

# MY VIRTUAL COLLEGE

# VIRTUAL APPRENTICESHIP OPEN EVENING

DONNA KENNY

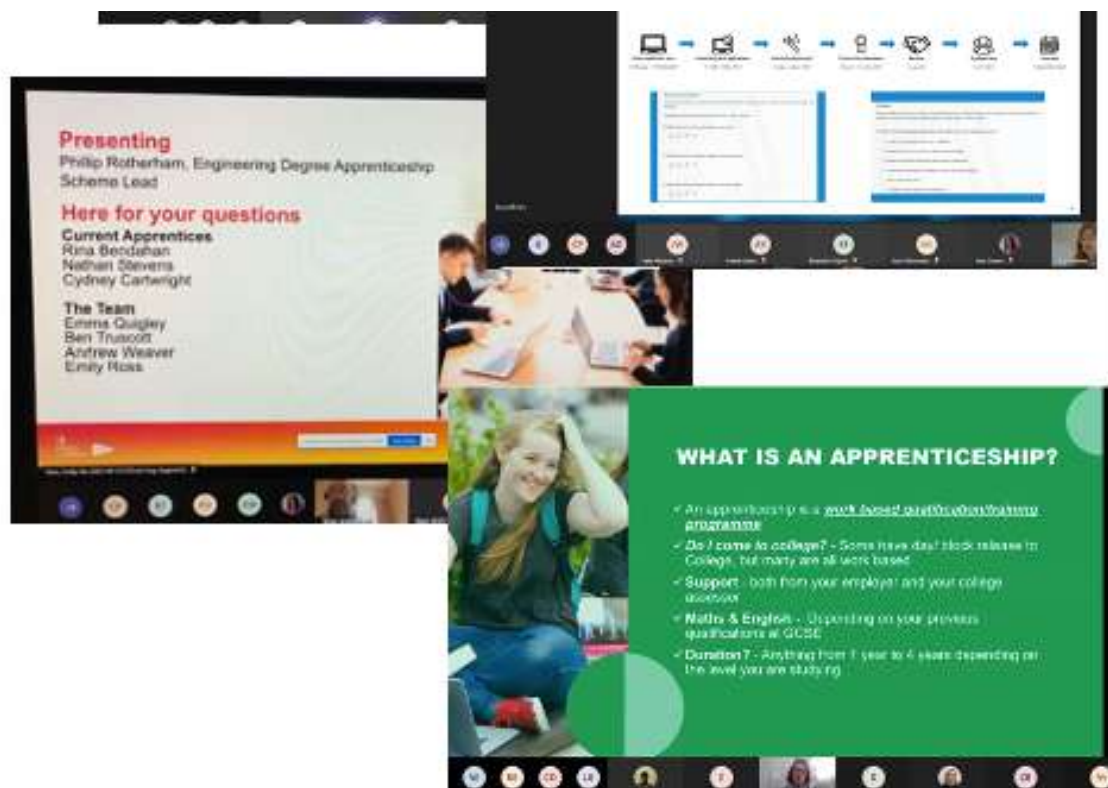
**The Apprenticeship Recruitment Team hosted our first Virtual Open Evening, this as always was held as part of National Apprenticeship Week.**

The evening was attended by 10 different employers across varying sectors, including Engineering, Healthcare, Sports, Childcare, Customer Service/Business, Digital and Construction. At ticket close the whole evening generated 238 registrations across the different sessions. Which also included 'Discovering Apprenticeships' and 'Discovering Traineeships'.

Attendance on the evening was great and despite not being able to see people in person the 'event buzz' was still there with some great interaction from those that attended.

We are always looking at ways to evaluate and improve what we do, so we made sure to ask those that attended for feedback.

These events are not possible without cross college collaboration and with a real team ethos which was demonstrated by all those involved, by the bucket load! From Marketing, Traineeships, Business Growth and our own Future Talent Apprentices. Whilst not forgetting the support from our amazing employers who showcased throughout the evening just how great apprenticeships are but also how we work in partnership with them to support them on their apprenticeship journey!



# THANK YOU FROM GLOUCESTERSHIRE NHS

## DAVE CREW

A 'thank you' email received from Gloucestershire NHS Trust for our ongoing support during the pandemic, and for collaborating during National Apprenticeship Week.

A special mention for Genette Henry in the Health & Social Care team, as Theresa Strange and I have received outstanding feedback regarding Genette in our contract meetings. Her understanding and support of learners, who have themselves been working in challenging conditions (mental health settings), has been fantastic.

Genette is an asset to the team and despite Covid, Gloucestershire NHS are enrolling a group of Healthcare Support Level 3 (Mental Health) Apprentices in March. Thank you Genette, and also Theresa Strange for providing support to this employer.

### Feedback

"We would like to take the time to say a huge thank you for all your hard work and effort towards supporting the Gloucestershire Health and Care Apprentices and the Apprenticeship and Widening Access Team.

We really appreciate the extra steps you have taken to continue to deliver quality training and adapt to the changes Covid 19 has thrown at us.

Please feel free to pass on this message of thanks to any of your colleagues who are a part of delivering your apprenticeship programme to Gloucestershire Health and Care Trust."

# LEARNERS CONTINUE TO SHOWCASE THEIR WORK ON THE NATIONAL STAGE

## JENNA RATCLIFFE

Amelia from Level 3 hairdressing has been shortlisted for 'concept learner of the month' her entry is 'D'.

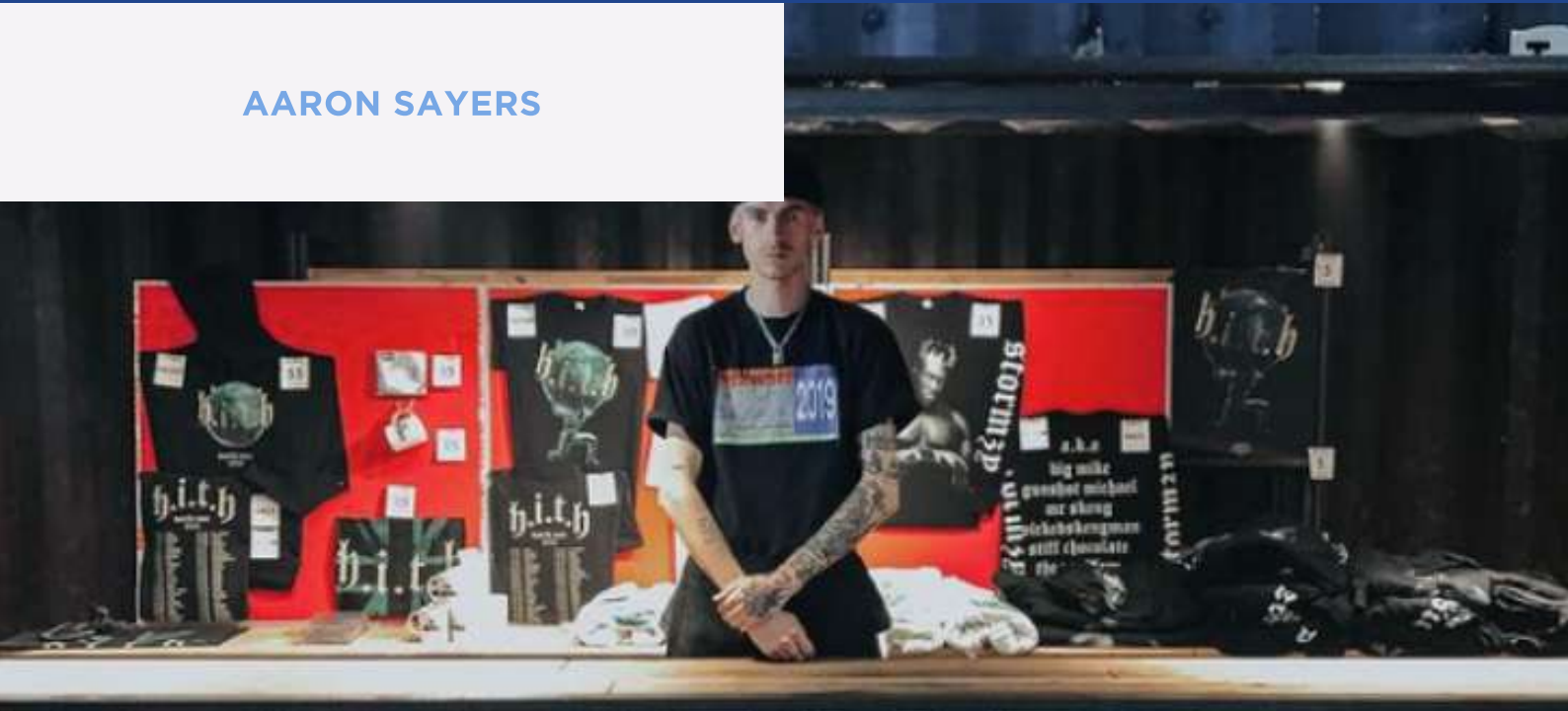
Please show your support!

<https://www.facebook.com/214966469232015/posts/851888975539758/?d=n>



# FE MUSIC INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

AARON SAYERS



## Live music industry professionals dial into Teams meetings for FE Q&A sessions

Second year Level 3 music students studying UAL Music Performance and Production at Weston College had the pleasure of meeting and discussing “everything industry” with seasoned music industry touring professionals. Across the three weeks organised by music lecturer Aaron Sayers, Weston College students had the chance to grill Jack Payne - Touring merchandise manager for artists including Stormzy and Why Don't We, Harrisen Larner-Main - Singer/Songwriter, Ex Weston College student and contestant of The Voice UK and Lewis Left - Tour manager and sound engineer for Kelvin Jones and The Hoosiers (Track21 Touring Limited).

“With current national lockdowns and remote learning in place, it's hard for our students currently to get hands on experience and benefit from industry visits” says organiser Aaron Sayers.

And with 99% of all live shows being cancelled worldwide, now seemed like a good opportunity to reach out to some usually extremely busy industry colleagues and see if they wouldn't mind imparting some of their knowledge and experiences.

Each session began with a little background information on the guests and a chance for learners to conduct additional research into the speakers and their specific roles within the industry. The guests then joined the remote Microsoft Teams meetings for questions and discussions.

It was great for our learners to have the opportunity to chat with professionals from different corners of the industry. Having a mixed cohort of performers and production students I wanted to ensure that learners no matter what their individual focus or direction could take something valuable away from the sessions.

Each of the guests discussed their personal pathways into industry, and some of the key factors that helped develop their careers. Particular learners found discussions around higher education really useful, and how the connections made whilst studying provided that all important bridge into working in the industry.

# FEATURE IN INSIDER MAGAZINE

DAVE CREW

# insider

MEDIA LIMITED

This article will be featured online and in the next edition of Insider Magazine across the South West.



**David Crew**

Head of Business Growth & Employer Partnership,  
Weston College



## BUSINESS MATTERS: DRIVING SKILLS IN THE WEST OF ENGLAND

© 16 Feb 2021 | South West

David Crew, head of business growth & employer partnership at Weston College, says over the last twelve months we've all faced challenging situations; trying to ensure that our businesses are ready for the changing landscape, and ensuring we're ready for the future. At Weston College, we're increasing our support for West of England business.

From launching an Institute of Technology, creating new fast-track online management courses, providing digital skills programmes alongside our bespoke approach to apprenticeships, and supporting the mental health of the regional workforce, we've stepped up our support for businesses during the pandemic.

Recruitment is a hot topic as employers are considering the workforce they need this year and beyond. An option that you may not have considered is apprenticeships, which allow you to recruit fresh talent; who bring new skills and ideas to the table. If you're nervous about committing to an apprenticeship, then we can work with you to offer a free traineeship programme. There hasn't been a better time to go down this route, with the Government offering up to £3,000 per apprentice.

Training isn't a one-size-fits-all approach, and to ensure that we meet the needs of employers across the region, we have just launched our brand new Skills Surgeries; 40 minute appointments designed to help you navigate the options available and quickly get to expert advice.

We are here for you. Reach out and get in touch: [employers@weston.ac.uk](mailto:employers@weston.ac.uk)





# UPDATE FROM THE TRAINEESHIP FACULTY

## ANDREW LEY

First of all I would like to say well done to the whole ESF team (Ben, Katie, Nigel & Sophie) during lockdown 3.0, this has been a trying time for all of us and so far we have tackled everything that has been thrown at us with dedication, determination and steadfast resolve. We continue to help all our learners from 16 – 65 years of age who are either not in education, training or employment, whether they are looking for Education, Employment, Traineeship or Apprenticeship, we help our learners with their CV, employability skills, job searching, interviews techniques, communication, presentation, short & long term goals whilst mapping out their future progression steps.

Below there are a few case studies from our Job Coaches which showcase the learner journey and some recent progression stories: -

### Case study 1

Since lockdown myself and JP have gone over his CV and amended where necessary. JP has also applied for 2 or more apprenticeships in his local area and then has since decided he would like to start Traineeships so he was then referred onto the Traineeship programme. With this in mind I completed 2nd stage with him and also discussed Traineeships together and what will be expected of him whilst on the programme. How apprenticeships work and what will be expected of him whilst doing an apprenticeship was also discussed. JP has been looking into the sector he wants to go into so he can get a rough idea of what it will be like and what will be expected of him when he gains employment. I also discussed with JP that welfare is still open at the college if he wishes to access this.

### Case study 2

During the latest lockdown, BC and I have continued to work together on getting him into university as this was his desired outcome from his time on NEET. It's been a transition from face-to-face meetings and having the luxury to look at the same content together to finding a system that worked to make our reviews the most productive, they could be virtually. Since lockdown started, I supported him in applying for the open university to do a maths and statistics degree which included writing a personal statement and amending his CV . We also researched more into what it's like to attend university online to address some of his concerns and queries regarding this- I also shared some of my experiences from doing my last term online to give him a first-hand account of what it's like. He has since been accepted to start his online degree in late February and we will be exiting him later this week.

### Case study 3

I have been working with JL who after a serious car accident cannot return to her previous occupation as a hairdresser. JL states that she has no idea which career pathway to follow. We have conducted a Skills Audit to help JL identify her transferrable skills. We have conducted a Careers Guidance Interview to help generate career ideas for JL to consider and research. We have also conducted Personality Profiling and Careers Profiling to help generate career pathways for JL to consider and research. Of the many career ideas generated for JL she has settled on two namely: Housing Officer and Estate Agent. As part of her research I arranged for JL to speak with a local Housing Officer to help her get an insight to the day to day workings of what it is they do. On our last appointment we reviewed this, based on the information she received she has now discounted pursuing Housing Officer as a career. Another appointment was arranged for JL to speak with a local Estate Agent. In our next appointment we will discuss how this conversation has helped to inform her about the day to day work of an Estate Agent and measure if this is a career she would like to pursue and identify which transitional steps she needs to take to fulfil this career aim.

# BRISTOL LIFE BUSINESS SURGERY

Bristol Life

## BUSINESS SURGERY

#BristolTogether @BristolLifeMag

DAVE CREW

Learning and Partnering: Monday 22 February, 12pm

In conjunction with:



**Dr Paul and I were interviewed this week by the CEO of Bristol Life Magazine as part of their 'Business Surgery' events series.**

**[A copy of the recording is here](#)**

We explored how the College had responded to the pandemic, created My Virtual College, and continued to drive forward growth plans including apprenticeships, student placement projects, bespoke training with employers, and the West of England Institute of Technology.

We closed the session talking about what makes an effective partnership between an employer and training provider, and the important of creating and delivering a clear vision together.

# LEVEL 1 SNAKES AND LIZARDS LESSON

## MAXINE PARK

**Level 1 Animal Care students have been studying taxonomy and classification and this week we pooled the resources of our own pets to have an amazing collaborative lesson on Order Squamata – snakes and lizards.**

As reptiles are not good at performing on request, we prepared throughout the week before and shared photos and videos to show types and sizes of snakes and lizards, environmental requirements, the process of shedding, how snakes use muscle to take in water and open their jaws to eat animals much bigger than their heads!

Those without reptiles prepared for the lesson by drawing anatomical diagrams of reptiles to teach others. I am very proud of this group, they enjoy homework and love to learn.





# PERFORMING ARTS SYMPOSIUM

SYLVIA LANE



## Our Performing Arts Symposium titled:

**'Out of every crisis grows an opportunity - what is next for the world of Music and Performing Arts?' was a phenomenal success.**

The webinar featured a mix of West End and Broadway stars, TV and film personalities and high-profile casting directors from the UK and USA.

The response was excellent, with the majority of our FE and HE students in attendance plus a large outside audience mainly from feeder institutions, and quite a few from European countries and the USA, so we were reaching the international market as well.

The feedback from our audiences was amazing; young people commenting that they felt inspired and got a new positive outlook on their chosen career path. We also had some other employers reaching out to us to connect for future collaboration and opportunities.

Panellist Michelle Zeitlin, CEO of Morezap Productions and Management which is based in Los Angeles, will release a summary of the symposium as a podcast on major streaming platforms such as Spotify and iTunes. The podcast will also include references to our outstanding FE and HE courses in Creative Arts and hopefully provide a catalyst to take our reputation further.

We learnt that this is a very useful advertising tool as well as a fantastic opportunity for our learners to connect with industry, ask questions and support their goals for the future. This is certainly something we will repeat in the future.

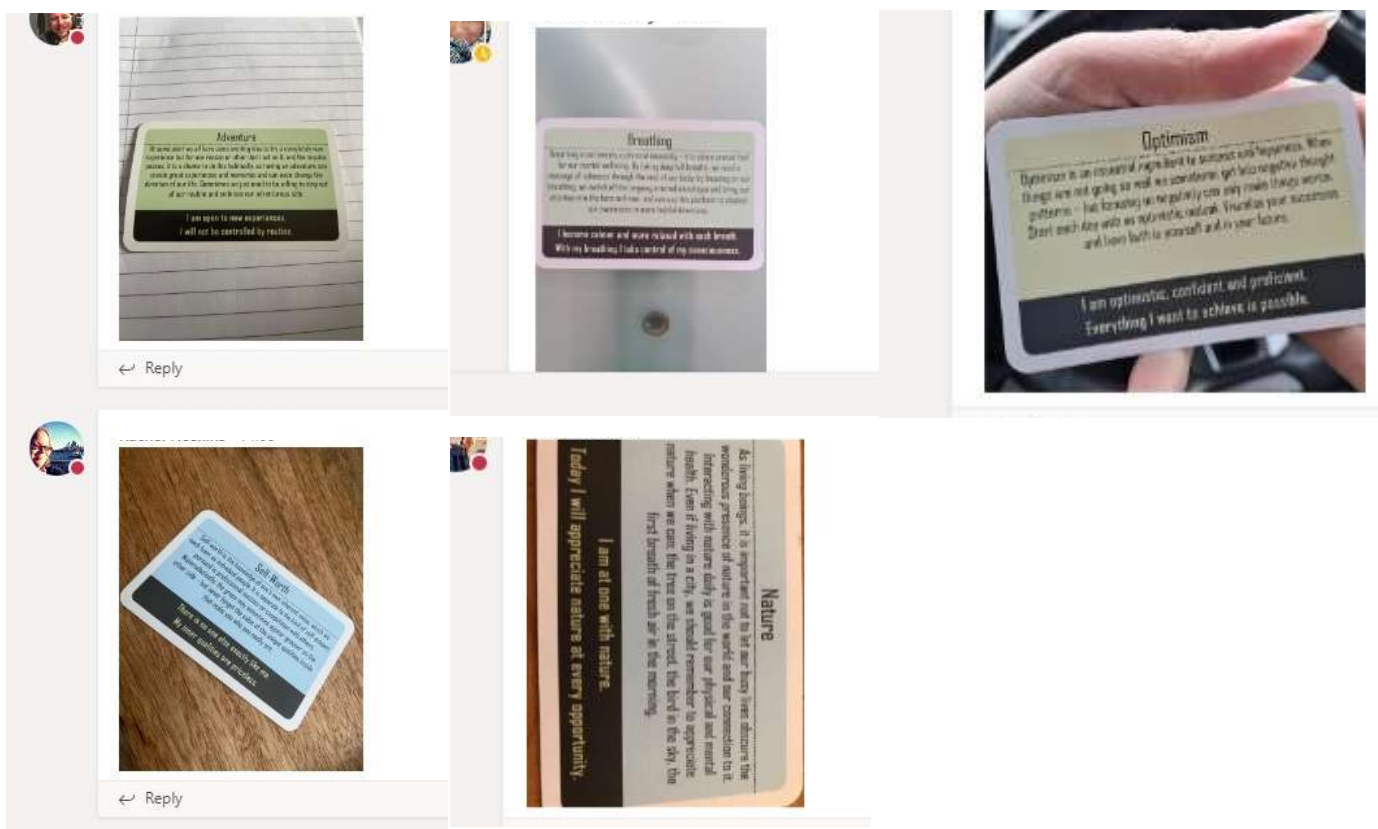
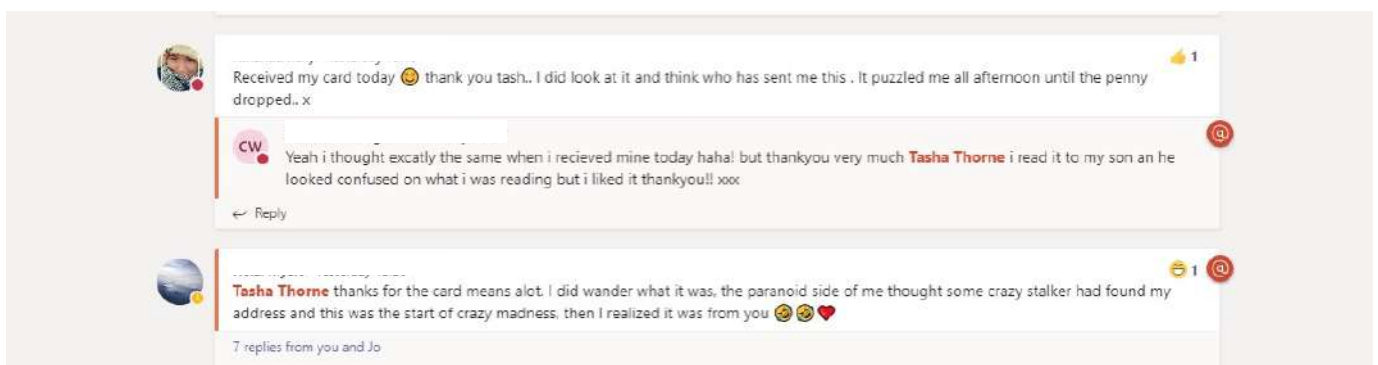
I would like to thank Jonathan Dibble, Lisa Fletcher and Chris Gill from marketing to help us set this up and make it the success it became!

# UPDATE FROM THE COUNSELLING DEPARTMENT

## TASHA THORNE

This half-term in the counselling department I sent all learners positive affirmation cards (chosen to fit with the individual), to remind them that we are still here for them and that we are proud of how well they are coping during this time.

The positive affirmation was designed to remind them how wonderful they all are and was received with such warmth.

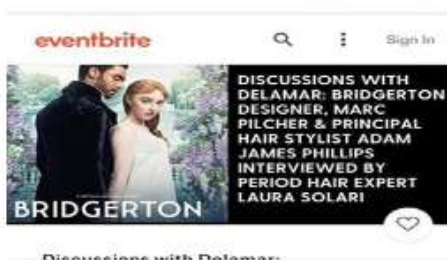


# HE HAIR, MAKEUP AND PROSTHETICS LATEST WORK

## SANDRA BULL

Both Sandy Day and Tara O'Hare from HMPP have gone totally above and beyond to ensure their UCW experience has not been affected by lockdown gaining more industry speakers, slo-mo demonstrations and sending out equipment to their homes so that they can continue study.

Of course, this practical area had concerns raised by students due to lack of access to studios but this week we have started the phased return of some of our practical areas so study can remain at a high level across the faculty.



From ageing by a specific number of years for film and TV purposes to making yourself the image of a Picture! It never ends in HMPP!



Ensuring online learning is as good as in the studio has meant a switch in delivery styles.

Students must do much on themselves creating some very new age, non-gender defined images!



Linking with industry experts and Delamar has helped our students see and hear first-hand how industry has responded to this global pandemic



# BACK TO PUXTON

## MAXINE PARK

**On the 24th February some of our level one learners returned to Puxton and we all had a fabulous time!**

We started the day with our duties, mucking out and feeding the rabbits, guinea pigs, zebus, donkeys, pigs, sheep and alpacas before theory lessons then this afternoon we were back out completing practical assessments on health checking rabbits.

We then found time to start handling and to complete socialisation training with some baby rabbits. We were all tired and smelly afterwards but it was wonderful to be back as you can see from the messages I have had tonight.

Elin B.  
Done the form. Thank you for a brilliant day xx

Glad you enjoyed it, I loved it!!

Holly F.  
thank you i must sit in with the rabbits again! xx

You can do it anytime Holly ☺

Elin B.  
It was amazing! I like it when we can go in it and do stuff !





# WESSEX INSPIRATION NETWORK

**BEN ANDERSON**



The Wessex Inspiration Network (WIN) have developed and launched a pilot virtual mentoring scheme with the University of Gloucestershire, Falmouth University and Bournemouth University for A-level learners at Weston College's Sixth Form.

The universities have provided 16 mentors who are current university students and are covering a range of A-Level subjects with learners and tutors. Mentors were interviewed at the end of 2020 by the Head of Faculty, Mark Hilton, and the WIN team, and all showed impressive enthusiasm and maturity.

Mentors begun a phased launch of mentoring sessions at the end of January, and the pilot has started well. There has been very positive engagement already, connecting learners to inspiring role models from Higher Education, passing on relevant skills and sharing ideas.

We have a lot of people to thank:

Mark Hilton for giving the opportunity and being so involved in the design of the programme. Eleanor Webber and the learning tech team for providing effective and safe ways for the mentors to meet with learners online through Microsoft Teams.

Fiona Walters and Nick Barret for organising and delivering safeguarding training for the mentors.

The A-level tutors for selecting the learners and encouraging their engagement. Also, for monitoring the TEAMS pages and supporting the mentors so well.

From the colleges perspective the project is going well. Here are the headlines:

62 learners have engaged in the program as of half term.

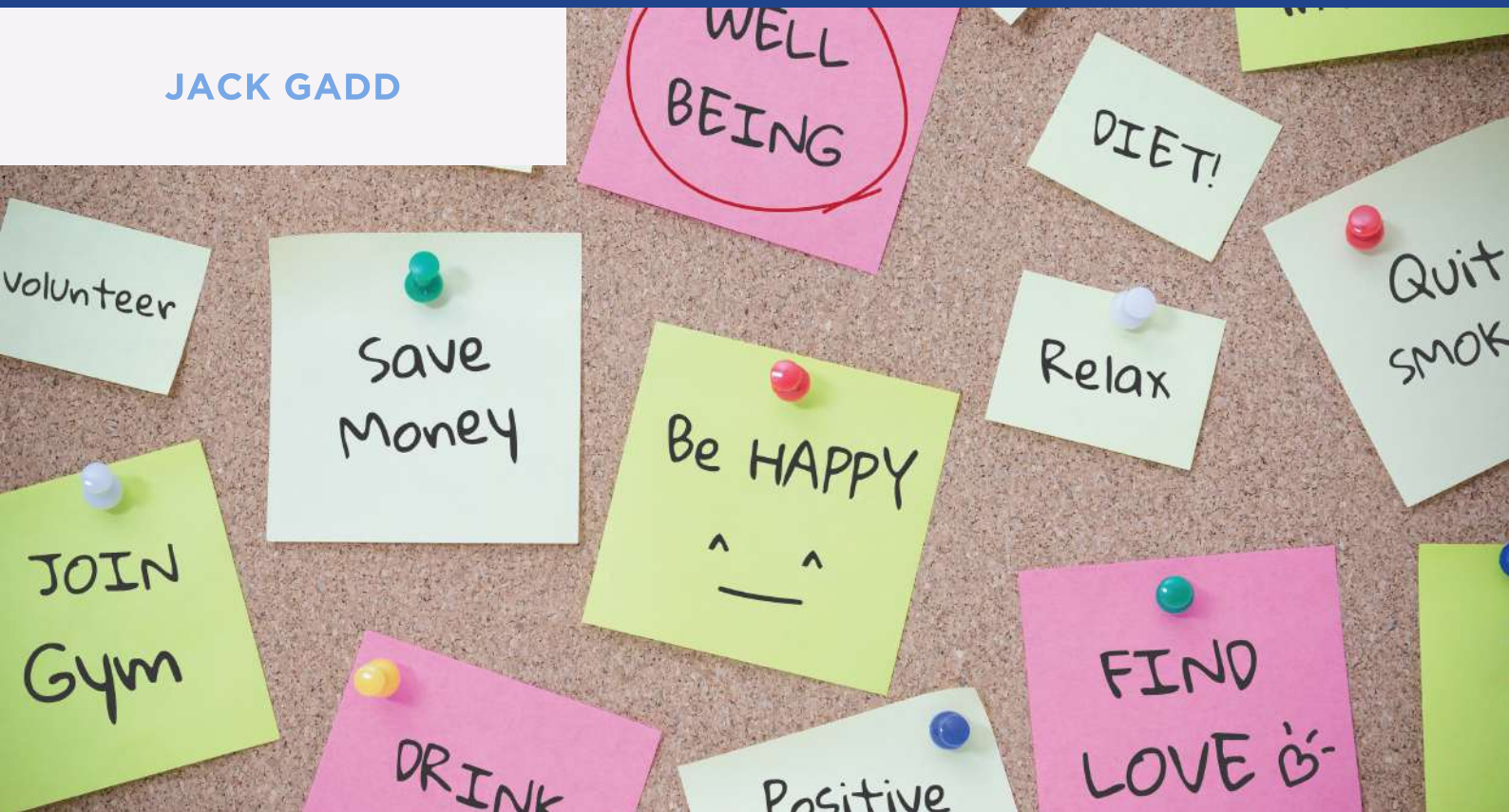
Over 82 sessions have taken place

With 60.5 hours of direct engagement



# STAFF WELLBEING

JACK GADD



Hope most of you enjoyed some time off over half term.

Please see below timetable for this week.

[Weston College Group - timetable.png - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Please fill in the Form if you wish to be added for these sessions.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=EgfhBifCK0qqQ-seKHrH93UTMzfRRFhBsOG3nwYiTo9UM0VYV041UUCzRzJVRk9DMIJaTkQxWEtKNi4u>

Please be aware that these sessions may slightly change from March onwards but, I will send out an update next week for this.

Please feel free to sign up if you haven't already and hope all staff who have signed up have found the sessions useful and engaging! We have had some great feedback and I look forward to seeing you in your sessions this week.

# CREATIVE ARTS SHOWCASE

## RACHAEL HEATH

### The Creative Arts Virtual Showcase is LIVE!

This Creative Arts showcase will provide a glimpse of the diverse creative minds, talents and skills of learners across all pathways and all levels (F.E & H.E). It builds on the Virtual Summer Show that went out last June and will no doubt be a regular fixture on the calendar from now on. With the uncertainty around when and how the usual 'live' performance and exhibition opportunities will be available again, this has been something for everyone to look forward to. It is a great platform from which our learners are able to exhibit, share, network and connect with an audience- it is also something for them to celebrate and take pride in.

The showcase presents a rare opportunity to take a 'sneaky peek' at what our students have been working on in-year. The quality of learners' work and performances are excellent! It is clear just how high the expectations and standards of teaching are at Weston College and UCW. It is also clear to see how hard the learners are passionately working towards creating their future; our learners' determination to overcome all of the significant challenges that they have faced in their education and life over the past year is astonishing. We are so proud of them and the resilience that they have shown.

I would like to commend the incredible staff and learners in the Creative Arts faculty. Bringing this together was a collaborative effort involving them all, but as ever, certainly would not have been possible without our amazing faculty technicians!

So, we are really pleased to invite you to see for yourself. If you have any comments or want to pass anything on to the learners please do email them to [CAD.Admin@weston.ac.uk](mailto:CAD.Admin@weston.ac.uk) and we will gladly pass this much-needed support on to our learners.



# LEVEL 2 ART AND DESIGN

CHRISSANDRA BOXLEY

**This week the Level 2 Art and Design learners have started their new project brief 'space and time'.**

The learners have already started to experiment with stop frame animation, attached is an example of what one learner has learnt and achieved in a few days.

Their Tutor Emma, and the learners have been so resourceful, I'm excited to see what they produce in the second week of their project.



# CV SKILLS WORKSHOP

## REED RECRUITMENT

**BEN MELHUISH**

On Thursday, Business learners had the opportunity to meet with Daniel Paul, Area Executive Manager for Reed Specialist Recruitment.

The three sessions provided learners with vital up-skilling for their documentation towards their Recruitment and Selection unit, but also provided them with substantial opportunity to reflect on their own documentation as they progress towards future employment.

The session provided them with a wealth of 'dos and don'ts' but more importantly gave them time to ask questions and gain support around what considerations they need to make to gain employment in a rapidly changing recruitment environment. A fantastic series of sessions which were well received by the learners!





# INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS

SARAH ROBERTS



## Two BTEC computing students had some great news before half-term

“You are receiving this email because you are a student on placement from Weston College.

We have been pleased with your work so far and how you have been managing your tasks.

Accrual Group Ltd is not obligated to pay you for your industrial placement, however, we believe in supporting each other especially in the unprecedented times we find ourselves. Hence, we have come up with a way to appreciate you and let you know that your contribution is valued. “

Doing a work placement brings lots of benefits but this is a well-deserved bonus for these students.

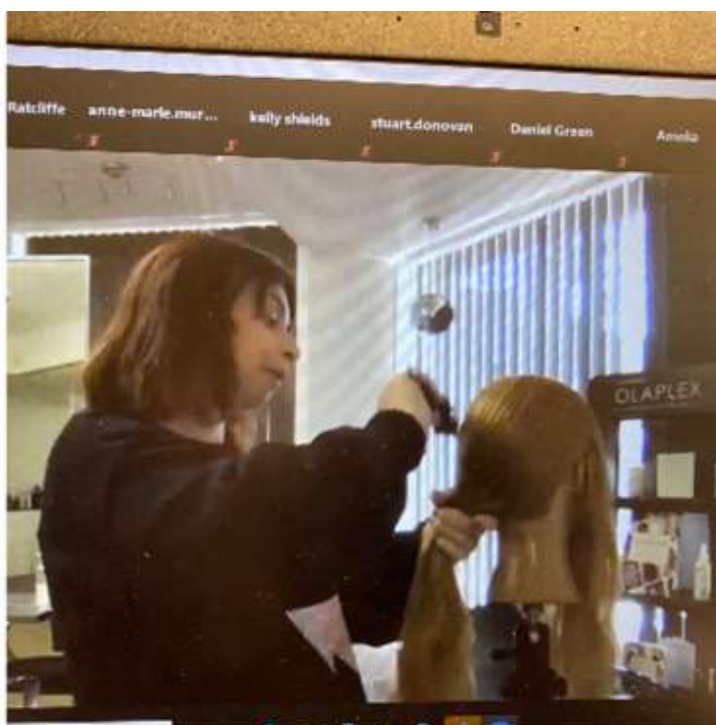
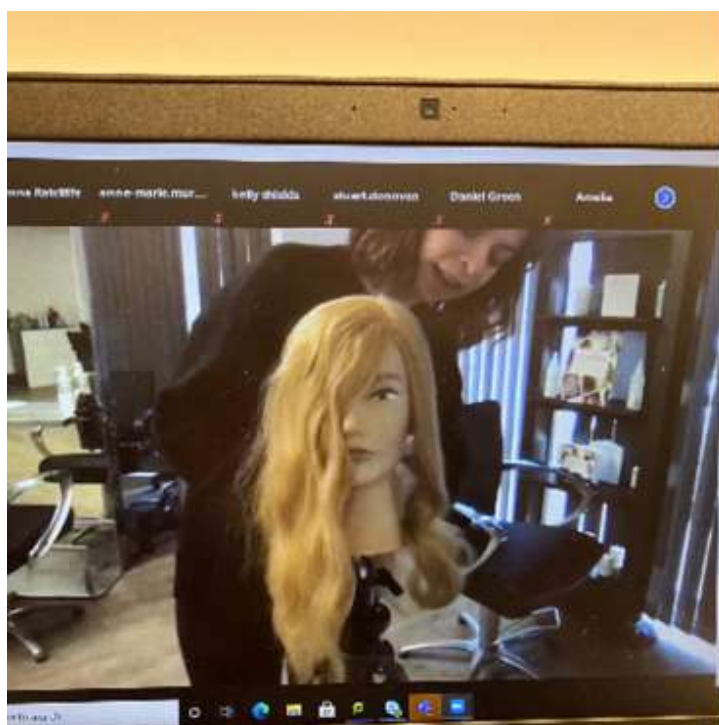


# WORLD SKILLS UK

JENNA RATCLIFFE

**Today our hairdressing and barbering competition squad had a technical masterclass from Linzi - Worldskills hairdressing manager and Squad UK lead via Zoom.**

Our competition squad used the opportunity to enhance their technical skill sets ready for upcoming Worldskills UK competitions.



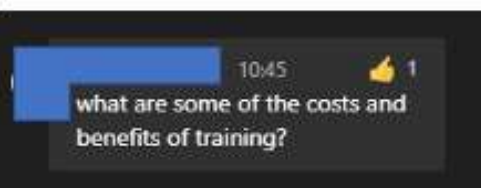
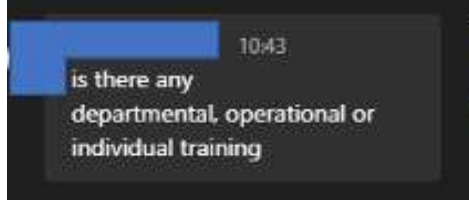
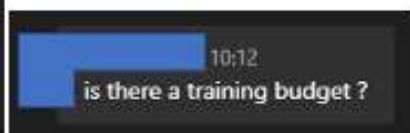
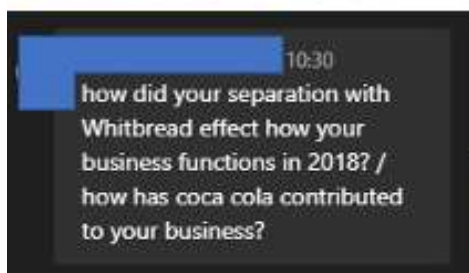
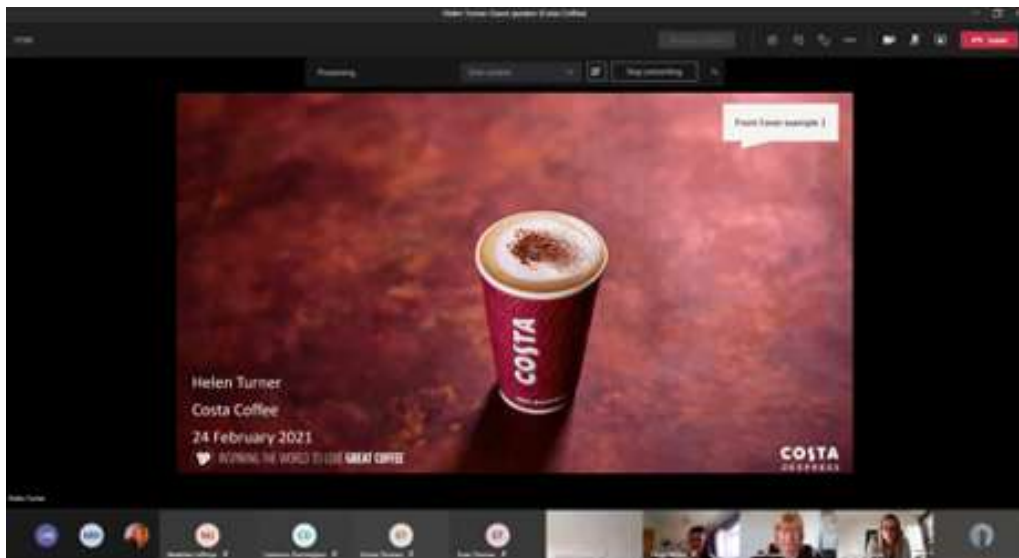
# GUEST LECTURE WITH HELEN TURNER

## EMMA HUSSEY

As part of learning around training in the workplace, business learners had a guest lecture from Helen Turner, Operational Training Manager for Costa Coffee.

Helen's session focused on strategies for effective workplace training which will provide the core focus for the learners upcoming assessment.

It also had a strong focus on her career and maximising progression opportunities in the workplace providing our learners with a real insight into how to go far in industry. Helen showed her own progression, showing learners that she too started off by studying a BTEC in Business! Some images below show the content of the session and the levels of curiosity it provoked in our learners.



# TEAMS UPDATE

ELEANOR WEBBER



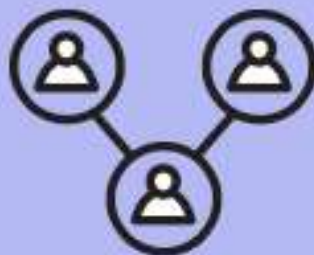
## FEBRUARY TEAMS ROUND UP

**414,995**

chat messages  
were sent

**11,483**

calls were  
scheduled



**17,875**

different meeting  
participants



**6,793**

active users

WESTON COLLEGE LEARNING TECHNOLOGY



# CHANGES FOR LIFE FUNDRAISING EVENT

JULIETTE WEAVER

Below are some slides from the fundraising event that happened on the 12th February

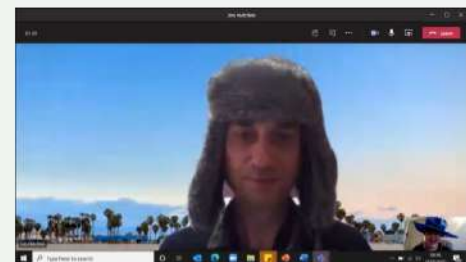


## Changes for Life

Fundraising Event (12<sup>th</sup> Feb.)

Juliette Weaver (*Tutor*)

Jon Hutchins (*LSA*)



### Chosen charity - Jasper's Journey

Here is a link to the charity, if you would like to learn about the story or make a donation... <https://justgiving.com/campaign/jaspersjourney>



#### Jasper's Journey

Help to support Jasper aged one from Swindon who has Lissencephaly. This means smooth brain and therefore he is globally developmentally delayed in all areas.

[justgiving.com](https://justgiving.com)

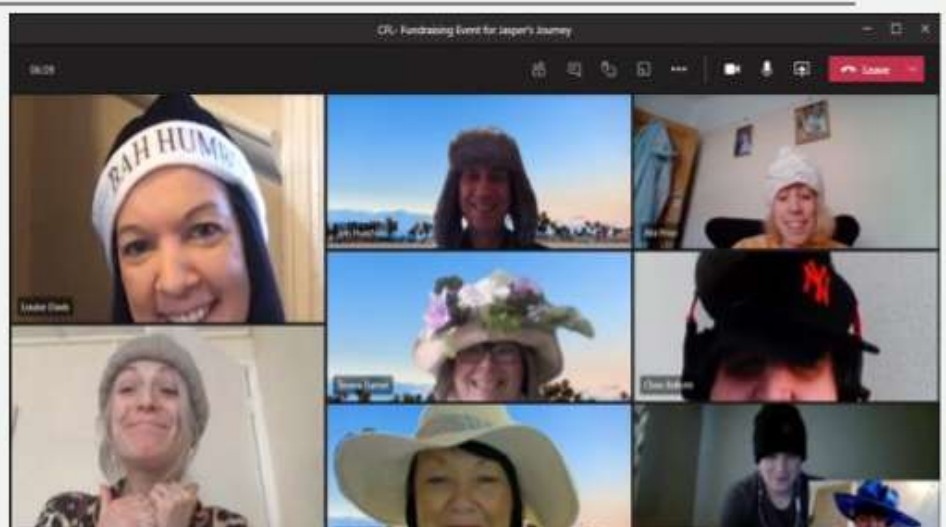
### Chosen Charity – Jasper's Journey

The Changes For Life group have been learning about their local community as one of their topics and have taken part in a charity event to help raise money for Jasper.

They decided on the charity between them.

Here's what they did....

The group decided to wear hats and do a quiz.



# SUCCESS STORIES

## HELEN GEORGE

I just wanted to pass on some great feedback from an employer regarding one of our business learners who has been continuing his Industry placement during the national lockdown.

"I'm blown away by Sam's ideas and expertise. He even checks on me that it's convenient to do our update calls! His work rate and willingness to commit to my expectations is spot on. He is already very employable to work in a team both from the perspective of his knowledge and skills but also his interpersonal skills, he's definitely got the balance right between rapport building and when to shift to a task related matter in conversation. As a result of enhancing my content, it's my hope that he'll absorb the modern day sales related messages and have the confidence to use them in his working life."

## LOUISE PERKINS

We have been working with EON PLC for the last couple of years via their future talent programme. To date 14 aspiring managers and leaders at EON have completed their management apprenticeships all passing with Distinction.

During last week's National Apprenticeship Week, three of our learners were recognised with nominations and 2 of them WON!

Darren won – Apprentice Ambassador of the Year  
Jake won – ACE Apprentice of the Year

This is a fantastic achievement and really demonstrates the outstanding teaching, learning and assessment we provide to all our learners and with a very challenging contract and customer too. Special thanks needs to go to their assessors – Greg Broadhurst and Hannah Dockrell for sticking with it and also a massive thank you and well done to our fabulous colleagues in the Faculty of Inclusive Practice and our Functional Skills Teams who worked tirelessly to ensure all learners completed not just their Operations Department Manager Standard (level 5) but all their functional skills and additional learning support.





# EVENTS



<https://www.weston.ac.uk/news-and-events/events>

**DON'T MISS UPCOMING EVENTS FOR EITHER YOURSELF  
OR YOUR STUDENTS.**

OR PLEASE SHARE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS WHO  
MAY BE INTERESTED IN STUDYING AT THE COLLEGE OR  
BECOMING A BUSINESS PARTNER.

01 FEB 2021  
31 MARCH 2021

A woman in a white sweater looking at a laptop screen.

SKILLS  
SURGERIES

2 MARCH 2021

A poster for #2021 CAREERS FEST with a large 'T' and 'EERS FAIR' text.

CAREERS FEST

06 MARCH 2021  
12 MARCH 2021

A smiling woman holding a stack of books.

UCW  
VIRTUAL OPEN  
WEEK

23 FEB 2021  
05 MARCH 2021

A green arrow pointing up and an orange arrow pointing right.

ELEVATE

# WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE **NEXT EDITION?**



**PLEASE EMAIL YOUR UPDATES, REASONS TO  
CELEBRATE AND NEWS TO SHARE**



[myvirtualcollege@weston.ac.uk](mailto:myvirtualcollege@weston.ac.uk)

# MY VIRTUAL COLLEGE