

# CONNECT:

THE MAGAZINE OF AYRSHIRE COLLEGE



## taste Ayrshire



**Ayrshire College students participated in an exciting event at Dumfries House in September, to promote Ayrshire produce in the year of food and drink.**

Seven teams of college student chefs – supported by hospitality staff and students – participated in a 'Cook off Challenge' in the afternoon, after secondary schools performed the same task in the morning.

Students were tasked with delivering a three course meal

in an hour, with ingredients sourced from stalls set up in the hall by local producers.



# taste Ayrshire

At the end of the timed challenge, the students' dishes were judged by Trump Turnberry's Ralph Porciani (General Manager) and Ryan Murphy (Executive Sous Chef), Willie Mackie (Chair of Taste Ayrshire and Ayrshire College) and Howard Wilkinson from the Farmers Market.

The students welcomed a very special guest to the event – His Royal Highness, The Duke of Rothesay.

He spoke to all of the College's young chefs about their dishes and chatted with the other students observing the event.



## *The winning teams were:*

- Best Recipe – Karli Keller and Scott Robertson
- Best Presentation – Jack Steele and Lewis Costley
- Best Tasting – Kelsey Dunn and Scott Duncan

All of the dishes looked and tasted fantastic, congratulations to the following teams for their great work:

- Kelly Knox and Kirsty Irwin
- James Healy and Connor McGuire
- Shannon Morgan and Tracey Stewart
- Marc Hope and Stephen Beswick

View images from this event on our Flickr page

# Dame Ruth Silver gives us a straight A in access excellence



By Dame Ruth Silver

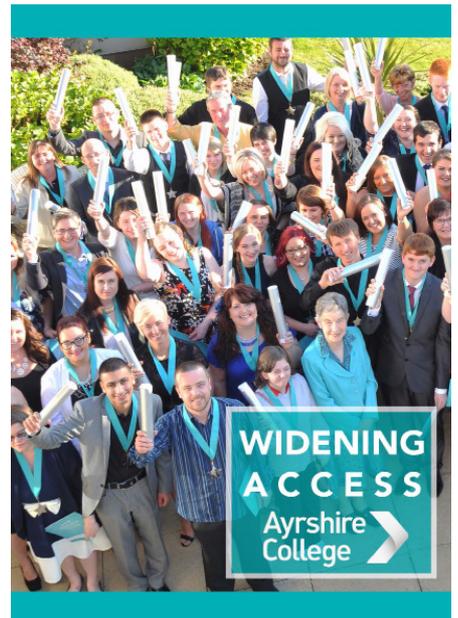
As Chair to the Commission on Widening Access I want to better support the ambitions of Scotland's talented young people regardless of their background to ensure that they can fully pursue their post school educational journeys and pathways. For this reason, I am undertaking a roadshow and a series of visits. As a former Principal myself of Lewisham College, a large bustling and diverse college in London, I was insistent that my journey to understand access excellence in Scotland must include colleges.

That was what brought me to Ayrshire College and what a lovely welcome and day out it turned out to be. After being met in person

I was shown the new college build which will be a straight A in shape it seems! Upon arrival at the college we were greeted in person by the Principal and the Chair and treated to a fabulous lunch and pudding courtesy of the staff and students from the hospitality department. Simply delicious.

The Principal and Chair then provided an overview of the access work of the College but mostly what came through was a pride in its staff and its students, for this reason they asked me to listen to the stories of the students and the staff themselves as they felt they could best tell the story of what access in Ayrshire College was about.

*“What a lovely welcome and day out it turned out to be. I was shown the new college build which will be a straight A in shape it seems!”*



[Click here to view our Widening Access Case Studies Booklet](#)

What followed was a session with past and current students to understand their journeys, their barriers, how they overcame them and what advice they would give to others to help them achieve their ambitions. The honest stories told by the students who had lived the experience reminded me of the need for choice and the need for flexibility in our systems if the talent of our young people is to be fully released and recognised. There is no one size fits all model or one right or best route but what there must be is flexibility and positive experiences along a progressive pathway.

My discussion with the students and staff also highlighted that sometimes this good practice is already in place and is working well, as is the case for one student on the SFC's Associate Student scheme with the College and the University of Strathclyde whereby he is both a college and a university engineering student and, it seems, getting the most out of both those systems. But in other cases this pathway is not as smooth or flexible, such as the student who entered advanced study in a Glasgow university with little support or connection to the cohorts progressing from year 1 or 2. Thankfully in the latter case the College was on hand to help find an alternative route to a university degree through the Open University at the College.

I was then invited to visit The Hive and discovered another level of access and inclusion. I also noted that one of the students I had met earlier started her journey and belief in herself through the great work of the staff from The Hive. This element of access is absolutely crucial and it was plain to see that this element of the College changes lives and increases the chances of progressive positive pathways. I wondered what would happen to the lovely lively students from The Hive and what pathways they would enter next with the great support of the professionals around them.

With my head filled with thoughts and stories of pathways, I was invited to try even more delicious treats from the hospitality department before meeting some impressive and ambitious school

students from the local area who will in time become our future teachers, dentists and doctors. Their stories differed from that of the College students and outlined how important it is to have a support network around you when considering university. It was clear to me that the application process itself, when told through the eyes of the first in family pupils, is a daunting procedure. Not only that, but it requires an element of forward planning and understanding of the system, to ensure you have right grades in the right areas at the right time. This simply must change and future students must receive better advice and support. It is unfair for those in the know to have a competitive advantage over those who do not. Furthermore, it is not the best means of identifying talent.

**Jennifer Gibson, 21 from Kilmarnock, left school early and enrolled on a Prince's Trust course. Her artwork has been displayed throughout Ayrshire.**



All of that said, the perseverance and determination of the young people I met in Ayrshire to pursue their dreams and chosen careers was remarkable, and I am not sure if anything will ever really stand in their way. I wish them all the best in their future careers and would like to thank them, the Principal, Chair and staff (and of course the wonderful hospitality department) for their time. I have a lot to think about as I lead the Commission on Widening Access towards its final report but, like the students, I and my fellow Commissioners have an impressive level of perseverance and determination.

*“Thank you Ayrshire College, like your new build I am giving you a straight A in access excellence.”*

# Developing the Young Workforce Ayrshire

## *Regional Group*



**An Ayrshire group set up to develop the young workforce in the region was launched at a conference during Ayrshire Business Week 2015.**

The Developing the Young Workforce Ayrshire regional group, funded by the Scottish Government, was unveiled on 6 October 2015 by Roseanna Cunningham MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Fair Work, Skills and Training.

The Scottish Government's youth employment strategy, Developing the Young Workforce, accepted all recommendations in the final report of the Commission on Developing the Young Workforce and set out a 7-year implementation plan to achieve these.

Recommendation 14 in the report called for the creation of employer led groups to provide leadership and a single point of contact between employers and education. The focus of these groups is to:

- Encourage and support employers to engage directly with schools and colleges
- Encourage more employers to recruit more young people

*Developing the Young Workforce Ayrshire is being led by the Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce and will be supported by a dedicated team of staff.*

The Chair of the new group is Ayrshire industry leader Jim English, General Manager at Hyspec Engineering and Vice Principal, Jackie Galbraith is the Vice Chair of the new group.

The new group's board is made up of representatives from the private, public and third sectors and met for the first time on 19 October.



**Read more about  
Developing the Young  
Workforce Ayrshire here**





# PROMOTING STEM CAREERS

AROUND 120,000 VISITORS ATTENDED THE 2015 SCOTTISH AIRSHOW IN SEPTEMBER, WHERE AYRSHIRE COLLEGE HAD FOUR STANDS.

In the Future Zone, the College promoted STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and we launched the Student Association's [#ThisAyrshireGirlCan](#) campaign to inspire girls and young women to consider careers in STEM.

Over 120 young people took part in CoderDojo taster sessions. at the Scottish Air Show. CoderDojo Ayrshire is a free coding club for 7-17 year olds supported by Ayrshire College staff and students. Young visitors were also treated to science experiments and learned all about composites and the latest wind turbine technology.

[Live cooking demonstrations](#) took place at the College's hospitality stand in the Taste Ayrshire marquee. In the VIP marquee, students Megan Dempsey and Niki Smith, along with staff members Claire Anderson and Ainslay Miller, served afternoon tea to delighted guests.

*“The entire event was a huge success and hopefully inspired future generations to start their careers with Ayrshire College.”*



In October, the College promoted [Ada Lovelace Day](#) which celebrates women engineers, scientists, technologists and mathematicians - role models who inspire other girls and women. [Read our blog posts here.](#)

This year is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Ada Lovelace who is widely held to have been the first computer programmer. Coderdojo clubs are a great way to find the [next generation of programmers](#) and the College is hosting its next Dojos at Dumfries House in Cumnock on November 26th from 6pm-8pm and on 15 December 6pm-8pm in our Ayr campus.

Videos showcasing the variety of roles within the engineering sector will be created by the College thanks to Skills Development Scotland's Equalities Challenge Fund. The College will visit local employers and film one of their employees 'a day in the life of' to highlight what an apprenticeship in engineering is really like. [We aim to encourage more females to consider a apprenticeships in STEM.](#)



# Employer Engagement

At Ayrshire College we deliver demand-led courses that ensure our students develop the necessary skills to make a valuable contribution in the workplace. To achieve this, we need to know the current and future skills requirements of employers.

That's why we engage with employers throughout the year. In September, we hosted business breakfasts with employers in Hospitality and Tourism, Engineering and Science, and Health and Social Care.

The feedback we received from businesses throughout the year has been invaluable in helping define our future curriculum.

These sessions provide a great opportunity for businesses to influence the range and content of courses we offer at the College.

Each curriculum area recently held its annual team evaluation to critically reflect performance in 2014 - 15. Teams are now refining improvement plans for 2015 - 16 to ensure the College continues to meet the needs of employers within Ayrshire.



## *Patricia Gibson MP visits our Kilwinning Campus*

We were delighted to welcome Patricia Gibson MP for North Ayrshire and Arran to our Kilwinning campus in October.

Patricia discussed various topics with our Principal and Chair Heather Dunk and Willie Mackie including the recent refurbishment of the Kilwinning campus.

The Student Association's President and Vice President -

Angela Alexander and Holly Bates - had the opportunity to discuss the #CuttheCosts campaign, launched by NUS to fight the UK Government's plans to scrap maintenance grants.

Another meeting has been arranged between Angela and Patricia in the near future.

Patricia tabled an early day motion about the College's Kilwinning campus on 19

October, commending the hard work and commitment of staff and their untiring support for students.

Find out more  
about Early Day  
Motion 535  
here...



## ➤ *Developing the Young Workforce*

# Skills Development Scotland visit Skills Centre of Excellence



**OUR SKILLS CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE PLAYED HOST TO MEMBERS OF THE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCOTLAND (SDS) BOARD. REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE COLLEGE AND NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL MET THE SDS SERVICE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AT THE CENTRE IN IRVINE.**

The committee oversees a programme of service design, development and improvement on behalf of the SDS board in respect of their key services such as careers advice in schools and national training programmes such as Modern Apprenticeships.

**View our blog of sports students here...**



College Chair Willie Mackie is a member of the SDS board and chaired the meeting.

Heather Dunk and Vice Principal Jackie Galbraith outlined the purpose of the Skills Centre of Excellence campus - situated within Irvine Royal Academy - which opened in September 2014 and attracted nearly 300 students in its first year.

At the end of the discussion, current and previous students in engineering, sport and fitness, and hospitality talked to committee members about their experiences at Ayrshire College. Amongst them was Dale Dunlop, a former Irvine Royal Academy pupil.

**Watch Dale Dunlop's journey here...**



Hospitality students, in their first week at the College, put into practice their new skills by providing a light buffet for our guests.





**WE ARE NOW A SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT AFTER STAFF AND STUDENTS VOTED OVERWHELMINGLY TO MAKE ALL CAMPUSES SMOKE FREE FROM THE 2015 - 16 SESSION ONWARDS.**

We are now smoke free on all campuses, car parks and grounds of the College. This will enhance the health and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors.

Every student was made aware of the new smoke free policy throughout the induction process.

The Smoke Free signs which are displayed at all campus entrances were designed by Creative Arts student Suzanne Penman.

Suzanne said *"I have really enjoyed working with the marketing team at Ayrshire College over the summer. It was a great opportunity to get relevant work experience in*

*graphic design. I am pleased everyone liked my design and I hope that it will be effective in promoting that we are now a smoke free college."*

We are working with Councils to ensure that residents in the immediate vicinity of our campus buildings are not negatively impacted by our smoke free policy.

It is important that staff and students respect our neighbours by not dropping litter or smoking near homes.



**AYRSHIRE SPORTSABILITY RECENTLY WON THE ASSOCIATION OF SCOTTISH BUSINESSWOMEN BEST BUSINESS CHARITY AWARD 2015, CITING AYRSHIRE COLLEGE AS ONE OF ITS KEY PARTNERS.**

Ayrshire Sportsability was born in 2001 after its current Chair, Dr Waiyin Hatton, met a group of children at an event organised by Rainbow House, Ayrshire Central Hospital. Their attitude of 'just get on with it' was so inspiring that a small group of like-minded people with a passion for promoting sporting opportunities for youngsters with disabilities organised the first Ayrshire-wide 'Come and Try' event for 200 youngsters.

The relationship between Ayrshire Sportsability and the College started from this event, with students helping out as volunteers.



Working with partners - Ayrshire College; East, North and South Ayrshire Councils; NHS Ayrshire and Arran; North Ayrshire Leisure; Scottish Disability Sports and Sportscotland - Ayrshire Sportsability has grown from strength-to-strength.

The 2015 'Come and Try' event was attended by 600 youngsters and over 30 adults over 5 days, including students from

the College. With the College's support, Ayrshire Sportsability organises a range of one-day events to promote sporting pathways, e.g. athletics, boccia, football, gymnastics, martial arts, racquet sports, swimming, wheelchair-curling, wheelchair-rugby etc.



Ayrshire Sportsability promotes inclusion by building local capacities in coaching and clubs. It supports individuals, clubs and other organisations through the Grant Award Scheme. Celebrating local achievements, Ayrshire Sportsability makes annual awards for Young Athlete, Activity in the Community, Active School and Coach. Supporting the 2012 London Paralympics legacy, it introduced the first ever Ayrshire Roll of Honour in Disability Sports to over 30 local disability athletes who have represented Scotland and/or UK over the last 10 years.

The partnership with the College offers every single sport student the exposure to work with diverse groups, 'not just to tick boxes but to provide the students with a meaningful experience'. Such opportunities also mean vital voluntary hours support their 'Citizenship Through Sport and Volunteering' unit. Several students who have volunteered in disability sport now intend to pursue this as a career.

Ayrshire Sportsability Chair, Dr Waiyin Hatton, said "Ayrshire College has been the essential ingredient in the success and growth of Ayrshire Sportsability. We share the same passion in 'making a difference' for people with disabilities through sports. The students' enthusiasm and professionalism have truly 'raised the bar' at our events."



*Ayrshire Sportsability has ambitious plans for the future – increasing the range of sports at festivals; expansion of coach development programmes; supporting more athletes, clubs and schools in the Grant Award Scheme. Plus holding the first ever Ayrshire Para-Games in 2016.*



Find out more about Ayrshire Sportsability here...





## Introducing the Ayrshire College Foundation

### THE WEBSITE OF THE AYRSHIRE COLLEGE FOUNDATION IS NOW LIVE.

Ayrshire College Foundation was set up to advance education by providing financial support for projects and activities carried out and supported by Ayrshire College.

The Foundation has already funded the upgrade of the Student Services area at the Kilwinning campus and the Student Services, Learning

Resource Centre and Refectory on the Ayr Campus. Anyone can apply for funding as long as they want to promote an educational project within Ayrshire and their request is in line with the objectives of the Ayrshire College Foundation.

*John Rainey, the Chairman of the Ayrshire College Foundation, said "I was happy to get involved in the setting up of Ayrshire College Foundation, as I'm all for making sure that these local projects are given help to get off the ground."*



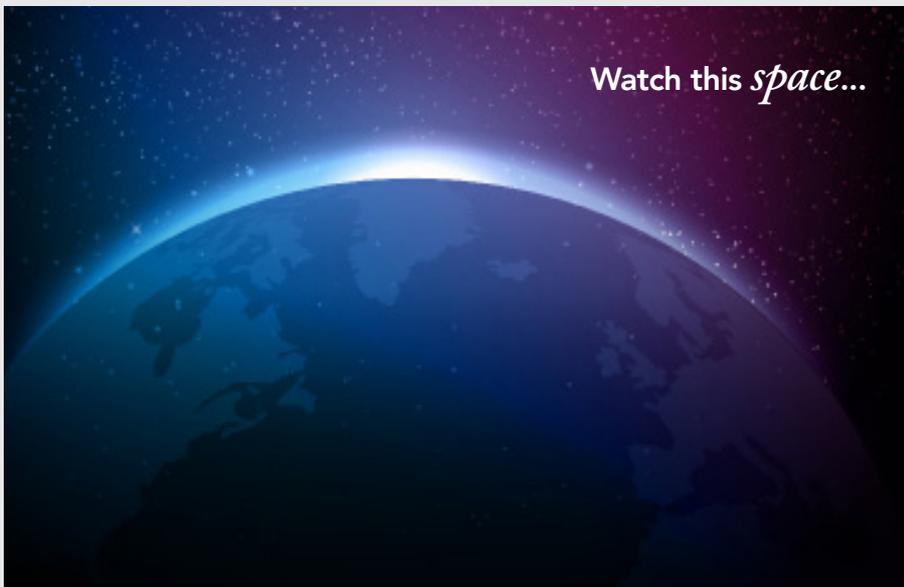
John Rainey, Chairman of the Ayrshire College Foundation

<http://www.ayrshirecollegefoundation.org.uk>

Read more about the Foundation here...



## COMING SOON...



Watch this *space*...



AYRSHIRE COLLEGE  
**FOUNDATION**

The Ayrshire College Foundation will soon be revealing an out of this world opportunity for Ayrshire students... watch this space!



## *Celebrating Excellence*

### **At the Herald Society Awards, we were delighted to be presented with a special 'Judges Award'.**

We were initially nominated for the 'Environmental Initiative of the Year' award as a result of our students creating a new wetland habitat at Dean Castle Country Park in collaboration with the conservation charity Froglife. We attended the event with our partners from Dean Castle Country Park and were pleased to be runners-up in the category.

However, at the end of the ceremony, the Chair of the judging panel – The Herald's Stephen Naysmith – announced there was to be an extra special 'Judges Award', to highlight an organisation that

had submitted a number of "exceptionally high standard" award entries.

To our astonishment and delight, Stephen announced Ayrshire College as the recipient of the award.

The entries we submitted covered a range of our activities, including:

- Froglife's Scottish Dragon Finder Project
- Violence Against Women Project
- #JointheConversation
- Police Scotland and NHS Ayrshire & Arran Partnership
- Personal Development for Peer Workers
- Stitch in Time – Dumfries House
- Improving Health & Wellbeing Needs of Staff, Students and Local Community
- Partnership with Ayrshire Sportsability

The Herald Society Awards recognise the achievements, imagination and commitment of organisations and individuals who are dedicated to making Scotland a better place, particularly for vulnerable and marginalised sectors of society.

# Awards 2015



## COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT NETWORK AWARDS

The College is shortlisted for the **Health and Wellbeing** and **Student Contribution** awards at the forthcoming College Development Network Awards.

The **Health and Wellbeing** nomination focuses on the Sports and Fitness department at the College, which supports many health initiatives in the community.

The **Student Contribution** nomination is for a former HND Coaching and Developing Sport student, Stephen Wilson, who was awarded overall Student of the Year at this year's Kilmarnock Campus graduation ceremony.

Stephen has amassed over 300 hours of volunteering in schools, community groups and other organisations, making a positive impact to hundreds of children and adults.

The winners will be announced at the awards dinner on 26 November 2015 at The Grand Central Hotel in Glasgow.



## AYRSHIRE BUSINESS AWARDS 2015

An Ayrshire College student won **Modern Apprentice of the Year** at the Ayrshire Business Awards organised by the Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce.

Craig Boyle from Ashleigh (Scotland) is undertaking the second year of his evening class in HNC Construction Management.

Fellow nominee, Graham McClung, also completed his apprenticeship training at the College.

The College was shortlisted for the Excellence in Customer Service Award, nominated alongside LAH Travel, Richard Healey Removals and Wabtec Rail Scotland.

## Celebrating Excellence



## SQA STAR AWARDS 2015

The College has been shortlisted in four categories at the SQA Star Awards, taking place on Friday 20 November at the Assembly Rooms in Edinburgh.

John McTaggart, Curriculum Manager for Sport and Fitness, has been nominated for **SQA Champion** and Stephen Wilson, HND Coaching and Developing Sports, is up for **College Candidate of the Year**.

In the **Innovation** category, the College has been shortlisted for two awards. Co-funded posts with NHS Scotland and Police Scotland will be up against the Healthy Body, Healthy Mind campaign from the Sport and Fitness department.

## SCOTTISH EQUALITY NETWORK AWARDS



The College's Equality and Inclusion team and Student Association were shortlisted in the **Equality Initiative of the Year** category at the first ever Scottish Equality Network Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Awards.

The College received the nomination for its **#JoinTheConversation** initiative, which raised awareness of LGBT issues to improve the experiences of LGBT people living, working or studying in Ayrshire.

Ayrshire College was one of only two colleges nominated for an award. Dundee and Angus College were nominated for the **Student Group of the Year** category.

# Staff and Students showcase the College at Parliamentary Receptions

**THE COLLEGE WAS INVOLVED IN TWO PRESENTATIONS TO THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT RECENTLY.**

Engineering staff took part in a parliamentary reception showcasing their sector-leading work within the renewables sector, while the Head of Sport & Fitness, James Adams and John McTaggart, Curriculum Manager for Sport and Fitness, addressed a cross-party group on Scotland's universities and colleges as part of the Commonwealth Games anniversary celebrations.

The engineering event, themed 'Colleges – Delivering a Skilled Workforce', was hosted by Iain Gray MSP and gave parliamentarians the chance to hear about the work of Scotland's colleges.

Gavin Murray, Director of Learning and Skills, and Alastair Heron, Head of Engineering and Science, represented the College, along with engineering lecturer David Stark, technician Johnny Kennedy and student Becky McIntosh. Becky is studying NC Aeronautical Engineering after completing a Performing Engineering Operations with Composites course last year.



They spoke about how they have devised and delivered a range of composite materials courses to meet the needs of employers in the aerospace and renewables sectors. The College is the only training provider in Scotland to deliver composites training for the industries. Courses run at the Composite Material Centre in the Aeronautical Engineering Training Centre at the College's Ayr Campus.

The sports team discussed the legacy of the College's Game Changer Award, which was previously received for their 'Sporting Contribution to the Local Community'. The team highlighted how the award has made a lasting impact and created a legacy for helping to educate the community about health and sport in the Ayrshire.

James, John and Student President Angela Alexander took part in Breast Cancer Now 'Wear it Pink' photocall at the Scottish Parliament.



## ➤ Building Community Capacity

# New Campus Countdown

AT THE END OF AUGUST, WE HOSTED A SPECIAL CEREMONY TO CELEBRATE THE PROGRESSION OF THE NEW KILMARNOCK CAMPUS

The campus has been progressing at a steady rate since work began in June 2014 and will be ready for students in September 2016.

Each month for the next twelve months, new facilities for a different vocational area will be revealed on the website, giving current and prospective students the chance to see how their area will be enhanced by the move to the new site. First up for October was Construction.

Watch flythrough here... 

Principal, Heather Dunk said of the new campus *"This project was a dream in 2008 and over time we persuaded lots of people to support a new campus for the College. Supported by investment from the Scottish Government of £53 million, the project has moved from design to construction in just two years.*

*"Twelve months from now we'll be welcoming thousands of students to this fabulous new campus. The building project has already created opportunities for students, including apprenticeships and work placements."*

Read our  
New Campus  
Newsletter  
here...



**MONTHS  
TO LAUNCH**

New campus opening  
**September 2016**



## POLICE SCOTLAND CAMPAIGN

### WE ASSISTED POLICE SCOTLAND IN ITS POWERFUL FOUR-WEEK CAMPAIGN TO TACKLE HATE CRIME.

Staff, students and partners of the College recorded messages about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues – the second most reported hate crime.

Week one of the campaign featured disability hate crime. Week two focused on LGBT hate crime. Week three dealt with racial hate crime and week four explored religious hate crime.

Police Scotland used social media channels to get

its message across, and invited College students and staff who have been affected by LGBT hate crime, or know people who have been affected, to talk about their experiences.

Meanwhile, Supporters Direct Scotland delivered a workshop to our sports coaching students on the issue of sectarianism.

The workshop gave students advice on how to deal with potential sectarian situations.

Students commented after the workshop that they felt more confident in tackling sectarianism should it arise during a coaching session.



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# #mymentalhealthmatters

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**#MYMENTALHEALTHMATTERS MONTH RAN FROM SEPTEMBER 10TH (SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY) UNTIL OCTOBER 10TH (WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY).**

The campaign aimed to get everyone to speak more openly about mental health and wellbeing, as well as to promote positive ways to look after ourselves and others.

The Equality and Inclusion Team produced weekly #mymentalhealthmatters e-zines focusing on mental health and wellbeing, as well as other activities on the days of Motivated Monday, Wellbeing Wednesday and Fit Friday.

Penumbra, North Ayrshire, also offered support, information and advice at the Kilwinning campus.

Choose Life, suicide prevention took place at the Ayr, Kilmarnock and Kilwinning campuses.



## THE COLLEGE SIGNS UP TO THE SAFE PLACE SCHEME

Anyone with learning disabilities who is feeling vulnerable within the community will now be able to approach the College for help, after we signed up to the 'Safe Place' scheme.

The safe place venues are normally in a town centre setting, with staff who can help to calm the person down and offer to make a call on their behalf to a relative or appropriate service if necessary.

Staff at the College's Kilmarnock campus will receive training to ensure their base will soon be fully operational as a 'Safe Place' venue. Training for staff at the Ayr and Kilwinning campuses will follow.

People can sometimes become targets for bullying and harassment, or feel intimidated and scared when they are out in their community. The 'Keep Safe' scheme involves working with organisations like the College to create temporary locations to which people can go if they feel they need support or reassurance.

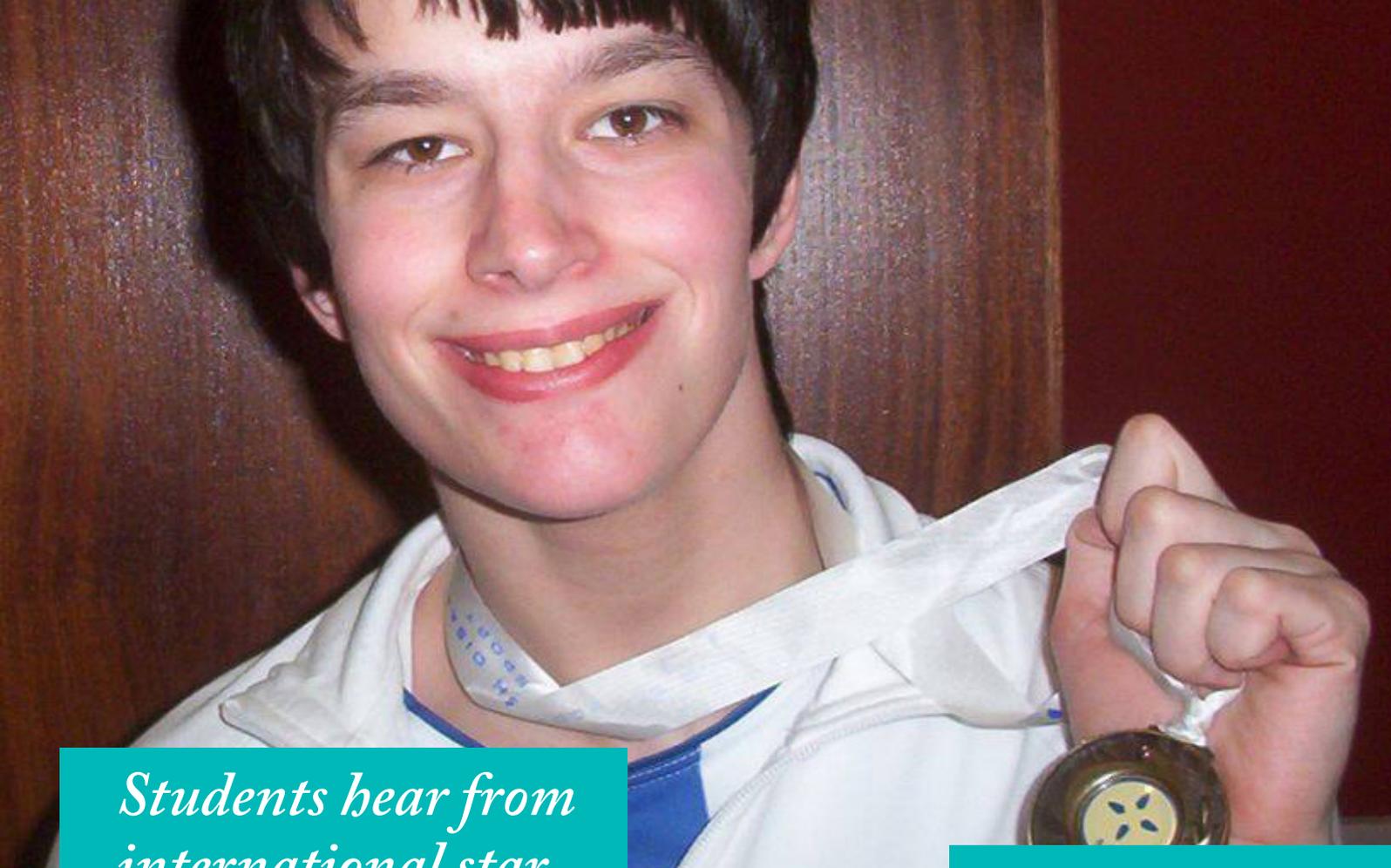
The initiative has been developed in partnership with [Police Scotland](#), East Ayrshire Council's Adult Protection Unit and local businesses.

Marla Baird, Equality and Inclusion Manager at the College, said *"It is really important that the most vulnerable individuals in our communities feel safe. We have many vulnerable students and understand some of the difficulties that they can face when they are out and about."*

*The 'Safe Place' scheme will allow individuals to find a safe space and provide them with a wider network of support.*

*"We welcome the 'Safe Place' scheme and look forward to working with the local authorities and Police Scotland to take this initiative forward."*





## *Students hear from international star*

Sport and Fitness students were privileged to hear Bernadette Leslie, a Boccia World Championship medal winner, deliver a talk about the sport.

Boccia is a precision ball sport that is similar to bowls and is played by competitors who have a physical disability that requires the use of a wheelchair. Bernadette, who was born with cerebral palsy, took up the sport when she was 18.

She competed for Great Britain in the 2006 Boccia World Championships in Brazil and won a bronze medal when her team defeated Hong Kong's side.

Bernadette also represented Scotland at the 2003 Boccia World Cup in New Zealand and became team captain at the 2005 Boccia European Championships in Portugal at the age of just 23.

Bernadette is a former student at the College, where she studied Business Administration and then Web Design. When the College approached her to deliver a talk about the sport and her career to future sports coaches, she was delighted to do so.

Her presentation to students went down a storm, with HND Sport student Danielle Torrance saying "Bernadette showed you can achieve anything when you put your mind to it". Classmate Shannon Baillie added that Bernadette was "very inspirational."

*"The talks went great. I wanted to make it fun for them, so I shared my medals and showed them a video of me playing. I felt like the students were very interested and engaged. When I was demonstrating how to play, you could really see their competitiveness coming out; some of them even beat me!*

*"I think they do have a greater understanding of boccia now. Sharing my own experience of the sport with them will hopefully inspire a few of them to help other people with disabilities in the future."*

# 7-STAR HOSPITALITY WALL



With the College's Ayr campus undergoing a makeover, the hospitality department now has a 7-star hospitality wall made up of shining examples of success!

Previous hospitality students who have secured employment or progressed onto university have their stories displayed on the wall to inspire current students.

Alistair McColm, Emma Tait, Gillian Greenwood, Lisa Mason, Paul Tyrell, Terri Stanovitch and Zoe Jordan have shared their experiences and explained how they got to where they are now.

You can hear from some of these students on our [YouTube Channel](#).

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## YMCA Plus Opening

The College catering team prepared a delicious buffet for the official launch of YMCA Plus, a youth facility and resource that can be used by the wider community.

To mark the establishment of YMCA Plus, East Ayrshire Provost Jim Todd unveiled a commemorative plaque and cut the celebration cake.

Kilmarnock YMCA is a long established facility in the town that

has adapted and changed to deliver services that are appropriate to the needs of the local community.

Kilmarnock YMCA's Josephine Orr wrote to Mark Hunter, Catering Services Manager at the College, to thank him for delivering the buffet.

Josephine said: *"Thank you for the variety of food you provided. Everyone thought it was amazing and the presentation was lovely. The service was great. I will be writing a letter of praise to your line manager!"*



# HAIRDRESSING SUMMER SCHOOL

## THE COLLEGE HELD A SUMMER SCHOOL THIS YEAR FOR 15 HARD WORKING HAIRDRESSERS.

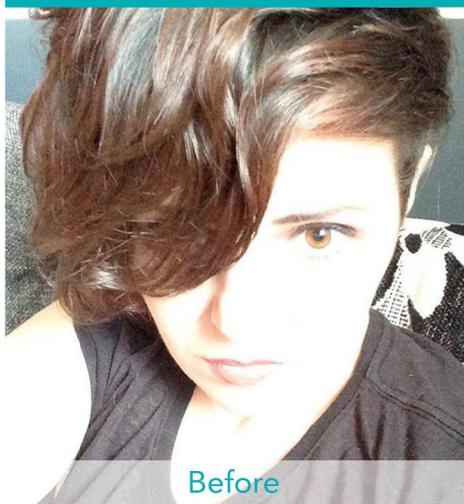
Students from all levels of hairdressing across different campuses came together and worked well as a team to develop their skills for future study. They had a fantastic opportunity to showcase their skills and passion for hairdressing.

One of the students who took part in the summer school was NC Hairdressing Level 5 student Paul McLavin. He originally trained to be a dancer, working for several years both in the UK and abroad.

After getting the chance to work at London Fashion Week, he discovered that he had an interest in hairdressing.

Paul said *"I knew that hairdressing was the career for me. When I moved back to Scotland, I wanted to retrain as I didn't want to be a dancer forever, so coming to Ayrshire College made perfect sense. The summer school is great as I'm gaining extra experience. I have ambitions to complete hairdressing at the highest level at college, then join a top salon."*

## HAIRDRESSING SUMMER SCHOOL



Before



After



Paul McLavin originally trained as a dancer before studying NC Level 5 Hairdressing with us.



## *The Prince's Trust Celebrations*

Three College Prince's Trust teams came together at the Ardeer Youth and Community Centre in Stevenson to celebrate the successful completion of their 12-week programmes.

Teams 140, 141 and 142, based at Kilmarnock, Ayr and Kilwinning respectively, came together at the end of the programme to share their Prince's Trust experiences in a presentation to invited guests, friends and families. They also picked up awards at the event for their commitment to the programme.

A number of the students will now progress onto full-time courses at the College. Others gained employment after successful work placements that were completed while on the Prince's Trust course.

During the programme, each team took part in an action-packed residential week and got involved in a community project of their choice. Just after the midway point of the programme they embarked on a two week work experience placement.

After that, a week was spent preparing students for their next steps – helping them to write their CVs and apply for college courses.



*Kelsey Maloney said, "I joined the Prince's Trust to build my confidence back up and to help tackle my anxiety. Along the way I have developed some really good friendships, I'm going to miss the team and hope we can meet up again in the future."*



# Student Success

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A former student achieved a 2:1 degree thanks to The Open University's combined social sciences degree which is delivered in partnership with Ayrshire College.

Rebecca Brown opted to take The Open University course when she found that the traditional university route did not suit her. It was only when she was made aware of The Open University's offering, where students study part-time and use the College as their study base, that Rebecca realised she would be able to get her degree after all. Rebecca had already gained an HND in Social Science at the College.

Now Rebecca has got her qualification, she has plans to enter either the police force or become a lecturer.

You can hear Rebecca, and her College tutor Andrew Sinclair, talk about the Open University partnership [here](#).



The Ayrshire College Student Association has restructured for 2015-16. Student President Angela Alexander, will now have a Vice-President working alongside her.

Holly Bates was voted in by her fellow students after an election process, and we

would like to wish Holly the best of luck in her new role.

The role is a full-time paid position until 31 July 2016. Holly will have the opportunity to stand for a second term in the 2016 Student Association elections.

The College recently delivered its fifth Ayrshire Hospitality and Bartending course through the Diageo Learning for Life Programme, which helps students launch their hospitality careers with some of the region's top bars and restaurants.

Thirteen students took part in the six-week course at our Ayr campus and celebrated their success with industry partners and lecturers. Families and friends also attended the celebration to recognise the students' hard work.

The Hospitality and Bartending programme was designed in partnership with Diageo to enable students to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to start a career in Ayrshire's vibrant hospitality industry.

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Sports student Biatrice Gabell recently represented Scotland in the Commonwealth Youth Games held in Samoa and lifted a silver medal in the 53kg weightlifting contest.

Biatrice, who won gold alongside Emma Cook in the badminton doubles at the Association of Colleges Sport National Championships in Bath

earlier this year, took up weightlifting two years ago.

She excelled in Samoa, finishing with a 56kg snatch and 73kg clean and jerk, both personal bests, to finish runner-up to Fiji's Ulina Sagone.

In the process, Biatrice broke a staggering total of NINE Scottish records – three each from Youth, Junior and Under-18s levels.



A PHOTOGRAPHY STUDENT MADE THE SHORTLIST OF A UK-WIDE COMPETITION WITH HER PHOTOS OF IRVINE HARBOUR, WHICH WERE TAKEN DURING HER TIME ON THE NC PHOTOGRAPHY COURSE.

Laura Anderson impressed judges for the National History Ships UK competition with a black and white photograph of a boat on the harbour, and a colour shot of old tins from her project last year.

She was invited to the awards ceremony on 22 October held on board HQS Wellington, berthed on the Thames in London!



# Staff Success

Members of the Board of Management's HR and Organisational Wellbeing Committee hosted a Celebration of Success event for staff at the Ayr campus.

Staff achieved the following qualifications:

## Teaching in Colleges Today

Fiona Beck

## PDA in Teaching Practice

Gordon English

Paul Harland

Muriel McNicol

Cheryl Smith

David Stark

## Teaching Qualification in Further Education (TQFE)

Lisa Flint

## HNC in Construction Management

Robert McDowall

*Congratulations* to all staff for achieving these qualifications, which will enable them to support continuing improvement and excellence in the delivery of the curriculum.

Read about our Kilmarnock and Kilwinning staff success in our next edition of *Connect*.



Ayrshire Business Week finished in style at the Gallery Restaurant in our Kilmarnock Campus, with a Ready, Steady Ayrshire College Cook, in aid of Go Purple Day for the Ayrshire Hospice where we helped to raise over £1,500.

Two teams comprising Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive Val Russell and Chief Executive of the Ayrshire Hospice, Mandy Yule, supported by hospitality lecturers Robert Lee and Euan Currie - stepped up to the hot plate to compete against each other.

Professional Cookery students Tommy Walker and Scott Duncan were the sous chefs for the day.

Each team was provided with a selection of raw ingredients and given thirty minutes to come up with the most innovative and tasty menu. The audience enjoyed canapés made by hospitality students and an Ayrshire College Go Purple mocktail, created by Hospitality and Bartending student Gemma McIntosh.

Team Ayrshire Chamber pipped Team Ayrshire Hospice at the post to take the winning title of best dish.



## In our next edition:

- Graduations
- More about Mission Discovery
- Staff Celebration of Success
- Official opening of Ayr and Kilwinning Student Services



● MISSION ● STRATEGIC PRIORITIES ○ VISION ● VALUES

