

collegenews

Issued by The Strategic Management Team

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Principal Retires

Retirement of Principal, Malcolm Tite

Malcolm Tite, who has been the Principal of Adult Education College Bexley since June 2008, has decided to leave the College.

The Council faces a challenging financial position and a programme of substantial expenditure reductions. The Principal is also anticipating a serious operation that will result in a period of absence.

In these circumstances, the Principal has very reluctantly agreed that it is in his best interests, and those of the College, to bring forward his plans for retirement.

The Principal would like to wish the College, staff, Governors and learners every success for the immediate and long term future. The Principal said "I have thoroughly enjoyed the time I have been at the College and will miss the friends and colleagues that I have had the pleasure to work with during my years there."

The Council would like to thank Malcolm for his hard work and commitment to the College and its learners, and wishes him a long and happy retirement.

Rosie Eaglen Strategic Manager - Curriculum

Successful Bid

Making 'The Big Society' a reality in Bexley

Adult Education College Bexley along with partners including Bexley College, Charlton Athletic Community Trust and other local groups has recently secured £66,000 from the **Skills Funding Agency** as part of the new **Adult and Community Learning Fund**, for a project called Kick Start Your Life. The successful bid was one of only 59 to receive funding from almost two and a half thousand requests, and is aimed at providing a wide spectrum of activities that are designed to make a difference to peoples' lives by engaging them in learning and other development opportunities.

Whilst the initial focus will be through sport, physical activity and healthy living, the project will also provide a broad range of progression opportunities. Taster courses and other activities will be available to local adult residents and may include arts & crafts, digital learning, IT, finance and social enterprise, literacy and numeracy. It is hoped the project will lead to a number of outcomes including volunteering, employment and self-employment. Look out for more details on the 'Kick Start Your Life' project starting near you soon.



Top Dog Trainer at AECB

Earlier this summer, learners on Adult Education College Bexley's Practical Dog Training and Agility classes had a surprise visit from none other than Rob Alleyne of BBC's Dog Borstal. Rob took a day out from his busy schedule to visit colleagues and fellow UK Registry of Canine Behaviourists (UKRCB) member Jackie Murphy during her Saturday classes at Crayford Manor House.

Rob was treated to a fun-packed day of dog training and agility classes with a variety of dogs from different backgrounds taught by Jackie. Jackie's Curriculum Manager, Karen Cullen, also took some time out to meet Rob. He was impressed with both Jackie's teaching and the site itself; he said it was a lovely space in an ideal location that was being used well. Apparently, there are very few outdoor areas within driving distance of London that are as suitable for dog training as the one at Crayford Manor House.

The learners thoroughly enjoyed Rob's visit and the opportunity to chat about their training and their dogs. It was a lovely end to their courses, and we sincerely hope Rob will pay a visit again one day.



Online Learner Survey

The College would like to thank all students who recently participated in the IPSOS-MORI online survey which encompassed accredited courses. The student response was very good and the College greatly appreciates your time given towards the completion of this survey. The following students are prize draw winners of College vouchers. Well done.

- 1st Prize, £50** Remdeep Shokar - ITQ Level 3
2nd Prize, £25 Lorena Suarez Callau - Cambridge First Certificate in English
3rd Prize, £25 Amanda Turner - British Sign Language Level 2

Learner Surveys 2011/12

As the new academic year starts, so do the learner surveys.

There will be a Framework for Excellence survey covering accredited course learners which has been conducted over the past two years.

The College is currently investigating the use of Survey Monkey to conduct further surveys amongst learners of non-accredited courses and to target specific areas where feedback from students is required.

Sue Seal Quality Manager

Examination Results

The College would like to advise that its students, especially in the GCSE and A Level examinations have received excellent results this year. The College will include an article in the next Newsletter along with an article on the Awards Ceremony which takes place on Friday 11 November 2011.

Women's Choir Concert

Two concerts a year are given by the Women's Choir in the Main Hall at Sidcup Arts & AEC and our Spring Concert is always a popular event in the College calendar. On 19th May we were delighted to see so many friends, colleagues and visitors. Whether it was the musical programme or the spring weather that enticed people to join us, the audience numbered over 50 enthusiastic supporters.

This academic year (2010/2011) welcomed twenty existing and new choir members, eighteen of whom performed at the concert, demonstrating their progress since January through a variety of musical items. The mood was set with the opening two-part piece by Eric Thiman: One Morning in May, followed by several more pieces by contrasting composers, including Mendelssohn, Bridge and Lehar (the popular Vilia). The Choir's three-part rendering of Climb Every Mountain from The Sound of Music (Rodgers) was enjoyed by both singers and listeners, with the audience humming along too! Interspersed between choral music were solo items performed by members of the Choir, which included songs and poems of varying styles and subjects and a male singer from another class. While the singers rested their voices Christopher Stokes, our regular accompanist, played a stunning piano solo, much appreciated by all of us. We are very grateful to Chris for his expertise and unwavering support for the Women's Choir, inspiring students' learning at all the Thursday afternoon sessions.

After the concert, the Choir and audience chatted and shared refreshments prepared by the Choir members; I would like to thank the College for the teas and coffees they provided and for making the Hall look so attractive for this important occasion. A raffle was organised by Mrs. Joan Monksfield to raise money for 'Bexleyheath & District Club for the Disabled' and we were pleased to meet some of its members. I received a very appreciative letter of thanks from the charity for the £144.60 raised during the afternoon.

The Women's Choir is a long-established class at Adult Education College Bexley and attracts new students every year who are welcomed warmly by existing members. This has been a particularly successful year for the Choir, in terms of musical results, with noticeable progress in all aspects of learning, which I believe has been achieved through commitment and an atmosphere of friendship and humour! The Choir members received many compliments for their singing on 19th May, which they all richly deserved. On a personal note, I felt privileged to be conducting my tenth concert with this choir! Congratulations to the Women's Choir and many thanks to all who have supported us this year. I look forward to meeting (and hearing) the Choir again.

Julia Bentham Tutor

Our Trip to London

Our trip to London was a fantastic opportunity not only to get acquainted with fascinating new places, but also, and perhaps mainly, to enhance our relationship while wandering around trying to capture as many poses as the cameras' lenses could take. Our tour was professionally guided by Amina Miles. First, we headed towards the Law Courts but not before Amina had pointed out some of the known places around Trafalgar Square such as the Coliseum and St Martin in the Fields.

The Law Courts' beautiful Victorian gothic style building, which was built in the 1870s, houses the Court of Appeal and the High Court of Justice of England and Wales. This visit to the Law Courts gave us an interesting insight into contemporary British society. Our next destination was Somerset House which is a spectacular neoclassical building (the Neoclassicism was dominant from the mid-18th to the end of the 19th century). Somerset House provides a wide range of activities and events and hosts contemporary arts alongside famous collections from the early Renaissance to the 20th century as well as some of the arts of the Islamic world. We enjoyed the privilege of being Amina's students and gained a free entry to the Courtauld Gallery thanks to her charm and persistence. After enjoying the outstanding collections which include the work of famous impressionist and post-impressionist painters, we went on to discover Covent Garden's mesmerising ambiance.

This area is well known for being the centre for entertainment and leisure activities and includes lovely shops, restaurants, theatres and the world famous Royal Opera House. Last but not least and before we bid our farewells, carrying souvenirs from the theatrical Benjamin Pollock's toy shop, we treated ourselves with a delicious hot chocolate at Cafe de Paul, leaving us longing with anticipation for more... And until our next outing together we enjoy our sessions of IELTS with Amina at Brampton Road AEC.

Dana Horak Student

Thanks to our Volunteers

The College is very lucky to have a dedicated team of volunteers who continue to give up many hours of their free time. They work hard supporting our learners with additional needs, many of whom would not be able to fully participate without this support. The volunteers help to contribute to a positive learning experience that we hope all our students enjoy. As a measure of appreciation, our charity BTAS, kindly donates vouchers for each volunteer and they are seen here receiving these from The Mayor of Bexley Cllr The current Mayor is Councillor Ray Sams. A huge thank you to Miranda Davis, Edwin Wallace, Janet Port and Brian Harris. I would like to make a special mention to Brian as he has now been a volunteer with the College for 20 years!



If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact Glenda Jackson on **0208 268 8990**



Learner Support

Blanche the Knitter

Blanche loves knitting! She was taught to knit by an incredibly patient instructor at her training centre over thirty years ago and encouraged to knit at home by her mother who was a keen and talented knitter herself. Blanche's achievement in learning to knit is amazing because she has both physical and learning disabilities which affect her vision and cause limited control of her right hand. She knits slowly but steadily managing a few rows each evening.



Over the past thirty years she has knitted scarves, baby clothes and teddy bears (all in garter stitch) as gifts for friends and family. Then one

day about ten years ago, a teacher friend asked her to try to knit a large dice for her to use with her class of five year olds. Blanche produced a beautiful dice with six differently coloured faces stretched over a large foam cube with white spots sewn on each face by her sister. (Finding a supplier of perfect foam cubes was a challenge initially as the dice must be evenly weighted to ensure it rolls fairly.) The dice was a great success with the children and soon Blanche was receiving requests for dice from other teachers in the school. Since then Blanche has knitted over 30 dice and some have been sent as far as Ireland and America.

However, Blanche's proudest moment came recently when she knitted a dice for her tutor to use in her 'Move to the Beat' class at Brampton Road AEC. The dice is easy for people with disabilities to use, helps teach colour and number recognition as well as improve throwing skills. After all these years of knitting dice this is the first time that Blanche has had the chance to use one of the dice herself and she is loving it!

If you have never tried to knit, this story might inspire you to have a go!

In Memoriam

Joy Porter Curriculum Manager

Some of you may have heard of the sad passing of Joy Porter in June this year. Joy was the ESOL Curriculum Manager since 2006. During her time at the College Joy was extremely professional and highly thought of by learners, tutors and colleagues. She had a quiet but determined manner and was not afraid to make the difficult decisions and changes which not only brought the ESOL Department out of its Notice to Improve but turned it into a very successful department.

Joy had a calm and serene nature who took life in her stride and despite her own illness she always managed to support and encourage her team. She was a very private person and only as you slowly got to know her did she reveal more about her life outside the College. Joy had a proverb in her office which inspired her:

*"It matters not how many times you fall down,
what matters most is how many times you rise."*

It was a privilege and an honour to have known Joy - she is a huge loss to the Department and is greatly missed by her friends and colleagues.

Lesley Clarke and Sarah Jobson

Bill Edgar Caretaker

Bill joined our caretaking team at Sidcup in November 2003 after a long and distinguished career in the City of London police force. He brought with him many skills from his previous job including a particular brand of tact and diplomacy and the ability to make people feel guilty with just a look! Bill enhanced our lives with many a practical joke or throw away remark that he delivered with such seriousness he was almost believable! Bill was a popular caretaker with people who booked to use our premises and was especially revered by the pistol club on Fridays as a result of his previous shooting triumphs. For all of us Bill was a character who brought humour and character to his work. He is very much missed by staff and College users alike. Our lives will not be the same on Fridays and Saturdays without his good humoured teasing and ongoing care.

*we meet many people on life's path
some pass by in an instant,
some stay a short while,
some stay a little longer,
then there are special people who become friends
and they stay in our hearts and minds forever*

The College would like to thank colleagues who contributed to his collection. We gave a cheque to Ellenor Lions Hospice for £200.

Gary Maslin Site Supervisor

Swimathon 2011

Over £700 raised

Four members of staff: **Christine Wilcock** GCSE English tutor; **Nina Wederell** PA to Principal; **Sue Palmer** Office Manager at Brampton Road; **Lesley Clarke** Head of Department; and a guest, **Lawrence Easterbrook** the former Principal's son, formed a team of five swimmers who took part in this year's Swimathon. Between them they raised over £700 for the Marie Curie Cancer Care charity. They would like to thank all those who contributed.

BTAS

Bexley Trust for Adult Students

Christmas Raffle

Tickets will be available in November for this popular raffle to win a Christmas Hamper.

Quiz Night

The College Quiz Night, held at Sidcup Arts Centre on Friday 6 May 2011, run by quizmaster Clive Wederell raised £337 for the Bexley Trust for Adult Students. The College would like to thank Clive for his hard work in setting the questions and for the enjoyable evening everyone had.

If you are interested in attending the next Quiz Evening which the BTAS Committee are hoping to hold in the Spring term, please contact Nina Wederell, on **020 8269 8988**, or email nina.wederell@aduldebexley.org

Book Money at Sidcup

BTAS would like to thank all students who have purchased books at Sidcup Arts & AEC over the past year. Approximately £1800 has been raised. Please don't forget to keep giving your unwanted books to us. Feel free to browse the books we have on offer as they are rotated and updated regularly. Books cost around 50p each with all funds raised going to a good cause.

Easter Raffle

The Easter Basket raffles held at Sidcup Arts & AEC, Brampton Road and Crayford Manor House raised a total of £112.

Items required

Please bring any unwanted birthday / Christmas gifts in to your centre marked for the attention of Glenda Jackson. These can then be used to raise funds for the Charity.

Used Postage Stamps



Please keep your donations of stamps coming in. There is a box at Sidcup for all used stamps, alternatively, please give your stamps to centre offices who will then forward them to Diane at Sidcup. Thank you.