

Construction Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE)

Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2009



Acton Campus

Welcome

I would like to say how much I am looking forward to working with you in my new role as Director of Skills & Training to ensure that our students are provided with everything they need to succeed.

Sir Terry Leahy, Chief Executive of TESCO said recently that "today's students are tomorrow's team".

His comment underpins an ethos that we as a college work towards every day. We continue to invest in both training and facilities for our students so that they are 'fit for purpose' and ready to support UK Plc.

We produce first class craftsmen and women across a range of construction-related disciplines and their success clearly demonstrates not only their talents, but also the commitment of staff and support of their employers.

Finally, we are excited to announce the opening of our new Vocational Centre at our Southall campus. The

Centre will provide the local community and businesses with state-of-the-art facilities and first class teaching and training in Construction and Engineering, Hospitality & Catering and Motor Vehicle.

Thank you for your continued and much valued support and I look forward to working with you over the coming academic year.



Sheila Fraser-Whyte
Director Skills & Training



Dates for your Diary

Employer Forums

19th November 2009

24th March 2010

Plasterers' Award Ceremony

For the sixth year in a row the Plastering Department were delighted to hear they have been successful in 'The Plasterers' Training Awards of 2009'. The College have received notification of winning the London & Home Counties Regional Certificate for overall achievement.

The College are invited to attend the ceremony, taking place at the prestigious Plasterers' Hall in the City of London on the 29th October. The award will be presented by the Lord Mayor of London, Alderman Ian Luder; the event will also be attended by Sheriff Peter Cook.

Employer Forum

The Employer Forum will be held on 19th November, from 5 to 6.30pm at our Acton Campus of the College. The purpose of the Construction Employer Forum is to:

- Improve formal links between the College and construction employers
- Receive and act upon employer feedback
- Contribute to the strategic long term planning of construction curriculum
- Provide an information exchange for workforce development
- Explore opportunities for future partnerships
- Provide businesses with an opportunity to contribute to the local community

The Forum is an excellent networking opportunity to meet with other employers and stakeholders and learn about the College and the services we offer. Refreshments will be available upon arrival and a buffet will be served on the evening's conclusion.

We hope you can join us on this valuable and informative evening. To attend please contact Martin Robbins on 020 8231 6538 or email martin.robbins@wlc.ac.uk

Joe Brennan of Notting Hill Housing Trust Completes Term as Chairman

The College wishes to thank Joe Brennan, who completed his voluntary term as Chairman of the Employer Forum in March. Despite his term ending, recognising a replacement had not been found, Joe stood in for a further term for which we are grateful.

Joe commented "The forum is very enjoyable, with informal settings and interesting presentations. I had the opportunity to meet with likeminded people".

Notting Hill Housing Trust have been partners with the College for over ten years. Many of the Trust's CTI Apprentices attend the College for their training

and we hope the long standing relations may continue and grow.

We recognised the importance of employers and partners being actively involved within the forum and the post of Chairman has always been open for that purpose.

We are currently looking for someone to take up the challenge. If you would like to discuss this opportunity and are interested in helping shape the forum for the future, please contact Martin Robbins or Theseus Joseph (contact details on back page).

Construction Extended to Southall Campus

From September the College have extended the Construction Department to the Southall Campus, in Beaconsfield Road.

Courses in carpentry & joinery, plumbing and electrical installation are now being held, additional to those traditionally held at the Acton Campus. Nearly £4million were spent to provide purpose built premises and facilities.

The new programme manager for Southall is Geoff Horwood, who can be contacted on telephone number 020 8231 6178, for further information.

Construction Celebration of Achievement Awards 2009

The Construction Department of the College were proud to celebrate the success of many students from the last academic year at a ceremony on the 24th September, held at the Acton Campus.

Robbie Beecher the Apprenticeship Manager from ConstructionSkills commented on how important it was to recognise and reward achievement and what a pleasure it was to be involved in the awards.

Presentations were made by our newly appointed Director for Skills and Training: Sheila Fraser-Whyte.

The College awarded learners from Brickwork, Carpentry & Joinery both site and bench, Electrical Installation, Plastering, Plumbing and Wall & Floor Tiling.

This event was made possible by the generous sponsorship of employers and partners of the College: Action Acton, Balfour Beatty Construction, Brian Hyde Ltd, ConstructionSkills, GallifordTry Construction Ltd, Haymills Trust, Henkel UniBond, Lafarge Plasterboard Ltd, Mears Ltd, Notting Hill Housing Trust, Raphael, Rollins & Sons (London) Ltd and SummitSkills.

This is an annual event organised by the department, in which we encourage interest from our employers and partners. If you would like to be involved in next years awards, please contact Martin Robbins (contact details on back page).



Sheila Fraser-Whyte presenting the ConstructionSkills Award for the 'Most Outstanding Construction Student' to Sean Crossan an Advanced Carpentry & Joinery Apprentice with Raphael.

Mums To Be Win Plumbing Awards



Sara Fernandez-Wheeler (left) and Carolyne Charles (right)

Two expectant mums were amongst those who were recognised at the Construction Celebration of Achievement Awards.

Sara Fernandez-Wheeler received the 'SummitSkills Plumbing Award' and Carolyne Charles the 'Mears Plumbing Award'.

Sara Fernandez-Wheeler (26) from Brentford and Carolyne Charles (37) from Harrow both recently completed the Level 3 Plumbing Technical Certificate and fell pregnant whilst following the course at the College's Acton campus. They received awards for their commitment and effort on the course.

Speaking at the event, Carolyne who is expecting her baby any time now said "I used to teach IT but my husband is a carpenter and we decided to enhance our business by adding plumbing skills to our offer to customers. Studying with our male counterparts was fun once they realised we were serious about qualifying it became really competitive, we beat them in the end though and finished our coursework first! Once I've had the baby I'm hoping to return to the business".

Commenting further, classmate Sara who is seven and a half months pregnant said "I was never very academic but always liked working with my hands, I thought about becoming an electrician or a mechanic but settled on becoming a plumber. I think there is a real niche in the market for female plumbers and carpenters, both for religious reasons and particularly if you are a woman living alone and feel more comfortable employing a female to do jobs around your home".

"Studying with our male counterparts was fun once they realised we were serious about qualifying it became really competitive"

ESF Project Delivers Leadership and Management Skills in Construction



Jane MacIntyre & Sarah Hunt at Canary Wharf inspecting a work sample

'This National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) is recognised industry wide and has enabled successful learners to apply for membership to The Chartered Institute of Building'

A European Social Funded project run by Ealing, Hammersmith & West London College back in 2008 is beginning to bear the fruits of its labour.

The SO6 Leadership and Management project was designed to help London's Construction industry comply with new legislation regarding competent workers. Following research carried out by the Learning & Skills Council, it was decided that there was a shortage of Leadership and Management training and qualifications within the construction sector.

Through the project employers are able to access free training. The majority of SME supervisor's/ managers are from a craft background and have years of industrial experience. However, many lack elements of formal training required for today's current legislation.

With this in mind the NVQ Level 3 in Construction Site Supervision and the Level 4 in Construction Site Management was introduced as a quality bench mark.

These National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) are recognised industry wide and have enabled successful learners to apply for membership to The Chartered Institute of Building.

The project has also been an opportunity to address gender inequality within the Construction Industry. With under 5% of women working in construction a 50% female learner target was set to ensure women were given the opportunity to pursue supervision.

At the beginning of the project there was a national shortage of assessors. A dedicated assessment team was developed, with some team members trained from industry. Assessor training proved added value as two new assessors have been developed from the project.

One of those assessors, Darren Serne, qualified for his NVQ Level 4 through the project and is now employed as an assessor helping others.

Darren was working as a manager whilst training for the NVQ Level 4 but was made redundant. Now he is back in full-time employment as an NVQ assessor on the project and has commented: "Although I am an experienced manager I found the course and additional training very useful in helping enhance my skills as a manager. I was given the opportunity to complete my A1 assessor award with the College and felt the training received during the NVQ course was vital in helping me understand the management job role and assessment process".

Learners were divided into two categories those for assessment only and those with a training need. Training was delivered at two locations: the Acton campus and at a construction site based in Canary Wharf.

Training is based at the two locations to enable flexibility for learners, making it a truly Pan London project.

The training has been well attended and learners who completed the training course are currently being assessed and are

keen to give positive feedback.

Sarah Hunt painting and decorating supervisor commented; "I really enjoyed the training and have learnt a lot. It has given me confidence in my role as a supervisor and I am putting what I have learnt into practice on site".

Arivantha Sewnath who works as a quantity surveyor / manager for Dray Construction commented:

"I am benefiting at work from the theory delivered in the training sessions about construction site management and being able to put it into practical use".

To date the team has recruited 204 Learners from 70 employers within the London area. Of which over 60 have completed a Level 3 or 4 NVQ within the first year of the project.

One of the employers Mike Haire from the BDL Group has commented that it is assisting the company at tender stage having his supervisors and managers NVQ qualified and it has enabled CSCS card compliance on site.

The 235 target for learners is almost complete but a successful advert placed in the London Metro targeting women has lead to another sixty learner enquiry's who will start training and assessment this October. The project is to due end in July 2010.

There is still a chance to join the programme. Any employers interested in this project should call 020 7565 1382.

"Mike Haire from the BDL Group has commented that it is assisting the company at tender stage having his supervisors and managers NVQ qualified and it also enables CSCS card compliance on site"

Sarah Hunt with fellow student Silva Sonseca-Silva



National SkillBuild Final

The 2009 SkillBuild Final was held at South Lanarkshire College, East Kilbride from 7th to 9th October and the College was proud to have two entries among the finalists.

Regional heats have been hosted around the British Isles over the past six months to determine the most skilled and talented crafts people from a range of trades. In May the College hosted one such event covering London and from that our apprentices proved their worth.

Michael McNally our Plastering Apprentice, who works for Simplicity Mouldings, entered the Regional heats last year but didn't qualify; this didn't dampen his enthusiasm! Michael was placed first in the Regional Competition in May and was of a high enough standard to be entered as a National Finalist.

Michael wasn't placed in the first three of the National Final, but plans

to qualify and return in 2010. Michael says that the competition was a great experience and the tasks were very demanding; that he enjoyed the challenge and is looking forward to next year!

Martin Bird is a carpentry Apprentice working for GallifordTry who entered the Joinery category, having come first in the London Regional competition.

Martin commented that it was an excellent experience, which he enjoyed, having benefitted from the extra training and support of his lecturer: Noel Hall. Although Martin wasn't placed in the first three of the competition, SkillBuild have recommended him to UKSkills. Martin will have the opportunity to compete, to represent the UK at WorldSkills.



Martin Bird with Noel Hall.

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Michael McNally, with Robert Shand of Simplicity Mouldings (left) and John Delaney, Lecturer (right).