

AUTUMN 2015

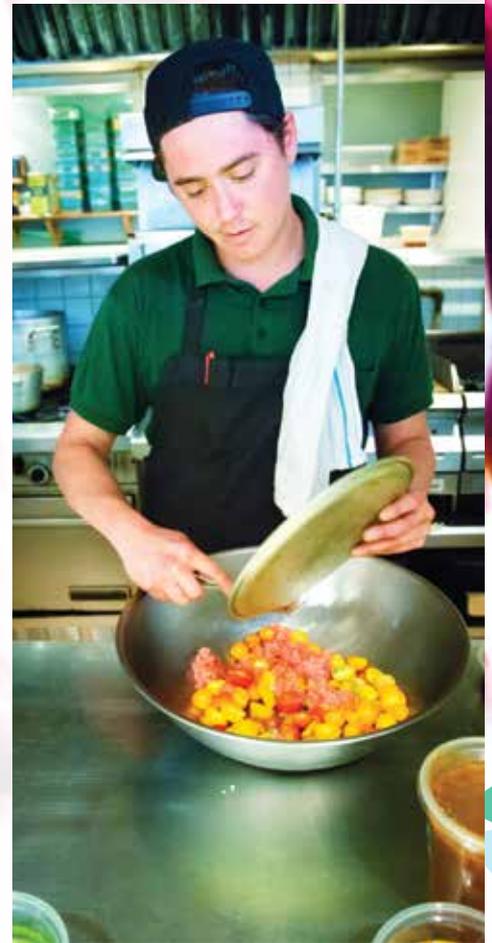


linked to the 5 College values. The event was hosted by Francesca Skelton, High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, who continues to be a great advocate of all the work you do to support our learners on their journeys to rehabilitation.

We are now entering an interesting time in OLASS. As you will be aware, there are 2 reviews of our provision taking place at the moment - the IPOS Mori review of OLASS 4 and the Dame Sally Coates review of prisoner education. I know a number of you will have been involved in interviews and discussion groups with these teams, and I hope you have taken the opportunity to contribute your wealth of experience and views. As these reviews are finalised and initial thoughts circulated, I will of course keep you informed - in the meantime, let's remain focussed on our learners and helping them to be the best they can possibly be.

So, please enjoy the newsletter, continue to share best practice with your colleagues, and let me know if you have a great story you would like to see in the next edition.

*Sally*



## Welcome

Welcome to our third newsletter - and what a fantastic summer of events we have had. Across July we celebrated the successes of our learners and staff, and of our partners, in 3 regional events, held in Reading, Stafford and Nottingham. This gave us the opportunity to showcase some great work and celebrate some fantastic individual and group successes. This culminated in a national event in August, held at the BIS offices in Westminster and in which 5 final award winners were announced,



### Library at HMP Bedford

Milton Keynes College has taken over the Library at HMP Bedford, which has now been updated with brighter, visual materials for the learners, including the inspirational & values posters, as well as newly branded signs and timetables!



### Ongoing OLASS Marketing materials

In addition to course posters and flyers that have been produced for a number of prisons across the region, and are in progress for the remaining, inspirational posters have also been designed. The aim of the inspirational posters is to encourage and motivate learners. Further to these, a set of posters depicting the Milton Keynes College Values, in keeping with the OLASS branding, are also being designed.

To view case studies and keep up to date with the latest stories visit <http://www.mkcollege.ac.uk/listing/olass-updates>

'TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH LEARNING'

# NEWS FROM ACROSS THE REGIONS

## EMPLOYMENT

### Justice Dinner - Building Better Futures for Offenders

The Justice Dinner was held on the 30th of June at the prestigious Bletchley Park, kindly hosted by the High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, in partnership with Milton Keynes College.

The 'Building Better Futures for Offenders' event aimed to bring together the key decision makers and influencers, both in the Justice System and public life, to initiate and discuss ideas that can build on current plans and actions. This includes areas such as ensuring higher levels of employment engagement, and ideas for new initiatives after offenders have been released.

Guests enjoyed pre dinner drinks and networking before leading into a formal dinner and after dinner debate hosted by the High Sheriff, Francesca Skelton and guest speaker, Baroness Helena Kennedy, finishing with a question & answer session.

Iain Standen, CEO of the Bletchley Park Trust, said, "We were delighted to be able to host this very successful and worthwhile event, which continues the tradition and commitment of the Bletchley Park Trust to support and engage with Milton Keynes and the wider Buckinghamshire community."

The Justice Dinner gave the opportunity to showcase MK College catering students who serviced the entire event, as well as the law students who were able to meet and chat with guests on the night.

### HMP Gartree Adult Learners Week

Learners at HMP Gartree celebrated Adult Learners week recently, organising a number of demonstrations from subjects across the curriculum, including:

- Painting & Decorating
- I.T
- Cookery
- Portrait drawing
- Peer mentoring

In addition, learners produced an education newsletter, which has proved so successful that it will be continued on a quarterly basis. Over 100 people attended the event, with nearly half signing up for courses.



### MK College Wins Two Awards for Ground Breaking Project Job Deal

Since 2010, Milton Keynes College has been instrumental in the delivery of a new ground-breaking National Offender Management Service (NOMS) Co-financing/ESF (European Social Fund) project called Job Deal. The NOMS ESF Programme aims to complement the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) in prisons, as well as other employment and skills services.

Milton Keynes College Job Deal team has helped over 3000 participants begin their journey towards making positive changes in their lives; supporting 250 into employment, and 100 into vocational training. As part of this project, the team has worked extensively with female offenders to facilitate and support them to make positive decisions and move their lives on.

Serco held an award ceremony at ZSL London Zoo to celebrate the successful delivery of this project. As recognition for this ground breaking work, Milton Keynes College won two awards:

- Extra Mile Award - given to Eddie Gray for his work in HMP Bronzefield with Domestic Violence victims & perpetrators
- The Innovative Delivery Award for the work in Elizabeth Fry Approved Premises, delivered by Lesley Reilly

This phase of the project will come to an end on 30th June. Ann Marie Conlon Taylor, Head of Employer Engagement for OLASS at MK College said "Milton Keynes College Job Deal team are very proud of the work we have done with ex-offenders in the community and offenders in custody over the last 5 years of the project. As a team we have supported and helped our participants to move their lives on. Our ground breaking and innovative support for women offenders has been recognised in both custody & community through these awards and I'm very proud of the team."

# NEWS FROM ACROSS THE REGIONS

## INSPIRE

where everyone  
motivates  
engages  
challenges  
and stretches  
each other

Milton Keynes  
COLLEGE

EDUCATION  
&  
SKILLS  
DEVELOPMENT

## MK College Olass - National Celebration Event Celebrates Learners, Staff And Partners

Following on from the regional celebration events, held earlier in the summer, Milton Keynes College hosted an OLASS National Celebration event in London on 7th August. The event, opened by Dr Julie Mills, Principal and CEO of MK College, saw 21 winners from across the three regions. 5 from this group of winners were picked to represent one of the College's five values:

- **Inspire** - awarded to a learner from HMP Coldingley
- **Integrity** - awarded to Nick Dawson, Admin Team Leader, HMP Nottingham
- **Respect** - awarded to a learner from HMP Spring Hill
- **Excellence** - awarded to Ian Knight, Trainer, HMP Stafford
- **Innovate** - awarded to Tim Bailey/Claire Rabbin from HMPYOI Drake Hall

Prior to the presentation of the awards by Francesca Skelton, High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, the nominator for each category stood up and spoke about why they had nominated the winning individual/s; with attendees hearing inspiring accounts of dedication from both staff, learners and partners. Karen Simmonds, Deputy Director for OLASS South Central said *"It was an absolute pleasure to put together an event that celebrates the achievements of our staff, learners and partners; and to acknowledge the good work that people do across the whole OLASS division. This will, hopefully, be the first of many such events, and I would like to thank everyone that contributed to the day, with a particular mention to Richard Ward for his help both in sourcing the venue and assisting on the day."* One learner was not able to attend the event, so a small celebratory event was held in his honour at HMP Coldingley where Sally Alexander, Executive Director of Offender Learning at MK College presented his award. Sally said *"This was a fantastic recognition of how inspiring our learners can be to their peers and how they can make such strong progress in the face of adversity."*

INSPIRE | INTEGRITY | RESPECT | EXCELLENCE | INNOVATE

## OLASS Managers' Meeting - Celebrating Success

Managers from across the OLASS division at MK College joined forces recently to take part in an Education Managers' conference celebrating successes, looking at best practice, quality, and the Employment Academy Model.

Nick Isles, Deputy Principal for MK College, opened the event, and spoke about the critical work that the college does within offender learning; working with employers and engaging learners, *"Our motto at the college is not just about education, it's a college to careers, and by the word careers I mean the life time opportunities for every individual to have a meaningful life and play a full part in society."*

The day proved an opportunity to celebrate successes from across the regions, with highlights including guest speakers; Dominic Headley, Legal Advisor at Nacro, who presented on how positive disclosure fits with recruiting fairly, followed by Dara McCarthy from RMF Construction, who gave an Employers Perspective on recruiting ex-offenders, and how it has worked for his business.

The afternoon focused on the success of the Employment Academy model, which has been developed to meet the needs of learners through the gate. Sally Alexander, Executive Director of Offender Learning at MK College said; *"The Academy is going to work with learners who are close to release and with real employers so we can help that employer to actually employ our learners and offer wider opportunities to them. We are doing this so when they are released they don't re-offend, they have a high self-esteem, who contribute to their communities and go back to supporting their families and friends."*

The day gave attendees the chance to share best practice and network, with post event evaluation forms rating the conference as excellent by all who attended.



# NEWS FROM ACROSS THE REGIONS

## Joining Up Prison Education: integration and re-integration

The Offender Learning Team from Milton Keynes College led a workshop at The Centre for Education in the Criminal Justice System annual conference on Joining Up Prison Education: integration and re-integration.

Sally Alexander, Executive Director of OLASS and Maxine Bennett, Deputy Director for Innovation and Development, discussed with an enthusiastic group of practitioners and academics, the Milton Keynes College model of delivering the right educational programmes that will lead to employment and re-integration on release from prison. Sally Alexander said, 'We have worked closely with a number of enthusiastic employers to develop programmes that will enable our learners to get real jobs on release from custody. These employers work in partnership with us to develop the programme and support the delivery in the prisons and then offer interviews both when the learners are on ROTL or after release. We have had really positive outcomes so far and are continuing to build and develop this offer. Having a real job to go to on release, will have a significant impact on these learners being able to rehabilitate and no longer offend'.

The approach adopted by Milton Keynes College is delivering the skills that current offenders need whilst developing the links with the right employers to make sure these offenders have the best chance possible when released.

## Milton Keynes College Offender Learning Celebration Events 2015

This year Milton Keynes College ran a number of events celebrating staff, learners and partners who are involved in the Offender Learning provision. Each region held a separate celebration event presenting the winners' certificates.

The events took place on the 19th June - West Midlands, 26th June - East Midlands and the 3rd July for South Central. Nominations were for the following categories:

- Support Person of the Year
- Learner of the Year - under 24s
- Learner of the Year - over 25s
- Mentor/Champion of the Year
- Teacher of the Year
- Partnership award - open to non- college employees that have gone above and beyond to support the success of OLASS.

Karen Simmonds, Deputy Director for OLASS South Central said "It was a pleasure to spend the afternoon celebrating the staff, learners and partners who have made a real difference to the journey our learners are on." Lisa Brown, Deputy Director for OLASS West Midlands said "It was fantastic to see the achievements made by the learners and staff recognised. We hope to continue celebrating the successes in the future - making this event the first of many."



## HMP Huntercombe Takes Part in Local Annual Art Show

HMP Huntercombe submitted a selection of artwork to exhibit at the local village Nettlebed's annual art show in August. It was an honour for HMP Huntercombe to be invited to participate in the prestigious show, which attracts amateur artists of high calibre. This year the prison displayed 30 - 40 pieces, mostly landscapes and seascapes, and learners also made a number of greeting cards which were produced as part of the City and Guilds course available at the prison. Many items were sold on the day, successfully raising a grand total of £152.00 in aid of the charity Sue Ryder, a local hospice.

## Prize awarded by NIACE for Best Content Developed at the Virtual Campus



Over the past year, Milton Keynes College has been working with NIACE, and others in the Justice Partnership, to develop Assistive Technologies for the Virtual Campus. The project has focused on developing tools to enhance inclusion and improve learning resources for learners through interactivity.

Participants on the project were tasked with developing a resource to demonstrate how a simple handout could be transformed into a piece of interactive and inclusive content. Mike Parry, Milton Keynes College, Regional Co-Ordinator, embraced the challenge and developed an interactive resource which contained a series of matching exercises and videos.

Mike, who won the prize, awarded by NIACE, for the Best Content Developed, said "I really enjoyed putting this content together and using the various tools and techniques demonstrated during the workshops but more importantly, opening up static learning resources to include students with a range of learning needs and create content which is engaging and fun."

Maxine Bennett, Deputy Director in Offender Learning, said "Milton Keynes College is committed to the development of Virtual Campus resources and we are rightly proud of Mike for this achievement. We look forward to seeing the new content on the Virtual Campus."