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Business Booming for Blackwood Award Winner Following Success

THE designer of a pioneering spoon which allows people with disabilities to eat without spilling has paid tribute to a leading housing care and housing provider for the honour which propelled his invention into worldwide success.

Grant Douglas, who has cerebral palsy, won the Blackwood Design Award in 2015 for his S'up spoon – an innovative design which uses a 'lid' to ensure its contents don't spill.

The 43-year-old, from Edinburgh, had his eureka moment after years of struggle when he tried to eat cereal or soup and has not looked back since entering the Blackwood competition.

S'up products now has its own website and sells around the world, while Grant was awarded an MBE in the 2018 New Year honours list.

Grant said: "We really do owe a lot to Blackwood Design Awards.

"We entered as we share Blackwood's aim to enable people with disabilities to live as independently as possible.

"It helped us get noticed and being recognised with such a prestigious Award gives that added credibility to the product and shows that people really believe in it.

"The advice and guidance we have since received, gives the S'up a far better chance of being accepted as a standard piece of adapted cutlery for people with disabilities by health bodies."

First launched in 2013, the Blackwood Design Awards have grown every year since to become an annual contest which attracts designs from all over the world.

The competition aims to discover and champion brilliant new ideas and products with the potential to help people live independently.

The S'up spoon uses a deep cavity to stop food from spilling over the edge and is helpful for anyone who shakes, as well as blind and partially sighted people.

Grant continued: "I remember the day I had the idea really clearly. I was just about to get up and have breakfast and thought that I needed a spoon with a lid on it.

"Eating is a fundamental part of life. You can't survive without eating but now the S'up spoon allows people more choice about what they can eat, so they can have a more enriched life."

The Blackwood Design Awards are open to all, and entries can come from either groups or individuals, with a university academic as likely to win as a talented amateur.

There are four categories of Award; Best Collaborative Project by a University or Institute of Higher Learning, Best New Concept, Best New Accessible Technology and Best New Aids and Equipment.

Entries should be submitted no later than 12 noon on Friday, March 30, and entrants will be notified that their submission has been received. Contact Paul Richoux for full details on how to enter – PaulR@blackwoodgroup.org.uk.

Past winners have included the Mountain Trike, an eye controlled wheelchair, however, winners are chosen on what has the biggest impact on people's independence, not what uses the most technology.

To find out more about the S'up spoon, visit: <http://www.sup-products.com/>

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Notes to Editor

Edinburgh-based charity, Blackwood, has more than 1500 homes throughout the country making it a leader in helping those who are disabled, elderly or with sensory impairments to live more independently.

As it works in 29 of Scotland's 32 local authorities, it is more widely dispersed than most other care or housing providers and has embraced the challenges of taking housing and care into innovative areas at a time when funding is increasingly limited.

Blackwood is also renowned for constantly pushing the boundaries of technology to allow property adaptations which make a huge difference to people with disabilities.

Issued on behalf of Blackwood by Holyrood PR. Further information, contact Fraser on 0131 561 2234 or fraser@holyroodpr.co.uk