd love to hear from you:

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A massive
thank
you