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Press Release

VOLUNTEERS' BUS STOPS AT CRC ON NATIONWIDE TOUR

The Big v Bus comes to Cambridge Regional College next week (September 28) as part of a nationwide tour, spreading the word about the national vTalent programme and encouraging young people to get involved in volunteering.

The College is one of just 13 universities and further education colleges across the country to host the bus, which will be inviting students to jump on board and discover how volunteering can help them get ahead in the job stakes.

Activities planned include inspirational workshops, advice on writing CVs, interview skills and guest speakers – as well as plenty of information on local volunteering opportunities.

CRC's Volunteer Co-ordinator Agnes Toth said she hoped the bus would give a big boost to the vTalent programme.

"Volunteering can give young people the skills and experience to help them get the job they want – and it's fun too," she said.

"Students face one of the hardest employment climates in years and the need for them to stand out from the crowd is more important than ever. Volunteering can help them gain skills such as team work and leadership and give them the experience to build their CVs."

The vTalent programme, now in its second year, was set up to help young people who were not in employment, education or training – NEETS – and those who might otherwise leave school with few qualifications.

The scheme has had huge success in changing lives by boosting self confidence and opening the door to further education and employment. A new national survey of last year's vTalent volunteers showed that 66 per cent of those who completed the year continued in education while 20 per cent went on to employment, seven per cent carried on volunteering and four per cent joined a training programme

“We have 15 placements a year at CRC and the programme has enormous benefits for the young people who enrol,” said Agnes. “They spend part of their time volunteering within the College – helping new students, charity fundraising and assisting at special events – and also do work experience and gain qualifications.”

Among last year's success stories was 20 year-old Marie Farmer from Cambridge, who was one of the young people classified as NEET. Today she is back in full-time education and is due to represent Great Britain in an International Youth Programme on how unemployment affects young people in Italy next month.

“Marie worked extremely hard on the programme, achieving a number of qualifications, and boosting her self confidence through volunteering and work experience,” said Agnes. “She has achieved a huge amount - the vTalent programme has definitely changed her life.”

Shofiul Zaman, 21, from Cambridge was another successful graduate of last year's programme, achieving a Level 2 Diploma, among other qualifications. He was very involved in youth work and events organisation at the College, and became the Activities and Entertainment Officer of the Students' Union, before progressing to full-time work.

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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 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.