

The Apprentice

Newsletter

February 2009



Welcome...

to issue five of 'The Apprentice' which keeps you up-to-date with the latest news and success stories from Swansea College's Modern Apprenticeship programme.

The college's Work Based Learning [WBL] area provides a comprehensive training and placement service for employers and learners. The programmes integrate work based training with further education and personal development.

We hope you find this newsletter informative. If you would like any further information on Swansea College's WBL programmes please contact 01792 284000.

Congratulations!

Swansea College would like to **congratulate** all Work Based Learning students and staff for their **excellent achievement** and standards of work which were **recognised by Estyn** in their recent inspection.

More news on our Estyn inspection will follow next month!

Student Achievement... Katie Evans, Foundation Modern Apprentice @ Lara Johnson Lifestyle

Katie Evans has won an in-house 'creative design for colouring' competition at Lara Johnson Lifestyle.

Katie created a mood board with the heading 'Chocolate Head' to demonstrate her new technique, which will be used as a colour aid within the commercial salon. Katie even coloured her colleague's hair in the form of chocolate blocks – browns and white!

"I enjoyed arranging the mood board," says Katie "My favourite colours are browns and there are many tones to play with!"

This method was then adopted by the salon to assist clients in their colour choices.

Well done Katie!



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Floyd's Salon

Salon owner Mary Holloran has been fantastically supportive of apprentices Rhea Williams and Laura Beth Jones.

Former Level 2 hairdressing student Rhea and current Level 1 student Laura both work in the Port Tennant salon where – as well as the busy day job – they have been arranging fundraising events to benefit a local child who has an undiagnosed condition known as 'Charlotte's Syndrome.'

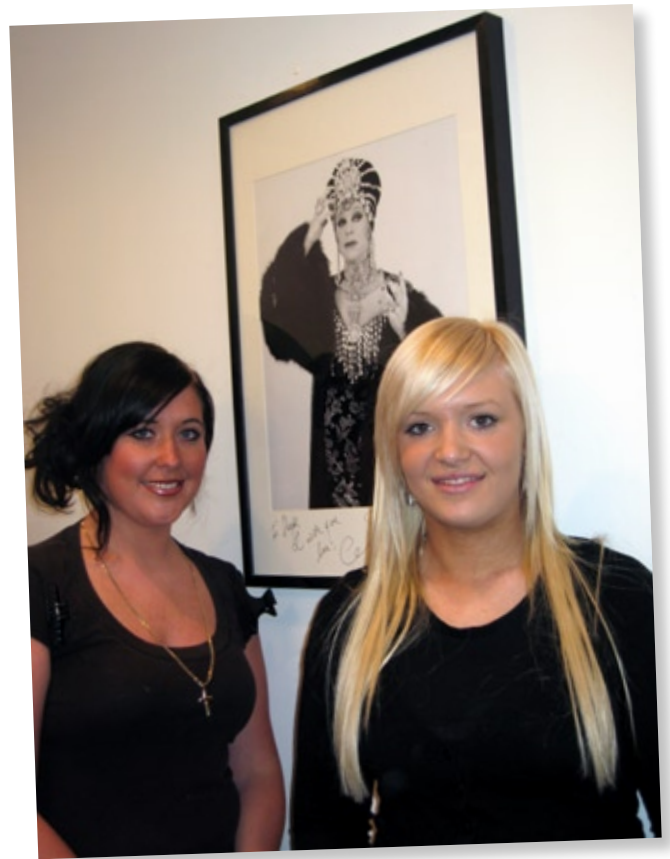
The kind-hearted students wanted to raise money to help the young girl and her family with their care expenses as well as paying for a special car seat and educational toys.

The local community has pulled together and a considerable sum was raised at a recent event. The popular entertainer Ceri Dupree – who has connections with the salon - performed and the students had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to style his wigs.

"I am proud to be part of such events as it's a worthy cause," says Laura.

"I live in Port Tennant and the fundraising is so important to help this little girl have a good quality of life," adds Rhea.

Both Laura and Rhea have received excellent support from Mary, who has provided them with many opportunities to expand their learning experience.



Student feedback - Focus Groups

In 2008 WBL mentors completed focus groups with a selection of apprentices from every occupational route. The focus groups aimed to identify their views on the strengths and weaknesses of the apprenticeship programme with a focus on recommendations for improvement.

Here is a selection of comments made by the apprentices and the actions we intend to take in response.

- **Majority of learners said they did not use the Student Services area of the college.**

Work Based Learning team to inform all apprentices of the location and facilities available from the Student Services department. This will happen mainly during inductions and through newsletters or emails.

- **Some learners said they had problems accessing Moodle and college emails from home due to password changes.**

Computer Services have now allowed learners to change their passwords from home to avoid this problem and all new passwords will be set to students' dates of birth.

- **Many learners said that they could not attend Diversity events as they were held on a different day to their college day release.**

Jane John, the college's Equality and Diversity Officer, varies the days of the events every year to allow as many people as possible to attend at least one of the events. Photographs of the events are then placed on Moodle for all learners to access.

- **Many learners would like more variety of food in vending machines.**

There is currently a large selection on main site which is rotated daily. However a suggestion box is to be posted to establish demand.

- **Students who do not attend Tychoch have said they would like the opportunity to visit the main site.**

At induction, learners are to be offered the opportunity to visit main site for a tour of its facilities [this also includes NHS Management learners.]

- **Some Hairdressing learners commented on the quality of some of their equipment.**

New straighteners have been purchased.

- **Engineering students said they would benefit from more field trips or team building events.**

Management will review the frequency of such events.

Welcome to the world of a...

Welding Apprentice

Meilyr is a mature welding apprentice who works with Teddington Engineered Services as a TIG [Tungsten Inert Gas] welder. Teddington is a busy company that produces and distributes fabricated steel work across the world. Meilyr mainly produces steel parts for diesel engines but also produces parts for power stations and even US military submarines.

On leaving school Meilyr completed a PGCE course and qualified as a teacher. He aimed to go into teaching Design and Technology in schools but could not find a placement so decided to get a job within the Engineering industry. He worked as a machine worker for ten years when a welding post was advertised in the company. Meilyr applied for the job along with many other machine workers and he was successful in the interview. Meilyr has now been a welder in Teddington for three years.

Teddington has been a supportive company and it was they who recommended Meilyr come to Swansea College to gain additional qualifications in welding. Teddington already had another apprentice studying in Swansea College so the course came recommended over other colleges.

Welding is sometimes thought of as a dirty job but Meilyr needs to keep his work area clean and tidy. He is required to wear flameproof clothing and a mask to reduce risk of burning and gas inhalation. The area has extension fans to get rid of gases produced by the metal which could be hazardous if inhaled.

Meilyr initially found it hard to come back to college as a mature student but

was put at ease when he realised there were other mature students in the Engineering department. The class all get on well and they are now in the third year of their apprenticeship.

"The course has been helpful in teaching me the different disciplines of welding," he says. "As I predominantly work with one area of welding the course has made me more confident in taking on the other areas."

Meilyr won the Swansea College Apprentice of the Year award in 2008 after being nominated by his assessor and lecturers who thought his dedication to the job and the apprenticeship should be recognised. He got a bit of 'stick' from the boys in his class but was really proud of his achievement.

Meilyr is in the final year of his apprenticeship and is happy to continue working in his current job role. He is taking on additional training in work to become more specialised in working on smaller, thinner and more delicate steel work. Meilyr says the college course has played a vital role in increasing his theoretical knowledge of the principles involved with all areas of welding work.



Six reasons why you should turn your house green!

- To protect yourself from fuel cost increases
- To change to a system that is economical to run
- To reduce your carbon footprint
- To boost your energy rating and increase the value of your property
- To use more renewable fuel and reduce use of fossil fuels [non-renewable fuel]
- Green technology prices are falling

Some examples of green/sustainable energy are solar hot water, heat pumps, under floor heating and wood/pellet burning boilers.

Sustainability is an issue that has been embedded into all our courses and NVQs and is also one of the department's cross cutting themes.

If you are interested in having sustainable energy resources in your home, please contact paul.newport@totalelectrical.co.uk for more information and advice.