

# College Times

EDITION 6

SPRING 2020

BROUGHT TO YOU BY WIGAN & LEIGH COLLEGE

## WAREHOUSE PROJECT

co-founder calls in to College

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## Where are they now?

Alumni share their success stories

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## Graduates Celebrate

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# COLLEGE RANKED IN CRUFTS 2020

## THE SUNDAY TIMES

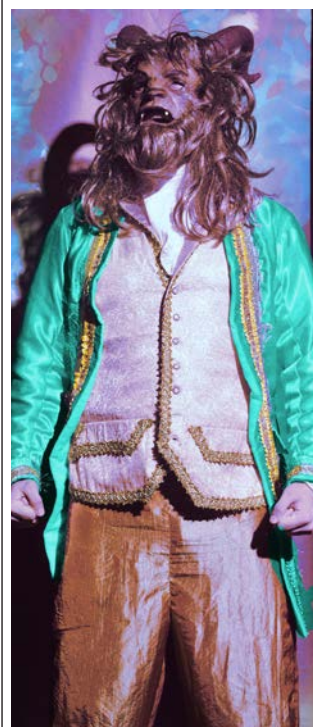
# 100

## BEST NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS TO WORK FOR 2020



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## BEAST OF A SHOW



FULL STORY PAGE 8

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**CREATING  
OUTSTANDING  
FUTURES**



# COLLEGE IS ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S BEST COMPANIES

The College is officially one of The Sunday Times 100 Best Not-For-Profit Organisations to Work For in 2020.

As one of the largest public sector employers in the Wigan borough, the College is the only northern further education provider in the Top 100 and one of only two country-wide.

Around 500 teaching and support staff completed anonymous surveys last year sharing their views on what it's like to work at the College. Best Companies, the specialists

whose recognition programme is the standard for workplace engagement, assessed their responses, placing the College at 71 in the Top 100 Best Not-for-Profit companies in the country.

Jonathan Austin, CEO & Founder of Best Companies, said: "I would like to congratulate Wigan & Leigh College on your achievement. Best Companies have been producing the accreditation standard since 2006 to acknowledge excellence in the workplace.



Staff celebrate Best Companies award



***"Organisations like Wigan & Leigh College have continued to focus on their employees and have been rewarded with an engaged workforce who tell us that this is a best company to work for."***

Vice Principal, Louise Brown, added: "We are delighted to be included in the Top 100 list. This is great recognition of our strong staff community and reinforces our vision of excellence."



Waterworks for plumbing tutor Stew Boyle

## CHILDREN IN NEED

Students and staff rose to the challenge of fundraising for Children in Need. Early Years teams created and sold Pudsey themed pebble art, while budding Hair and Beauty experts put their creative nail skills into practice in exchange for

donations to the national campaign. Others took part in a 500m indoor rowing challenge.

Meanwhile, Pagefield students paid for the pleasure of soaking their tutors in a sponge throwing session. The College raised almost £300.



Pudsey pair Andrea Cowburn and Maire Robinson



Nail Art



# 9 for learner 10 satisfaction

FE Week's 2019 annual league table placed the College as best in Greater Manchester and seventh nationally.

NICDEX rated 172 FE colleges across England in four categories: employer satisfaction, learner satisfaction, 16 to 18 positive progression and adult progression into work.

The criteria is based on performance

measures published by the Department for Education.

Scoring high across all standards, the College achieved 9/10 for learner satisfaction.

This reflects the previous year's position in the top 8% nationally in a FE Choices Survey for student satisfaction.

Principal, Anna Dawe, said: "This is a fantastic

achievement for the College, our students and staff".

**"Our aim is to provide much more than a qualification, so to achieve such high student and employer satisfaction rates is amazing."**



Students discovering dissection

## Biology taster session

Activities for Level 3 BTEC Applied Science and Animal Management students were certainly not for the

faint-hearted, in a practical HND Applied Biology taster day. The dissection of lambs' brains was just one of the planned

activities, alongside studying Daphnia (water fleas) and the effects on their heart rate after exposure to drugs.

# CLUBBING ENTREPRENEUR ON NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY



Students with Sacha Lord (centre right)

**"Students raised some interesting points,"**  
**"Factors such as safety and transport are areas I'm particularly interested in,"**

Throughout the session, the Night-Time Economy Adviser encouraged students to work with the Council on important issues.

One of Manchester's most influential nightlife figures Sacha Lord, visited the College to talk to students about their experiences of

Greater Manchester's night-time scene. Co-founder of the Warehouse Project and the Parklife Festival, Mr Lord is Manchester's first ever

Night-Time Economy Adviser. The festival organiser, who began his career with a club night at the legendary Hacienda in Manchester, visited

students to hear their views on transport links, safety, parking, as well as food outlets, entertainment and venues across the region. The session

forms part of a wider project to discover more about the region's nightlife, in a bid to offer more options for young people.

There was also an added incentive for those who share their ideas, with the promise of VIP tickets to this year's Parklife festival.



# Author Antony on Mental Health Wisdom

Published author and practising specialist nurse, Antony Simpson, studied Level 3 Childcare at the College from 2002 to 2004.

His book, Mental Health Wisdom – (Developing Understanding & Empathy) has sold in the UK, Europe and as far as Australia.

Antony faces his own

challenges having been diagnosed with a form of bi-polar, Cyclothymic Disorder, at the age of 15.

After gaining Distinctions at College, he progressed to higher education at University of Central Lancashire graduating with a degree in Children's Nursing.

*“All of my tutors were inspirational and motivating. I was able to build my confidence at College,”*

Antony currently works as an Alcohol Nurse Specialist for Adults, Children and Young People at Royal Oldham Hospital.



Alumni Antony Simpson

Wigan firefighter Steven Waygood came back to College to share his route to success with current Public Services students.

Steven completed the BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Public Services in 2003 and has gone on to enjoy a successful career in the fire service.

**“The course helped me with the application process for the fire service and I was able to reference it in my interview,”**

said Steven. “I always wanted to become a firefighter. Responding to the floods in Cockermouth has to be one of my proudest moments. I was involved in the rescue of hundreds of people and it is something I will never forget.”

Steven works for Wigan Fire and Rescue Service which covers a 70 square mile area.

## Firefighter shares career success



Firefighter Steven Waygood

## PC Andrew Seddon



PC Andrew Seddon

Public Services alumni, Police Constable Andrew Seddon, completed the BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Public Services in 2009.

“The best thing about being a police officer is getting a good result, especially when you catch someone in the process of committing a crime,” said Andrew.

“The course provided an in-depth understanding of what was expected in the public services. I enjoyed learning about the law, which has definitely helped me in my career.”



# HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR INSPIRES STUDENTS



Holocaust survivor, Harry Kessler, with A Level students at Edge Hill University

A Level students met inspirational Holocaust survivor, Harry Kessler, at a guest speaker session at Edge Hill University.

Harry shared his wartime escape story from Czechoslovakia to Chester, thanks to the family who took in his own as refugees. Students also heard about many more family members who were not lucky enough to escape Jewish oppression and the concentration camps. The visit included sample sessions in History and English Literature providing a taste of university life.

# House of Lords trip for Humanities students

Students attended Parliamentary workshops to gain an insight into how UK legislation is passed. The London trip also included a session with Baroness Benjamin to find out more about her work in the House of Lords. A cultural and historic tour of the city rounded off the day, complementing A Level studies in Economics, Social Science, History and Media.



Humanities students at the Palace of Westminster



Guest speaker Aidan Matear

# AN AID FOR ALL

Motivational speaker and disability rights campaigner Aidan Matear shared his achievements and experience of living with a disability. Aidan was inspired at school by current Wigan & Leigh College tutor Anna Cook and went on to achieve a first class honours degree in creative writing. Aidan's blog, An Aid for all, features his poetry and his experiences as an advocate for people with disabilities. Aidan has cerebral palsy and uses advanced computer software to write just by scanning his eyes over the screen.



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**DINNER 5 COURSES - £14.95**

Themed events include monthly gourmet evenings



# The best defence bar none

Students enjoyed success in their defence case at the prestigious Bar National Mock Trial at Preston Crown Court.

The team won the trial verdict working with real judges and barristers to prepare and deliver Crown Court cases.

The Judge praised the future legal eagles for their skilful speeches and sharp deliveries of their examination in chief and cross examination.



# Science students get hands-on experience



Science students visited the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) to find out more about Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR).

They attended an undergraduate lecture on the background theory of NMR prior to viewing the machine in action, preparing and running a sample of a medicine.

As a core studies topic the experience of witnessing NMR in action was invaluable in developing their understanding.

# Insight into careers in diplomatic relations



Sociology students visited the Consulate of Iraq in Manchester to learn about careers in

international diplomacy. They spoke to Embassy professionals, including the Consul General

of Iraq, the Honorary Ambassador for Japan and Ambassador for Poland.

# GAME ON



Games analyst Harvey Speakman visited Creative Design for Gaming

students sharing his experience of working for Rockstar on AAA titles such as

GTA V and Red Dead Redemption.



# BEAUTY AND THE BEAST



Students won rave reviews when they wowed audiences with their sell-out Beauty and the Beast pantomime.

University Centre

students joined those studying BTEC Diplomas to take part in a rigorous audition process with former Hollyoaks actress Helen Noble who led the casting.



Sharing the part of Fairy Formidable with the talented Peta Goodman was Elisha Duffy, who recently starred in the Channel 4 documentary series, The Dog House.

Assistant principal, Maxine Mealey, said: "Our students' enthusiasm and energy was infectious and the production really showed off their



technical ability.

"It was a wonderful twist on the popular classic which was full of humour, lavish costumes and great performances.

***"We are incredibly proud of them all and can't wait to see what's next."***

## University Centre Wigan & Leigh College graduates celebrated their achievements at the annual Higher Education Graduation ceremony.

The event, held at All Saints Parish Church, is always a special day for those who achieve diploma and degree level qualifications.

Graduands donned caps and gowns before the traditional procession from the College along Market Street, led by Liverpool Scottish Regimental Association Pipes and Drums.

Proud family members and friends eagerly awaited their arrival in a packed-out church.

Students studying Higher National Certificates, Higher National Diplomas,

Foundation Degrees and Top-up Degrees received their awards from Head of Higher Education, Dr Janet Thompson, and Chief Executive at Wigan Council, Alison McKenzie-Folan.

Mum of three, Natasha Bullough from Wigan, celebrated completing her CIPD Level 7 course. She currently works for Wigan Council in Human Resources.

"I don't think I would have finished the course without the encouragement and support of the staff," said Natasha. "I am really proud to be graduating today."

# GRADUATES CELEBRATE



Proud dad graduates



Pipers on parade



Natasha Bullough and family



Graduands prepare for the ceremony



Hats off to graduation



# FASHION STUDENTS HAVE IT ALL SEWN UP

Students competed for the chance to design a children's nightwear range for Matalan.

First year Foundation Degree (FdA) Creative Industries Fashion and Textiles students met Children's Wear Designer, Sarah Edwards, at the Wigan store to discuss ideas.

The aspiring fashion designers sketched out their ideas before

developing them with CAD software.

*"I want to see something a bit different, with great use of colour, graphic skills and a bit of everything really,"*

"Most people lean towards designing nightwear for girls but there is so much you can do for boys too," said Sarah.



Former students who have impressed with their designs have secured placements and employment with the national retailer.

Second year (FdA)

student, Natalie Halliwell is currently on placement at their Knowsley base, after catching the designer's eye with her Christmas themed designs in 2018.

Natalie is working with designers, getting involved in every aspect of the process on her six-week placement.

And former HND

Fashion and Textiles student, Madara Namike, secured a role with Matalan as a Junior Designer and has been promoted to Nightwear Designer.

# Lessons in travel industry development on board historic aircraft

HND Travel & Tourism Management students visited Manchester Airport to board the historic aircraft Concorde.

The visit formed part of the contemporary travel and tourism unit which covers key developments that have shaped the travel industry.

Students found out more about the history of the famous aircraft including the configuration of the seats and galley, its speed, and how the events of 9/11 contributed to the decision to retire it.



# VIVIENNE WESTWOOD INSPIRES STUDENTS

Foundation Degree Fashion and BA Creative Practitioner students drew inspiration from a visit to the Vivienne Westwood Exhibition in Southport.



# Conservation matters

HND Applied Biology Year 2 students are evaluating conservation at Pennington Flash to protect and develop wildlife.





# Focus on Kinship for photographers



First year Level 3 Photographers

First year Level 3 Photographers visited the Open Eye Gallery in Liverpool to generate ideas for their Kinship project. They experimented with a range of techniques using the former Liverpool Docks as a backdrop with a trip to the Tate Gallery for inspiration.

# DISCOVERING DOGS AT CRUFTS

Animal management students visited day one of Crufts to learn more about showing and handling mans' best friend. Students saw Lemon the border collie winning the British Open Agility. The main focus for the day was on the Toy and Utility Groups where miniature poodle Ch Minarets Best Kept

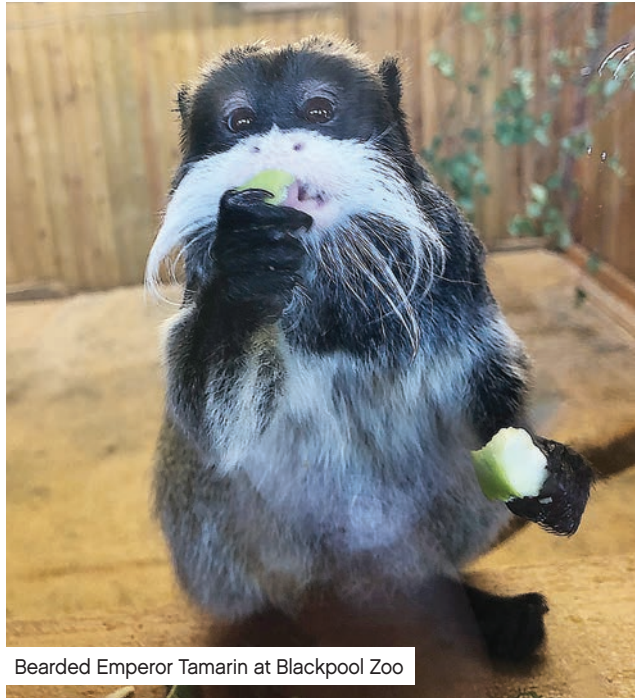


Secret, better known as Frankie, won the utility group. Pablo the bichon frise took top prize in the Toy group. The trip was the perfect platform for students to network with animal industry experts and experience the thrills and spills at the world's premier canine calendar event.



# TRAVEL AND TOURISM STUDENTS MEAN BUSINESS

Travel & Tourism students visited Blackpool Zoo to find out more about the business behind visitor attractions. They attended a talk on the commercial aspects of the zoo before getting up close and personal with a few of the residents.



Bearded Emperor Tamarin at Blackpool Zoo

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# MASTERCLASS WITH AWARD WINNING CHEF



Oliver Mather, Sous Chef

**Former Level 3 Advanced Professional Cookery student Oliver Mather returned to his training kitchen to deliver a masterclass for current students.**

Oliver is a Sous Chef at AA Rosette restaurant, The Punchbowl Inn, in Cumbria. The rising culinary star reached the final of North West Young Chef of the Year in 2018 and was keen to share his skills with

the chefs of tomorrow. “It’s good to pass on new dishes and ideas that students might not be familiar with,” said Oliver, who cooked a venison dish with beetroot puree, kale and blackcurrant sauce and a classic lemon tart – all dishes from the Punchbowl. The former Rivington and Blackrod High School pupil works under Head Chef, Alex Beard, a former 3 Michelin star establishment chef. Having progressed from Chef De Partie at the Punchbowl, Oliver has fond memories of the College.



**“I learned lots of skills on the course from experienced tutors, who helped me to prepare for work in the industry.”**

# Trainee hairdresser is a cut above



Apprentice hairdresser Tommy Taylor celebrated runner-up position in the regional finals of Concept Hair Apprentice of the Year competition. The 21-year-old spent time in care and has used the misconceptions some people have about care leavers to

motivate him along his career path. “I always wanted to go into hairdressing,” said Tommy. “I use the negative stereotypes some people have of care leavers to push me forward, as I want to prove everyone wrong. My foster mum also made sure I had a good work

ethic and insisted I get a job as soon as I left school.” Tommy is studying NVQ Level 3 Hairdressing at the College, while completing his apprenticeship at Rebel hair salon in Wigan, following a great start to his career at Trevor Sorbie in Manchester.

# FUTURE CAREERS ACADEMY

Health and Social care students teamed up with Wigan Council’s adult social care sector to create the Wigan Council Future Careers Academy. The partnership means that students will have ready access to work placements across the Wigan borough in community and GP settings supporting adult care.

Andrea Glasspell, Service Manager for Adult Social Care and Health at Wigan Council said: “This is a brilliant opportunity. Students need experience to back up their technical knowledge. “Having the right attitude and skills through a selection process shows they have the ambition to do the job well.”

# MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN SPORT



Ex-professional Wigan rugby league player, Danny Sculthorpe, spoke to Health & Social Care students about his battle with depression and anxiety. He shared lots of tips to manage stress, which helped him to cope with match day anxiety.



# MUM OF SIX BECOMES SECOND CHANCE STUDENT



Supermum Katie Tarr

Supermum Katie Tarr is on the way to her dream career as a midwife, after completing the Access to Higher Education Diploma in Health at Leigh College.

Despite not achieving GCSEs at school, the mum of six boys, aged two to ten, returned to learning to take up functional skills in English and maths before achieving GCSEs

English, Maths and Science.  
Now aged 31, Katie has earned a place on the prestigious BA (Hons) Midwifery course at Liverpool John Moores University.



# BUS DRIVER EN ROUTE TO A NEW CAREER

A Wigan father of five has returned to learning to follow his lifelong ambition of becoming a paramedic.



Matt Hewlett has paramedic plans

Matt Hewlett, 34, is currently working as a bus driver while studying Maths and English GCSEs to qualify for a place on a university paramedic course.

Having just missed out on achieving these GCSEs at school, Matt is enjoying his return to learning.

**“I am finding it easier to study now, as I have a clear goal in mind and feel much more motivated than I did at school.”**

The former sign language tutor has a study pal in his 14-year-old daughter.  
“We can help each

other with our studies, which is an added bonus to gaining the qualifications I need to get to university.”

# LEIGH ADULT LEARNING CENTRE

Leigh Adult Learning Centre opened its doors to students aged 19 and above last September.

The Centre is located at the College's former hair and beauty salon and is open on Mondays and Tuesdays offering English, maths and computing courses.

College Principal, Anna Dawe, said: “The refurbishment of the old Image Centre building has come at a perfect time as more and more adult learners are returning

to college.”  
For more information or to enrol contact **01942 761111** or email **applications@wigan-leigh.ac.uk**





**Polly Ball - Aspiring Teacher**  
**Former School:** Bedford High School  
**Course:** A Level Professional Honours Programme: Teaching Pathway  
**University offers:**  
BA (Hons) English Literature - Durham University  
BA (Hons) English - University of York  
BA (Hons) English Literature - University of Central Lancashire  
English Literature and Criminology and Criminal Justice - Bangor University  
BA (Hons) English Literature - University of Huddersfield  
*“Highlights of my course include the visit to Parliament where we observed from the gallery. I really enjoyed the mock trial at Preston Crown Court too where we practised defence and prosecution in front of real judges who gave us feedback.”*



**Samuel Ngoma - Aspiring Marine Biologist**  
**Former School:** Westleigh High School  
**Course:** BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma Applied Science  
**University offers:**  
BSc (Hons) Marine Biology - University of Plymouth  
BSc (Hons) Ocean Science and Marine Conservation - University of Plymouth  
BSc (Hons) Marine Biology with Study Abroad - University of Exeter  
*“I have always been interested in marine biology and I want to follow that career path, ideally in Australia.”*



**Carla Booth - Aspiring Journalist**  
**Former School:** Dean Trust Wigan  
**Course:** A Level Professional Honours Programme: Media & Journalism Pathway  
**University offers:**  
BA (Hons) Multimedia Journalism - Manchester Metropolitan University  
BA (Hons) Journalism - University of Brighton  
BA (Hons) Journalism - University of Chester  
BA (Hons) Journalism - University of Leeds  
*“I decided to come here because I liked the idea of smaller class sizes and the College gets good results.”*



**Cassia Pedro - Aspiring Clinical Psychologist**  
**Former School:** Dean Trust Rose Bridge  
**Course:** A Level Professional Honours Programme: Health Professional Pathway  
**University offers:**  
BSc (Hons) Psychology - Loughborough University  
BSc (Hons) Psychology - Lancaster University  
BSc (Hons) Psychology - University of Manchester  
BSc (Hons) Psychology - University of Leeds  
MA (Hons) Psychology - University of St Andrews  
*“I like the small class sizes as we have a lot of support. I particularly enjoyed trips to the Consulate of Iraq in Manchester and getting involved in the Big Borough Debate.”*



# NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

## The College celebrated the achievements of apprentices throughout the week in February.



As the lead provider of apprenticeships in Greater Manchester, the College works with more than 1,500 employers and 2,000 apprentices in a range of sectors, from health and social care to hospitality and catering,

bricklaying to business and many more. The College also employs its own apprentices in departments including finance, human resources and catering. These apprentices

account for 3.6% of the workforce, higher than the 2.3% national benchmark for public sector employers. Vice Principal for Corporate Services, Louise Brown, said: "We value the contribution

our apprentices make and support their progression. It's great to see them develop their talent and become integral to the departments in which they work."

## Apprenticeships counts for Chelsey

Chelsey Jackson is planning to become an accountant following her training and apprenticeship at ISM Construction Ltd based in Ashton-in-Makerfield.

**"I decided to do an apprenticeship as some of my friends recommended it as a great way to get a qualification and work at the same time,"**



Chelsey Jackson

Bookkeeping, accounts and admin form part of her work

and studies and she plans to progress to the Association of

Accounting Technicians (AAT) Level 3 next year before moving to

higher education at the University Centre Wigan & Leigh College.

## ENGINEERING A CAREER IN A MAN'S WORLD

Abbey Berry works full time at MBDA as a Senior Test Engineer and is a degree apprentice studying the BEng (Hons) Electrical & Electronic Engineering (Top-up).

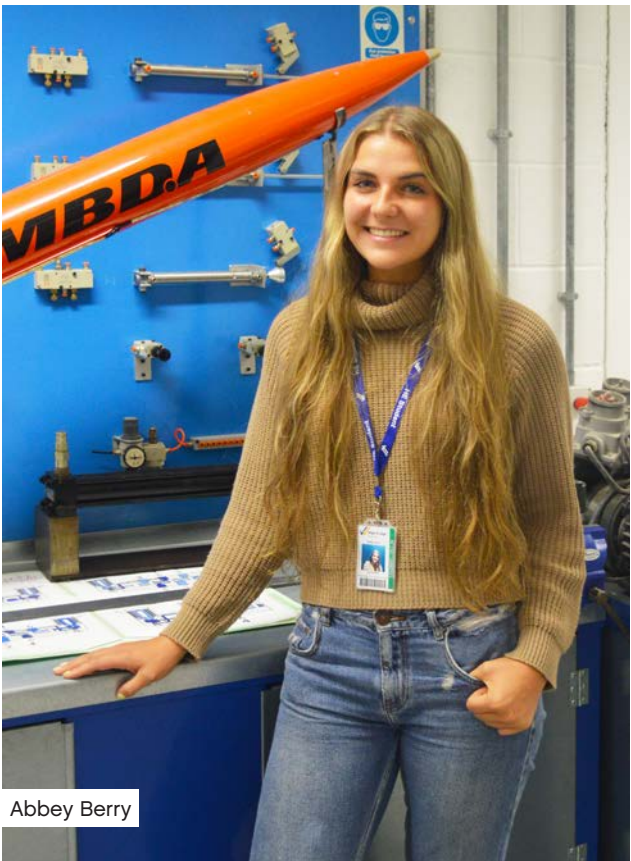
As one of the few women in the industry, Abbey is keen to encourage more to consider a role in engineering.

"It isn't a dirty industry. You will not be on the floor beneath an oily

engine. It's all extremely high tech," said Abbey. "I have never been treated any differently as a woman, but it does need to be more widely accepted.

**If more women join engineering it will become the norm."**

Abbey would like to become a Chartered Engineer and is considering a masters when she completes the degree.



Abbey Berry

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## MORGAN SIMONS



Apprentice Morgan Simons

Morgan is an apprentice at Household Hero - a small Wigan based company specialising in maintenance, construction, plumbing, electrical and glazing. He studies the Level 2 Site Carpentry qualification at College one day a week.

**"I enjoy the apprenticeship as I get to do a lot of practical work. What I learn in class is very useful too. I gain different skills at College that I use at work, such as how to cut skirting properly."**

Morgan plans on progressing to Level 3 next year.



# LEIGH COLLEGE HOSTS WOMEN'S RUGBY LEAGUE TOURNAMENT



The women's game in action



Wigan rugby team

**Leigh College hosted the North West College's Women's Rugby League Tournament this year.**

Wigan & Leigh College and Wigan Warriors Education players competed against a host of teams from across the region in the 9's format of the game.

The home team played exceptionally well, winning four out of four games. Cronton Sixth Form College, Priestley College, New College Pontefract, New

College Bradford and Carmel College took part. The RFL has also launched the Women's College Development Academy programme, linking colleges and

professional clubs to promote rugby league for female students. This provides more opportunities to play or officiate at matches, as well as take part in coaching.

## BASKETBALL AWARD



Foundation Degree Sports coaching students

Foundation Degree Sports Coaching students are set to achieve a Basketball Activators Award as part of the University Centre Advantage scheme, which

supports students with funding for activities relating to their studies. Train With Premier delivered the training and the qualification.

## WIGAN WARRIORS LEGEND ON COACHING

Wigan Warriors legend, Mick Cassidy dropped in to speak to Sport students about his current role as Head of Youth Development at the club. Mick also talked

about the importance of sport conditioning and his own coaching philosophy, sharing the value of work experience and volunteering to stand out from the rest when applying for jobs.



Mick Cassidy former Wigan Warriors player



Fred Longworth pupils on course for Young Sports Leaders award

## YOUNG SPORTS LEADERS

Foundation Degree Sports Coaching students led activities for more than 50 pupils from Fred Longworth High School to achieve the Young Sports Leaders award. The award means that the high

school pupils can lead sporting sessions for local primary school children. The sessions provided an opportunity for higher education students to develop their own coaching skills.





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# University Centre

Wigan & Leigh College

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