

PRESS RELEASE! PRESS RELEASE! PRESS RELEASE!

**LOCAL COLLEGE STUDENT WINS BBC RADIO
APPRENTICE COMPETITION**

Friday 6 March 2009

Nicki Smith, a student at Cambridge Regional College (CRC) has won “The Apprentice-Search for a Star” competition and been hired for one week’s work experience at BBC Cambridgeshire.



Sam Lovell, Gary Pounder, Nicki Smith and Chelsea Robertson

Nicki (18), along with four other students studying the National Diploma in Media – Radio Broadcast & Journalism at CRC, were all put forward to take part in the competition which ran throughout this week, LIVE on the BBC Radio Cambridgeshire Breakfast Show.

Each morning the students received their task live on-air and from Tuesday morning onwards, one “Apprentice” was fired. Monday’s task was to record a 30 second vox pop (a selection of comments from the public) on a subject of their choosing. The recordings, which covered topics such as drinking laws, rising crime rates and teen mums, were broadcast on Tuesday morning, resulting in the first student, Darren being fired!

On Wednesday the students were really put to the test when they were asked to get together and create a live bulletin, including news, sport and weather, with only a few minutes notice. They performed well under the pressure, but someone had to go and on the day, Gary was fired.

Thursday saw the “Apprentices” accompany roving BBC Reporter Jozef Hall to Cambridge Market Square where the students were tasked with coming up with a live report and interview, but with no briefing. This was to test their skills in the essential art of *finding* news, as there may not always be a convenient story to use. Nicki talked to the Chairman of the National Country Market about how the recession has affected stall holders and Sam discussed how they would be affected by the proposed congestion charge. Chelsea reported on the problems of late-licensing laws in the city centre, but later that morning, she was fired by Jeremy.

On Friday, both Sam and Nicky spent the morning helping Jeremy to run the Breakfast Show. They introduced news articles, talked to callers and completed tasks live on air, such as “critique BBC Radio Cambridgeshire in one minute”. After a nerve-wracking two hours of on-air work, Nicki was declared “Sir” Jeremy’s Apprentice! She won one week’s work experience at the BBC, where she will hone her skills in radio, television and online services. Runner-up Sam also won some work experience at 209 Community Radio.

“I was really ecstatic to win the competition, but I was also really surprised as the other students were so good!” commented Nicki. She continued, “I found the

news reading task the most stressful as we had very little preparation and my subject is sports which I know nothing about! I have learnt so much from the experience and gained so much more confidence in my presentation skills and abilities”.

Jeremy Sallis, Breakfast Show presenter said, “Nicki shows some real potential and I'm sure she'll fit in very well during her week at BBC Radio Cambridgeshire. Picking the winner was a desperately hard job and all of the wannabe Apprentices excelled at some point during the week; they are a credit to the hard work and opportunities provided at Cambridge Regional College. I'm sure I'll be seeing all of them at some point in the industry”.

The National Diploma is only 1 of 44 in the country and provides a practical in-depth introduction to the creative and technical skills of radio journalism, broadcasting and audio production.

Drew Tremlett, Sector Leader for Media commented, “This was a fantastic opportunity and experience for the five students. They got to put all their skills to the test, as well as gaining valuable experience in their industry of choice. I congratulate them all for their work throughout the week, but Nicki in particular who did a wonderful job”.

- ENDS -

NOTE TO EDITORS:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cambridgeshire/apprentice/>

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

For more information, please contact Lesley Devaney, PR & Events Co-ordinator, on 01223 418773 or email ldevaney@camre.ac.uk