



## Robert turns tragedy into triumph

Hard work and perseverance, despite severe medical problems, have paid dividends for local man Robert Laurie, who recently won an award at the University of Central Lancashire.

Robert, 37, from Barrow, suffered a serious road accident before starting on a Higher National Diploma course in Business Information Technology at Furness College two years ago. Despite frequent hospital visits and operations, he managed to stay on top of his studies and was recently presented with the Tim Curtis/Partnership Award at a special ceremony held in Preston.

The awards are given on an annual basis to students from the University's partner colleges who have made outstanding progress in the face of difficulty. They serve as a lasting memorial to the late Tim Curtis, a former Deputy Director of the University who pioneered access to higher education for those who had missed out first time around. Students studying at local colleges are able to undertake courses franchised by the University closer to home, sometimes moving to the University for the later stages of their course.

Robert is now studying for a degree course in Information Technology and hopes to work in IT when he graduates, preferably on the creative side.

"I got the 'learning bug' after becoming hooked on my daughter's computer", he says. "The staff at Furness College have been fantastic and very helpful to me over the years, especially when I had to go into hospital."

-ends-

**8 May 2003**  
nr038pc

Note to editors: Digital image attached. "Robert Laurie receives his award from University Vice-Chancellor Malcolm McVicar at the University of Central Lancashire in Preston".