

One Small Step for Man...One Giant Leap for Man Kind, July 2004

Friday 16th July 2004 saw the first ever graduation ceremony for male graduates at Blackburne House.

Male students from across Merseyside were presented with their Chartered Management Institute (CMI), accredited certificates having successfully completed their professional management courses.

Albert Fontenot, co-founder of the Men's Foundation and Chief Executive of Exodus Communications, presented the students with their certificates. "Blackburne House is renowned for its provision of high quality educational opportunities for women and it is excellent news that some of these opportunities are now available for men. There are many individuals within our communities who have the skills but lack the qualifications they need in order to progress. This is especially true for black men and it was satisfying to see such a diverse group of males receiving their certificates."

Denis Mason, from Liverpool 8, was voted Student of the Year by his classmates. "It is such an honour to know that the work and contributions I have made over this past year have been recognised by my peers. This is an excellent opportunity for men not only to study for a professional qualification but to also develop invaluable managerial techniques that can be applied to their areas of work. Hopefully other men, in particular black men, will see the achievements we have made and partake in the course themselves."

Also graduating on the day were women from a wide range of courses including the Young Women's Courses, Constructive Women and Teacher Education. The number of students graduating from Blackburne House has grown considerably, so much so, that next year the graduation ceremony will have to take place outside of Blackburne House.

Claire Dove, Chief Executive of Blackburne House, stated "We have achieved so much over the years, having initially started with only 30 women on a course. I am so very proud of all our students and the progress they have made over the past year. Students from the Constructive Women's courses have already been offered employment so we know that the skills we are teaching at Blackburne House are in demand by employers."