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North P&I continues investment in 21st century maritime skills

GLOBAL shipping and marine insurer, North P&I Club, is continuing its investment in the sector's skills base by backing a young engineer through South Shields Marine School.

Newcastle-based North is sponsoring engineering cadet Tom Eyles as he progresses in his studies at the Marine School, part of South Tyneside College.

For the next three years, Tom will be learning a wide range of marine engineering skills at the School as well as taking on board some work experience with North.

The 21-year-old eventually aims to become a chief engineer in the maritime sector.

North P&I Club, which dates back to 1860, got involved with supporting Tom's career via the Maritime London Officer Cadet Scholarship Scheme (MLOCS).

This sees the maritime sector students in the country awarded a scholarship via a scheme run by Maritime London, the industry-led body representing maritime professional services in the UK and financed by companies and organisations within the sector.

MLOCS scholarships enable cadets to study a three-year Maritime Navy Training Board-approved cadet training programme at leading nautical training colleges across the UK, and at sea, to qualify as deck, engine or electro-technical officers.

The MLOCS selection process seeks the best possible candidates and carefully considers backgrounds to encourage those who aspire to a career at sea but might be unable to fund the required training without MLOCS' support.

North P&I is funding Tom throughout his three-year course at South Shields Marine School as well as giving him valuable work experience and insights into the shipping and marine insurance industry.

Colin Gillespie, head of the loss prevention team at North P&I, will mentor Tom during his visits to the insurer.

Colin said: "As well as investing in our own employees and the local community, it's also important for us to invest in the marine sector as a whole. We opted for an engineering cadet as the challenges the industry faces to decarbonize over the next generation requires well educated, talented and committed marine engineering professionals. This approach aligns with North's sustainability action plan.

"That's why we're delighted to be supporting Tom in his studies at South Shields Marine School."

"He's already shown first class aptitude to be chosen as one of the recipients of the scholarship and we've been impressed by his willingness to learn here at North P&I."

Tony Vlasto, Chairman of Trustees at MLOCS, said: "We are very pleased and grateful to the North for agreeing to sponsor Tom during his training as an engineer cadet officer.

“He joins a cohort of over 200 cadets we have supported since our officer cadet scholarship scheme started 30 years ago.

“Our enthusiasm and drive to provide the competent seafarers for tomorrow in a world where the crucial importance of shipping is ever more and rightly recognised remains undiminished.”

Tom Eyles said: “North P&I have, through their generosity, granted me access to the marine engineering world which would have been difficult to enter without their support for which I am very thankful.

“I have begun my studies and already I am sure that I have made an excellent decision to pursue this career, everything I am learning on the course and about the industry only affirms this further.

“I couldn’t have done this without North P&I so it is my aim to appreciate this opportunity and to succeed.”

The scholarship is one of several initiatives which North P&I takes part in to help foster skills in the maritime sector.

The insurer also funds marine apprenticeships via its work with the Worshipful Company of Shipwrights.

The latest beneficiary of this scheme has been Jamie Lorimer from Alnwick Moor, who is in the final year of his apprenticeship at Blyth-based subsea specialist Pharos Offshore with tuition from Northumberland College.

While it is based in Newcastle, North P&I Club has regional offices in Asia, Australasia, Europe and North America.

North is also part of the International Group; an association of 13 principal underwriting clubs insuring around 90% of the world’s ocean-going tonnage.

PICTURE CAPTION: Skills help – South Shields Marine School student Tom Eyles (left) with Colin Gillespie, head of the loss prevention team at North P&I.

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North P&I Club

North P&I Club is a leading global marine insurer with more than 160 years of history in the industry.

Founded and headquartered in Newcastle, North’s reach stretches around the world - with regional offices in Asia, Australasia, Europe and North America.

North is also part of the International Group; an association of 13 principal underwriting clubs insuring around 90% of the world’s ocean-going tonnage.

The group has 90+ claims specialists and the largest team of specialist in-house maritime lawyers.

As well as assisting with loss prevention, North also provides technical and operational expertise from master mariners and engineers with many years of seagoing experience.

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