



Sandwell YOUR BUSINESS COLLEGE

YOUR BUSINESS COLLEGE

Serving the Black Country and Birmingham

Newsletter Winter 2015/16

Working in partnership with Sandwell Council



PRINCIPAL'S BLOG

My message for this edition is Apprenticeships. We are currently working with over 300 local companies, from small garages to nationally recognised organisations like the

AA. This year we will have supported over 400 existing apprentices and will be recruiting a further 420.

As we all know, a key Government initiative is to achieve 3 million apprenticeships, and the College supports this drive. Sandwell College has a well-established apprenticeship team that works with local employers to ensure that the right people are recruited to vacancies and we continue to support those apprentices once they are in the workplace. We also help employers through the minefield of paperwork and funding to make sure that it is as easy as possible for them to take on an apprentice.

An apprenticeship gives someone the opportunity to develop the much needed workplace skills needed for a successful career. In return an employer is gaining an enthusiastic and motivated individual who they can work with and help to develop to join their team.

The College is pleased to have developed its work with Sandwell Council in the last 12 months to promote these opportunities for young people working in apprenticeships. Together with the 'Think Sandwell' team, and following our recent merger with the Council's Future Skills, we are now able to offer even more opportunities.

Finally a plea! If you are a local employer and might be interested in helping either a young person or an adult to gain the right experience through an apprenticeship, please get in touch and we can help guide you through the process. We are confident that you will find taking on an apprentice a benefit to your company.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MESSAGE

The Council is pleased to have developed its partnership work with Sandwell College in the last 12 months to promote opportunities for young people working in apprenticeships. Together with the

'Think Sandwell' team, and following our recent merger of Future Skills with the College's apprenticeship team, we are now able to offer even more opportunities.

A key barrier to growth for businesses is the ability to source a skilled workforce to ensure productivity, the tri-partite relationship between the Council, College and Business Community will address these challenges collectively.

DIGITAL FAB LAB LAUNCHES!



New Manager Anne Scrimshaw helps anyone to make amazing things.

Sandwell College has launched its brand new Fab Lab for the entrepreneurs of the future at its Central Sixth campus.

Engineering and computing students were among the first to create electronic prototypes and mini traffic light simulators when Creative Black Country teamed up with Black Country Atelier to help the college launch its digital fabrication laboratory in New Square, West Bromwich. Equipped with superb 3D printers, laser cutters and more, the Fab Lab will support the development and interaction of smart technologies in the region and beyond. The state-of-the-art facility was officially launched by leading Black Country business figures from the Consortium, Chamber of Commerce and Local Enterprise Partnership.

Principal Graham Pennington said: "We now have a localised ability to work with businesses and network across the world. We have a fantastic resource for our own students with real projects that they can help local businesses work on." Paul Linton, from the Black Country LEP, added: "Thank you for the opportunity for us to support you and get students where they need to be – in employment."

To visit the Fab Lab, just call in during college opening hours, or call Anne Scrimshaw on 0121 667 5031.

CAREERS PLUS

Careers PLUS



Top government officials and business leaders toured Central Campus to see how Sandwell College is filling the skills gap and securing students' futures with its new employment hub Careers Plus.

Mike Keoghan, Director of Vocational Education for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), Kim Rowlands, Assistant Director of BIS West Midlands, Sarah Middleton, CEO of Black Country Consortium, and Paul Linton, Chair of the LEP Employment and Skills Board, were shown the state-of-the-art facilities by the Principal Graham Pennington, Chair of Governors, John Tew, and Ninder Johal, Governor and LEP representative.

FUNDING FOR EMPLOYERS

thinkSandwell

Finding and securing the right investment for your business can feel like a daunting task. Complicated application forms and processes leave many people feeling confused and worried about getting the money they need to achieve their business plans.

Think Sandwell's Business Growth Team can help. We have helped secure finance for a huge number of businesses: money that ranges from small grants to significant capital assistance from the European Regional Development Fund. Our aim is to help businesses in our region to thrive and grow, creating job security, training opportunities and wealth for our local economy. As everyone knows, most businesses need finance in order to succeed.

We work closely with partner organisations to signpost businesses to the most appropriate funding sources. Our experienced business advisers offer free advice. They will help you assess your current position to determine what type of finance is appropriate for you. They can help you apply.

For more information visit www.thinksandwell.com or contact 0121 569 2121

BRITAIN'S BEST



Sandwell College students were crowned among the UK's very best trainee hairdressers and nail artists, after winning in Britain's Best 2015 – a competition run by the National Hairdressers' Federation. Emilijana Veseli won the Hair Up – Glamorous Night on the Town (Students and Trainees) category, with Muzghan Rahimi finishing third. Nadia Shayler won the Nail Art category with Anastasia Krjuckova in second place.

NHF president Paul Curry said: "For Sandwell College to win in its categories was an amazing performance and they should be very proud of what they achieved."

The competition was held at the Heritage Motor Centre in Gaydon, Warwickshire.

GRANT FUNDING BRINGS BROCKHOUSE A BOOST



The financial director of one of the largest engineering employers in the West Midlands has thanked the Think Sandwell team for our role in helping his company secure thousands of pounds of grant funding to modernise its operations.

Brockhouse Group Limited has been manufacturing at its West Bromwich site for over 120 years. The company forges steel products for a wide variety of industries, including mining, railways, power, automotive and defence. It also offers other related services such as machining, sub assembly, fabrication and the worldwide sourcing of forged components.

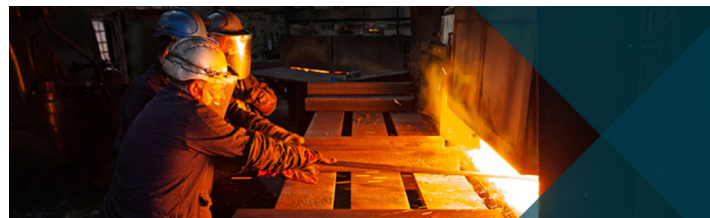
The funding has enabled the company to invest in new machinery, refurbish existing equipment and update the lighting and heating at its premises to be fully fit for the 21st century.

"The investments made have greatly increased our efficiency, capability and reliability," said financial director Steve Walters. "Thirty five percent of our parts are already directly exported overseas and we aim to increase this further with newly opened markets in Australia and Russia."

Established in 2010, the Regional Growth Fund is a government-led initiative which supports eligible projects and programmes in raising private-sector investment to create economic growth and lasting employment. The Think Sandwell team has extensive experience in helping local businesses access this funding and, in Brockhouse's case, helped the company secure £125K.

"The grant support was invaluable in assisting us with the capital investments necessary to modernise the business and enable us to grow," said Steve. "We have recently been recognised as one of Sandwell's top 50 fastest growing companies."

This is a major achievement for a business that began in 1885 with just eight employees. Thanks to the RGF grant, Brockhouse is facing a healthy future as one of the region's major employers.



HELP US SHAPE THE FUTURE OF APPRENTICESHIPS, PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

We are seeking enthusiastic employers to join our new Skills and Careers Academies where employers can make a difference in shaping how the college trains its students.

Our Health, Care and Life Sciences SCA works with a wide range of employers, including Action for Children, BUDS, Oldbury Children's Centre Cluster, Voyage Care and West Bromwich African Caribbean Resource Centre.



Two more SCAs are also being developed as centres of excellence for the sport and automotive industries.

Can you help? Employers wanted for our pioneering Work Experience programme, giving students the opportunity to practise the skills that employers are looking for and to improve their employability for the future.

TOP TRAINEES



TOP TRAINEES AT SANDWELL COLLEGE HAVE BEEN REWARDED FOR THEIR SUCCESS IN A SPECIAL AWARD CEREMONY.

Trainee of the Year 2016 went to Aaron Bell, who is now working for R & P Repairs in Great Bridge.

Runners up for the big prize were Sindija Malakovska and Tanveer Najeer, who have both now been offered apprenticeships with local employers as a direct result of their traineeship programme with the college.

The awards were sponsored by awarding body NCFE.

"As a small business, when we get an opportunity like this we embrace it with enthusiasm -the opportunity to make a difference for a learner, enabling them to feel the real working environment and the associated responsibilities. The potential to support the learner and set them off on the right track in the world of work, and watch their continuous development, provides immense satisfaction to us as a small business. The company benefits as the learner develops and applies the new skill set within our business. Thank you Sandwell College!"

Delia Cannings,
Environmental Excellence Training & Development Ltd



"I started my own business a few years ago and I understand how hard it is for young people to find work these days. I think Traineeships are an excellent idea and I am delighted that Adderley Repairs had the opportunity to provide young people with the skills and knowledge needed to go forward in their chosen careers. I look forward to working with Sandwell College again in the future."

Mohammed Asif, Adderley Repair Centre

"Having a college placement has been very useful to us as a company. We have utilised this college placement by showing trainees how to deal with referrals on the telephone and the process we use after that. The college placement also helped with administration work and filing, which gave us a lot more time to concentrate on our service users."

Michael Sutton, The Kaleidoscope Plus Group

Thank you to all employers supporting the Sandwell College Traineeship programme:

Adderley Repair Centre
Autocrew
BUDS
Care View
Charter Care Limited
Church Square Dental Practice
Colson Castors
Environmental Excellence

Fast Fit Clutch & Service Centre
Foundry Gym
Friar Park Pharmacy
GHK Accountants
GNG Nursery
Heartlands Furniture
Home Instead
Impact Repair Centre Ltd

McDonald's, West Bromwich
Our Care Ltd
Our Kids
Our Place
R&P Repairs
RSPB - Sandwell Valley Reserve
Sandwell & West Birmingham
Hospitals NHS
Shaffs MOT and Service Station

Shaftesbury Casino
TGS Electrical Contractors
The Kaleidoscope Plus Group
Thermal Limited
Watts Accountancy
Wonderland Day Nursery
Woodford Care Home
YMCA Carters Green

For more information on Traineeships call 0121 667 5027 or email marie.mathews@sandwell.ac.uk

DESIGN EXPERIENCE



“Three designers gave up two hours of their valuable time to accommodate us. Fantastic!”

Media students got a valuable insight into the work of busy Birmingham design agency Clevercherry. The learners were also given essential career tips from the head of the creative department, from how to produce attention-grabbing CVs to what would make them appealing candidates to the design company. Lecturer Richard Franklin said: “Three designers gave up two hours of their valuable time to accommodate us. Fantastic!”

EXPANSION SUCCESS FOR PRECISION ENGINEERING FIRM



Sandwell precision engineering company A&M EDM Ltd has credited Think Sandwell with much of its success in securing Regional Growth Funding (RGF) money and opening a second manufacturing site within 100 yards of its original site in Smethwick.

In January 2015 A&M EDM opened a 4,000-square-metre factory in Middlemore Road, tripling its work space and enabling the firm to take on new staff and handle larger contracts for high-profile clients in the aerospace, defence, medical and transport industries.

The company, which was founded in 2002, produces high-tolerance complex components and tooling for applications in areas as diverse as Formula One racing and North Sea oil exploration, through to machinery which attaches tape to babies' nappies.

A&M EDM invested nearly £3m in the new site – £375,000 of which represented an RGF grant secured with help from Think Sandwell.

“Without the support and guidance provided by Sandwell Council the project would have been far more difficult to complete in the timescale we did achieve,” said Melvin Wingfield, director at A&M EDM. “The help A&M EDM Limited has received from central and local government has been instrumental in allowing the company to expand in the way it has.”

For more information call our Employer Team on 0121 667 5018
www.sandwell.ac.uk

CAREER LADDER



A group of construction students at Sandwell College are being helped onto the career ladder by Sandwell Council. Thirteen carpentry and painting and decorating students have been offered work experience placements by Sandwell Council managers, who have significant industry links in the construction trade. The students will now go on to work with local employers, giving them the chance to put their college skills into real-life practice.

CARE PARTNERSHIP



Employers from the social care sector joined forces with Sandwell College and Job Centre Plus to showcase career opportunities on offer. The Care to Make a Difference event, hosted in the college's employer engagement suite, featured 247 Professional Health, Black Country Partnership for Care, BMET, Charter Care, Home Instead, icare, Mears Care, Our Care, Radis Community Care, Seva Support, Skills for Care, Woodford Homecare and Xyrius Resourcing. The event was also attended by the Vice-Chair of Skills for Care England, Helen Wilcox.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Working in partnership, Sandwell College and Sandwell Council can offer you a fully supported, professional recruitment service that includes:

- Free advertising with National Apprenticeship Service
- Advice and guidance with job descriptions, contracts of employment and salaries
- Access to a pool of interview-ready individuals
- Administrative support with the selection process
- Matching service to identify the best candidates for your vacancies
- Short listing of candidates to save you time
- Selection tests to ascertain the level of potential candidates
- Health & Safety company assessments
- Business Unit qualified industry staff
- State-of-the-art equipment and facilities

Along with professional business support offering information and advice to improve your business's performance.