



# DEFINING FUTURES

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COLLEGE NEWSLETTER ISSUE 17 /// MAY 2024

Welcome to the fifth edition of the Defining Futures newsletter for the 2023/24 academic year which covers activities from when students returned to college after the Easter holidays, until they broke up for the half-term break at the end of May.

### What's in this issue?

This issue features news on the latest developments of the college's multi-million pound campus transformation project and an overview of a very successful open evening in April.

There's also news of the work the college is doing with local employers and local job seekers, as well as a round-up of activities from a range of curriculum areas and the chance to find out how current students are finding their courses and what former students have achieved since completing their qualifications.

Enjoy the edition!



### CAMPUS TRANSFORMATION

Work is well underway on the Advanced Technology and Automotive Centre at the Wellington Road campus in Bilston, while a major milestone has been reached in the construction of the new City Learning Quarter campus in the heart of Wolverhampton.

Read on to find out more...



### ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY AND AUTOMOTIVE CENTRE - OPENING SEPTEMBER 2024

Exterior work on the £8.1 million Advanced Technology and Automotive Centre is nearing completion and, with the building now fully watertight, the interior fit-out is underway.

The centre is being purpose-built for engineering and automotive studies and will house a range of industry-standard equipment and training facilities for students and apprentices doing qualifications in these areas.



Stay in the know Download the myWolvColl app



Take a look at the College's social media platforms: YouTube Facebook Instagram X Visit [www.wolvcoll.ac.uk](http://www.wolvcoll.ac.uk)

Work is on schedule for the centre to open in September 2024, meaning that all automotive and engineering training will move from the Paget Road campus to the Wellington Road site ready for the start of the new academic year.

As work nears completion site tours will be held to showcase the facilities - but in the meantime, join Speller Metcalfe project manager Dave Sugden for a **behind the scenes preview!**

Follow progress of the Advanced Technology and Automotive Centre **here**.

////////////////////////////////////

## CITY LEARNING QUARTER - OPENING START OF THE 2025/26 ACADEMIC YEAR

The development of the college’s £61m city centre campus – part of City of Wolverhampton Council’s City Learning Quarter (CLQ) vision – reached a major milestone recently with the start of the installation of steel framework.

The three-storey campus, in Bilston Street in the city centre, will provide state-of-the art training facilities for thousands of students and apprentices and will enable the closure of the out-dated Paget Road campus which will be sold for housing development.

Mal Cowgill, principal and chief executive of the college, said: “The installation of the first steels is a significant milestone in the construction of the new campus and great news for the city, the college and the thousands of students, apprentices, staff, employers and local people who will benefit from its first-class training facilities for many years to come.

“We are extremely grateful for the support of the council and other partners in the development of the new campus and are looking forward to seeing the building take shape and the long-held vision finally becoming a reality.”

To celebrate the milestone, two students from the college joined Peter Merry, deputy chief executive, Councillor Stephen Simkins, leader of City of Wolverhampton Council, and representatives from the contractor and other partners for a commemorative ‘signing of the steel’.



Following the recent elections for Mayor of the West Midlands, new Mayor Richard Parker met with Peter and Cllr Simkins to find out more about the CLQ development and the positive impact it will have on the city and its residents.



Follow the progress of the new campus **here**.

////////////////////////////////////

## HUNDREDS OF STUDENTS ATTEND COLLEGE OPEN EVENING

Over 400 prospective students came along to an open day in April to find out about courses, qualifications and apprenticeships on offer at the college.

Visitors spoke to tutors about the best routes into their chosen career, took part in activities relating to the subject they wish to study, and found out about financial support available to help with college costs from staff in the Student Hubs.



Stay in the know Download the myWolvColl app



Take a look at the College’s social media platforms:     Visit [www.wolvcoll.ac.uk](http://www.wolvcoll.ac.uk)

## SUPPORTING LOCAL EMPLOYERS

As part of its commitment to working in partnership with employers, the college hosted two new Employer Advisory Boards for the automotive and engineering sectors.

The events were an opportunity for employers to find out about full-time and part-time courses, apprenticeships and T Level qualifications, as well as give feedback to college staff about challenges facing their industries so that courses can be adapted to address particular needs.

At the end of the event guests were given a tour of the Advanced Technology and Automotive Centre and heard about the training opportunities and industry-standard facilities it will provide for automotive and engineering students and apprentices.



## SUPPORTING LOCAL PEOPLE INTO WORK

The college offers a range of free Into Employment, Preparation for Work and Skills Bootcamp programmes to give people the skills needed to work in priority sectors in the region, as well as bespoke schemes for employers wanting to recruit to specific roles.

See the range of free courses available **here**.

Participants on a recent Preparation for Work programme for those who want to work as learning support assistants got some interview experience and gained in confidence when they donned virtual reality headsets and practised their skills in an online environment through the Bodyswaps training platform.

As a result of their training, nine out of the 14 participants were offered jobs in their chosen field.



Following a recent programme for people wanting into work in the hospitality industry, 21 out of 24 participants were offered work at Wolverhampton Racecourse; five out of seven participants on a scheme run in partnership with Midland Metro Ltd were offered jobs as customer service representatives/tram drivers, and 13 out of 15 participants on an NHS scheme were offered employment at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust.

What's more, since October 2023, working in partnership with Jobcentre Plus, staff in the Careers and Skills Hub at the Wellington Road campus have helped 167 young people into work.

Turn to page 9 to find out what students on the free programmes have learnt and the employment opportunities they have had since completing the programmes.



➔ **Stay in the know** Download the **myWolvColl** app



Take a look at the College's social media platforms:     Visit [www.wolvcoll.ac.uk](http://www.wolvcoll.ac.uk)

## COLLEGE LIFE

Students and staff celebrated the rich diversity of the college during World Day for Cultural Diversity. The day featured traditional Bhangra dancing, a Dhol drumming workshop, a VR experience of different countries, readings, poetry and live music, as well as a range of delicious international cuisine to sample.



Students at the Wellington Road campus attended a workshop on knife crime delivered by West Midlands Police which covered the serious impact on lives and the importance of making good and safe choices.



Determination, innovation and resilience was the subject of an engaging talk by author and motivational speaker Stephen Seki who inspired students with his wise words and advice on unlocking their hidden potential.



During Mental Health Awareness Week, students were given free cans of flavoured sparkling water kindly provided by AQUA Carpatica, and on Earth Day they were able to swap a plastic bottle for a reusable bottle, or a plastic bag for a fabric college tote bag.



## CURRICULUM ROUND-UP

### APPRENTICESHIPS

Lean operative apprentices Sam Brophy and Anthony McGuinness, who work for Elta UK Ltd – a manufacturer of industrial fans – both achieved distinctions in their end-point assessments (EPA).

As part of the EPA they were required to suggest improvements to health and safety and workplace organisation and efficiency processes, with their implementation of purpose-made portable tool storage units being so popular that the company has had requests from some of its suppliers for units at their own businesses.



Staff from the apprenticeship team had a stand at the National Apprenticeship and Education Event at Millennium Point in Birmingham and talked to exhibition visitors about the range of apprenticeships on offer at the college.



Stay in the know Download the myWolvColl app



Take a look at the College's social media platforms:     Visit [www.wolvcoll.ac.uk](http://www.wolvcoll.ac.uk)

## AUTOMOTIVE

Automotive students got to see a NAPA racing car up close when Gary Roper from Alliance Automotive Group paid a visit to the Paget Road campus with a replica road-legal race car to promote the British Touring Car Championship at the start of the motorsport season.



As part of their course, students have learnt how to use wheel alignment clamps which help measure the angles of a vehicles wheels to make sure they are aligned correctly.



## BAKERY, HOSPITALITY AND CATERING

Bakery students spent a day at Dawn Foods Global – a leading bakery ingredients manufacturer – benefitting from a factory tour and a talk about trends in the industry.



They also took part in a practical session with Dawn’s technical application chef and were shown different ways of icing and decorating cupcakes using the company’s frostings, sprinkles and chocolate decorations, with students Emily Dooley and Hania Boutarik both winning a Dawn baker’s toolkit for their creations.



During the term, cookery students got hands-on experience of working in a busy kitchen by helping to prepare and cook meals sold in the Food Hub at the Paget Road campus at lunchtimes.



They also got chance to find out how the army feeds its troops when they took part in a ration pack challenge. Working in two teams, and under the guidance of army chefs, they were given a ration pack and two hours to plan, prepare and cook a three-course meal suitable for hungry soldiers.

## CHILDCARE AND EARLY YEARS

Students working towards childcare and early years qualifications have been getting practical hands-on experience learning how to prepare a range of activities for children of different ages.



They also found out about job roles and career opportunities in the sector during a visit from a team from Protocol Education and, during Mental Health Awareness Week, heard about careers in the NHS and mental services available to children and young people during a visit from Christine Stevens, a mental health practitioner.



Stay in the know Download the myWolvColl app



Take a look at the College’s social media platforms: [YouTube icon] [Facebook icon] [Instagram icon] [Twitter icon] Visit [www.wolvcoll.ac.uk](http://www.wolvcoll.ac.uk)

## COMPUTING AND DIGITAL

Students working towards computing and digital qualifications found out about cyber security from leading companies during a visit to The Security Event at the NEC in Birmingham. As part of the visit they also had the chance to take part in fun computer-based activities including a race simulator.



## CONSTRUCTION

Bricklaying students doing Level 2 qualifications showcased their latest work including cavity walls, pillars, and a diamond pattern wall.



## CREATIVE ARTS AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Performing Arts students are well into rehearsals for their forthcoming end-of-year production of Little Shop of Horrors which takes place on June 26-28 at the Paget Road campus.

Hear how lead performers Jermaine and Holly - who are starring as Seymour and Audrey - are finding rehearsals and join the cast and try to guess who the singer is in the lip-sync exercise!

Photography students headed down to the automotive department to practice their skills and experiment with different lighting techniques as part of their lighting assessment.



## FUTURES FOUNDATION LEARNING

Students on Futures programmes visited the Bert Williams Leisure Centre in Bilston and took part in a gym session and got a taste of playing badminton, table tennis, pickleball and squash - all great ways to develop life skills and contribute to healthy living.



Stay in the know Download the myWolvColl app



Take a look at the College's social media platforms:     Visit [www.wolvcoll.ac.uk](http://www.wolvcoll.ac.uk)

Groups also welcomed representatives from Tesco who talked about healthy eating, budgeting and job roles with the company, and they were given a selection of fresh fruit to take home.



During Mental Health Awareness Week, they visited Sandwell Park and found out the benefits that walking can have on physical and mental wellbeing, and also held a charity raffle in memory of student Liam Asquith with all proceeds donated to Young Minds.



## HAIR AND BEAUTY

Hairdressing and barbering students spent their Fridays at the Good Shepherd charity, providing free haircuts to users of the service.

Take a look at student Olu Rufus Shaba at work [here](#).



## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Health and social care students got a taste of living with dementia by taking part in a virtual reality (VR) session to give them a deeper understanding of the progressive brain condition and also used VR technology to help develop their communication skills with patients.



## MATHS AND ENGLISH

On National Numeracy Day, maths tutor Dan Rose explained why maths is essential in everyday life and the support offered at college to help people achieve a qualification.



In preparation for exams, tutors welcomed students to English revision sessions and providing advice, support revision tips.

When GCSEs got underway, a friendly team was on hand in the reception area to check them in, calm any last minute nerves and wish them the best of luck in their exam!



Stay in the know Download the myWolvColl app



Take a look at the College's social media platforms: Visit [www.wolvcoll.ac.uk](http://www.wolvcoll.ac.uk)

## SPORTS AND FITNESS

Students from the football academy took part in an in-house tournament in mixed teams of players from different levels of qualification, and also played in a match against students representing Aston Villa



During Mental Health Awareness Week, students were joined by Wolverhampton Wanderers' right-winger Tawanda Chirewa who talked about the importance of mental wellbeing in the sports industry and took part in a Q&A session.



## TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Travel and tourism students got the lowdown on life as a Redcoat when they spent a day at Butlins in Minehead. As well as talking to the team about their varied job role, the visit was also an opportunity to find out about accommodation, hospitality and entertainment on offer and to talk to guests about their holiday experience.



Students also found out about how Oxford University's Museum of Natural History attracts visitors from all over the world during a recent visit to the city - and while they were there they also had chance to get up close with real dinosaurs and do some sightseeing!



## UNIFORMED PUBLIC SERVICES

Students working towards qualifications in uniformed public services put their teamworking skills into action during a visit to the AZTEC Adventure Park in Bromsgrove where they worked together to build a raft and take part in kayaking challenge.



During enrichment week, they took a break from the classroom and joined in a game of badminton in the sports centre.

Members of the West Midlands Police Cadets Unit, who attend training sessions at the college, marked the end of their programme at a presentation event attended by trainers and representatives from West Midlands Police.

During the event Lin Singh from the English department received a certificate of appreciation for her work with the cadets during their training.



Stay in the know Download the myWolvColl app



Take a look at the College's social media platforms: [YouTube icon] [Facebook icon] [Instagram icon] [Twitter icon] Visit [www.wolvcoll.ac.uk](http://www.wolvcoll.ac.uk)



## STUDENT STORIES

The students below all attended free Into Employment or Skills Bootcamp courses, designed to improve skills and job opportunities.

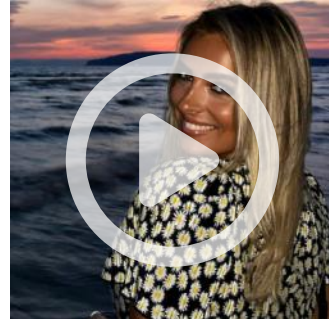
Click on their image to find out how the courses have benefitted them, including one who is now working as a support worker at the college!



*Joshua Cox -  
Into Employment  
programme (Direct  
Learning Support)*



*Tafadzwa Mushipe -  
Social Media Content  
Creator Level 4 Award*



*Kamila Sawzdargo -  
Social Media Content  
Creator Level 4 Award*

## CURRENT STUDENTS

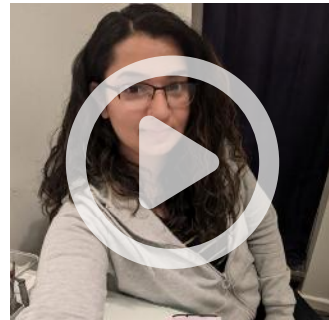
Take a look at what current students have to say about their courses by clicking on their individual links below:



*Qwert Fisher -  
Digital Support  
Services T Level*



*Sarah Heaton -  
Light Vehicle Service  
and Repair Level 3  
Diploma*



*Navkiran Klare -  
Nail Technology Level 3  
Diploma*



*Veronika Laumane -  
Multiply Maths*



*Deniza Pavolva  
English Functional  
Skills*



*Reece Wellsbury  
Engineering Level 3  
Diploma*



Stay in the know Download the **myWolvColl** app



Take a look at the College's social media platforms:     Visit [www.wolvcoll.ac.uk](http://www.wolvcoll.ac.uk)

## FORMER STUDENTS

Find out what former students have been doing since completing their qualifications with us by clicking on their images below.



*Karum Cheema -  
Media Production and  
Technology Level 3  
Diploma*



*Aaron Dhanda -  
Art and Design Level 3  
Diploma*



*Ravina Kaur -  
Travel and Tourism Level  
2 Extended Certificate*



*Joshua Vinters -  
Science and Manufacture  
Foundation Level*

Read more student stories [here](#).



➔ **Stay in the know** Download the **myWolvColl** app



Take a look at the College's social media platforms:     Visit [www.wolvcoll.ac.uk](http://www.wolvcoll.ac.uk)