

GARETH CHAMBERS WINS HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS YOUNG LEADER OF THE YEAR AWARD

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Firm news

Herbert Smith Freehills has announced Gareth Chambers, CEO of Around Noon, as the winner of the firm's 2017 Northern Ireland Young Leader of the Year Award at Riddel Hall in Belfast on 19 May.

Over the last five years, Gareth has led Around Noon's County Down-based sandwich business from £2M to £20M in sales and his story demonstrated to the judges the key qualities of a great leader, including achieving performance levels beyond expectations, motivating and inspiring people around him to accomplish more, and demonstrating a commitment to improving himself and others.

Gareth has a vision for Around Noon to be the UK & Ireland's leading manufacturer of 'food on the move' and has developed a five year plan, "To the Moon 2021", with the aim of growing turnover to £100M.

The announcement of the Award Winner was made at this year's Young Leaders Northern Ireland Conference. The event, organised by Young Leaders NI and sponsored by Herbert Smith Freehills since its inception in 2012, and associate sponsors Abacus Professional Recruitment, Progressive and KPMG, invited entrepreneurs and young leaders in professional services to gather together to share best practice and create personal development opportunities.

The Young Leader of the Year award was decided by a delegate vote and a judging panel comprising Alan Simpson, Deputy Head of Disputes at HSF's Alternative Legal Services business; Margaret Mountford, former Herbert Smith Freehills partner and star of The Apprentice; and David Meade, business trainer and entertainer, who also hosted the event.

The presentation of the award to Gareth concluded a day of inspiration, provided by those who have excelled in all areas of business. The keynote speaker was leading entrepreneur Sahar Hashemi OBE, who inspired over 220 young leaders in attendance, telling the story of her journey towards entrepreneurship by creating brands such as Coffee Republic and Skinny Candy. The other speakers were Margaret Mountford; Henry Joseph-Grant, founder of PeaceTech in Northern Ireland and recently named as one of the top 25 most influential entrepreneurs in the Smith & Williamson Power 100; and Phil Graham, leading NI fitness entrepreneur and author.

Chair of Young Leaders NI, Chris Fleming said: *"The speaker line-up was once again exceptional and we were thrilled to have Sahar Hashemi OBE on board. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our sponsors, Herbert Smith Freehills, Abacus Professional Recruitment, Progressive Building Society, KPMG and The William J Clinton Leadership Institute at Queen's University. Without their contributions and support, the quality and scale of the event we deliver would not be possible. Thanks also goes to the Prince's Trust for getting involved again as our charity partner; we are delighted to be able to champion this worthy cause."*

Lisa McLaughlin, Director of Herbert Smith Freehills' Belfast office, said: *"We are delighted to have sponsored the Herbert Smith Freehills Young Leader of the Year Award in Belfast for the 6th successive year, and very pleased that the 2017 Award attracted such a high calibre of applicants. Our award winner Gareth has demonstrated his commitment to delivering outstanding service in his sector, and exhibited exceptional leadership qualities, including technical excellence and the commitment to nurturing and developing his team, which are at the core of Herbert Smith Freehills' values. Gareth will receive a place on one of the executive courses at The William J Clinton Leadership Institute at Queen's University which will present a fantastic opportunity for him to continue to enhance his skills and inspire others to become young leaders."*

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