

IN BRIEF

Help tackling teen problems

MALDON: Around 100 pupils from Maldon and Burnham will look at issues faced by many young people – including bullying, relationship problems, low self-esteem and personal safety – at a special event today (Thursday).

Students from Plume Maldon Community Academy and Ormiston Rivers Academy in Burnham are taking part in the Surviving the Teenage Years youth conference at Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome.

Run by The Britten Partnership and Essex County Council's Youth Service, the event sees performing arts students create various scenarios that illustrate some of the problems, before pupils are split into groups for workshops to discuss the themes and get practical advice on coping strategies.

Ray Gooding, Essex County Council's cabinet member for education and lifelong learning, said: "It is important teenagers realise they are not alone and this event aims to encourage them to be more open, as well as signposting them to support available locally through the council and our partners."

The write stuff

FELSTED: Wordsmith Henry Dean, 14, from Felsted School, has won the National Heffers Writing Competition after entering a piece of creative writing originally set as English homework.

Using the given theme of The Dark Forest, Henry wrote an introduction to a story called The Manual which he hopes to continue. It was inspired by a television advert for Dior featuring Johnny Depp.



PASSING THE TORCH: (l-r) Nick Garner, Kim Holdsworth, Konner McKay, Kaytie James and Jacob Grothier carry the torch for apprenticeships in the county

Apprentice torch lights the way for on-the-job learning

College works with top firms to give teens a new path to employment

By Paul Dent-Jones
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THE 'apprentice torch' made a whistle-stop visit to Chelmsford College on its UK tour to celebrate and champion National Apprenticeship Week.

Chelmsford College is the first apprentice provider in the region to welcome the Olympic-style torch as it hosted 50 of the county's biggest employers with an interest in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) recruits.

Space technology pioneers e2v, based in Waterhouse Lane, Chelmsford, currently has 14 Chelmsford College recruits and will take on another ten next year.

Chris Hawkins, apprenticeship manager at e2v, said: "e2v has been established in Chelmsford for nearly 70 years and it is very important to us to continue to be part of the local community and to be part of the future of the area."

Mr Hawkins is pleased to be developing a bespoke Higher Level Apprenticeship which incorporates an HNC in manufacturing and engineering with Chelmsford College. This will effectively sponsor the apprentices from Btec L3 through HNC and ultimately to HND/degree-level qualifications.

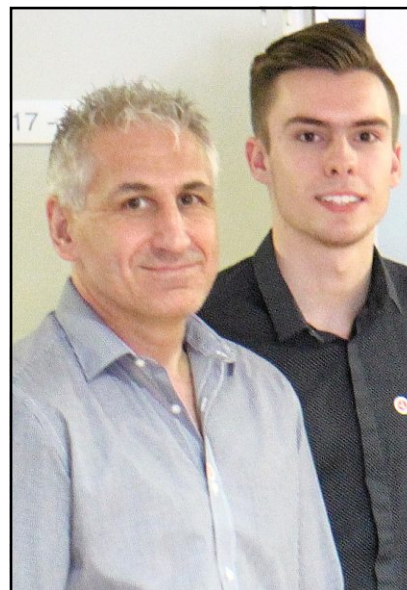
Matt Pike, who is coming to the end of his apprenticeship at e2v, is planning to continue with the new HNC apprenticeship before going onto higher qualifications.

Outer space

"It's been the making of me, I've come on in leaps and bounds," said the 18-year-old from Little Waltham, who wants to help drive the firm's space imaging technology that is helping photograph never-before-seen parts of outer space.

The European Space Agency's £1 billion Rosetta spaceship spent ten years travelling 4 billion miles to reach Comet 67P in 2014, where it deployed a probe named Philae to land on the 2.4-mile long comet, which is hurtling through space at 34,175mph more than 317 million miles away – but it was e2v camera technology that beamed the first pictures back to earth.

The theme of this year's National



PLEASED: Chris Hawkins, apprenticeship manager at e2v, and apprentice Matt Pike

Apprenticeship Week celebration, from March 14 to 18, is Rise to the Top and aims to raise awareness of higher apprenticeships which offer a new work-based route into professions that have traditionally been the preserve of graduates.

Prime Minister David Cameron, who was the first to pass the torch last month, is committed to 3 million new apprenticeships by 2020.

Another happy employer is Cruise & Maritime Voyages in Purfleet.

Having acquired a new vessel, Magellan, in March 2015, the company has grown rapidly and this is the first year it has recruited apprentices.

"We are thrilled with the results," said HR manager Miranda Coates. "The sup-

port from the college was fantastic and the apprentices have done so well."

Harry Bowen, 17, has completed his Level 2 NVQ in business administration, together with achieving his functional skills in maths and ICT.

He was interviewed for a job as a customer services consultant once he had completed his apprenticeship.

"He just blew us away in his interview – he has come so far in just one year – he's now a permanent member of the team," added Miranda.

Harry said: "I have really enjoyed my apprenticeship and as this is my first job it has really helped me gain a greater understanding."

The apprenticeship provision at Chelmsford College and its relationship with local employers was recently rated 'good' by Ofsted and the organisation is committed to developing courses to meet the current and future needs of the wider business community.

Working closely with Essex County Council, the college uses its 'skills evidence base' to shape the programme.

Growth areas

This analysis of local skills and employment needs has established seven growth areas, such as construction, advanced manufacturing, health and care and has prompted new apprenticeship pathways such as Chelmsford Colleges' apprenticeship in clinical healthcare.

In addition, it is currently running advanced level technical construction apprenticeships for civil engineers and has recently introduced pathways for surveying and estimating.

The higher level apprenticeships in this industry should be ready in September.

■ If you are an employer and could benefit from having an apprentice or if you are looking for an apprenticeship, call the college for an informal chat on 01245 293031.



not being paid the salary you deserve?

'Earning while I study is a major positive for me'

DEMI Starck, 21, has also completed her Level 3 NVQ and is preparing to start her Level 4 qualification.

"Doing an

apprenticeship you receive the same benefits as other employees and you're also earning whilst learning which is a major positive," she

said. "The best thing for me about doing an apprenticeship is that I've been offered a full time permanent position at Cruise and Maritime,

so I'm so pleased I took up the opportunity to do this apprenticeship and I really would definitely recommend others to do it."



FULL-TIME: Demi Starck, 21