



# THURROCK Gazette

Friday September 24, 2010

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## GCSE results are up again

Thurrock GCSE results are up again as the borough's 16-year-olds celebrate another 'best ever' year. Pupils in most of the borough's secondary schools improved results on last year and this

is the fourth year running that the overall Thurrock figures have risen. We want to congratulate all our schools for the very high standards reached and also for the fact that almost all of the

pupils gained five or more GCSE passes. This wrap-around and page 15 highlights some of the many successes and opportunities that are available to Thurrock residents.



## New look college gets AA Approval from students

South Essex College of Further and Higher Education welcomed new and returning students back to a new look 'triple A' College.

The College has spent over £1million over the summer, renovating and decorating its three campuses in Basildon, Southend and Thurrock. To celebrate the first day of the new term, slices of 3 A-shaped cakes, signifying the College's core values of Aspiration,



Access and Achievement, were handed out to students as they took a look round the new and improved facilities.

Media make-up and hair student at the Thurrock Campus, Hollie O'Riordan, 17, from South Ockendon, thought the summer makeover made a big difference to the Woodview campus. She said: "It wasn't very welcoming before but it's a much better atmosphere now".



Thurrock Campus canteen - before

The College has improved buildings, IT facilities, furniture and equipment ready for students this month, with the Thurrock and Basildon campuses receiving particular attention with investment in remodelled libraries, redecoration of classrooms and corridors and a bright new look to the Campus restaurants. Also studying at the



Thurrock Campus canteen - after

Thurrock Campus, Stanley Archin, 16, from Grays said: "The College looks really nice now. You usually feel nervous with new schools but it didn't feel like that here today." The College is still open for enrolments with limited places still available at each campus. For more information call 0845 52 12345 or drop into your local campus.

## Have you considered an apprenticeship?

If you have left school or college this summer and are wondering about what to do next, why not consider an apprenticeship? An apprenticeship is an opportunity to earn whilst you learn and get valuable experience – whilst doing something you enjoy.

The National Apprenticeship Service advises that "apprenticeships train you in the skills that employers want". They can truly open doors in your career. There is a whole range of exciting opportunities from Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care to Leisure, Travel and Tourism.

Jessica Pham a student at Palmer's College met with Shaun Bajnoczky, 19, from Chadwell St Mary to find out more about the benefits of an

apprenticeship. Shaun joined the Royal Opera House Thurrock and Thames Gateway team as a Community Arts Apprentice



Jessica Pham and Shaun Bajnoczky

in January. Shaun is the first apprentice for the Royal Opera House in Thurrock and is studying towards an Education Development International (EDI) Level 3 award in Community Arts Management at South Essex College.

Shaun is working on plans for the High House People's Opera which will launch the Bob and Tamar Manoukian Production Workshop at the Royal Opera House Production Park in the autumn.

Shaun says that he finds his job "demanding but fun". Communication, time management and handling large workloads are just some

of the skills Shaun feels he has gained from this experience. Shaun says "Within a short time of being with the Royal Opera House, I'm already leading on a project. I'm a big part of the events that are going on."

Shaun is a talented musician winning Thurrock's Young Musician of the Year 2009 award. After his apprenticeship Shaun hopes to pursue a music degree or to continue working within the arts sector. Not only does his hands-on experience in the industry boost his CV but he is doing something he thoroughly enjoys.

Find out what an apprenticeship can do for you and discover top tips for applying by going to [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk) or contact your Careers Advisor.

## Want to learn new skills?



*Sarah Bennett, Palmer's student meets with students and staff from Thurrock Adult Community College*

**A leaflet bought home by their children from school has changed the lives of many parents across Thurrock. Parents Tracey and Jade are now able to engage with others in the same situation and make new friends whilst also learning new skills.**

After taking the Positive Parenting course, run by Thurrock Adult Community College these young mums gained the confidence they needed to continue their learning. They have recently taken the National Test in Literacy; this 15 week course is

a national qualification for adults who have no formal qualifications, and is a great way of learning whilst their children are being looked after.

Without the Positive Parenting course Jade and Tracey doubt they would have decided to do a literacy course, mainly because they find it very stressful meeting new people. They could have easily just walked back out but they have now completed both courses. Tracey hopes to become a child minder whilst Jade would like to gain further qualifications while her children are still young.

Thurrock Adult Community College helps parents who are going back into learning by providing free child care and transport and appropriate courses. They listen to their learners and try to make these opportunities available.

Without these types of courses on offer in the local area, both Tracey and

Jade feel they would never have considered going back into learning but have persevered, because as they said "nobody else is going to push you into this apart from yourself".

During 2009/10, Thurrock Adult Community College provided 5,630 learning opportunities to 4,253 learners. Learners studied courses ranging from literacy, numeracy, positive parenting, computing qualifications, childcare qualifications and many more. Courses are delivered at primary schools, secondary schools, children's centres, sheltered housing complexes and community halls throughout the borough. Success rates for 2009/10 are predicted at 86%, 6% higher than national average.

If you are interested in learning new skills call in to speak with staff at Richmond Road, Grays or telephone them on **01375 372476**.

## Entrepreneur Jevan

**Charlotte Woods a student at Palmer's College met with Jevan Tokan, also a student at Palmer's to discuss his business ideas.**

In addition to studying, Jevan also runs a graphic design business called Intuitive Graphics. Jevan enjoyed art at school and decided to do a graphic design course at GCSE level and this confirmed that he wanted to pursue a career in graphic design.

Jevan spotted a business opportunity when he saw some professional work and realised that he could do better; with a little bit of knowledge of the industry he decided to design a few things and see how it went. He began his business on his own but acknowledges that his dad's business acumen has helped him.

Intuitive Graphics provide whatever their clients need including business cards, logos, website banners and corporate identity. Jevan has undertaken work for caterers, money transfer companies, churches as well as T-shirt designers.

Jevan has learnt many new skills running a business. He says that "managing studies and a business is difficult; you have to find good balance, get your priorities right and set yourself deadlines." To encourage other young people who want to be successful in business, Jevan says "do not give up too easily, my first job was rejected and it was discouraging but you have to go on."

After going to university, Jevan hopes to get an apprenticeship to learn more skills before branching out on his own.



*Jevan Tokan and Charlotte Woods*

## Palmer's College 'Enterprise in Education'



*Clive Attwood, Attwood Solicitors and Katie O'nion*

**Palmer's College held its very first 'Enterprise in Education' event earlier this year. The event was organised for Palmer's business students to help them stand out from the competition and get a job in today's climate.**

The event consisted of a number of workshops including looking at job applications, creating a CV as well as interview skills; and each student had a one to one interview with a Thurrock employer.

The day was considered to be very valuable and a great experience especially to those students considering going straight into employment after College.

A number of Thurrock employers

took part and all praised the students for their efforts on the day. Sophie Outen, a student at Palmer's college, interviewed two Thurrock Council employees who took part in the event, Lynette Young and Helen Graydon both from Legal Services. Lynette said "the students were very well prepared, smartly dressed and took on board the advice given by the employers to help them stand out from other candidates." Helen added "This type of event is crucial for students seeking employment after College. The day provided valuable advice and guidance around CV writing, interviewing techniques and has definitely

proved to be worthwhile for the students as well as an opportunity for local employers to support the College."

The advice given to the students who took part in this event was much appreciated, especially by Katie O'nion a student studying the ILEX Diploma for legal secretaries'. Katie won an award for her outstanding contribution on the day. She said: "I have really enjoyed the day and have taken away some really valuable feedback. Practicing interviews and CV writing with real-life employers has really improved my confidence for when I start applying for city jobs after College."

## Talking opportunities in Thurrock



Sue Potter, Charlotte Woods and Georgina Clark

Charlotte Woods, a student at Palmer's College met with Georgina Clark - Public Affairs Advisor and Sue Potter - Competency Assurance Lead (Apprentices) from Petroplus Coryton Refinery, to talk about opportunities in Thurrock and the qualities of a desirable CV and interview techniques. Petroplus is Europe's leading independent oil refinery and wholesaler of petroleum products.

Sue says "when preparing their CV a good candidate should try to ensure that they meet the company's criteria". Georgina advised that applicants should remember it is important to be concise and relevant to

the position being offered and tips for a good CV are clear presentation, good English and correct spelling and punctuation.

When attending an interview it is important that candidates do some research into the company and the industry that they are applying to and remember body language – an interviewer can tell a lot from the way someone is responding e.g. good eye contact.

Petroplus is delighted to support the 'Next Top Boss' project stating that it is a great opportunity for young people in Thurrock and will give them an insight into business.

## Thought of becoming a volunteer?

In today's difficult climate many young people find that being able to show that they have done some voluntary work helps them when applying for a job or a place at university.

Nina Humphries a student at Palmer's College interviewed Brogan Sargent, an International Baccalaureate student also at Palmer's to find out more about volunteering. One hundred and fifty hours of voluntary service is required to pass the International Baccalaureate course. Brogan undertook her voluntary service working with pupils from Treetops School, Grays. Brogan assisted the students with a community renovation garden project at the

Park Inn Hotel, North Stifford and also led a mentoring session with them.

Brogan said "I met so many different people and have had many new life experiences. It's made me a more rounded person. I felt that this was a very worthwhile experience and my social skills have improved so much. Employers love to see voluntary work included on a CV especially if it is in line with that job. I helped out with sporting activities which helped me get a part-time job at a sports centre."

Brogan feels that all young people would get positive benefits from doing voluntary work.

If you are interested in volunteering contact [vinspired.com](http://vinspired.com)



Brogan Sargent (3rd from left) and other IB volunteers and students from Treetops

## Hard graft and dedication

Despite leaving school with no formal qualifications, Lucy-Emma Harris, 41, has led an enriching life. She has been an underwater photographer and archaeological researcher, has cooked for Stephen Spielberg and Tom Hanks, and has become the Director of both Pixelwork - a successful design company and Agency East - a community interest company, all through hard graft and dedication.

At school, Lucy was inclined to be creative, rather than academic and admits she still has some struggles due to slight dyslexia. However this has never held her back; "I wanted to see the world, I did that. I wanted to learn to ski, I did that. I wanted to go scuba diving... and I've done that."

She has a passion for helping young people, who like her, achieve little academically. She recognises that "you don't have to decide here and now what you want to do", as her own career path has changed, but believes instead that people with an open-mind, good communicative



Lucy Harris (left) and Holly Burton IB Student Palmer's College

skills, timekeeping and experience can succeed in business.

Lucy recommends the 'Next Top Boss' project; she says "doors are being opened to young people that don't know what we have on our doorstep. It provides an opportunity for people living in Thurrock to understand that local businesses can have top jobs available".

Lucy is an excellent example of someone who has achieved due to their personal commitment. Her story should inspire young people to make something of their creative talent.

Lucy is one of the Project Managers for Thurrock's 'Next Top Boss' project. 'Next Top Boss' is a competition for anyone living, working or studying in Thurrock and who is 17-19 this year. For more information see [www.nexttopboss.co.uk](http://www.nexttopboss.co.uk)

Read more success stories like these on page 15

## Continued from the Thurrock Learning Partnership wrap-around

Pupils in most of the borough's secondary schools improved results on last year and this is the fourth year running that the overall Thurrock figures have risen. We want to congratulate all our schools for the very high standards reached and also for the fact that almost all of the pupils gained five or more GCSE passes.

This page follows on from the wrap-around and highlights some more of the many successes and opportunities that are available to Thurrock residents.



Shiv Kumar and Katie Roake

**Katie Roake, a student from Palmer's College interviewed Shiv Kumar, who is also at Palmer's studying accountancy, economics, law and mathematics, about his education, career aspirations and his entry into the 'Next Top Boss' competition.**

Shiv says he hadn't always wanted to go to college in fact, when he was younger he thought he would go straight into work, but after attending a couple of Open Days at college realised the best option would be to

go to college and further his education whilst deciding on a career. Shiv now feels he would ultimately like to go into property development and hopes to find a suitable career once he has completed his 'A' levels in order to raise the capital to do this.

Shiv says that he applied to be part of 'Next Top Boss' to gain some business experience and the essential skills required in business whilst having some fun. He says "it is also a great opportunity to meet new people and learn from them."

**Nadine Clarke is currently the Training and Development Officer at the Port of Tilbury London Ltd. Nadine attended The Aveley School from 1996 to 2001 where she gained ten GCSE's at A-C grade.**

During years 10 and 11 she also studied for a GNVQ in Business with Thurrock and Basildon College and passed with distinction. Nadine then enrolled on the Advanced Business course at the then Thurrock and Basildon College (now South Essex College).

Following college Nadine attended Anglia Ruskin University to study a BA (Hons) in Human Resource Management and after two years undertook a year's placement in industry working for a global recruitment company based in London before going back to university to finish her degree.

Nadine began her career at Port of Tilbury London Ltd in November 2007 as a Training Coordinator. The Port is keen to

develop relationships within the community, and this role gave Nadine the opportunity to work within the local community especially in schools and with young people.



Nadine was promoted to her current role in November 2009 and is now studying part time at Anglia Ruskin University for a CIPD Diploma in Human Resource Management and Leadership in Management.

## Aimee at the industry trade show 'Salon International'

**Aimee Brown, Apprentice, Advanced Apprentice, Finalist National Wella Xposure – 2010 Competition, Finalist Wella Trend Vision 2010 Competition, Winner London Hairdressing Council Student of the Year, Finalist National Hairdressing Council Student of the Year 2010.**

Thurrock girl Aimee will be appearing at the industry trade show 'Salon International' in October as a finalist in the 'National Hairdressing Council Student of the Year 2010' competition. She won the particularly difficult London regional heat and will have to prove her talent is the best in the country in the finals.

Aimee started very young as she



didn't like the way her mum used to do her hair. She chose a career in hairdressing "...because the industry

is creative, gives opportunities to push boundaries both artistically and commercially for anyone to achieve; it is challenging, involves fashion, colour and passion. It is skilful, allows a vast array of emotions - from nervousness in achieving a look, to elation at winning a competition.

Aimee, an Apprentice with Strangeways Hair which is famous for high standards within the industry, says "I can honestly say I have received training in some form or another every single day"; complemented by structured training sessions at J&E Training – 1:1 sessions, theory delivery and practical model nights giving variety and a consistent blend of training. Aimee

says "My tutor has my complete admiration for her depth of knowledge, her patience and her passion for teaching hairdressing. This year has been AMAZING, seeing all the top names in the industry up close and personal. Working with hair makes me feel alive, it is such a big part of my life – my Apprenticeship with Strangeways makes me feel creative and talented, the people around me inspire me, provoke me and stimulate me. Not only have I gained recognised qualifications, I feel I have learned to appreciate the craft of hairdressing and have come to realise that learning will never stop."

# Where an apprenticeship may take you ...



Left to right, James Nunn, student from Palmer's College met with apprentices Elliott Golding, Katie Lester and Daniel Spencer.

**Katie Lester, Elliot Golding and Daniel Spencer – both current and previous apprentices at RWE npower Tilbury Power Station - are hoping that their successes may act as an inspiration for young students emerging from their GCSEs.**

Katie and Elliot impress everyone with their achievements. Katie has gained numerous awards during the course of her apprenticeship, including national IET Woman Apprentice of the Year award and winning the 2010 Thurrock Business Awards Apprentice of the Year. Elliot was also a finalist in this competition.

Both Katie and Elliot chose an apprenticeship to further their education rather than going to college. Both are now in the final year of their apprenticeship and have found that their experiences are as good as any academic course if not better.

Katie explained: "During the programme we gained a lot of practical knowledge that we can apply in real life situations within our workplace. We are given various levels of responsibility, and this gives us increased confidence to tackle any task we are given."

On the subject of her experiences of working in the power industry Katie said "I hope that more women will choose careers in engineering and hopefully I am proof that if choosing to do so, they should not feel intimidated pursuing this goal. I was made to feel very welcome and valued from the beginning."

Elliot said "the Advanced Apprenticeship programme has been a

real challenge for me, because as well as the academic studies we get to develop craft skills and practical knowledge in a way that very few further education colleges could match." Talking about his plans for the future he said "The apprenticeship programme package will enable me to pursue my chosen career in mechanical engineering with RWE npower, and the possibility of future studies to a degree level."

Daniel Spencer, a former apprentice now working in the C&I engineering department, agrees wholeheartedly with this approach. He says "I think that the route I have taken has allowed me to progress towards my chosen profession in clear stages. It allowed me to experience engineering training at different levels and gave me an appreciation of what the job entails. I am now studying at degree level and my past apprenticeship training has given me a very good grounding for this."

From these three aspiring engineers it is quite clear that college is not the only option for students after their GCSEs. The Advanced Apprenticeship scheme has been a very effective career development choice for Katie, Elliot, Daniel and others who chose this programme at RWE npower Tilbury power Station.

Katie has a personal message for all students: "When choosing the apprenticeship route you gain a lot more practical and technical experience and you don't have the fees or debts that you would have had if you went from college to a course at a university."

## KEY CONTACTS FOR SKILLS ADVICE

Anglia Ruskin University - 0845 271333  
[www.anglia.ac.uk](http://www.anglia.ac.uk)

Connexions (under 19) - 01375 413735  
[www.connexions-direct.com](http://www.connexions-direct.com)

National Apprentice Service - 0800 100900  
[www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

Palmer's College - 01375 370121  
[www.palmers.ac.uk](http://www.palmers.ac.uk)

South Essex College - 0845 52 12345  
[www.southessex.ac.uk](http://www.southessex.ac.uk)

Thurrock Adult Community College - 01375 372476  
[www.thurrock.gov.uk/adultcollege](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/adultcollege)

University of East London - 020 8223 3000  
[www.uel.ac.uk](http://www.uel.ac.uk)

University of Essex - 01206 873333  
[www.essex.ac.uk](http://www.essex.ac.uk)



**THURROCK LEARNING  
PARTNERSHIP**

**14-19 Partnership**

**Anglia Ruskin University**

**Government Office East**

**jobcentreplus**

**Libraries & Cultural Services**

**National Skills Academy for Creative & Cultural Skills**

**Nextstep IAG**

**NOVA (Work Based Learning)**

**Palmer's College**

**Royal Opera House**

**South Essex College for Further & Higher Education**

**Thurrock Adult Community College**

**Thurrock Association of Secondary Schools**

**Thurrock Business Association**

**Thurrock Council**

**Thurrock Council for Voluntary Service**

**Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation**

**Youth & Connexions**

**University of East London**

**University of Essex**

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