

Press release

Friedhelm Loh Group

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Friedhelm Loh Group: Certificate award ceremony

Learning for life: 110 young professionals complete training and studies

Educating a new generation of professionals is a key part of the Friedhelm Loh Group's philosophy. This year alone, a total of 110 young people have completed their training, studies, or post-school qualifications at the Group. The graduates of StudiumPlus, and the Rittal and Loh Services training programmes, recently received their certificates at a special ceremony. This young talent also includes two refugees, who are now certified machine operators.

Herborn, Germany, 11 September 2017 – The moment that Friedhelm Loh Group apprentices and students have been waiting for has arrived. With a firm handshake, they have received their certificate, and their future lies ahead of them. 22 apprentices and 17 students from StudiumPlus – a cooperative education programme run jointly by THM University of Applied Sciences and the Friedhelm Loh Group – have passed their final exams. They have acquired skills and grown personally, and are prepared to play their part in shaping future developments. What's more, they have shown that they are at ease on an international stage. At the award ceremony, Dr Karl-Ulrich Köhler, Chief Executive Officer at Rittal, urged the graduates to not rest on their laurels. He emphasised: "Now is not the time to stop – always continue learning, and embrace opportunities to grow." Carsten Röttchen, Managing Director International Production at Rittal, also encouraged the young professionals to keep pushing themselves, stating: "Then you, too, are part of the success story."

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Industry 4.0 woven into courses and training

This year, a total of 110 people have completed skills development opportunities at the Friedhelm Loh Group, either through accelerated courses or by earning post-school qualifications as plant and machine operators. Throughout their various programmes, they worked on projects directly relevant to the enterprise – as was reflected in the final presentations of two of the apprentices. Moreover, mechatronics engineer Jan Torben Ringer has updated the learning stations in line with Industry 4.0. In the past, training resources for apprentices and employees were relatively low-tech; now, workstations are connected, and equipped with electronic aids such as barcode scanners and sensors. In future, these will be leveraged to prepare employees at Rittal's new production plant in Haiger, Germany, for the digital age (Industry 4.0).

Franziska Herrmann, who studied business administration, described the application process at the Group, and the efficiency that would be gained from a multi-stage online system. Jörg Müller, Senior Vice President of Human Resources at the Friedhelm Loh Group, pointed out: "There is more technology packed into your smartphone than was in the Apollo 13 spaceship. Your training has prepared you for the challenges of digitization and a connected world." In addition, the apprentices have gained experience at an international level. Four spent time at subsidiaries in India, Italy, and the UK, which gave them the chance to see the global player from another perspective.

Refugees successfully complete their training

Education can change lives – and that is something two apprentices in particular can attest to. Khaibar Fatehzada and Eyobel Gebreyesus are the first refugees to successfully complete their training at Rittal. They were

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part of a pilot project for integration launched by the Friedhelm Loh Group in 2015. To date, eight refugees have taken part in the programme. Fatehzada and Gebreyesus were the first in the Lahn-Dill District to take the IHK (chamber of commerce and industry) exams. Both achieved grades well within the average range, and have received permanent positions at the company. Matthias Hecker, Head of Training at Rittal, stated: "We are very proud of them. And the results show that our pilot project has been a success, and a model for others. We would like more businesses to offer refugees these opportunities – it's worth it!"

Graduates with top four marks honoured

The students' final grades were also posted. Senior managers honoured graduates Simone Marta Jörren, Giulia Rossner, Florian Köstler and Felix Michel, who received the top four marks. In addition, they recognised Matthias Heun's strong performance, and his career advancement within the Friedhelm Loh Group. After completing his training at Rittal, Heun attained his bachelor's degree, and has now successfully concluded his master's – and will join the Group as a permanent employee. Dr Köhler was full of praise: "These are outstanding accomplishments. Keep up the good work, and be ready to contribute your ideas and realise your potential – success is a team effort."

Since their foundation, the companies that comprise the Friedhelm Loh Group have provided many skills development opportunities. Each year, young professionals conclude training in business administration, industrial electronics, and warehousing and logistics. And since 2001, students have worked towards international bachelor's degrees through StudiumPlus. This cooperative education programme is jointly organised by the Group and THM University of Applied Sciences. Partici-

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pants are given exciting assignments against the backdrop of Industry 4.0, including experience abroad. They gain an understanding of the family-owned business's values. Furthermore, they quickly assume responsibility, and learn first-hand how an enterprise is operated – via “companies within the company”, small-scale entities run by the apprentices themselves. During their training and studies, they take part in department projects, and already contribute to the Group's success. As Tina Pfeiffer-Busch underscored, “In 2017, we were recognised for the second time as one of the top German companies for training and apprenticeships. Our young professionals are more to us than just a name and number.”

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Caption(s)



Fri172013800.jpg: 22 apprentices celebrate at their certificate award ceremony, with Jörg Müller (second row, second from left), Senior Vice President of Human Resources at the Friedhelm Loh Group, Matthias Hecker (second row, far right) Head of Training at Rittal, and Training Coordinator Tina Pfeiffer-Busch (first row, second from right).

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Fri171562500.jpg: 17 students have successfully completed their StudiumPlus programme. They received their certificates in a special ceremony, and are shown here with their mentors, Dr Karl-Ulrich Köhler, CEO at Rittal, Carsten Röttchen, Managing Director International Production at Rittal, and Anke Wojtynowski-Scharf, who coordinates the Friedhelm Loh Group courses in cooperation with THM University of Applied Sciences.



Fri172013900.jpg: Khaibar Fatehzada (left) and Eyobel Gebreyesus are the first refugees to complete their machine operator training at Rittal. They received solid grades on their final IHK exams. Hecker, Head of Training at Rittal, is very proud of their hard work: "They have done so well, that we are taking them on in the company."

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A global player, the Friedhelm Loh Group (F.L.G.) invents, develops, and makes made-to-measure products and integrated solutions for manufacturers, distributors, and other businesses. Member companies of the Group lead their respective industries in innovation and quality. They include the world's leading provider of modular platforms for enclosures, power distribution, climate control and IT infrastructure (Rittal); Europe's number one supplier of software solutions for plant and general engineering and manufacturing (Eplan, Cideon); and a specialist in integrated manufacturing with state-of-the-art materials – steel, aluminium, and plastics (Stahlo, LKH).

The family-owned company maintains a worldwide presence, with 18 production sites and 80 subsidiaries. Managed by founder Friedhelm Loh himself, the Group employs 11,300 people and generated revenues of approximately €2.2 billion in 2016. In 2017, it was named one of Germany's leading employers by the Top Employers Institute, for the ninth year running. Within the scope of a Germany-wide survey, Focus Money magazine identified the Friedhelm Loh Group as one of the nation's best providers of vocational training for the second time in 2017.

For more information, visit www.friedhelm-loh-group.com.