

■ EDITION 23

incentives

inov8 REACH NEW PEAKS!

The 2009 Celebration of Learning and Skills Awards at The Sage Gateshead to mark the achievements of the regions's employers and learners certainly proved to be a night to remember for the team at Crook based inov-8 who specialise in off-road running and extreme sports products.

Winning their category 'Pioneering Recruitment' is a tremendous accolade for a small company based in a rural area, successfully recruiting local young people in partnership with ITEC North East.

ITEC's training centres attract applications for Apprenticeships from young people and adults aged 16+ aiming to get a foot on the career ladder through work-based learning in conjunction with local employers such as inov-8. ITEC assess and select suitable candidates for work placements and potential vacancies, guides everyone through the interview process and ensures continuous support for learners and employers during their Apprenticeship journey.

inov-8's Operations Manager, June Archer expressed delight on behalf of the team who are all very proud of their business and personal achievements. "Although we're a small team, we have four Apprentices and we value their commitment to both our business and their studies. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend to other employers the benefits of our partnership with ITEC who understand our business priorities,



Pictured: Jamie, Steven, Daniel and Catherine.

and help to motivate our young people to meet a range of goals and targets. We've a pride and team spirit which impacts on staff moral and injects a real sense of purpose throughout the business which we hope will bring continued rewards for everyone."



SLAYING NUMERACY DEMONS

Not everyone has a head for figures and numeracy nightmares can haunt many aspects of life until they are challenged head-on, and although Cathryn Dowd had already gained GCSE in maths, she lacked confidence with figures.

Leaving school at 16 and wanting to get a job, she successfully applied for an office junior role with Wilsonart in Shildon, the largest producer of kitchen worktops in the UK. Given experience in all departments, Cathryn flourished, gaining vocational qualifications to back up her newfound skills in Business and Administration and Customer Service Level 2.

With support from colleagues to take on more responsibilities, processing orders, purchasing, product knowledge, IT skills and communication, Cathryn progressed to an Advanced Apprenticeship and an NVQ Level 3 in Business and Administration with Key Skills, including.....numeracy!! With the depth of work involved Cathryn sought support from her ITEC assessor, Judith Barrett along with colleagues at Wilsonart. It proved a

real test of determination and commitment for Cathryn, the numeracy test proved to be a challenge, but she re-motivated herself, grasped exactly how to understand and work confidently with figures and successfully gained her Key Skills.

Cathryn is now a Customer Service/Sales Co-ordinator in Worktops and Solid Surface Sales dealing externally with UK customers and international suppliers, whilst internally is a

valued colleague now able to train other staff. Maureen Nichols, HR, is very proud of Cathryn, "She's worked very hard and bravely asked for help when she struggled which isn't easy. I've no doubt that as the company expands, Cathryn has now gained both knowledge and confidence to grow in her current role and she is ready for any future challenges. She's already started her NVQ Level 3 in Customer Service and has her sights set on a Level 4 qualification which is admirable".



Pictured: Cathryn, Service/Sales Co-ordinator

SUNNY PROSPECTS AT SUNNYDALE

Achievement rates at Sunnydale Community College in Shildon, Co. Durham, are improving as Year 10 & 11 pupils receive additional tutoring, accessing the Cisco Networking Academy thanks to the schools ICT Technician, 22 year old Kathryn Jerred.

Kathryn appreciates the benefits of introducing a more hands on,

practical approach for some pupils as she's a true exponent of the vocational route to success having completed Level 2 & 3 Apprenticeships in IT Practitioner and Professional with learning provider ITEC North East. As Kathryn carries out her duties providing support to the network and its users, she also spends time in class working as an unqualified teacher. Sunnydale's policy to encourage all staff to become involved in as

many of the curriculum activities as possible, gave Kathryn the confidence to suggest she provide additional support for groups and individual pupils offering both e-learning and written work allowing them to develop valuable ICT skills and extra confidence to succeed in their GCSE's.

Michael Flatman, Learning Systems Manager, supports Kathryn's work in school, especially the essential

role she plays in overseeing the network at neighbouring Timothy Hackworth Primary School. Michael's been impressed not only with Kathryn's ICT skills, also her communications skills as demonstrated in class, handling challenging situations and becoming a positive role model, all of which has been reflected in her salary.

Kathryn continues to relish her role in school and has started studying for a degree in History, attending evening classes at Teesside University, ultimately hoping to qualify as a teacher in History and ICT.

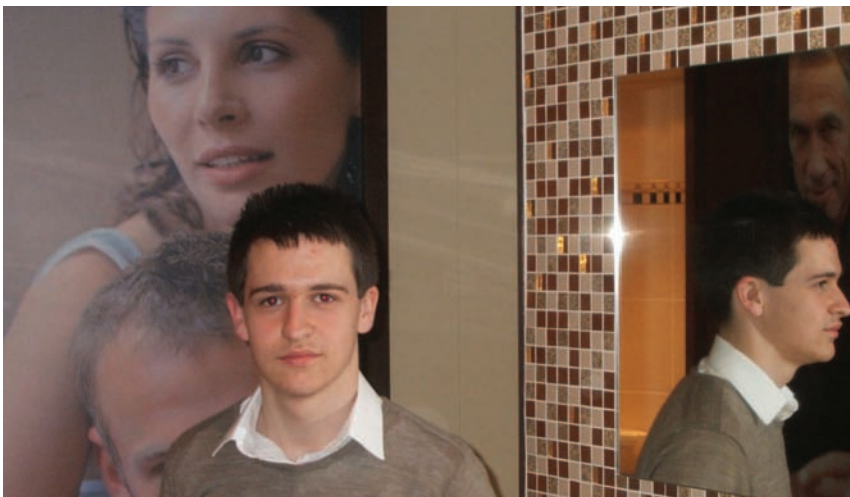


Duties: Kathryn loves providing network support

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Team player: Callum Watkin

DESIGNER DREAMS

Callum Watkin is definitely someone you would want on your team. Even though still only 17 he's acquired so many invaluable work related skills from voluntary work with young refugees and disadvantaged youth groups, part-time retail at The Metro Centre, to serving conference and banqueting guests at The Marriott Hotel – all whilst at school and college.

Callum's first involvement with ITEC in 2007 was to gain non-academic experience of IT with our Saturday Taster ICT courses and he easily completed 4 units of the IT Practitioner NVQ. Leaving school he enrolled for a Graphic Design course at college but after six months was impatient to achieve and decided a vocational Apprenticeship was his answer to making real time progress.

Martin Kelly, whose bathroom design business h2o based on Team Valley, contacted ITEC as he was in a position to recruit a young

trainee designer, but specifically someone with the potential to grow as his business expands. Callum's CV was submitted and during interview impressed Martin with his attitude, work ethic, communication skills and the potential to become a real attribute to his business. Since starting in February, Callum's design flair and IT skills are well utilised, producing bathroom designs and virtual reality views with an impressive CAD software package. Other duties include stock ordering and control, product knowledge, and crucially excellent customer service where Callum excels and he's now well on course with his NVQ Level 2 in Customer Service.

As Callum relishes his new job, Martin says, "Joining our team and being given so much information to take on board hasn't fazed Callum, in fact he seems to be thriving on everything we ask of him. It's still early days but if everything goes to plan it won't be too long before we'll be sending Callum over to one of our German suppliers for additional training".

TEA TRAVELS

Andrew Moyle is in the final stages of a very strange journey, completing a challenge he set himself to drink a cup of tea in each of the 39 true historical counties in England.

Since February 2007, starting in County Durham, Andrew has drunk a cup of tea in 27 counties, covering 4457.2 miles of which 2,639.4 were by train and spending £451.65 on travel costs. These facts and more can all be found in 'The Tea Travels' on Facebook along with an album recording memorable cuppas.

Andrew, employed as an IT Technician at Spennymoor School, should complete his Advanced Apprenticeship and IT Professional qualification this summer giving him time to plan his last few cuppas before a grand finale on New Years Eve in London.



Pictured: Andrew Moyle likes a cuppa

MC WARE'S WORLD

Many young people aspiring to a career in IT fail to progress without the benefit of a visionary employer, committed to recruiting school leavers who can demonstrate their potential to develop within the business. Since 1998, Jonathan

Wheatley, founder and MD of MC Ware based in Stokesley, has succeeded in expanding his IT Solutions business into a global marketplace, pioneering a team of bright young technicians.

ITEC's Middlesbrough training centre has three Apprentices with

MC Ware, Christopher Johnson and Francis Lane both 20 and recent recruit Hasaan Asghar 17. Chris and Francis both completed Advanced Apprenticeships in IT Professional ahead of time and now matching them, Hasaan's completed his Level 2 IT Practitioner in 10 months and started his Level 3 IT NVQ.



High flying: ITEC Middlesbrough Apprentices

In a fast moving, competitive industry it's vital all staff readily adapt to new technology. Chris travelled to San Francisco 2 years ago for training in VM Ware and with the introduction of 'Visualization' and 'Cloud Operating Systems' these guys will hold all the qualifications to respond to market dynamics faster and more efficiently than ever. A world-wide client base has seen Chris and Francis working in China, Norway, Ireland and the USA, fantastic experience for their career development.

E-PORTFOLIO VQ DAY WINNERS



Celebrating Vocational Achievement

Learning Assistant is a user-friendly online e-portfolio and e-assessment system for the delivery of NVQ's providing an online environment where portfolio building and assessment is made easy.

To mark VQ Day, 24th June 2009, Learning Assistant held a national competition to acknowledge the benefits of e-learning for candidates and assessors. ITEC's assessor Marie Weddell nominated her learner Darren Newton who has adapted to e-learning whilst working in a busy steel sales/stockist office in County Durham. Whenever he has access to the internet, Darren works on his Business & Administration portfolio, doesn't carry files of paperwork and can submit work to Marie 24/7 giving both learner and assessor flexibility to organise evidence using a variety of IT resources.

Learning Assistant were so impressed at the quality and sheer volume of entries they decided to give additional prizes so Darren and Marie have both been acknowledged in the runners-up category – Well Done.



PROGRESS2 A BRIGHTER FUTURE



'Progress2' running at The Skills Academy by The Gateshead Collective offers an insight into

Apprenticeships in Administration, ICT and Customer Service, giving opportunities to learn new skills and further develop existing skills and knowledge to meet the needs of employers. Chloe Alexandri (18) joined 'Progress2' hoping to broaden her career options after completing a Level 2 in Beauty Therapy and surprisingly discovered she really enjoyed the whole experience of learning new practical office skills. Working in hair and beauty salons, Chloe's communication and team working were absolutely no problem and combined with her new skills, totally transformed her CV.

Newcastle quayside based Park



Chloe: A great personality

Lane Plowden's award winning chambers interviewed Chloe when, due to internal promotion, they had a vacancy for an Office Assistant. Anne McParlin was impressed by Chloe's CV, her interview, and four months later is confident they have employed a young lady with real potential to develop into her role supporting colleagues, barristers and clients in a truly professional manner, enhanced by her bubbly personality.

As Chloe demonstrates her new found skills she is also progressing with evidence for her Apprenticeship with ITEC in Business and Administration Level 2.

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