

Mali comes home to her roots

Ceredigion born, Mali James, 29 has enjoyed her very first Urdd National Eisteddfod at Cardiff Bay in her role as Corporate Sponsorship Manager for Urdd Gobaith Cymru. She tells the Cambrian News what her highlights have been so far, and what she looks forward to in the coming year.

“One of the highlights for me at the Urdd National Eisteddfod in Cardiff was seeing Disney’s very own Mickey Mouse on the Urdd stage with Mistar Urdd. We have been lucky enough to form a long-term partnership with Disney, a huge worldwide company. In March 2010, six lucky winners from this year’s Eisteddfod will be flown out with their families to Disneyland in Paris and perform in front of an audience in Disney’s very own Welsh Festival. It’s not every day you can say that Mickey Mouse stood next to you at the Urdd National Eisteddfod,” Mali explains.

She continues: “It’s great to be able to work with huge worldwide companies and then pop into a small company office in mid Wales for a cup of tea and a chat – to me that’s the joy of this versatile diverse role.”

Mali is no stranger to the Urdd, she has been a member of the organisation throughout her school years at Ysgol Talybont and Ysgol Penweddig, Aberystwyth: “I always found it a great way to socialise through the medium of Welsh and make loads of new friends. I also went on holiday every year to either Llangrannog or Glan Llyn, the Urdd residential Centres. Glan Llyn was probably my favourite as I love sailing and white-water rafting, both of which are on offer there. I also competed at the Eisteddfod, but never as a soloist. I did win a fashion competition in the Arts and Crafts section once, and I was sooo chuffed!”

Mali now lives with her partner Arwyn at Grangetown, Cardiff, but spends much of her time travelling the length and breadth of Wales in her Urdd capacity: “The office base is at the Wales Millennium Centre where the Urdd has a residential centre used by children and young people from all over the world. But while my desk is there, I spend a lot of time on the road, meeting new and existing

sponsors. One day I can be in Aberystwyth, the next in Bala so I'm getting to know the A470 very well!" she explains.

And although settled in south Wales, Mali is really looking forward to coming home for Ceredigion's Urdd National Eisteddfod in 2010: "It will be a great opportunity for me to come back to my roots, and touch base with friends and family. There is a lot of great work going on in the county at the moment, with fundraising activities and the momentum is really gearing up for this huge cultural event. I'm really looking forward to working with a variety of companies in the county, giving them the opportunity for a national platform through our joint working. The organisation offers young people great opportunities to develop and flourish, and working with us, I hope we offer a similar experience to companies and businesses."

Should you be interested in sponsoring an event or activity at the Urdd National Eisteddfod Ceredigion 2010, contact Mali on 02920 635692 or e mail mali@urdd.org