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CAMBRIDGE MAYOR AND CRC PRINCIPAL GO 'BACK TO THE FLOOR' FOR APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

3 February 2010

Cambridge Mayor Russ McPherson and College Principal Rick Dearing went 'back to the floor' at Cambridge Regional College to find out more about life as an Apprentice for National Apprenticeship Week.

Rick swapped his normal business suit for chef's whites to work alongside Apprentices in the Catering Academy, while the Mayor found himself at the cutting edge of events in the hair salons.



Rick Dearing learning new skills in the Catering Academy

Vice Principals Steve Caley and Chris Sherwin also did their bit to help draw attention to the talents and skills of Apprentices – Steve trying his hand at carpentry, and Chris working in the College’s Sports Centre.

The novel event was part of a week of activities at the College to celebrate Apprenticeships, including an Apprentices’ Fair in the College’s SmartLIFE Centre, and the annual National Apprenticeship Week Dinner at The Park restaurant.

Rick, who joined a group of Catering Apprentices to help cook up a risotto and beef olives, said he had picked up professional techniques for preparing and presenting food.

“It was great to be involved in this rewarding practical activity from which you could see, smell and taste the finished meal, and to work alongside some exceptionally talented young people,” he said.

The Mayor spent his time in the hair training salon and practiced his cutting skills on a mannequin – a far cry from his usual mayoral duties of greeting dignitaries and representing Cambridge. He was happy to turn his hand to a wide range of back-up skills in the salon, including sweeping the floor, to mark the significant role apprentices play in everyday life.



The Mayor with Apprentice Gary Hellman



Steve Caley in the Carpentry workshop

Steve Caley donned blue overalls for his session in the carpentry workshops and was also impressed by the skills shown by his fellow Apprentices – all employed by local firms. He learned how to put a door together, and then had a go at doing it himself, under the watchful eye of tutors in the Construction Academy.



Fellow Vice Principal Chris Sherwin had an early start when she helped open the gym first thing in the morning. She was kept busy throughout her session in the Sports Centre, setting up activities, getting to grips with all the equipment and finding out about the courses on offer.

During the week, Nick Hillman, the Conservative Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Cambridge, visited the College to discuss Apprenticeship programmes with Steve Caley before meeting CRC Apprentice chefs at Selwyn College.

The College offers 22 Apprenticeship frameworks involving 45 qualifications, and has the largest Apprenticeship contract in Cambridgeshire, worth £2.8million.

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MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

For more information, please contact Lynn O'Shea, PR & Events Co-ordinator, on 01223 418773 or email loshea@camre.ac.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

Cambridge Regional College is the second largest provider of full-time education for 16 to 19 year-olds in the Eastern Region. The College has around 3,500 full-time and around 6,000 part-time students. Students come in from a 40-mile radius, covering Cambridge and its surrounding villages, eastern Bedfordshire, northern Essex and western Suffolk.

Over 80 per cent of full-time students are aged 16 to 18 years old and come to the College after secondary school; the rest are mature students, studying on a range of Access to Higher Education and vocational programmes.

The College offers the largest and most comprehensive range of vocational courses in Cambridgeshire, and has one of the largest Train to Gain contracts in the Eastern Region. It has the largest apprenticeship contract in Cambridgeshire, working with around 400 employers.