

The Entrepreneur

Winter 2010-11

Darwen Aldridge Community Academy



Produced by Academy students

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Team Spirit

Welcome to DACA!



Department for Education. Rod Aldridge expressed his delight at the opening of the new building: "The place is absolutely incredible; we have been working on this for six years. Everything you see now was designed around a table and to see it now is absolutely unbelievable, I am proud of it and everyone in it."

As one of two current Aldridge Academies, DACA hopes to be an inspiration for further projects with its innovative approaches to teaching and learning - a view fully supported by Rod Aldridge: "We have plans to sponsor another two academies in the future. We want to share our success with others."

Our newly appointed Head Boy and Head Girl, John Meadowcroft and Zoe Harrison added: "We are very impressed with the new building, the learning spaces are great, especially the break-out areas."

Darwen Aldridge Community Academy is now established in its magnificent new building.

Standing in the centre of Darwen, the futuristic building is open and spacious, containing flexible learning spaces and, most importantly, a home for aspiring entrepreneurs. Everyone helped to make the transition from Holden Fold run as

smoothly as possible. Boxes were unpacked, students' work exhibited and now the building looks amazing both inside and out. The business-like feel to the Academy has made a huge impression on the public, with many positive comments about the Entrepreneurship Centre and the sports facilities.

The Academy is jointly funded by our Sponsor, The Aldridge Foundation and the



Community Open Day

In the first few months of opening, over 2000 local people have been shown around DACA's state of the art facilities.

During the Community Open Day, 300 members from the local community and business sector enjoyed a tour of the Academy which included the Darwen Creates enterprise haven. They were also present for the launch of the Pennine Lancashire No Limits Young Enterprise Fund. This is a financial award for young people (14-25) who wish to take their successful enterprise projects further. The fund aims to recognise enterprising behaviour, encouraging young entrepreneurs to achieve their full potential. Something DACA knows all about!

Later in the evening the doors were open to the wider community to showcase the opportunities the Academy could offer to local residents. In addition to the tours, conducted by our own Lead Students, guests received a welcome address by Principal, Mr Loughran, and Academy Sponsor, Rod Aldridge.

Mr Loughran said: "The Academy is located at the heart of the town and has a commitment to the Darwen Community. It is intended that the new facilities will increasingly benefit the wider community as we become established at our new location."

Rod Aldridge is pictured addressing the guests.

Want to start a business?



DACA has launched a groundbreaking new project designed to support entrepreneurs when starting a business.

Darwen Creates is a unique business incubation centre for young entrepreneurs and members of the community. Based on the Entrepreneurship Bridge, it has 11 business pods providing modern, flexible workspace for people to start and run a business. Alongside the office space there is a dedicated team offering support and advice to entrepreneurs interested in starting a business.

The team also organises workshops and events to help people develop their business skills and bring together local businesses to network and share ideas. All events and support are freely provided and the centre is also free for 16-25 year olds until they start making money from their business.

Max Larcombe, Darwen Creates Project Manager said: "Despite only being open a few weeks the project is already proving to be extremely popular. A number of businesses are using the pods as their full-time office space and we have been working with people across the community to support them in their business ventures."

"I want to encourage everybody in the local community who is interested in starting a business or has recently started a business, to contact us to find out how we can help. We're also keen to work with local businesses that might be able to mentor new entrepreneurs through their entrepreneurial journey."

The project is supported by No Limits funding (www.no-limits.org.uk) and is part of a number of No Limits projects across Pennine Lancashire. For more information visit www.daca.uk.com/darwencreates or call 01254 819 555.

Meet the news crew

This is the DACA team which has edited the winter edition of The Entrepreneur.



Helping to produce The Entrepreneur requires dedication, independent research and most importantly, people skills. Not only does The Entrepreneur act as a fun and exciting project but it also helps to teach essential entrepreneurial expertise. If you think you are a budding reporter and would like to build your entrepreneur portfolio, then contact the teachers in our team. We will be recruiting new members in January - so feel free to come along!

The news crew welcomes comments and suggestions from members of the local community. If you have an interesting story then please let us know. Address your email or letter to The Entrepreneur at the Academy address above. If any local businesses would like to advertise in our spring edition, please contact Mrs Lewin on 01254 819500.

Pictured are: Hannah Forster, Kenny Harle, Christian Riley, Sean Webster and Qachina McKeefery with staff members Miss Tumelty, Miss Grahame-Dickinson and Entrepreneurship Projects Co-ordinator, Mrs Lewin.



Adrenaline Enterprise Event

DACA students brought dads, brothers and uncles along to an Adrenaline Enterprise Event at the Academy, supported by Inspiring Communities.

Over 150 people took part in a variety of workshops organised by Seven Stars Agency, Hill Climb Ltd and ONTECA. Aimed at engaging Dads and Lads, those in attendance were challenged to try something new and take part in BMXing, Martial Arts, Soccer Skills, Graffiti Art, Junk Music, High Ropes, Archery, Breakdancing, Basketball, DJing and Computer Game Design.

Participants gained a real life insight into entrepreneurship from Director of the Seven Stars Agency, Leon Henderson. Seeing the workshop



leaders demonstrate their skills first-hand gave those in attendance an understanding that having a positive attitude and a determination to succeed was the key to their talent - and that practice definitely makes perfect!

Inspiring Communities Project Co-ordinator, Jude Smith, commented: "It was lovely to see a wide range of positive role models on the day, from workshop providers to dads, brothers and uncles."

Our future media stars!

“Stand out in Darwen,”

DACA students have been learning how television and radio programmes are made during a visit to the BBC regional television centre for the North West.

The thirteen students also had chance to visit the interactive studio where they had a go at presenting the weather and starring in their very own radio drama, complete with sound effects! The tour was part of the Stand out in Darwen project and it gave the students an insight into the many programmes originating from the BBC. They saw the North West Tonight studio, Radio Manchester and Studio 7, the home of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra.

The students also found out about the BBC's move to the MediaCityUK development at Salford Quays. When the new location opens, 2500 staff will be employed through the relocation of five London-based departments, along with local and network broadcasting from Manchester city centre. The University of Salford will also have a presence, with a brand new campus for more than 1500 students and staff.

The Stand out in Darwen project is focused on helping young people achieve their potential and raise their aspirations. The principles of the project are: Inspire Me, Advise Me, Guide Me and Connect Me. The BBC tour was one of many events aimed at broadening the horizons of our young people and inspiring them to succeed.



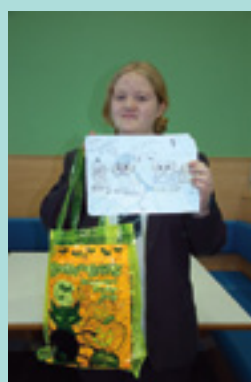
Scary sketches!

The Learning Resource Centre has held a Scary Halloween Drawing Competition.

Due to the massive number of entries it was decided to have two categories - Most Scary and Cute Scary! The winner of the Most Scary category was Nico Cavallo (7E) and the winner of the Cute Scary category was Sarah-Jane Singleton (9W).

Both winners received a goody bag filled with Halloween treats. Thank you to all

the students who entered the competition. We had some outstanding contributions and we look forward to holding more fun competitions and activities in the LRC in the future. Watch this space!



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A novel month



Six DACA students have undertaken the enormous challenge of writing a novel in a month, as part of the Young Writers Programme.

The students had prepared for the November challenge since May, by attending regular weekly writing workshops in the LRC. They joined thousands of other students worldwide who also took part in the exciting

project which tested their creativity and endurance to the limit. We were the only school in Lancashire participating in the event. The sky's the limit and who knows, we may have some published authors at DACA when the results are announced!

The students taking part are pictured left to right: Qachina McKeefery (Y10), Ewelina Gorska (Y9), Ms Arnott (LRC Manager), Ryan Perkins (Y10), Georgie Clarke (Y12), Sammy Bourke (Y12) and Olivia Davies (Y12).

Pink Passion Party

By Christian Riley

Almost 300 women and young girls attended DACA's third Pink Passion Party.

The Party was organised as part of Global Enterprise Week and the event aimed to raise aspirations and bring the community of Darwen together to celebrate its talent. Students showcased their enterprising ideas and hosted stalls to raise money for Cancer Research and the East Lancashire Hospice.

Local entrepreneur and managing director of JoJa Designs HQ, Giorgia Smithies, shared her success story with the guests. Aged only 19, she provided the perfect role model to the many youngsters and women of Darwen who have a passion for business and an entrepreneurial spirit.

As part of the Stand out in Darwen campaign, the fun and glamorous Party was hosted by Martin Cooper of 107 The Bee. The evening included a raffle, with the winners sharing numerous prizes donated



by local companies. The event was rounded off with a fashion show featuring the latest winter fashions from Sainsbury's and designer wear by Cargo.

Jude Smith, Inspiring Communities Co-ordinator at DACA said: "We are passionate in teaching entrepreneurship so we can equip young people to make a greater contribution to our community. If we can have fun and enjoyment in doing this, then it is even better!"

Stand out in Darwen has secured £450,000 from the Inspiring Communities Government grant programme. It is a partnership between DACA, Blackburn with Darwen Community and Voluntary Service, and Blackburn with Darwen Strategic Partnership.

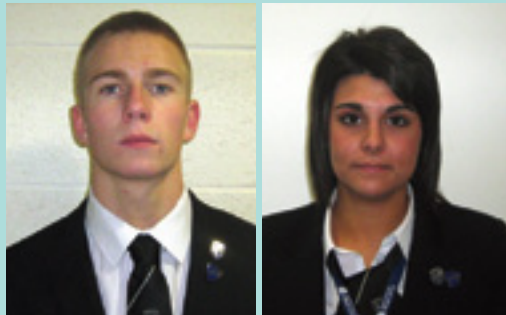
Please visit www.standoutindarwen.com for information of how you can get involved in Stand out in Darwen or to register your interest in the programme.



Leading the way

We have selected our Year 11 Lead Students and the Head Boy and Head Girl for 2010-2011.

Each student candidate produced a promotional video about themselves which was screened around the Academy. Teachers and students were invited to vote, resulting in John Meadowcroft and Zoe Harrison (pictured) being selected as our Senior Lead Students.



During the presentation assembly both John and Zoe accepted their roles gracefully, as Head Boy and Head Girl, and invited their fellow lead students to join them as part of the team. The students have continually represented the Academy in areas such as Sport, Art and Entrepreneurship and they are great ambassadors for the Academy and also for future students.

We wish them all the best in their new role and congratulate all Lead Students for their effort and determination. Well done to: Lucy Smith, Kyle Craven, Dylan Norton, Rokasana Kujawa, Alice Leach, Ciaran Pearson-Moore, Hayley Dickinson, Amber Riley, Khushna Sulaman-Butt, Molly Charnley, Kieron Dowdall, Michael Heeks, Callum Ryan, Lauren Tracey, Abigail Ireland, Matthew Phillipson, Matthew Lee, Luke Atkinson, John Meadowcroft, Lewis Taylor, Joannah Riley, Liam Dargan, Gabrielle Harrison, Amanda Smith, Elizabeth Whittaker, David Nairn, Liam Shaw, Seana Nicholson, Beth Scanlon, Sammie Ford, Matthew Phillipson, Zoe Harrison, Megan Dawson, Rebecca Hunt, Jonathan Eccles, Charlotte Tierney, Ryan Fern, Aimee Dewse, Scott Kelsall, Annie Foster, David Ryder.

My Life is My Business

In the last edition of *The Entrepreneur* we wrote about *My Life is My Business*, a pilot programme run by the Aldridge Foundation, DACA, Blackburn with Darwen Council and Youth at Risk.

The programme involved young people aged 16-25 from the local community and aimed to get them back into education, employment, training or entrepreneurship. The participants were engaged in personal development training and a range of entrepreneurial experiences.

Nine months into the programme and we couldn't be any prouder of the results. All the young people are now re-engaged. Three people have gained employment, six have signed up to college courses, one has gone



onto a training programme with the Prince's Trust and nine are engaged in starting up a business!

As the first phase of *My Life is My Business* came to an end we held a celebration event at DACA. With the inspiring backdrop of the Academy's own Entrepreneurship Centre, friends and family of the participants helped them to celebrate their success.

Pictured are some of the group meeting Rod Aldridge.

Remembrance Day

By Qachina McKeefery

DACA students visited the old Darwen Cemetery on Remembrance Day, accompanied by Mr Turner and Mrs Martin of the Humanities Department.

The seven students read war poems, extracts from the Bible and then the whole group said prayers. Pupils from the junior school laid wreaths of poppies on the war

memorials. At the eleventh hour, everyone stood still in silence. The only noise that could be heard was the rustling of leaves and the whistle of wind blowing through the trees. The two minutes seemed like an eternity and, as soon as they were over, people lifted their heads as if waking from a strange dream.

After singing the Remembrance Day Hymn, the large group split up and began to search for the 96 war graves in the cemetery in order to place their poppies. The ceremony was short, dignified and tinged with sorrow.



Stand out and volunteer



Blackburn with Darwen CVS Volunteer Centre, in conjunction with Stand out in Darwen, has organised an Intergenerational Volunteering event.

Held at DACA, the event brought together parents and students to participate in volunteering taster sessions. The partner organisations involved were: Scrap Arts Material Store, Starfish Kitchen, Wildlife Trust, NSPCC, Friends of Darwen Cemetery and Bangdrums.



The volunteering taster sessions included activities related to cooking, music, arts and crafts, the environment and fundraising. During the event, the organisations allowed participants to try out the various volunteering opportunities that they could offer. Parents and students had to indicate on a score sheet four intergenerational volunteering activities of their choice. The winning organisations were: Friends of Darwen Cemetery, Starfish Kitchen, Bangdrum and Lancashire Wildlife Trust.



Various volunteering sessions have recently been taking place at DACA including Starfish Kitchen (free cookery activities) and Bangdrum (free samba drumming activities). Art, Drama and Conservation volunteering opportunities will be delivered in the New Year. For more details please contact Jude Smith, Inspiring Communities Co-ordinator, 07545 735115 or the Volunteer Centre 01254 583957 (option 4).



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Team spirit



Building relationships with the local community is one of the most important aspects within Darwen Aldridge Community Academy.

Over the past two years the Academy has formed a close association with Sainsbury's who have supported us in a number of ways. Last year Sainsbury's sponsored one of the trophies at the Sports Awards and members of the store were present to award Year 10 girls with the trophy for Fair Play.

In a recent assembly, Ian Hampshire and other Sainsbury's staff presented the Key Stage 3 football team with an excellent new kit. The store has also committed to further sponsorship of another football kit and a netball kit. This represents an outstanding contribution from our neighbours and we would like to extend our thanks to Sainsbury's and we hope to continue to build a strong bond with the store.

Sixth Form success

By Sean Webster

Over 170 prospective sixth form students from DACA and neighbouring schools have enjoyed an exciting evening in the new building.

Word has spread about the range of excellent new facilities and the courses on offer at the DACA Sixth Form, resulting in a high interest for the 2011/2012 intake. Principal, Mr Loughran, gave a speech to prospective students and their parents about the Academy's bright future. There were activities taking place in each department around the building. The

Academy offers a number of BTEC and A Level courses which aim to give our students the best possible start to their working future.

Members of our current sixth form were available for guided tours and to give information to parents and prospective students about their time at DACA. Teachers were also available to offer guidance and support about their subject areas and the change from Year 11 to Sixth Form.

We anticipate that many of our current Year 11s will be joining us next year as well as increased numbers of students from other schools in the area, to enjoy the fantastic facilities and teaching DACA has to offer.

Career Academy

By Katie Stewart, Daniel Conway, Aysha Iltaf and Le'tasha Thompson

DACA's first Entrepreneurship Career Academy has been a great success.

The sixth form programme of study is equivalent to 3 A Levels. Enhancement and support is provided through business mentors and inspirational lectures, visits and seminars. Students involved have a paid internship in the holidays, between Year 12 and 13, in places such as The Lowry, 3 in a Bar, Little Angels and Concept 4.

We have regular meetings with our mentors to discuss coursework and issues where they can help. We have been to the Capital experience in London and attended business-led lectures, seminars and company visits. The hands-on experiences have taught us life skills such as interview techniques and public speaking. Internships have included working in Human Resources, finance and



administration, giving us an insight into daily tasks and helping with our college work. It has been extremely rewarding and we have really enjoyed the experiences. An additional nine students will join the Career Academy cohort through 2010/11.

Pictured are some of the students taking part in the programme.

Moving on to High School

By Hannah Forster

Moving on to High School (MOTHS) is a programme to support students with the move from primary to high school.

It starts with primary students and covers their transition, making the move much easier. They are given an insight into high school which builds their confidence about

moving. Mrs Worden works with the students and gets to know them really well. When they come to the Academy, there is somebody they already know and can go to with any concerns.

MOTHS continues at DACA in the first half-term, enabling students to work in small groups and make friends with others from different schools. It is an invaluable programme for new students and it's also really good fun!