



UK Team triumphs at EuroSkills Lisbon 2010

by Harry Smith

THE 20-STRONG team that represented the UK at the pan-European skills competition, EuroSkills, held in Portugal, from 9 – 11 December have returned home with an impressive 19 medals. The medals were won in skills ranging from Landscape Gardening and Hairdressing to CAD and Mobile Robotics.

The UK Team included some members of Squad UK for WorldSkills London 2011 and two members of the WorldSkills, UK Alumni. Linzi Weare (Team UK 2009) and Keith Chapman (Team UK 2007) competed as part of their continuous professional development and to give them an opportunity to test themselves yet again in a competitive environment.

Linzi represented the UK in Hairdressing, completing a total of six tests over three days; including colouring, cutting, perming and dressing long hair into a bridal look.

As well as taking Gold in her skills competition Linzi also won 'the best' of the 'best of nations' award. This is an award given by ESPO, the competition organising committee, to one of the best of nation winners; recognising not only their high score but also their inspirational attitude. Her success follows on from her recent gold medal at the Hairdressing World Championships in Paris.

Keith won two gold medals at the event, one in the Landscape Gardening Multi Skill Competition and the other in the Landscape Gardening Design Competition. Keith was also presented with the Best in Europe Award for achieving the highest score of all 463 competitors in the whole EuroSkills Competition.

Congratulations to both Linzi and Keith!



UK Skills New Year message

I WOULD LIKE to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy New Year and to thank you once again for your continued support of our work.

In what proved to be a difficult operating climate for all last year, UK Skills was able to continue to champion high standards of training across the UK. This was demonstrated most recently at EuroSkills in Lisbon, where our skilled UK team stormed home with a total of 19

Medals, including eight golds. Huge congratulations to the team, their training managers and team leaders and to everybody else involved. We also rounded off the year with our annual awards evening for the National Training Awards UK Winners, whose stories provide object lessons in how training can positively impact on an organisation's bottom line.

As we start the New Year there is a huge amount to be excited about. Next month

will see the responsibilities of UK Skills transfer to the Skills Funding Agency, a move which will allow us to embed competitions and awards firmly into the mainstream education and training landscape and use them to drive up the quality and profile of vocational skills. I am confident that this will provide greater opportunities for learners, providers and employers to aspire for excellence in training across the board.

Indeed the move into the Skills Funding Agency will be of great importance as WorldSkills London 2011 rapidly approaches. With less than nine months to go, the event will shine a spotlight on the skills agenda in the UK in a way that has never been seen before. It is vital that we use this opportunity, together with our joined up thinking, to push the agenda further

and demonstrate how skills and training are central to achieving economic growth.

Geoff Russell and his colleagues at the Skills Funding Agency will be in contact with you in the future to secure your support for skills competitions and awards and securing the legacy of WorldSkills in the shape of higher profile, greater appreciation and increased value of vocational skills. I will continue to support this agenda, remaining the UK's official Delegate to WorldSkills and in my forthcoming role as President Elect of WorldSkills International.

Thank you again for your support.

Simon Bartley
CEO UK Skills and WorldSkills London 2011

**2011
Alumni Event**

COMING SOON...

5-8 OCTOBER

**WorldSkills
London 2011**

2011

Alumni recognised at WorldSkills UK Competition Awards, 2010



Pictured from left to right Simon Bartley (Chief Executive UK Skills), Peter Mitchell (Interim CEO Edge), Natalie Stanyer (Team UK 2007) & Brian Turner (Chef UK Skills Board Member)

by Emma Ward

Natalie Stanyer (Team UK 2007) and Keith Chapman (Team UK 2007) were presented with a WorldSkills, UK Alumni Award, in recognition of their ongoing achievements and their continued commitment to the promotion of vocational skills and learning. The Awards, sponsored by Edge, are open to all past members of Team UK who have competed at the international skills competition WorldSkills and were presented at the 2010 WorldSkills UK Competition Awards on the 4 November.

Natalie, who competed at WorldSkills Shizuoka 2007 in Floristry won the Award for Outstanding Achievement, in recognition of her entrepreneurial success. Since competing, Natalie has taken over the running of the florist business in which she started working in as a Saturday shop assistant aged 15. Under Natalie's ownership the business has gone from

strength to strength and she has also found time to mentor apprentices who are taking part in national and international floristry skills competitions.

Keith, who manages his own company 'Keith Chapman Landscapes', won the Award for Most Valuable Contribution to Skills and Practical Learning. Since representing the UK at WorldSkills Shizuoka 2007 in Landscape Gardening, Keith has continued to devote time to training and mentoring apprentices who are taking part in national and international landscape gardening skills competitions; including this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show in which a team of UK Skills gardeners including Keith, were awarded a RHS Silver Gilt for building a spectacular show garden.

Nominations for the 2011 Alumni Awards will be open in summer 2011. Watch this space, it could be you this year!

Campaigning WorldSkills

by Harry Smith

IT HAS BEEN over two years since an international group of past WorldSkills champions gathered in the beautiful city of Vienna to discuss the future of WorldSkills. In October 2010 a fresh faced team of 29 Champions from 12 countries/regions covering 13 skills areas gathered in Kingston, Jamaica to discuss how to promote the WorldSkills mission.

The Youth Forum's four day programme began with a visit from the WorldSkills Board of Directors. Tjerk Dusseldorp, President of WorldSkills International, gave a speech on the WorldSkills 2020 Vision to set the scene for the next few days. Work then began on the programme focus 'Campaigning WorldSkills', which involved designing a viral video based campaign to help reach new audiences and supporters.

The Champions worked tirelessly in their groups to define a target audience, create a look and feel for the campaign, generate a word bank, come up with a tagline and draw a storyboard for the campaign video. The final

hours of the programme were spent filming and editing the videos in preparation for the presentation to the WorldSkills General Assembly which was running parallel to the Youth Forum.

The atmosphere was electric as the presenters took to the stage the following day led by the hosts our very own UK Alumni members, Katie Watson (Team UK 2009) and Sam Fairgrieve (Team UK 2009). For the next 40 minutes the presenters took the General Assembly delegates on a journey through their own WorldSkills experience and the resulting campaign this unique experience helped the group to develop.

The presentation was delivered by the nine strong team without a hitch and was followed by a standing ovation from the General Assembly. The Final Report and hundreds of photos are available at www.worldskillsyouthforum.com where a video of the presentation to the General Assembly can also be found.



Introducing Steve & Steph

STEVE and Steph are WorldSkills personalities born out of one of the campaigns created at the Youth Forum last year.

They will help spread the word about WorldSkills far and wide by visiting meetings, events and competitions around the world virtually

and reporting back on their Facebook pages and the WorldSkills Blog.

Everyone involved at any level with WorldSkills, past and present should engage with Steve and Steph and help spread the word out into schools, colleges and workplaces by becoming

friends with them on Facebook or following their blog entries. To become friends with Steve and Steph visit www.facebook.com/steph.skills and www.facebook.com/steve.skills or read the WorldSkills international blog at <http://blog.worldskills.org/>

WorldSkills, UK Alumni Event 2010

by Harry Smith

ON THE 22 October 2010 the WorldSkills, UK Alumni met at the Chancellors Hotel & Conference Centre, just a stone's throw away from the hustle and bustle of Manchester city centre. This year's event programme was packed full of updates for the Alumni and opportunities for them to shape its future.

Simon Bartley, Chief Executive of UK Skills, kicked off the proceedings with an update on UK Skills and its current developments. Simon was followed by a WorldSkills London 2011 double act, Ross Maloney, Operations Director and Julia Bowditch, Head of Volunteering. Ross updated everyone on the exciting progress made so far on the competition itself and Julia explained the exciting ways in which Alumni members can be involved in the event through volunteering.

Lunch was an opportunity for everyone to catch up with old team mates and the wider



Alumni network. It was felt sharing that 'once in a life time' experience with like minded individuals was a highlight for everyone.

UK Skills staff were also on hand to capture these tales and update the ever growing collection of Alumni case studies.

Business Link joined us in the afternoon to talk about the services they offer including sourcing specific training for businesses and

how to access finance and grants for training. It wasn't all talk though as two training workshops followed, 'Inspirational Leadership' and 'Starting a business: Is it for me?'.

The event closed with round table discussions on the direction the WorldSkills, UK Alumni should take in the future. The ideas and feedback offered during the discussions is now directly influencing the exciting programme of events being planned for this year!

Each year UK Skills will host specific events for Alumni members to re-connect and share their experiences. Some events will have a particular theme/discussion whilst others may be more general 'reunion' type events to bring people together. You will be sent an invitation for these events at least once a year. We hope to have the next Alumni event in Summer 2011 and would like to hear your views on the type of event you would like to attend. If you'd like to feed your ideas in, please contact harry.smith@ukskills.org.uk

Catching up with the WorldSkills family

by Vikki Challen

FOR EVERY WorldSkills competitor there's an army of people who have supported them. Not just the Training Managers and employers, but also their friends and family who have watched and cheered on their progress every step of the way. We wanted to find out more about their stories and caught up with Lee Blowers wife Ellie to find out more about her story.

Lee Blower (Team UK 1997) won a Gold medal in Bricklaying in the 1997 WorldSkills Competition held in Switzerland. After competing at WorldSkills, Lee set up his own privately owned and hugely successful bricklaying company LG Blower which employs over 30 people. The company has a large portfolio of work including new build, bespoke builds, garden walls and decorative brickwork. When we interviewed Lee recently he said he couldn't have achieved all that he has without his wife Ellie who plays a key role in the family business.

Ellie was a barmaid at Lee's local pub and knew of Lee

through friends, she had also seen lots of press coverage on his WorldSkills experience. "Shrewsbury is a small town and Lee was regularly featured in all the local papers because of WorldSkills, so everyone knew who he was" she comments. They eventually got together and have both worked extremely hard ever since to establish their business. Ellie found herself working day and night and because they are self-employed there really has been no such thing as a 'day off'. "When we go on holiday the phone is always on as we have to be available for both our clients and staff" she says.

Ellie had no previous experience of running a business and had to learn it all from scratch. "Lee works on site with the lads and I run the office, so I do everything from dealing with the accounts through to sorting out advertising and managing clients."

As well as running the office side of the business, Ellie has also been instrumental in driving forward significant changes which both she and Lee believe has helped secure



Wedgewood museum medallion - Constructed by Lee Blower at the Wedgewood Museum, Stoke 2007, working with Gwen Heeney, Sculptress.

them work. One of the first things she did was change the image of Lee and his employees. "I wouldn't like it if someone turned up to do a job for me looking scruffy so I made all the staff, including Lee, wear smarter clothes branded with the name of the business. I thought that if they looked professional, it would make people have confidence in them to do a professional job" she says.

Ellie was clearly right as the business continued to grow. In fact it became so big that they moved the office out of their house to the local town of Battlefield. This was an

absolute necessity as by then Ellie and Lee had a growing family. "We felt that there had to be a differentiation between work and home and so setting up new offices away from the home was crucial."

Despite having three children Mae 7, Kyle 6 and Rhys who is just 6 months old, Ellie continues to work extremely hard in the family firm and has recently developed the company's new website, which she believes has already pulled in work. Ellie clearly plays a crucial role in the business and has also developed a keen eye for excellent brickwork.

"Whenever I drive anywhere I can't help but look at the quality of the brickwork, especially with new build houses" she confesses.

For more information on L.G Blower visit www.lgblower.co.uk

We have set up an 'Alumni Group' on Facebook which we would encourage you to join to re-connect with your former teammates. If you already have a Facebook account you can do this by searching for the WorldSkills, UK Alumni group and 'request to join'. Please help us to encourage as many of your former teammates to join!

A woman in a man's world

by Vikki Challen

Melanie Adlam (Team UK 2009) was always interested in the practical side of physics and maths at school. She knew she didn't want to go straight to university after completing her A-Levels and applied to the 'Year in Industry' scheme. She secured a place doing engineering at MBDA, a world leading missile systems company, and really enjoyed the work. Melanie went on to do several summer placements with them before securing a place on their graduate training scheme once she had finished university.

So what is it like being a woman in a world which traditionally employs men? "I'm one of 7 female engineers in a department of 100. Most of the time I don't think about it. The only time I really notice it, is on social occasions when I suddenly realise I am out with lots of middle age men!" she says.

Whilst there are still very few female engineers, it seems that things are improving. "It's easier to get a job as a female engineer now and

there is more of a sense of equality. Employers recognise that women want to go into engineering and they actively encourage it. MBDA, for example run lots of initiatives to get more women into the industry, including going out to talk to girls schools through the SETPOINT initiative" she says.

'The only time I really notice it, is on social occasions when I suddenly realise I am out with lots of middle age men!'

Melanie herself is keen to encourage other young women to consider a career in engineering. "You shouldn't be put off by the traditional male image. If you are interested in this area, then pursue it and we can grow the number of women in engineering for the better she comments.

So what does the future hold for Melanie? "I'm on the MBDA graduate training scheme so I change jobs every 6 months. This scheme will give me a really well-rounded experience and I am keen to use the skills I develop to move upwards within the company."

For more information on MBDA visit

www.mbdacareers.co.uk

For more information on SETPOINT visit

www.setpointherts.co.uk

We'd like to receive your latest news about developments in your career and life to date. If you've recently got married, got a new job, been given an award or have some other news you'd like to share, please contact harry.smith@ukskills.org.uk



Melanie competed in Electronics at the 2009 WorldSkills Competition in Calgary where she was awarded a Medallion of Excellence.



Martin competed in Electrical Installation at the 1991 WorldSkills Competition held in Amsterdam. He was awarded a Bronze medal.

Focus on Martin Grech and NG Bailey

by Vikki Challen

Martin Grech (Team UK 1991) started his apprenticeship with NG Bailey, one of the UK's leading independent building services firms, when he was just 16 years old and is a huge advocate of the company. "NG Bailey is a fantastic family owned business with a true commitment to developing and training their employees. I can honestly say that I have never looked back since day one" he says.

It was a traditional four year craft apprenticeship which for the first two years saw Martin working between training in NG Bailey's purpose built engineering academy, attending the local college to do his City & Guilds qualifications and gaining practical experience on site. At the end of the four year period he undertook his final exam and was then graded as a professional electrician.

Martin believes that

NG Bailey's training and development opportunities are among the very best. "They invest millions in technical training and management development and have their own state of the art training academies" he says.

Following a couple of years gaining experience as an electrician Martin quickly became a supervisor, which was the first step in his career development. He has steadily worked his way up ever since. Along the way Martin has spent time in engineering and project management roles, which eventually led to his appointment as Operations Director managing the St Helens & Whiston Hospital project in Liverpool - a contract worth in excess of £100 million to the business.

Martin currently works as NG Bailey's Business Development Director and is studying once again, only

this time it's for an MBA at Cranfield Business School. "NG Bailey has been hugely supportive of my professional development. Not only are they investing in my MBA, they are also allowing me time off for study. They really are committed to training and development and I can think of no better firm to work for" says Martin.

For more information on NG Bailey visit www.ngbailey.com

There are many opportunities to share your experiences as a past competitor, and in doing so, inspire others to improve their skills. Examples of this may be talking to the media, speaking at a UK Skills or sector event, or providing case studies to promote practical vocational education and learning. Professional media and presentation training can be made available for all Alumni members who would like to sign up to be part of the engagement aspect of the programme.



Ian Whitaker at the WorldSkills, UK Alumni 2010 Event

From Competitor to Trainer

by Vikki Challen

THE WorldSkills Competition is a special experience for all competitors. Many tell us that they would like to continue their links with the competition by training future WorldSkills teams. Ian Whitaker is one such example. He competed in Restaurant Service in 1991 and became a UK Training Manager in 2004. In the 12 year gap Ian kept himself exceptionally busy. He started his career in London working for some well known names including Leiths, the Mayor of London and the Royal Household. In 2001 he went to Scotland where he initially managed the opening of the catering operation for CairnGorm Mountain's Funicular Railway. From there he became Commercial Director responsible for their income driven activities including ski-hire, catering and retail. In 2008, Ian was appointed Chief Executive and now manages a team of around 150 people.

This breadth and depth of experience makes Ian a

perfect Training Manager and we asked him to give us the low down on what the job involves: "Potential WorldSkills competitors are identified by UK Skills mainly from national competitions. The Training Manager has to review their skills against the standards of a WorldSkills Competition and make recommendations to UK Skills about who should go forward. Once the Squad has been selected you need to conduct a new skills audit to determine your competitors' strengths and weaknesses. From there you can organise the training you think they need to get them to the WorldSkills standard. This is crucial as although you deliver some training sessions yourself, a lot of the time you are facilitating the training of the competitor and that is where industry contacts are invaluable. I couldn't do the Training Manager role if I didn't have those contacts."

Relationship management is another key skill of a

successful Training Manager: "Competitors are often pulled out of the workplace or college to attend training sessions. This can be very disruptive and it's crucial that you build a strong relationship with their employers and learning providers to allay any concerns they may have. It is also incredibly important that you build a connection with your competitors. They are put under an immense amount of pressure and need to feel they can approach you with any problems. This is especially true once the Competition finishes. No matter what the outcome, win or lose you need to support them" Ian says.

Once at the WorldSkills Competition, Training Managers become WorldSkills Experts and everything changes. "You have just spent a year training and supporting your competitor and then suddenly you have to completely disconnect from them and keep your distance" Ian says. This can be extremely challenging; however, as

Ian says, there is one way in which Training Managers can help their competitor at the WorldSkills Competition "Each competition changes its content by 30% and like every training manager I try to negotiate changes which will play to my competitors strengths". The final step is the judging and marking. "You have to know what you are doing. I have a lot of experience of judging and assessment, and regularly judge at competitions outside of WorldSkills to ensure my skills are up to date" Ian says.

So given all of this does Ian enjoy being a Training Manager? "I wouldn't do it if I didn't. There are times when it can be incredibly hard, but it is also amazing to help develop the skills of a young person. I do it for the competitors and am incredibly proud of each and every one of them" he says.

For more information on CairnGorm Mountain visit www.cairngormmountain.co.uk

How do I get involved in training future WorldSkills teams?

Training Managers need to have substantial teaching, learning and assessment experience as well as significant work experience within their industry area. Given this, Alumni need to be at least 5 years out from competing to become a WorldSkills Training Manager and at least 8 years out from competing to become a WorldSkills expert.

Those candidates who match this profile would initially be invited to become Apprentice trainers, teaching small modules of learning. Feedback and guidance would be provided by the current training manager to ensure continuous professional development. Should Apprentice Training Managers meet the requirements set out by UK Skills, they would be invited to apply for a Training Manager position as vacancies occur, alongside other suitable candidates who have also excelled within their skill area.

Younger Alumni may have opportunities to act as role models and may progress earlier to become Apprentice Trainers.

For more information or an informal discussion please contact Jenny Shackleton, Head of Skills Development, 020 7429 2837 or email jenny.shackleton@ukskills.org.uk

Squad UK: an update

by Jenny Shackleton

SINCE THE END of last October Squad UK has been growing in its size and range. From an initial 71 squad members in early November we are now approaching 90, with the final number likely to be no more than 94. This compares with a high point of 63 squad members for WorldSkills Calgary 2009. So Squad UK for 2011 will be almost 50% larger than for 2009.

This increase also reflects the number of skills in play. For WorldSkills Calgary 2009 Squad UK covered 29 skills, with 25 skills ultimately represented at the WorldSkills Competition, following team selection. For WorldSkills London 2011 we are currently running with 38 skills, in order to have scope to take forward the 35 most promising skills following team selection.

Given this, the heat is on the skills and squad members to build their performance and secure their places at WorldSkills London next October. By mid January plans will have been signed off for the all-important squad training phase. There is absolutely no guarantee that any squad member will keep their place until team selection in June 2011. Milestones and targets are being set for every squad member, and recurrent reviews will determine who stays in the squad and who needs to step down early.

With the expectations and investment riding on Team UK in 2011 the pressure is greater than ever before. This is really tough on both the Squad and the training network, and we are more impressed and grateful than we can say



Colleen Campbell, Squad UK 2011, Aircraft Maintenance

that so many are prepared to join us on this journey. Our heartfelt thanks to all.

Some of you, our alumni, may be an active part of this training network, and will be experiencing the squad training process at close quarters. You will know about the greater demands from our training managers/WorldSkills experts and you

will understand that in the current financial climate strict economy is paramount across all our available resources. This means that we simply cannot afford to accept many of the generous offers of help that we receive, because they naturally come with an additional financial cost, however small. We ask you to understand that over the

coming year we shall accept as many offers as are appropriate and affordable in the current climate, but inevitably this will disappoint some of you.

Please be assured that our appreciation of you remains as strong as ever!

Please visit www.worldskillsquaduk.org to view the latest version of the Squad UK brochure.

WorldSkills UK Competition Awards a great success

by Katie Bracher

ON THURSDAY 4 November, the annual WorldSkills UK Competitions Awards Ceremony was held at BFI IMAX in London marking the close of last year's cycle. The event was well attended by Gold medal winners and guests and proved a great success.

The Ceremony included a performance by Marina Kelman, the winner of this year's Performing Arts: Musical Theatre competition, a showcase of some of the medal-winning nail art entries, and refreshments provided in the form of macaroons by the students of Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College. The Awards Ceremony finished with the presentation of the 2010 Alumni Awards.

The 2010/2011 WorldSkills UK competition cycle is now open and many students and learners have already registered to take part in a competition. Building on the success of last year, here is some of what we have planned for 2011....



Pilot Schools and Colleges programme

As attitudes towards learning and work become entrenched at a young age, UK Skills recognises that there needs to be better promotion of vocational training at an early stage in education. The Schools and Colleges programme seeks to enhance the value of skills competitions by embedding them into

pre-vocational teaching and learning.

The pilot is a means of inspiring and engaging young learners by providing new opportunities, and recognising and celebrating their achievements. In addition, it harnesses each learner's natural desire to achieve by encouraging them to explore their potential future vocations and to take

opportunities to challenge themselves by participating in WorldSkills UK competitions.

Over the next 7 months we shall be working with Lewisham College, Hackney Community College, North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, Barnfield College and Rathbone to design a series of projects for learners at Key Stage 4.

WorldSkills UK Information Sessions

In February 2011 the National Competitions team will be running information sessions about WorldSkills UK at colleges around the country. This follows on from the success of last year's pilot programme.

These sessions are intended to help increase awareness of skills competitions in organisations that currently have a low level of engagement with national competitions, hopefully increasing participation in WorldSkills UK. The activities at each session will be designed in collaboration with the host colleges and may include activities such as a Q&A Session with WorldSkills, UK Alumni members, information stands, and seminars on how to run internal college selection competitions.

To date, ten colleges from Manchester to Hackney have volunteered to host information sessions.

For more information, or to get involved in the Information Sessions, please contact Andy.Hall@ukskills.org.uk

WorldSkills Crew 2011 needs you!



Two of the first WorldSkills London 2011 volunteers Katie Blake and Morium Hkanoum with Theo Paphitis

by Julia Bowditch

WORLD SKILLS, UK Alumni members have a unique skill-set – including a deep understanding of international skills competitions and the stresses and strains of competing. This makes them an invaluable resource for 'Crew 2011', the WorldSkills London 2011 volunteer programme.

WorldSkills London 2011 needs to recruit around 2,500 volunteers to help make the event a success. From greeting competitors on arrival at the airport to escorting special guests around the event to helping to manage the media, it will be volunteers who make it happen. As a member of Crew 2011 you can expect to make new friends, develop skills and play an important role at the centre of the world's biggest and best skills competition.

The role

The WorldSkills London 2011 team has set aside two key Crew 2011 roles for Alumni members, as Tour Guides and Special Guest Liaison Officers*.

As the face of the Special Guest Programme you will be greeting Special Guests from across the Skills and Education sector, offering a personal insight into competitions and providing guided tours around the competitions. Volunteering as part of Crew 2011 you'll be working in a pressurised environment but you'll gain experience working directly with Ministers, International Ambassadors, CEOs and a host of important dignitaries – inspiring them to spread the word about the value of skills and competitions.

Special incentives

Alumni members who sign up for Crew 2011 can also access a special package of travel and accommodation incentives (not open to other volunteers) which comprises: four nights hotel accommodation, travel costs to and from London (up to £100), a travel card for use around London and a ticket to either the Opening or Closing Ceremony.

The Young Mayor of Newham, Ali Mohamed, has given his support to Crew 2011. He said: "Young people have so much to offer and volunteering is a great way to give back to the community and develop skills at the same time."

"Like my predecessor Kaycee de Belen, who successfully lobbied for under-18 volunteering positions at the 2012 Olympic Games,

I'm always supportive of initiatives that enable young people to be positive role models. This programme is an opportunity to do just that."

'Please think about volunteering for this particular event. This will be inspirational and educational'

Dragon's Den star
Theo Paphitis

Dragon's Den star Theo Paphitis also threw his weight behind the project when he met two of the first volunteers (pictured) who have signed up to work at the prestigious event: "Please think about volunteering for this particular event. This will be inspirational and educational. And I promise you, everyone will also have a great time!"

To register your interest in any of these roles please contact our Head of Volunteering Julia Bowditch on email volunteer@worldskillslondon2011.com or call 020 7429 2861.

If you aren't able to volunteer, you can still help by publicising the Volunteer Programme in your organisation by downloading and displaying one of our volunteering posters featuring 'Apprentice' Lee McQueen.

*If you would prefer an alternative role there will be other opportunities across the whole programme.

The future of vocational learning

by Andi Neophytou

Plans to set-up University Technical Colleges (UTCs) all over the country have been gaining momentum these past months. Proposals have been made for an innovative, exciting curriculum, for smart, modern buildings and for the creation of strong links with local enterprise and existing further education facilities. Encouragingly, these have been taking up increasing numbers of column inches and played an important role informing the turbulent debates about our future education system. With twelve colleges supported by the government, to be built over the next 5 years, there is a great future in the pipeline for UTCs and vocational education as a whole.

Brainchild of the Baker Dearing Trust set up by Lord Baker and the late Ron Dearing, UTCs will provide a



University Technical Colleges

new, pioneering solution to the ever present 'academic' and 'vocational' conflict in current teaching technique. As a means for 14 – 19 year olds to study traditional, core academic subjects whilst specialising in two or three vocational areas such as engineering or construction,

the colleges will offer a bridge between these two educational paths.

In addition to offering an innovative rounded, adaptable curriculum to students, UTCs will also work in partnership with local universities and employers to ensure they create a future

workforce to be reckoned with. By liaising closely with local institutions UTCs will function with the needs of the community and local economy firmly in mind.

Industry supporters of UTCs will be varied, with some coming from FTSE 100 companies – such as the JCB

Academy in Staffordshire, for example. There is high demand too from universities, with Aston University set to back the next UTC opening in autumn 2011 and further interest from universities in East Anglia, London and Cranford.

At a recent UTC conference, the proposed curriculum framework was introduced to much interest from journalists and educationalists alike. Next steps now are to cement the place of UTCs in their local areas, and continue to spread the word amongst the key players, the students themselves. The future for UTCs is looking bright, with increasing support amongst politicians, teachers and students for a way that celebrates the many paths to success that young people can choose.

To find out more please visit www.utcolleges.org

A new dawn for the hospitality industry

by Andi Neophytou

The hospitality trade will soon benefit from a new initiative that will see the industry revolutionised. The Edge Hotel School, launched to the hospitality industry at the Ritz this autumn, will be the first working hotel run and staffed by students. It will provide both quality practical and vocational learning for students whilst also functioning as a commercially sustainable hotel providing a quality experience for guests. The unique concept will provide high levels of training and education in a world class facility, with training becoming fully integrated with day-to-day hospitality, putting in place a production line for home-grown talent.

The Edge Hotel School will offer students the opportunity to become future leaders of hospitality by working in a fully functioning hotel and learning from industry experts whilst gaining a degree level qualification. The Edge Hotel School will be four star in terms of facilities



Artist's impression of The Edge Hotel School at the historic Wivenhoe House, in Colchester, Essex.

and will open in Spring 2012 in a Grade II listed building. The historic Wivenhoe House, in Colchester, Essex will be restored to its Georgian and Victorian splendour through a

£10 million investment.

The hotel school is a partnership between the Edge Foundation, an independent education foundation dedicated to

raising the stature of practical and vocational learning and the principal funder, the University of Essex and its academic partner Colchester Institute.

To find out more information or details on how to apply www.edgehotelschool.ac.uk

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