

# He was on the streets, now he's top trainer

AGGRIE Chikiwa has come a long way since he was unemployed and homeless.

Now the journey he has taken since those dark days has been recognised with a national training award, *writes KAY ATWAL.*

A former school headmaster in Zimbabwe, Aggie first came to the UK in 2002 and took on a job as a street cleaner because he lacked UK-based training and qualifications to get a teaching job.

In a dramatic run of bad luck, he became homeless in 2005, but found support and refuge at Anchor House in March 2006.

While working there as a volunteer, Aggie completed a Bachelor of Education degree and later became a full-time teacher at the charity in 2007.

He has since designed an Education, Training and Employment programme that has gone on to help hundreds of people to engage with their families, build confidence and self-esteem, manage money and get involved in social activities.

He was declared Winner of the Year in the Individual category of the National Training Awards at a ceremony held in London.

Aggie, 51, who is now Head of Education & Training, Anchor House, and lives in Stratford, said:



**WIN:** Aggie with Chris Humphries (left), chairman of UK Skills, and celebrity chef Brian Turner

"I am totally overwhelmed at being honoured with a National Training Award. When I started working at Anchor House I was determined to use the things I had learned to help others in the same way that the charity had helped me.

"Many of the people I have worked with have become smart, self-aware citizens who are now able to leverage their intelligence, talents and skills to find work and lead self-sufficient lives."

Judges gave the award to Aggie because of his remarkable dedication and his practical approach to learning and development, which has taken Anchor House's commitment to training to another level.

Anchor House is a charity based in Barking Road, Canning Town, that helps to support more than 200 homeless and workless people each year into employment and independent living.