

MCAST LINK

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 **MCAST**
MALTA COLLEGE of ARTS, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

MCAST INSTITUTE OF

1

Information Pg4	Principal's Message Pg12	New Member of Staff Pg14	Gozo Centre Pg15
Institute of Business and Commerce Pg16	Maritime Institute Pg22	Institute of Community Services Pg24	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering Pg26
Institute of Information and Communication Technology Pg30	Institute of Art and Design Pg31	Institute of Mechanical Engineering Pg36	Information and Support Services Pg38
EU Projects Pg39	Health and Safety Pg45	Sports Pg47	Library Pg55
Learning Support Unit Pg56	International Programmes Office Pg58		

EDITOR'S MESSAGE



Caroline Balzan
Communications
and PR Manager

Welcome to the start of another academic year!

The College has experienced a record number of applicants for the full-time courses with a total of 3215 students applying. Two hundred applicants more than last year. One hundred students opted to apply for a degree course offered by MCAST while sixty six mature students decided to continue studying and applied for a full-time course. Another 1778 persons applied for the part-time courses launched during August. These are exciting and challenging times for the College as it continues to experience more growth and expansion while providing high quality level courses.

This issue provides an overview on the funds that MCAST has managed to acquire from the European Union under the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programmes. It is proud that it has designed and implemented a series of projects amounting to twenty-three million Euro. The full list of completed 2004-2006 projects and the new batch of 2007-2013 projects are mentioned inside this issue. A brief description of each project is also provided.

This year, for the first time, the College presented certificates to more than 105 beneficiaries of EU-funded programmes. Distinguished guests included Dr Joanna Drake, Head of the European Commission representation in Malta and Ms Joanna Bastura, European Commission representative. Through the European Union, the College provided the opportunity to members of staff and students to participate in several programmes including Leonardo Da Vinci, Erasmus, Comenius, Grundtvig and Youth in Action.

An interesting article is by Mr Anthony Saliba, Deputy Principal. He writes on his participation at an international conference on Vocational Education and Training held in Singapore. This conference focused on the requirements for a successful pedagogy in VET, as well as models of achievements in the same sector resulting from the ongoing collaboration between educators, the government and industry.

A selection of student projects displayed during the annual end-of-year Exhibitions organised by the Institute of Art and Design and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering are found inside this edition. The Art and Design projects ranged from animation work, editorial design, typographic design, photo manipulation, corporate identity and logo designs while the Electrical and Electronics Engineering projects covered a broad range of technological fields including robotics, control, home and industrial automation, automotive applications, renewable energy, control, process investigation and data logging amongst others. The work presented in both exhibitions was of a very high quality and many projects applicable to local industry.

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caroline Balzan".

INFORMATION

LAUNCH OF THE NEW MCAST PROSPECTUS

On Thursday 11 June 2009, MCAST launched its new prospectus for the academic year 2009-2010. Year in year out, and throughout the last eight years, MCAST made considerable steps forward in the provision of post-16 further and higher quality vocational education and training in order to achieve its strategic goals. This year's prospectus continues to reflect this positive trend, featuring, as it does, several important highlights, the most significant of which being the introduction of the vocational degree courses which were officially launched by the Prime Minister, the Hon Dr Lawrence Gonzi.

October 2009 will see the introduction of degree programmes in four institutes, namely the Institute of Art and Design, the Institute of Information and Communication Technology, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, and the Institute of Business and Commerce. Students who, at any time, have successfully completed their two-year Higher National Diploma course may now progress to the vocational degrees. This year's courses will be followed by the introduction of further degree programmes in the remaining institutes within a two-year period.

The College will also be extending its offer to those adults whose 'second chance' may have come relatively late in life and who may wish to return to learning after a substantial break. The introduction of the so-called 'maturity clause' will be of interest to those who wish to update their skills or to learn new skills. In this regard, MCAST is offering a wide range of attractive courses. The College is aware that a good number of mature learners might need further support to be able to benefit from these courses. The College will thus sustain this initiative with the introduction of evening programmes which are specifically designed for those who will otherwise be excluded, those, that is, who will not be able to cope with or benefit from such courses unaided. The changing nature and patterns of employment mean that there will be a continued demand for vocational training and retraining, a demand for which a college of Further Education (FE), like MCAST, is well placed and expected to provide.

MCAST has reached a stage where it must continue to build on and consolidate its successes with an aim to satisfy the demands from both students and industry. The College's student profile has changed over the years with numbers rising and class sizes increasing and with increasing numbers of students following courses at the higher levels. The pressures on MCAST are typical of Further Education institutions worldwide and may appear contradictory at times.



Prospectus front cover

The need to provide excellence in vocational education and training while contemporarily driving down costs and increasing student numbers is a classic example. This notwithstanding, MCAST is committed to adapt to many different situations and circumstances. Through its dedicated academic and support staff at all levels, MCAST will continue to ensure that its students are learning, progressing and achieving.

MCAST is an inclusive College, one which caters for the widest possible student population with diverse learning needs and aspirations and where programmes of study may be delivered through a range of techniques. MCAST will continue to serve the personal and community needs and respond to the economic development of the country in a flexible and fast way.



During the launch

NEW STIPENDS FOR MCAST'S VOCATIONAL DEGREE STUDENTS

Following the Prime Minister's decision to pay a stipend to Maltese students who are following a degree at a university abroad, it was recently announced that students who register on one of the new vocational degree courses at MCAST, shall be receiving a stipend which is at par with what Maltese university students get today.

Equitable access, progression and completion are three important elements of Higher Education which the frequently used term "Social Dimension" implies. This is one of the important cornerstones of a knowledge society in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

Maltese students have a strong incentive to follow studies at tertiary level, not only because all courses are free of charge, but also because they receive a monthly stipend, benefits which foreign students in colleges or universities overseas are not normally entitled to.

MCAST's plans to introduce vocational degrees are in an advanced stage. A total of seven courses, between B.A. Honours and B.Sc. Honours programmes, will be launched. The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering will offer B.Sc Hons (Electronics) and B.Sc Hons (Electronics and Control) while the Institute of Business and Commerce will deliver a B.A. Hons (Business Enterprise). The Institute of Information and Communication Technology will provide a B.Sc Hons (Computer Networks) and a B.Sc Hons (Software Development). B.A. Hons (3D Design and Interiors) and B.A. Hons (Graphic Design and Interactive Media) will be introduced at the Institute of Art and Design. For this long term project MCAST is benefiting from substantial EU funding under the European Social Fund scheme.

MCAST COLLABORATION WITH THE FACULTÉ DES MÉTIERS, ESSONNE, PARIS

MCAST is constantly working to establish and consolidate international collaboration with other European vocational colleges, particularly colleges which have strong links with industry. Over the last six months MCAST has established very close collaboration with the Faculté des Métiers in Paris.

To date, the two Colleges undertook a number of reciprocal exchange visits by students, lecturers and senior management in order to share and evaluate the practices of both institutions in terms of a European dimension.

Last month a delegation from the Faculté des Métiers in Paris visited MCAST and had an opportunity to appreciate the modern training resources. It also provided an opportunity to initiate a process of mapping the training programmes of the two Colleges in order to facilitate the students' transfer between the two Colleges. The delegation also visited Playmobil, Actavis, Medavia and other local establishments.

This delegation was followed by a visit of MCAST representatives to the Faculté des Métiers at Essonne. During this visit the MCAST representatives, Mr Emanuel Attard, Project Director for the MCAST New Campus, and Mr Emmanuel Zahra, Director of the Institute of Mechanical Engineering, had an opportunity to see the brand new facilities of the Faculté des Métiers which were inaugurated last September. Both sides started discussing negotiations

which shall shortly lead to the signing of a formal partnership agreement between the two institutions. The representatives of the two colleges also identified a number of technical areas of a vocational training nature, including the automobile and the aviation maintenance sector.

The Faculté des Métiers has strong relationships with the main industries in France such as the automobile sector which includes the Renault Formula One Team and in the aviations sector which includes Air France. The MCAST delegation had an opportunity to visit and evaluate such facilities and meet students who are on an apprenticeship phase at these firms.



From left: Mr Emmanuel Zahra, Director of the Institute of Mechanical Engineering and Mr Emanuel Attard, Project Director, New Campus Project

EU COMMISSIONER VLADIMIR SPIDLA VISITS MCAST

Mr Paul A Attard, President of the MCAST Board of Governors, met Vladimir Spidla, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, and former Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, during Mr Spidla's visit to Malta in June 2009.

Mr Attard briefly spoke of MCAST's mission, current work and planned projects, and the College's offer of a wide range of courses that respond to the students' personal and professional development as well as the economic growth of the islands. He stressed MCAST's flexibility and ability to respond to current and emerging needs of industry, highlighting the College's contribution to the growth of the ICT sector, aircraft maintenance and servicing, financial services, caring services and the pharmaceutical industry, among other important achievements.

Mr Spidla was particularly interested in MCAST's contribution to the growth of aircraft maintenance and servicing, adult education within the context of lifelong learning and the College's future plans.

The EU Commissioner was also briefed about the College's participation in European Social Fund projects. MCAST has benefited from EU funds in the past and is looking forward to increasing its participation with the launch of new projects in the coming months.

Mr Spidla visited a number of workshops and laboratories in the Institute of Mechanical Engineering and in the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering. He discussed relevant issues with the administration and spoke to staff and students. Mr Spidla was accompanied by Dr Joanna Drake, Head of the EU Representation in Malta.

SINGAPORE: VTE FORWARD – PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES- By Anthony Saliba, Deputy Principal QA, Academic and Student Services

When the Principal first drew my attention to an invitation for the second international conference on Vocational Education and Training in Singapore, I was a bit hesitant for a number of reasons: the travelling involved to reach this Asian country exceeds fourteen hours flying; I knew almost nothing about this region and Singapore itself; also, I had very little information then about the conference programme and the keynote speakers.

After receiving informative brochures and the main website on this conference, the Principal and I decided to participate. We departed from Malta on Monday, 5 July 2009, going through Larnaca, Dubai and finally reaching Singapore. We were strongly impressed by the general public discipline, the cleanliness of this island, the remarkable communications infrastructure and their wonderful sense of hospitality. We were immediately surrounded by greenery and a high degree of humidity. Wednesday, 6 July, was the pre-conference session.

The three colleges – ITE College West, ITE College East and ITE College Central – were mainly responsible for the conference organisation. During the day, which was held at the Waterfront Ballroom, we realised and understood why the Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr Lee Hsien Loong,

declared that: "We are all very proud of ITE (Innovations in Technical Education), to train students with 'thinking hands' who excel in technical vocations. A first class ITE system is critical to enable every Singaporean to maximise his potential, and participate fully in Singapore's growth and progress" (on the receipt of the IBM Innovations Award given to ITE in 2007).

Presentations were delivered by a number of experts in Singaporean VET. Dr Benjamin Tan, the Chairman of the VTE 2009 Organising Committee and CEO, discussed the topic of 'Experiential Learners Change a Nation'. Mr Heng Guan Teck, Deputy CEO (Academic) at ITE, explained the importance of planning and developing market-relevant VTE programmes. Mr Tan Seng Hua, Principal of ITE College Central delved deeply into the issue of 'Infrastructure Planning for VTE.' Ms Sabrina Loi, Senior Divisional Director at ITE, shared with us the amazing ITE story vis-à-vis 'Strategic and Image Innovation.'

The afternoon session was a 'Learning Journey to ITE College East', where we were first welcomed by the Principal, Dr Ricky Tam, and then we toured the magnificent campus with its very impressive resources and curriculum development strategies. This was an



Professor Maurice Grech, MCAST Principal/CEO, having a word with Mr Abdullah Hj. Baharudin bin Hj., the Executive Director of the Sarawak Skills Development Centre in Malaysia

unforgettable experience, which taught us about the importance of serious planning, innovation and creativity in the infrastructure of VET Colleges, the unique relevance of the excellent rapport between VET colleges and industry, and the crucial role of the Government's public commitment to fund in no small way these three VET Singaporean colleges.

The conference days on Thursday 9 and Friday 10 July were held at the Grand Ballroom of Copthorne King's Hotel. The use of technology and the remarkable preparation work for the smooth running of these two days left no doubts in our mind that Singapore attributes great importance to VET. Apart from the presence and opening speech by the Senior Minister of State for the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Education, the conference dealt with various topics which have a strong bearing on the outcomes of VET strategies, plans and achievements.

On Thursday, we were privileged to listen to the presentations of Dr Paul Elsner, Chancellor Emeritus of Maricopa Community Colleges in USA, who dwelt at length on the subject of 'Leadership Challenges and Imperatives in the Global Economy.' Ms Irene Lewis, President and CEO of Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) Polytechnic, in Canada, highlighted the crucial role of leadership in translating strategy into action. Mr Bryan Albrecht, President of the Gateway Technical College in USA, shared his experiences about designing global education and training systems in VET, while Mr Goh Mong Song, Deputy Principal ITE West, and Mr Samuel Ng, Divisional Director at ITE, elaborated on the 'iDe'Lite® software as a means for achieving professional excellence.

Dr Ang Kiam Wee, Project Director of the ITE-METI Centre for Healthcare Simulation Training in Singapore, presented a case study entitled 'Necessity is the Mother of Pedagogic

Innovation – A Case Study on Introducing Simulation into Healthcare Training.'

Friday, 10 July, was no exception to the high quality three-day conference. The first part of the day was dedicated to authentic VTE learning environments. Ms Patricia Sullivan, Education Solutions Executive for Global Education Industry, IBM Corporation in USA, demonstrated the high relevance of open education, by which one can transform learning through a more integrated approach. Similarly, Professor Thomas Reeves, who delivered his session via teleconferencing, gave us a most interesting presentation on the enhancement of VTE through traditional, blended and online learning environments based upon authentic activities.

The last part of the second day turned out to be most informative, given that the keynote speakers addressed experiments which proved to be so successful in their country. Mr Edward Ho, Deputy Principal at Nanyang's Polytechnic in Singapore, explained the concept of the Teaching Factory at Nanyang. Mr Hartmut Mattes, Minister Adviser for the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports at Baden-Württemberg in Germany, gave us a detailed presentation about the 'Dual System of Training' in Germany, which enables youngsters to undergo a training system which best fits their potential in VET. When the last speaker, Mr Hervé Fleury, CEO Institute Bocuse in France, took the podium, everyone held their breath to listen carefully to this philosophical interpreter of food and culinary delights, while he was discussing 'Sustainable Employment: Retaining Human Capital'. His last remark while replying to questions from the floor, brought a smile on the face of all present: 'Man is what he eats'.

Apart from contacting some of the key experts in the VET sector, both in Singapore and in other countries, this conference brought to our attention the requirements for a successful pedagogy in VET, as well as models of achievements in the same sector resulting from the ongoing collaboration between educators, the government and industry.



Mr Hartmut Mattes, Mr Tom Cheong and Mr Hervé Fleury at the last question-and-answer session of the conference

MCAST PRESENTATION OF DONATIONS



From left: Ms Dorothy Meli, Director Institute of Community Services, Ms Antoinette Shah, General Manager Malta Hospice Movement, Mr Paul A Attard, President of the MCAST Board of Governors, Prof Maurice Grech, MCAST Principal and CEO and Fr Martin Micallef, Director Dar tal-Providenza

On Friday 24 July 2009 the MCAST Institute of Community Services presented donations to Id-Dar tal-Providenza and the Malta Hospice Movement. The donations were collected during the annual Hair and Beauty Marathon that was held in May 2009.

Mr Paul A Attard, President of the MCAST Board of Governors and Prof Maurice Grech, MCAST Principal and CEO, both commented that the Marathon is an invaluable experience both for MCAST students, staff and the beneficiaries. They stated that besides contributing to a worthwhile cause, MCAST students have the opportunity to demonstrate their social awareness in a very tangible

way, gain practical experience, and develop the skills and attitudes valued by society and employers. The Marathon is also a further development for MCAST to fulfill its role as a Community College.

Mr Saviour Grech, Precincts Manager, also presented a donation on behalf of the administration staff. The funds were collected during a BBQ.

Fr Martin Micallef, Director Id-Dar tal-Providenza and Ms Antoinette Shah, General Manager, Malta Hospice Movement, thanked MCAST and Ms Dorothy Meli, Director of the Institute of Community Services, for the hard work and dedication.

MCAST STUDENTS CARRY OUT CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION WORKS ON VILLA FRANCA

MCAST students were given the opportunity to participate in the restoration and rehabilitation of Villa Francia in Lija. The conservation and restoration project started in June 2006 and aimed at giving a complimentary function to the villa and at the same time respecting the artistic, historic value and structural identity of the building.

The MCAST students started in November 2006 and remained on location throughout the whole process of the project. They were deployed in various parts of the site to gain the best experience possible. One student assignment included the sensitive cleaning of the main corridor wall at

ground floor level. During the process of cleaning the wall, two authentic sculptural low reliefs were discovered.

The students were also involved in the restoration of some of the fountains in the villa as well as the nymphaeum. The intervention on the nymphaeum was very complex and during the process the students uncovered the original colours using surgical blades and fine scalpels.

The Architect in Charge and person directly responsible for the tuition of the MCAST student was Perit Claude Borg.



Elevation of nymphaeum prior to initialisation of the restoration and conservation project



Two MCAST students during the cleaning process and discovery of the various lime washes



Before and after - One of the fountains, nearing its completion stage. The treatment involved the intervention of plastic repair, pointing and lime washing



The students cleaning the garden walls from various plasters

MCAST PARTICIPATES IN TRADE FAIR

For the second consecutive year MCAST participated in the Malta Trade Fair held at the MFCC at Ta' Qali between the 25 June and the 5 July 2009.

This year the MCAST stand was much larger and included all the Institutes and the Gozo Centre. The Institute stands were manned by MCAST students who carried out various activities while on duty. Art and Design students painted, Community Services students carried out Hair and Beauty techniques. Maritime students were busy preparing different types of knots, while Agribusiness students carried out

various grooming techniques on animals. The Electrical and Electronics Engineering students presented their end-of-year projects, whilst the ICT students in Malta and Gozo gave overviews of the computer programmes they had developed throughout the year.

The MCAST stand provided prospective students and parents with the opportunity to get a good glimpse of what the College offers. They also had the chance to ask questions to the professional Counsellors and Guidance Officers that were also present at the stand throughout the whole fair.



Maritime student carrying out a knot demonstration



Electrical and Electronics Engineering final-year project entitled 'Synchronised Fountain'



ICT students presenting their programming projects



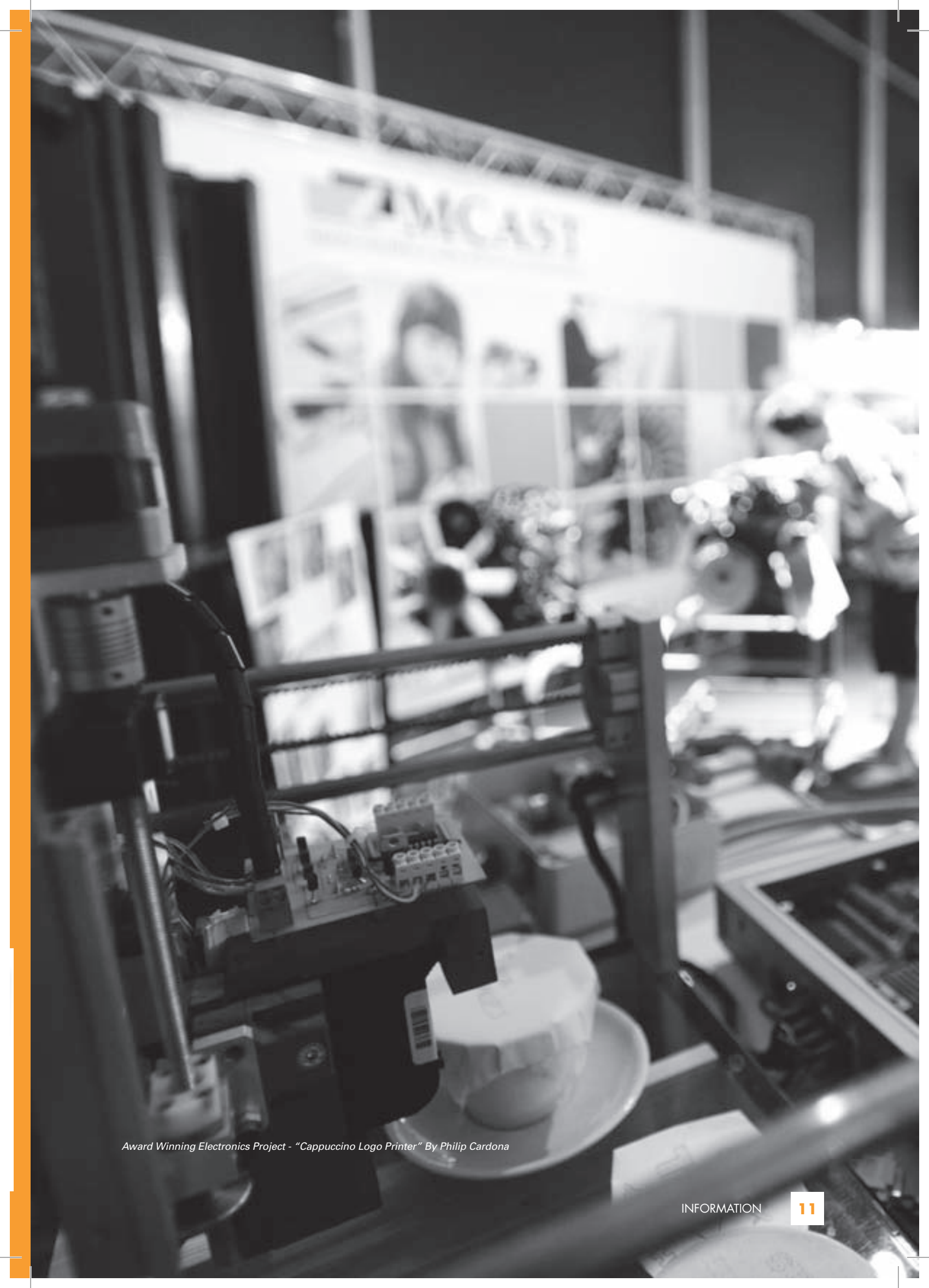
Car engine on display



Students following hairdressing and beauty courses at the Institute of Community Services



Art and Design student painting



Award Winning Electronics Project - "Cappuccino Logo Printer" By Philip Cardona

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

PROF MAURICE GRECH



Prof Maurice Grech
MCAST Principal
and CEO

Dear Student,

Some of you may already be successfully following the career path which they had planned from their early school days. Others may feel that they are standing at a crossroad and are not sure in which direction to go. There may be others who believe that the educational system has somehow failed them but who would be prepared to grab a new opportunity if offered a second chance. There will be those who may have left school too early but who are now mature enough to realize that the assimilation of new knowledge and skills will improve their career opportunities. This message has been prepared with all of you in mind!

MCAST's mission and ambition has always been that of providing alternative routes for those who are willing to learn. Through its wide range of vocational courses, the College will help you to identify a level of study which is compatible with your preferences. Progression frameworks are in place and you should be able to take advantage of an offer which is suitable for your present and future needs.

Since their setting up eight years ago, the nine institutes in Malta and the two centres in Gozo have developed considerably. MCAST is now able to offer a wide range of applied courses ranging from Level 2 to Level 6 on the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF). The College has different entry points into its courses set-up and as many exit points into the world of work.

Students with a school leaving certificate may join the Foundation Course at Level 2 on the MQF. Depending on their qualifications, those with SEC, 'O' level, Intermediate and Advanced level passes, may wish to select suitable courses, such as those from First Diploma at Level 3,

National Diploma at Level 4 or Higher National Diploma at Level 5.

In my forward to last year's prospectus, I promised that in September 2010, MCAST would be launching its Vocational Degree Programmes. I am pleased to announce that we have actually managed to surpass our own expectations. In fact, as from September this year, we shall be offering Vocational Degree Programmes in Graphic Design, 3D Design, Business Enterprise, Electronics and Control, Electronics, Software Development and ICT Systems Support. By September 2011, MCAST will be offering vocational degree courses in all its institutes. This means that all students joining the College this year, may be offered, in the years to come, a higher education alternative opportunity to the existing, traditional university education.

From this year too, mature candidates and who are able to demonstrate that they can start and finish a course profitably, will be offered the opportunity to join MCAST. MCAST is also planning to offer access courses and the support they need through the apposite evening classes.

Over the years, MCAST has established a strategic alliance with various institutions, such as the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry and the Employment and Training Corporation. We are also working closely with the aviation maintenance sector, the banking, printing and marine industries, Smart City and many more.

This collaboration enables the College to review the changing needs of each industrial sector by meeting key private players on a one-to-one basis. These discussions



help to identify the strengths and weaknesses of MCAST graduates, opening the door for a most desirable input from the private sector, one which will help to enrich the curriculum. This approach guarantees a constant focus on preparing students who are employable and who possess those skills which potential employers are keen to secure for their workforce.

The College cherishes the holistic development of its students and courses are designed and delivered with this axiom in mind. Entrepreneurial, interpersonal and key skills are integrated within the course programmes. Students are encouraged to engage in sports and to participate in activities involving voluntary work. The atmosphere on the campus is friendly and welcoming. Group initiatives are promoted and student representation on various organizations and boards is encouraged.

Student and staff mobility have vast educational, cultural and social benefits. For this reason, the College has this year intensified its efforts to promote student and staff exchange visits, such as those under the European Union's Socrates and Leonardo action programmes. These aim at promoting cooperation between schools and colleges and at facilitating the professional development of students in Europe.

The academic recognition of work undertaken in the host organizations helps European integration and labour market mobility. Students wishing to avail themselves of these opportunities will be advised by staff members within the institute where they are studying. They will also receive all the assistance necessary from MCAST's international office.

MCAST owes most of what it has achieved since its inception to its dedicated and competent staff. The College is fortunate enough to have staff with a good balance of academic qualifications and industrial experience. This notwithstanding, it is still crucial that the College retains this advantage and offers opportunities for continuous professional development. As from this academic year, a number of Masters programmes will be offered to members of staff in various specialist areas. Scholarships for postgraduate studies will be offered in those key areas in which MCAST wishes to invest, such as marine, aviation, transport, ICT and other. Following a skills gap analysis, a wide range of short courses will be offered to all staff including managerial, administrative, academic, technical, clerical and other. Staff will also be given the opportunity of placements within industry so as to keep them abreast with the latest technological developments. MCAST must remain a pro-active organization which not only believes in change but which is an agent of change itself. It is also important that the education and training delivered to our students is constantly updated to make it relevant to the times.

I look forward to meeting you all at MCAST and wish you every success in your studies.

Prof. Maurice Grech
Principal and CEO

NEW MEMBER OF STAFF



Ms Veronica Sultana,
New Member of Staff
Vocational Teacher
Training Unit Coordinator

Veronica Sultana's profession is teaching. Her vast 35 years of experience in education in a variety of academic fields, including Biology and Mathematics at both Ordinary and Advanced level, taught her not to undervalue the role that education plays in the development of the individual, society and the nation. Having taught fast stream academically oriented students for the most part of her teaching years, taking up teaching posts at Mrieħel Girls' Secondary and Savio College, Dingli as well as in the upper-secondary state sixth form (now Junior College of the University of Malta), it was sequential that her queries were directed towards the future of a much higher percentage of Maltese youngsters who were more inclined to a vocational education learning approach. With this in mind she ventured on to Malta's vocational College, MCAST, where she lectured Anatomy and Physiology and Diet and Nutrition, areas which are normally undertaken by students reading at the Institute of Community Services. She managed programmes tailored for the vocational aspect of the national curriculum, promoting social inclusion and cohesion with the consequent encouraging effect on employability and industry and on the social status of the individual. She was also appointed internal verifier of the National Diploma in Applied Science Programme and a mentor in the Vocational Teachers' Training Programme, as well as a member of the MCAST Chaplaincy Team.

Recently, Veronica started attending to administrative duties where, as a Senior Lecturer, she partook the duties of Deputy Director of the same Institute. Whilst working as a deputy director in the daily running of the Institute, she was also involved in the development of various programmes, including MCAST Foundation Programmes in Hair and Care, and other programmes related to environmental issues, pharmacy and health services, early education, food production and applied science. At present she is a member

of the Skills Assessment Board of the Employment and Training Cooperation.

An ardent believer that the role of teachers and trainers is central in ensuring high-quality education and training, she has always shown keen interest in the professional development of teachers and trainers, and this led to her appointment as Co-ordinator of the Vocational Teacher Training Unit.

Born in Valletta in 1954 to Mro. Carmelo and Giovanna Schembri neè Borg Bonaci, she is the eldest of four children. She received her primary education at Our Lady Immaculate Conception School and at the Hamrun Primary School and attended Maria Regina Girls' Grammar School, Blata l-Bajda for her secondary education. She followed her post-secondary studies at the Junior College of the Royal University of Malta where she continued her studies graduating in 1975 in B.Sc - Chemistry and Biology. Furthering her studies in the then Old University of Malta, she obtained an M.Sc specialising in Biology, followed by the Post Graduate Certificate in Education in the teaching of Science.

Veronica has been an active member of her local Parish for the last 18 years and has co-ordinated pastoral work in various areas, including the Parish Summer Club, the Parish Publication Group, as well as organizing Parish Seminars. She has also been involved in sub-committees organising various pastoral activities. At present she is the secretary of the Pastoral Parish Council of Attard.

Veronica is married to Paul Sultana and has two sons, Francesco and Karmichael.

GOZO CENTRE

THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON DR LAWRENCE GONZI VISITS MCAST GOZO CENTRE

On 21 May 2009, the Hon Prime Minister Dr Lawrence Gonzi, accompanied by the Hon Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo, and the Hon Dr Chris Said, Parliamentary Secretary for Public Consultation and Information, visited the new workshop wing at the MCAST Xewkija Centre.

The Prime Minister was welcomed by Mr Godwin Grech, Director of the MCAST Gozo Centre, administration,



At the workshop

academic staff and a sizeable representation of the Centre's student population. Mr Grech spoke about the progress and expansion registered by MCAST in Gozo since its opening in October 2002 when it started with one Centre in Xaghra, seven courses and 63 students. Seven years down the line, MCAST now has two Centres: one in Xaghra and one in Xewkija, it has doubled its course provision in Gozo and more than triplicated its student population.

The workshop wing visited by the Prime Minister is an ERDF project (part of project 13) from the 2004-2006 EU budget. The investment amounted to €396,000 (75% of which were co-financed from EU funding). Mr Grech also briefed the Prime Minister about subsequent projects that have either been completed or are in progress, which will also be co-financed from the EU 2007-2013 funding. These include the refurbishment and procurement of new machinery and equipment for the Mechanical Machining and Woodwork Workshops (part of ERDF 65 project), the supply of new computers for the expansion of ICT courses at the MCAST Gozo Centre (part of ERDF 66 project) and the Language Lab with Call Centre training facilities (part of ERDF 62/63 project). These projects have amounted to an investment of almost €700,000.

Voluntary Work at YMCA

Students that completed the National Diploma in Care carried out voluntary work at YMCA in Malta. The students carried out various tasks ranging from manual work such as painting and decorating, spring cleaning of the stores and general cleaning, administrative work such as paperwork, filing and computer data-entry and organising craftwork activities.

This activity was the result of the students' own initiative and proved the excellent team-spirit that has developed among this group over the years that they spent at MCAST Gozo. The students were accompanied by Ms Victoria Sultana and Ms Daniela Sciberras.



INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS AND COMMERCE

WORK PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE BY BUSINESS AND COMMERCE STUDENTS

BY STEVE DIACONO

AT BUTTERFIELD TRUST

My work experience at Butterfield Trust was a great opportunity for me to gain a better perception of the real business world and an even greater understanding of how an office environment functions.

During my work placement period I was asked to perform a

variety of office routines, such as archiving, filing, sorting, organising and creating databases.

This work placement was an invaluable opportunity to apply real life practice to what I have been taught throughout the academic year.

EDMEA MARIE ABELA

AT SET LTD

Whoever said that work is not fun surely never worked with SET Ltd and the Phase team! As part of the annual work-placement experience, this year I was assigned to SET Ltd, a young and energetic organisation that takes care of various projects, one of which is the Phase magazine (youth publication targeted mostly to post-secondary students).

During my placement I was in charge of various tasks that were related to my field of study – I have just finished my first year on the HND in Business. The most interesting of all were the proposals I presented as well as the two focus groups I was able to carry out together with two other student colleagues hailing from the Certificate in Marketing Studies.

It's one thing seeing the final product on the display, and it's another trying to sell out the magazine for adverts as well as carrying out research for more interesting material of the magazine.

One of my interests is watching movies which would involve an individual who works for a mega-publication media house, and I always wondered what it would be like. This summer I was able to experience such an opportunity,,, and I will treasure this forever!

The working environment is cool and funky and my work-mates were so friendly and welcoming, helping me in whatever I needed in order to live such a wonderful learning experience. Ms Hillman (the executive of the company) also requested us three students assigned with SET Ltd, to write an article for the Phase Issue 6 that was out in August.



BY KIMBERLEY BROWN

AT EMBASSY CINEMA WORLD

My experience throughout the National Certificate in Business work placement was very positive. Amongst others, this was due to the fact that I gathered a lot of information and gained more knowledge regarding the effectiveness required at the place of work. The working environment was very interesting and surely this helped me in working even more efficiently. The staff was also very helpful and they did their best to make me feel welcome and be confident in my tasks. My manager was also very understanding and always

showed appreciation whenever necessary. This undoubtedly helped boost my confidence in the work I was assigned to do and therefore the work was done more efficient and effective. Moreover this experience helped me realize strengths which I was not aware I possessed. All of this helped me overcome a challenge which earned me an extraordinary experience that will surely help me in the near future in order for me to achieve the goals of the programme of studies I have chosen to take up.

BY INA VELLA

AT R.S ATTARD-MOORE STEVENS

As part of the Diploma in Accounting offered at the Institute of Business and Commerce at MCAST, first year students are assigned to work in companies so as to get a clearer picture of what their chosen area of studies will lead to. I was assigned to work at R.S Attard-Moore Stevens Malta which is a group of certified public accountants and auditors.

This was a satisfying experience where I learned new things which I never knew were related and included in the job. I also was given the opportunity to put knowledge into practice. Meeting experienced people and observing personnel carry out work professionally, was another asset out of this work experience. Working in Accounts can be quite stressful at times, with figures not reconciling and instances when data is not always readily available. However I learned that with good team work and clear communication, one can work efficiently.

I got the opportunity to work in both accounts and audit: doing mainly quality assurance and even got the chance to visit clients and work at their offices for audit assistance purposes. In Accounts, I had the opportunity to type Sales and worked with Excel, proofread financial statements and worked out opening and closing balances. I also carried

out administration work, doing photocopies of financial statements, filing and sending invoices to clients.

The staff assisted me and always patiently checked my work accordingly - it is important that in accounts everything is accurate and consistent. During this work experience, I observed how other people worked in different situations for example dealing with clients, relationships between staff and how work was shared according to one's job description and qualifications.

To some students, this work may seem like a time consuming matter which one can do without. However in my opinion the work placement is an opportunity to show the organization with which one is assigned, how enthusiastically diligent one may be in training for a career in accountancy. I believe that in this period one should look at the benefits of getting this experience and look into what we'll be doing in the forthcoming future. One should always keep in mind that this five-week experience may have many positive effects on our studies and even for our future career. As for me, I am thankful that I got this opportunity and a glimpse at what working in accounts is really like. This encourages me to further my studies so as to make this experience a permanent one.

BY CLAIRE SPITERI AT VODAFONE MALTA

As a first year student following the Diploma in Accounting with the Association of the Accounting Technicians (UK) I have just concluded my first work experience. I was based at the Vodafone Head Office in the Financial and Accounting department.

There I was given the responsibility of the 'non urgent and important tasks' that were time consuming. I also had the opportunity of getting an idea of the different jobs and tasks that were assigned to the employees in this department. Though the work tended to be rather repetitive, I was satisfied when the job was successfully completed. Some tasks that were assigned to me were filing, checking actual contracts with their details on the spreadsheet, and organizing filing boxes which were being prepared for the archives. Whilst working on the tasks assigned, I used the skills and competencies that I learned during my studies. The staff in the department I was in, were very helpful and even though they had their own work to do, they made sure that they dedicated time to assist me in understanding the tasks which I was asked to do.

Throughout this work placement I witnessed how employees truly worked as one team. I also got to see how employees dealt with the day to day discrepancies and eventually learnt that the most essential thing was to have good communication between themselves and the clients.

Acquiring hands-on experience has been an essential part of my studies. Working in a real life scenario related to the environment in which I aim to set up my career, is a totally different experience to sitting behind a desk in the lecture room.

Working for five weeks at Vodafone has really been a challenging and a positive experience.

MCAST BUSINESS & COMMERCE STUDENTS' VISIT TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

During this summer five MCAST students following studies at the Institute of Business and Commerce, have had the opportunity to take part in the Erasmus Mobility Programme funded by the European Union.

This programme enables participating students to work or study abroad for a period of time. They spent three months in Brussels, all working in different organisations. On 22 July 2009 they were invited to visit the European Parliament by one of the Maltese Members of European Parliament, the Hon Dr Simon Busuttil. The European Parliament is situated in the heart of Brussels exactly at Rue Wiertz 60, B-1047 Bruxelles.

During their visit they were also hosted by Ms Sarah J. Gay who is one of the personal assistants of the Hon Dr Busuttil. Very kindly she prepared an extensive and very interesting tour around the European Parliament, explaining the day to day running of this key European institution.

One fact that was strongly pointed out by Dr Simon Busuttil during their meeting with him was that the European Parliament is the parliament which represents all the

citizens of the twenty-seven countries forming part of the European Union. In fact it is a place where lively political debates are held and where laws that will eventually affect our daily lives, are enacted.

Finally the Hon Dr Busuttil stressed that the main objective for every elected MEP should first be to strive for his respective country rather than for the political party which he represents.



Business and Commerce students together with Dr Simon Busuttil in front of the European Parliament

Wanted...

Dynamic Young People
with a Caring Vision
of Life

Create a Trend Join



Show You Care

Our Mission:

To enhance one's personal development and the formation of the character whilst generating a spirit of dynamic creativity.

To propagate spiritual values and social awareness through the promotion of various initiatives, highlighting skills and talents put to the service of all members of society.

We all strongly feel the need to instill in our environment a positive sense of Values. Living such a hectic life, demands for a greater need for moments of calmness and internal peace.

With this in mind, students attending the Institute of Business and Commerce are being invited and encouraged to form part of a dynamic team of young people who have labeled themselves "Comunio".

The roles and functions of this Team include the following:

- o Initiate and foster a Social Care Project amongst young children and adolescents residing in institutions --- whereby students will organize themselves in a roster in which they will attend at a particular Children's Institute and help children with their homework as well as play with the younger ones. On occasions, Comunio will organise social activities for these children such as Film Viewing, Picnics, Bar-B-Qs, Hikes etc. Throughout the year various other Charity and Solidarity stunts and Charity Campaigns are organized.
- o Organise Social Events which enhance the vital aspects of team work and a community spirit within the Institute of Business and Commerce. This is achieved through - amongst others - Sports events, Treasure Hunts, Get Togethers, Celebration of Talent, etc.
- o Promote a positive social awareness of a Pro-Life Message through various Health Awareness Activities and Healthy Life Style Initiatives.
- o Organise youthful and dynamic Celebration of the Holy Eucharist. On special occasions throughout the year, Youth Vigils are also organized.
- o Organise vibrant and modern prayer meetings through which one will really find an opportunity to share some moments of peace and reflection.
- o Provide foras for discussion on themes which are the basis of ongoing social discussions. This is done through Debating Societies as well as the publication of social reflection newsletters, together with Food for Thought Campaigns.
- o Publication of a regular e-zine by the name of "footSTEPS". This is a bilingual electronic magazine distributed primarily via electronic mail featuring various features and articles written by students as well as a number of well known contributors.
- o Life Blocks: Facilitate events which explore Character Formation and Personality Development.
- o Participate in International Foras related to the various aspects forthcoming from the group's Mission Statement and Vision Policy. The group has been actively involved in EVS and Youth Programmes.
- o Organise other events on a national scale whereby the promotion of peace and mutual respect in our society is given high priority.
- o Organise any other initiative which will respond to the current signs of the times.

Awaiting your valid participation and dedicated commitment towards the promotion of love, peace, and service to others.

Further Information may be achieved by communicating through :

comunio@mcast.edu.mt

Be part of it and share
**Love, Service &
Peace**

Forthcoming Events and Initiatives organized by



Leadership Training Seminars

Social Care Projects

Spark - Debating Societies

Celebrate Life

Treasure Hunt

Battle of the Bands

Comunio Charity Tournament

Celebrations 2009

Life Blocks Seminars

D:Mission - experiencing true happiness

Look out for further information through

Notices, Flyers, Posters etc.

Keep in touch all throughout the year :

www.comuniomalta.org.mt

MARITIME INSTITUTE

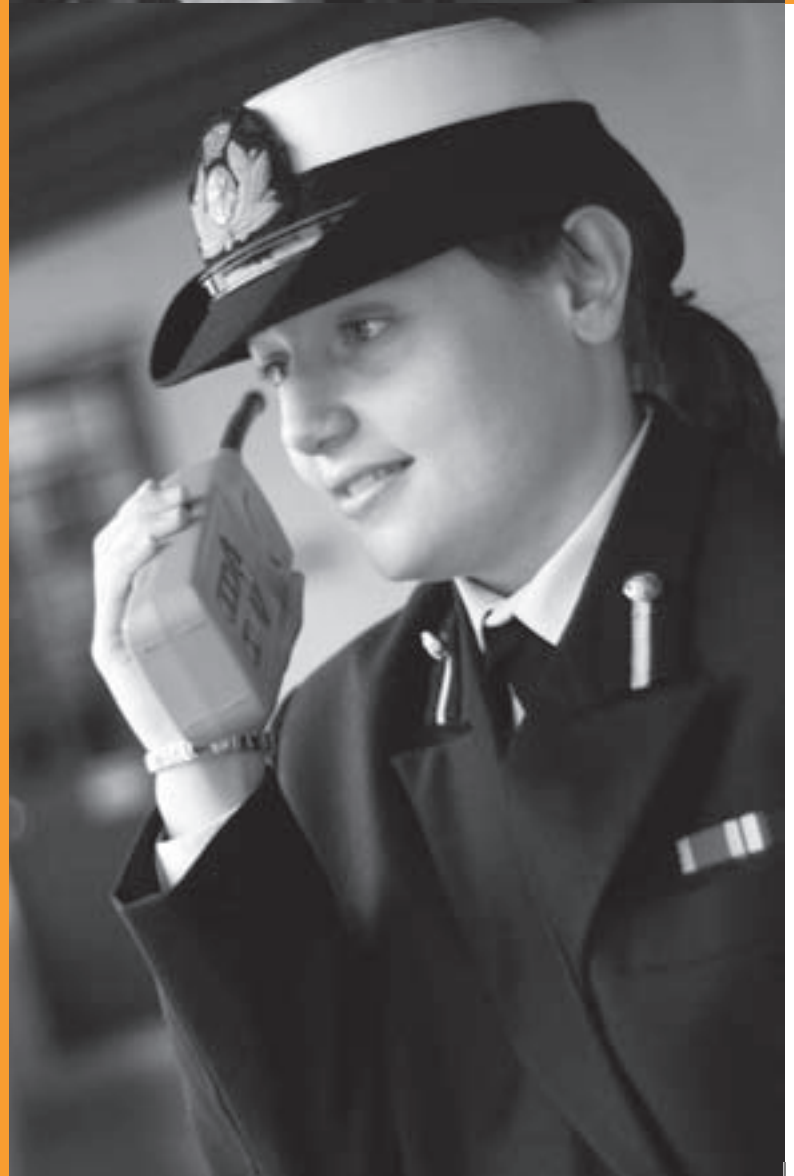
Maritime Institute holds talks for prospective students

On 7 July 2009, the Maritime Institute organised a talk for prospective students interested in joining the MCAST Maritime Institute on the various maritime full-time courses. The presentation was delivered by Capt Reuben Lanfranco, Director of the Maritime Institute, to a full hall of prospective students and accompanying parents. Mr John Bartolo, Director of the Student Support Services, also gave information regarding the application process and any guidance required throughout the week of student registration.

Following what may be considered as the largest number of course applicants ever, since the Maritime Institute was established, prospective Officer Cadets had their interviews and physical aptitude tests carried out for selection into the Probationary Officer Cadet Course and the Officer-in-Charge of a Navigational Watch Course, during the week commencing 24 August through to the 4 September 2009.

Works carried out at the Maritime Institute, Villa Portelli, Kalkara and at the Shore Training Centre, Hay Wharf, during the summer months

During the summer months works on the Maritime Institute premises at Kalkara and at Hay Wharf did not cease. The bulk of the work was carried out in upgrading the Institute's 25 man Lifeboat and Gravity Davits, at Hay Wharf, which were due for a complete overhaul. The work was carried out by Malta Shipyards and Manoel Island Yacht Yard. Other work was also carried out on the hydraulic hi-up for the newly acquired rescue boat. At Villa Portelli, all air-conditioning units were serviced and classroom furniture cleaned for the new scholastic year.



MCAST Maritime Institute

Lecturers conclude popular TV programme “Lura fil-Klassi”

Seven lecturers from the MCAST Maritime Institute who were participating as lecturers in the popular TV Programme “Lura fil-Klassi” completed the TV series and attended a student certificate presentation ceremony which was held on Friday 7 August 2009, at the Ministry of Education at Casa Leone, Sta. Venera.

The theoretical course on the handling and driving of small sea craft, which commenced in March, consisted of two, one-hour programmes per week on Tuesdays and Thursdays for a total of twenty-six sessions. The programmes were televised on TVM and on Education 22 channels.

Certificates were handed out to students during the reception, by Dr. Claire Thake Vassallo, Chairperson of the Public Broadcasting Services, together with Producer, Ms. Moyra Felice,.



Lura fil-Klassi Logo

OFFICER CADETS AT SEA

The following officer cadets were at sea on the following vessels during the period this article was written:

Vessel	Cadet	Date Embarked
MSC New York	Jasmer Vassallo	15/01/09
MSC Seattle	Jacqueline Spiteri	26/04/09
MV Eurocargo Istanbul	Clyde Camilleri	04/02/09
MT Paradise Bay	Andre Agius	05/04/09
MV Eurocargo Valencia	Vivienne Chircop	27/10/08
MV Maersk Dampier	Laura Falzon	15/01/09
MT Salina Bay	Dorian Grech	16/04/09
MSC Boston	Ben Vassallo	13/01/09
Embarking Vessel	Cadet	Date Embarked
MSC Boston	Pierre Mangion	TBC*
MSC New York	Max Galea	TBC*
MV Grande Buenos Aires	James Sammut	TBC*
MT Paradise Bay	Kenneth Ciantar	TBC*
MV Eurocargo Istanbul	Alexia Fenech	TBC*
MV Grande Francia	Benjamin Borg	TBC*
MT Salina Bay	Christian Coleiro	TBC*
MSC Lawrence	Fabrice Bonello Dupuis	TBC*
Tankship Management	Luke Fenech	TBC*
Tankship Management	Gordon Lungaro	TBC*

*TBC = To Be Confirmed: Exact date unknown at time of writing.

OFFICER CADETS AT SEA

INSTITUTE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIAL CARE USING AN ADAPTATION OF P4C METHODOLOGY

by Emerson Fabri, Anthony (Toni) Galea, Veronica Vella

As foundation students attending a Foundation Certificate Course in Care at MCAST during 2008-2009, we discussed different topics in some of our units using a philosophical questioning approach. We were introduced to this approach by our lecturer, Dr Damian Spiteri, who engaged us in reflecting about different care concepts.

Dr Spiteri would begin his lectures by a brainstorming session thus eliciting different issues. He would then question us about why we should be raising the issues that we had brought up. He introduced us to the idea of always questioning 'Why?' 'How?' 'What?' and 'What For?' In class, we would then discuss the responses we gave to these questions. It was eventually explained to us that he was introducing us to an adaptation of a particular teaching (and learning) methodology known as Philosophy for Children, or P4C, in short.

In one particular lesson, we discussed how a young boy's social needs are different from those of an elderly man. Then, after looking at the different physical, intellectual, social, and emotional needs of these two people, we looked at why we thought those needs were different. Under Dr Spiteri's guidance we introduced concepts such as truth, reality, knowledge, justice, identity, love, responsibility, language, fairness, reason, existence, possibility, beauty, meaning, self, time, infinity, human nature, and thought, into our discussion. What we found so interesting was that much of what we take for granted in everyday life is not necessarily taken for granted by others. Thus, we realized that what is the correct thing for someone to do in a given set of circumstances, is not necessarily seen as the correct thing for someone else, even if the circumstances are similar.

P4C is an experiential group-based approach to learning. Its origins can be traced back to the mid-1970s, when Matthew Lipman founded the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC), at Montclair State College (now University). Lipman advocated discussion in classroom settings since he noted that when people discuss things, they get feedback from others besides clarifying those thoughts in their own minds. He noted that as a result of discussion, critical attitudes develop. Lipman refers to discussions of this nature - where people think philosophically about the deeper meaning of things - as communities of inquiry.

At the end of the academic year, we accompanied Dr Spiteri to The First Malta International Forum on Learning that was hosted at the Dolmen Hotel and that dealt with the overall topic of enhancing learning in organized educational settings. He first introduced the topic by speaking about the history of P4C and explaining that data that is used in communities of inquiry - and henceforth in discussions where philosophical issues are raised and questioned - stimulates reflection and discussion. We then demonstrated what such a community of inquiry consists of. We used case material from an assessed assignment that we had carried out.

In this discussion, we related the case-material to philosophical notions such as fairness, friendship, goodness, and truth. Although the discussion we gave at the conference was spontaneous, we felt very confident in the use of this methodology since we had used P4C extensively during our lectures. We found that the most interesting aspect of P4C was that it made us think for ourselves and to constantly question our own beliefs and those of others, thereby taking nothing for granted without reflecting upon it.

ANNUAL SOIRÉE

As in previous years the final year students at the Institute of Community Services organised the annual The Soirée was held in the open area in front of the Institute in July 2009.

Preparations for the Soirée started by participation in brainstorming sessions under the guidance of Mr Anton Calleja, lecturer at the Institute of Community Services. The Soirée was a showcase of the various student talents including song, dance, hairstyles and costumes.

Students following the Beauty courses acted as models for avant-garde upstyles created by three lecturers, namely Ms Anna Dora Spiteri, Ms Kathleen Cassar and Ms Doriette Abela. Two other lecturers, Ms Helen Bottiglieri and Ms Alison Farrugia carried out body painting on the models. The theme chosen was The Sea.

A group of students introduced the show with a number that enchanted the audience. The students taking part in this number were Alana Paula Bondin, Audrey Sultana, Roxane Reale, Mark Mamo Amato, Clint Abela Wadge, James Muxi, and Nathaniel Ellul. Iona Ghiller read a short poem written by her in tribute to a friend who had died recently in a traffic accident. During this number these students were accompanied on the violin by another lecturer, Ms. Tatjana Chircop. Thea Falzon Garrett and Julie Pomorski sang solo, again showing their professionalism as singers. Mr Anton Calleja, lecturer and artist, also put up an Art Show displaying some of his recent paintings.

Sound and light were controlled by Mr. Saviour Grech, Precincts Manager, and Mr. Pierre Bonello, Handyperson.

The show came to an end with the presentation of awards as recognition to students who excelled in the following areas: Participation and Commitment during Course, Participation and Commitment during Institute Extra-Curricular Activities, Respect towards Authority, Best Personal Presentation, Effort and Perseverance, and Leadership

The Best Overall Award went to André Buhagiar who excelled in all the above areas during the years spent at the Institute.



INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING

THE INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING JOINS THE LEONARDO DA VINCI EXCHANGE PROGRAMME – “TRANSFER OF INNOVATION”

Following participation in the EuroSkills Competition, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, together with six other countries (Finland, the Netherlands, Turkey, Sweden, Slovakia and the UK), was invited to participate in a Leonardo project entitled “Transfer of Innovation”. The objective of this project is to promote vocational education through European competitions whilst using the same competitions to gauge the level of vocational education in the various European countries.

The first meeting, held in Malta at the end of November 2008, was organized at the Vivaldi Hotel in Paceville. The seminar was a success, and all the objectives of the meeting were achieved. These included decisions on how this project will be structured, tasks being undertaken by each participating country and all the plans required for the next meetings to be held in Vaasa, Finland. The programme also included a tour of the MCAST premises, the participating Institute, a meeting with MCAST Senior Management, as well as meetings with local industry representatives.

The second meeting was held in Vaasa, Finland in April 2009. Darren Abela, a graduate in Industrial Electronics was invited to train a person as a Junior Expert for the competition while in Finland. With the help of a Finnish colleague who translated the tasks from the Finnish language to English, Darren spent two days testing his skills in electronics fault-finding, design of printed circuit boards and debugging and developing software for an embedded system controlling a small manufacturing robot. Considering that he had not previously been exposed to the hardware, he performed very well and is now confident of his performance in the actual competition.

The third meeting, held in Slovakia, was attended by Mr Vince Maione. Proposals for the final tasks of the next EuroSkills Electronic Workshop Competition were discussed. The next competition will be held in Lisbon in November 2010.



Student Darren Abela

John Sciberras, CE Olavi Lahtinen, Vince Maione in Finland



ANNUAL PROJECT EXHIBITION

INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering Project Exhibition was held on the 19 June 2009 at St James Cavalier Centre for Creativity. The Project Exhibition was officially opened by Ms Helga Ellul, President of the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry. There were over seventy exhibits on display from the following courses:

- MCAST/BTEC Higher National Diploma in Electrical/ Electronics Engineering
- MCAST Diploma in Industrial Electronics
- MCAST Diploma in Computer Engineering
- MCAST/BTEC National Diploma in Electrical/Electronics Engineering
- MCAST/BTEC National Diploma in Telecommunications

The projects covered a broad range of technological fields including Robotics, Control, Home and Industrial Automation, Automotive Applications, Renewable Energy, Control, Process Investigation and Data Logging amongst others. Some of the projects were directly supported by local industry.

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering is

a leading provider of quality vocational education and training in Malta. It works closely with local industry through various projects and sustains itself by providing a range of commercial technical services and educational schemes to both the local industry and to markets outside the island.

The Institute boasts of up-to-date facilities and modern, good quality equipment. These are important in order to keep abreast with the latest developments in this fast-changing technological field. In this regard the Institute has recently set up an Electronics Laboratory funded through the European Regional Development Fund. This laboratory includes a variety of Electronic boards that interface with computer systems to enable students to carry out virtual experiments and practical exercises through installed software. The Institute has lately also invested in more new modern equipment namely precision instruments and automation equipment.

These up-to-date facilities and equipment together with the variety of engineering programmes offered at the Institute demonstrate the College's commitment to prepare students for tomorrow's challenges and rewarding career opportunities.

From left: Mr Vincent Maione and Mr Ronald Curmi, Deputy Directors, Mr Paul A Attard, President of the Board of Governors, Prof Maurice Grech, Principal/CEO, Mr John Sciberras, Director, Ms Helga Ellul, President of the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry, Mr Emanuel Attard, Project Director and Mr Anthony Saliba, Deputy Principal.



PROJECTS

Group of students - Diploma in Industrial Electronics and Diploma in Computer Engineering

George Bellizi



Cappuccino Logo Printer

Suzanne Zarb



Voice Recognition Checkers

Voice Recognition Checkers



EXHIBITION

Weight Burden Car Transducers



Synchronised Fountain



INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

MCAST students attending Computer Domain organize a Volunteer Day at St. Joseph Home

Around 30 students following the MCAST-BTEC National Diploma Course in IT at Computer Domain spent one of their Saturdays carrying out voluntary work with their lecturer Mr James Catania at St. Joseph Home in St. Venera.

Each student picked up drinks sponsored by Computer Domain from the school canteen (which opened on a Saturday for this event) and headed down to wait for the coach taking them to St. Venera also sponsored by Computer Domain.

By 9:00am the students were standing in the courtyard of the stunningly beautiful mansion that was built in 1888, today serving as the well-known St. Joseph Home for Children. The job was simple but not easy. The students had to paint the roof of this huge estate with water resistant compound. The students were amazingly cooperative and eager. Equipped with mixed paint, rollers and paintbrushes they worked under the close supervision of the lecturer and the Home Director. This supervision was unnecessary as they all set an example for others to follow with their hard work and responsible behaviour. Nevertheless, students' safety is something taken very seriously at Computer Domain.

By 11.30am the temperature on the roof was around 30 degrees Celsius but this only seemed to harden the entire group's resolve to work even harder. The water provided was a cool blessing in the every 30 minute compulsory breaks. The atmosphere, which was nothing less but jubilant, gave the students time to talk, discuss and experience work which moulded both the physical and the spiritual self. This proved to be an excellent experience for team building.

The teamwork was something to admire, an ad hoc micro co-ordination of filling, rolling, painting, cleaning, sweeping and the occasional paint fights which were an inevitable part of such an experience. Whilst all this was going on, five of the students were in one of the apartments cleaning some of the one hundred fifty windows. Whilst checking in on the students working on the first floor Mr Catania had time to discuss with Fr Cini the kind of work and challenges that such a Home meets on a daily basis.



Group of students with lecturer Mr Vince Catania

St. Joseph Home is a €330,000 per year operation, taking in 18 children with social problems ranging from special needs to abandonment. Fr Frankie Cini explained that the commonest issue that the Home dealt with was abandonment. The Home receives help from the government mostly in the form of augmented children allowances for all the children who are under the care of the home. The government also fully funds carers for the children with special needs through "Agenzija Appoġġ". However Fr Frankie Cini also acknowledged the fact that although this support was somewhat tangible, it did not even start to scratch the surface. Therefore most of the funding needed to be generated by fund raising activities such as the "Ohloq Tbissima" marathon. Fr Frankie Cini also commented that in today's political scene, children were no longer a national priority.

St. Joseph is a home to 18 children ranging from 7 to 18 years old, in three separate apartments: one for the young, one for the mid-teens and one for older children. He also went through the routines, curfews and procedures that the children lived by on a day-to-day basis. After an hour's discussion, one thing was very apparent: that Fr Frankie and all his team took their work very seriously and only had one priority, the well-being of the children under their care.

At noon we were on the roof again, but by then we realized that the students had managed to cover most of the 400 square metres of roof with compound. The students were gleaming in the sun due to all the silvering on their legs and hands from the covering. The only reason that the students stopped working was that the actual roof compound, more than 125 litres of it, was all used up. After cleaning the tools and putting them back in their place the students were given a little treat by Fr Frankie's generosity since they were supplied with "pastizzi".

After an hour of very well-deserved rest, the students were split up into two teams. One team went to the Home's garage and cleared up more than 20 old, rusted bicycles. These were placed in a van waiting to go to the Mrieħel bulky refuse plant. The other team dismantled a small scaffolding setup and brought everything down two floors for storage. When one team was done they also swept the stairs and cleared some rubbish which had accumulated over the years.

The eagerness shown by these students has given Computer Domain new energy and renewed gratification in the social conscience of the company. The event would not have been possible without the support of Mr Nick Callus and Ms Miraide Callus Gatt, Directors of Computer Domain, who not only gave their whole-hearted permission but also sponsored drinks and transport from the Institute to the Home and back.

ART AND DESIGN

MCAST Institute of Art and Design End of Year Students' Exhibition

This year marked the eight consecutive annual exhibition of works by the MCAST Institute of Art and Design students, held at St James Cavalier. This year there were over a hundred exhibits on display, with participating students having successfully completed different programmes of studies at varying levels.

Projects exhibited by students following the First Diploma in Art and Design all followed a given theme. This revolved around using a specialist medium of the students' choice to research, develop and produce an artifact related to a theatrical production entitled 'By the Beautiful Sea'. Thus all works for this project were inspired by sea creatures and other related artifacts (such as fishing nets).

The Foundation Diploma in Art and Design is a one-year course that allows students all the necessary freedom to explore and develop their creative intentions in their preferred pathways. In fact, all projects by the students were self-initiated, thus holding a highly personal significance, as well as being functional.

National Diploma in Design Crafts projects displayed this year show students' varied abilities with a range of media and materials, particularly ceramics, metal, stone and wood.

Students who have just completed their Higher National Diploma in Graphic Design put up a show of a range of skills and creative works produced during their course. Projects ranged from animation work, editorial design, typographic design, photo manipulation, corporate identity and logo designs. Visitors could note that all works on display were of a very high level, with most being easily industrially applicable.

Higher National Diploma in 3D students also showed a highly proficient level of achievement in the displays of works. Exhibits ranged from 3D products (using ceramics, textiles, wood, stone and metal) to interior 2D rendered designs using appropriate software. This year, a selection of model Maltese Balconies from the Commercial Model Making unit were also included in the exhibition.

BTEC External Verifier, Marilyn Gauld, was once again highly impressed by the standards achieved by students from all programmes. In her comments she stressed that, "there is a strong creative atmosphere throughout the Art and Design centre". She went on by saying that, "Independence and individuality have clearly been encouraged through the research, exploration and experimental stages of all projects. Students have gained a wide range of appropriate skills and they have developed a mature and sophisticated approach to their work."

In response to demands from industry, the Institute of Art and Design is launching two new courses in October 2009 – Level 4 National Diploma in Media Production and Level 5 Higher National Diploma in Media (Moving Image). These courses will enable students to progress to technical and managerial roles within the media and television sector. Co-financed by the EU through an ERDF project, these courses will be delivered thanks to newly set up state-of-the-art TV studio and relative editing suites. The Institute of Art and Design will also be offering two new vocational degrees leading to a B.A. (Hons.) in Graphic Design and Interactive Media and a B.A. (Hons.) in Product Design and Interiors.

Art and Design as a discipline provides students with an array of transferable skills, particularly creative and lateral thinking, problem solving, and development and evaluation of different solutions to a problem.

"At our Institute we believe that Art and Design plays a crucial role in communicating visions and ideas which words alone cannot fully express," said Mr Stephen Vella, Director of the Institute. "Art and Design may also be perceived as a means to educate and give a cultural identity. Students exhibiting their works mirror this new cultural expression, which will inevitably be imparted to the generations to come."

The Exhibition was inaugurated by the Hon Dolores Cristina, Minister for Education, Culture, Youth and Sports.



The Prime Minister, the Hon Dr Lawrence Gonzi visiting the Art and Design Final Year Students Exhibition.



Fashion garment using innovative materials and technics by Mathilde Friggieri



Graphic Design Illustration on Kitchen ware by Roxanne Gatt



Set of ceramic test pieces by Sarah Marie Scicluna



Metal and perspex design commemorating Malta's entre into the euro zone by Claudio Micallef



The Hon Dolores Cristina, Minister, during the inauguration



Ceramics Sculpture by Lorraine Fenech



Ceramics Sculpture by Christian Fenech



3D display by Trudy Xuereb



Mr. Joe Mifsud, President of The Malta Society of Arts, Manufacturing and Commerce presenting the award for the most outstanding student Ritianna Zammit

‘Journey to the end of the Night’ Exhibition at Mount Carmel Hospital

‘Journey to the end of the Night’ was an exhibition of art works by students from the MCAST Institute of Art and Design in Mosta. Works by the twelve students-artists were on display between the 11 and the 17 of June 2009 at the newly renovated Mount Carmel Hospital. The exhibition was inaugurated by the Hon Mario Galea, Parliamentary Secretary for the Elderly and Community Care.

The selection of works on display was the result of a four month collaborative project started during the first Progress Week organized by the Institute. In January 2009 students from the newly established Higher National Diploma in Fine Arts were invited by the administration of the Institute of Art and Design to think about possible projects they could carry out within the community. Presented with the opportunity to merge part of their studies with a one-week internship at Mount Carmel Hospital, they took up the challenge to creatively exploit this relatively unknown place of rehabilitation for the mentally ill.

Specialised hospital staff took turns to brief the group of students about the various issues related to psychiatric health, cure and medicine. More importantly students also participated in workshops about stigma, discrimination, prejudice, perception and understanding of people with mental health problems. Following these daily presentations, lectures and workshops students were able to roam and observe the hospital’s psychiatry museum and environment. They then produced a series of artistic studies based on the knowledge they had acquired and through observation of the place itself.

“The variety of artistic idioms used and the creativity shown by these students affirms our belief in extending the learning experience beyond the school walls. We are extremely pleased with the results achieved through this project,” Stephen Vella, Director of MCAST Institute of

Art and Design said, adding: “This positive experience has proved that there are great benefits to garner from collaborative projects with partners from civil society and industry.”

Using a wide variety of media such as video, photography, sculpture, drawing, painting and other materials, the students started the long process to creatively exploit their studies to produce a highly personal, coherent body of works.



By Martina Vassallo Eminyan



By David Camilleri

FIGURATIVE ART COMPETITION

David Camilleri, a seventeen-year old student from the MCAST Institute of Art and Design, clinched the national prize of a Figurative Art competition organised by the National Parliament of the Slovak Republic.

The competition was open to students between the ages of 14 and 18 and participants could present works in different media, including painting, design or collage, working to the title "Why I am Happy to be in the World". Through their works, students had to give their outlook on the importance of primary prevention of drug addiction, with special attention to legal drugs.

David Camilleri, who is currently following the Foundation Certificate in Art and Design, produced a computer manipulated image with a strong message against smoking. In fact, through his use of visual language, David's message is loud and clear – smoking burns you out.

"Having one of our younger, first year students compete and win this competition is undoubtedly a boost for all of our students and staff. We always encourage students to participate in these kinds of events and spur them to put acquired skills and developed talents to good use, particularly when the scope of such a competition involves raising awareness on such a hot issue," said Mr Stephen Vella, Director of the Institute of Art and Design.

Technical judging took place on the 9th May 2009 at the offices of the National Centre of Bratislava, where Mr Camilleri's work was chosen among all submissions from Malta. His work, together with the works of the other finalists (one for each participating country), will be taken to the Chamber of the Parliament of the Slovak Republic.

INSTITUTE OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

MORE RESOURCES FOR THE MOTOR VEHICLE COMPLEX

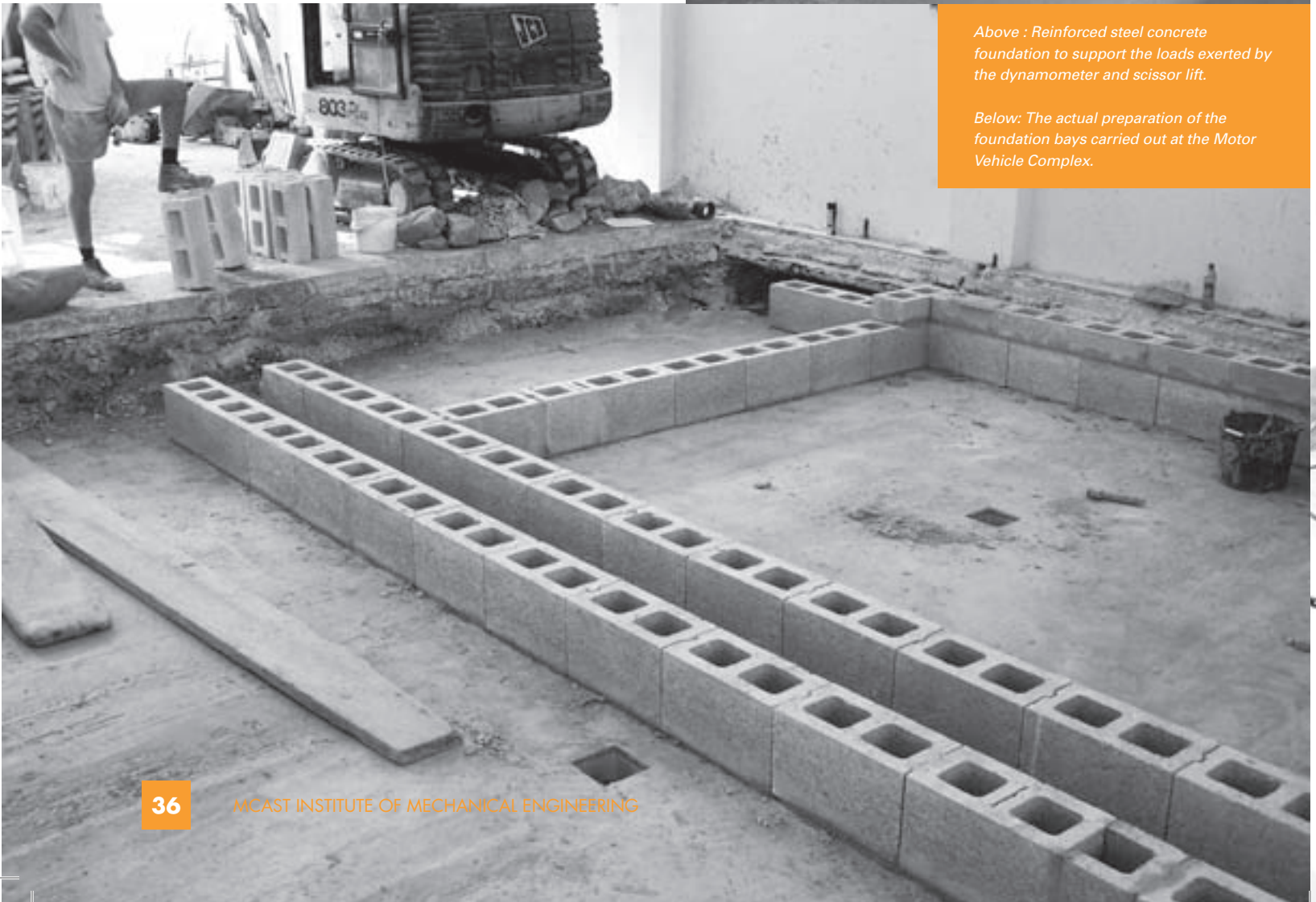
MCAST is in a continuous process of change and development to meet the evolving needs of the students pursuing their vocational education at the respective Institutes. At present, the Institute of Mechanical Engineering is investing heavily in its educational resources; the aim being to provide better equipment to the students following the various courses available.

Those who are familiar with the Institute of Mechanical Engineering can witness several projects that are either in progress or have just been completed. It is hoped that these projects will render a better and a dynamic human resource to the industrial economy. The field areas vary from manufacturing engineering to plant maintenance processes and automation; from aircraft maintenance to the newly embarked area of marine engineering. One also needs to point out that as from the academic year 2010/11, it is envisaged that the Institute of Mechanical Engineering will be in line to deliver a vocational top-up degree to the mechanical engineering highflyer HND students.

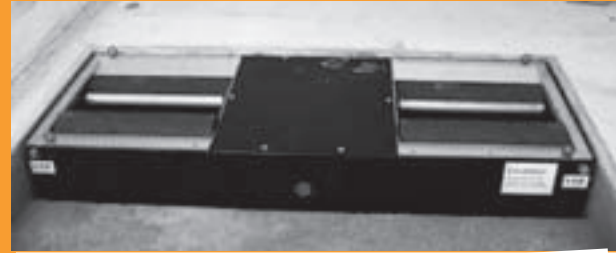


Above : Reinforced steel concrete foundation to support the loads exerted by the dynamometer and scissor lift.

Below: The actual preparation of the foundation bays carried out at the Motor Vehicle Complex.



Apart from all the mechanical engineering fields mentioned, there is also the motor vehicle engineering. As one can imagine, various projects were carried out in this field too. The financial funding came directly from MCAST, the European Regional Development Funds as well as from the local industrial entrepreneurs who have particular interest in our students and programmes. These projects rendered the Motor Vehicle Complex to become more in line with the modern projected demands of international accredited certifications for motor vehicle engineering where quality assurance measures, online examinations and continuous assessments are more in vogue. Furthermore, the industrial entrepreneurs are also being informed about the new programmes that are being delivered within the Motor Vehicle Complex. This is being done through regular meetings organised with the major stakeholders involved in this field during the academic year. In fact, foreign organisations in conjunction with local entrepreneurs in the field of motor vehicle engineering and insurances are using MCAST resources to upgrade the knowledge of their staff.



Lecturers preparing an all wheel drive vehicle for a test on the power dynamometer.

This academic year the final year students at the Motor Vehicle Complex will benefit from a new lab. The lab has been installed with a fully fledged VRT test lane (Class II), a four-wheel electronic alignment, a 4x4 Power tester dynamometer and two - two post lifts. Other projects that the Motor Vehicle Complex will benefit from by December 2009 are a cleaning bay for vehicles and a preparation bay for panel beating, together with some newly refurbished classrooms.



SUPPORT SERVICES

PATHWAY 2009 AWARD CEREMONY



Second year students preparing for Christmas '08



A day visit to Gozo

The awards ceremony of the Pathway to Independent Living Programme was held on the 26 June 2009 at the Students House.

Five students received certificates from Mr Joe Camilleri, Chairperson of the National Commission for People with Disabilities, Mr Paul A Attard, President of MCAST Board of Governors and Prof Maurice Grech, MCAST Principal/CEO.

The two-year course consisted of various modules ranging from Vocational Skills, Personal and Social Development, Citizenship,

Thinking Skills, Life and Community Skills, English, Maths and Maltese. The course focused on experiential learning with students attending various work placements in the community learning zones.

MCAST congratulates the students for their hard work and achievements and wishes them good luck in their future endeavours.

MCAST MAKES THE MOST OF EU FUNDING

Like many institutions which have fully grasped the advantages linked with European Union membership, particularly with regard to the benefits which may be derived from the Union's structural funds, the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology has designed and implemented a series of projects which have helped to further strengthen Malta's main pillar of vocational education and training.

A significant number of MCAST projects are partially funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The College's initiatives are a celebration of educational opportunities of high calibre and they are directly connected with present and future employment opportunities and the wealth which a strong economy invariably generates. MCAST has to date benefited from more than twenty-three million Euro for EU funded projects.

The European Social Fund was set up to promote economic and social cohesion among Member States and to improve employment opportunities in the European Union. The programme helps to raise standards of living and helps people fulfil their potential by giving them better skills and better job prospects. Employment opportunities are extended as a result and productivity raised through a skilled and adaptable workforce. It is no coincidence that all these priorities are reflected in MCAST's aims and objectives and the projects for which EU funding was secured.

On the other hand, the European Regional Development Fund stimulates economic development in the lesser advantaged regions of the European Union. Such support helps them to reach bigger prosperity in such a way that a better balance of wealth is achieved. The examples which follow prove that MCAST is doing its utmost to maximise on such funding in the knowledge that the ERDF has today developed into a major instrument for helping to redress regional imbalances.

Without these structural funds MCAST would have found it close to impossible to adapt and modernise its policies and systems of education and training and according to Malta's needs. But EU support has gone even further in that it has in fact helped MCAST to develop into a centre of excellence in vocational education and training, both in terms of facilities and the closely-linked students' learning experience.

Following the project involving the expansion of existing buildings on the Main Campus, such as the Childcare Centre, and the construction of new ones, such as the New Library Building and the Institute of Community Services, MCAST is also benefiting from further significant EU funding for the construction of a state-of-the-art new campus which will bring together all the institutes, including the four satellite institutes. This move will create new synergies which will certainly

benefit all those players who are able to derive an advantage.

Today MCAST may boast that it has managed to offer a second chance to thousands of young people by instilling in them a renewed interest in and an enthusiasm for learning by offering them a wide selection of vocational training to choose from. A large proportion of the global costs incurred for such projects to materialise comes directly from EU funding.

During these last few years, MCAST has also focused on the unemployed as well as those workers whose future is suddenly threatened as a result of shifting trends, a lack of worker flexibility and/or skills mismatches, often skills which are no longer in demand. The College is offering these disadvantaged groups opportunities for retraining and reskilling in suitable levels of competence with added emphasis on the acquisition of transferable skills which have today, and more than ever before, become part and parcel of all study, work and careers, serving as they do as a bridge from study to work or from one career to another.

Various vocational training programmes, which MCAST has been able to offer to large numbers of adult learners free-of-charge over the years, benefited from heavy subsidies from the European Union. The retraining and reskilling courses in the fields of mechanical and electrical engineering, the course for women returning to the workforce and the one aimed at increasing ICT student capacity in Malta, are some examples which illustrate the variety of courses which have been offered. The ICT courses being delivered at MCAST will certainly stand learners in good stead as soon as Smart City Malta embarks on its recruitment exercise.

MCAST's connection with the aviation industry brings us to another success story. Nobody would have imagined that a good number of the College's up and coming youngsters from the Mechanical Engineering courses were to become involved in the maintenance and repair of aircraft. In spite of the challenge MCAST was faced with, the College succeeded in responding in earnest, securing significant EU funding to train the trainers in this highly specialised field of activity and qualifying for the prescribed Licence A as a new training centre. MCAST has since secured funding for yet another project which will be instrumental in helping MCAST move higher up the skills ladder in the aviation maintenance sector with an aim to offer more demanding training programmes.

As a result of the funding MCAST is receiving from the European Union, the College is able to focus on the island's declared priorities with regard to education, training and employment. MCAST is thus helping the country to keep pace with an ever changing global economy by enhancing its human resources skills and embracing life-long learning.

ESF PROJECTS

ESF 2004-2006 COMPLETED PROJECTS

- ESF PROJECT NO. 11 PRESERVATION OF TRADITIONAL MALTESE CRAFTS
- ESF PROJECT NO. 12 RETRAINING AND RESKILLING OF WORKERS FOR THE ENGINEERING INDUSTRY
- ESF PROJECT NO. 13 RETRAINING AND RESKILLING OF WORKERS FOR THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY
- ESF PROJECT NO. 14 TECHNOLOGY SKILLS FOR WOMEN RETURNING TO THE WORKFORCE
- ESF PROJECT NO. 15 RETRAINING AND RE-SKILLING OF WORKERS FOR THE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY
- ESF PROJECT NO. 16 TRAINING FOR ADULTS WITH NO FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS
- ESF PROJECT NO. 81 ENHANCING PRACTICAL SKILLS IN ENGINEERING
- ESF PROJECT NO. 85 CALL CENTRE TRAINING



Structural Funds Programme for Malta 2004-2006
Project co-financed by the European Union
European Social Fund (ESF)
Co-financing rate: 75% EU Funds; 25% Government of Malta



ESF 2007-2013 APPROVED PROJECTS



- ESF PROJECT NO. 1.33 INCREASING ICT STUDENT CAPACITY IN MALTA
- ESF PROJECT NO. 1.34 ADDRESSING SKILLS IN THE AVIATION MAINTENANCE INDUSTRY
- ESF PROJECT NO. 1.36 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES FOR MCAST STAFF AND STUDENTS' TOP-UP DEGREE



Operational Programme II - Cohesion Policy 2007-2013
Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life
Project part-financed by the European Union
European Social Fund (ESF)
Co-financing rate: 85% EU Funds; 15% National Funds
Investing in your future



ERDF PROJECTS

ERDF 2004-2006 COMPLETED PROJECTS

- ERDF PROJECT NO. 9 MCAST CHILDCARE CENTRE
- ERDF PROJECT NO. 13 CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL FLOORS AND REFURBISHING BUILDINGS
- ERDF PROJECT NO. 25 MCAST LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE
- ERDF PROJECT NO. 26 PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT FOR MODERN AND RELEVANT VEHICLE TRAINING PROGRAMMES



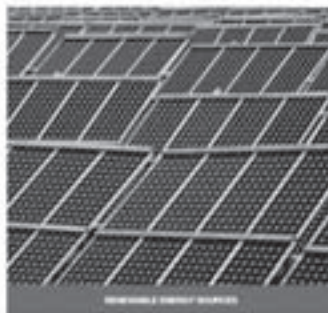
Structural Funds Programme for Malta 2004-2006
Project co-financed by the European Union
European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
Co-financing rate: 70% EU Funds; 20% Government of Malta



ERDF 2007-2013 APPROVED PROJECTS



- ERDF PROJECT NO. 054 MULTIMEDIA TRAINING CENTRE AT MCAST INSTITUTE OF ART AND DESIGN
- ERDF PROJECT NO. 056 UPGRADING AND EXPANSION OF MCAST INSTITUTE OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING MALTA AND GOZO
- ERDF PROJECT NO. 062/063 LANGUAGE LAB WITH CONTACT CENTRE FACILITY AT MCAST INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS AND COMMERCE
- ERDF PROJECT NO. 065 EXPANSION OF THE MCAST INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING
- ERDF PROJECT NO. 066 COMPUTER SYSTEMS AND COMPUTER LABORATORIES AT MCAST MALTA AND GOZO
- ERDF PROJECT NO. 1101 INSTALLATION OF RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES AT MCAST



Operational Programme I - Cohesion Policy 2007-2013
Investing in Competitiveness for a Better Quality of Life
Project part-financed by the European Union
European Regional Development Fund
Co-financing rate: 80% EU Funds; 10% National Funds
Investing in your future



MCAST EU FUNDED PROJECTS 2007-2013



EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND PROJECTS MULTIMEDIA TRAINING CENTRE AT MCAST'S INSTITUTE OF ART AND DESIGN

The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology is currently working on the list of projects that have been approved for funding under ERDF and ESF 2007-2013 and are currently implemented

This project involves the purchase of equipment and the setting up of 4 integrated studios namely: the TV Studio, the Video and Sound Control Room, the Editing Suite Room and the Graphics Laboratory.

ERDF Project no. 56

SETTING UP OF LANGUAGE LAB AT MCAST INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS AND COMMERCE, CORRADINO

This project involves the provision of a Language Laboratory training facility within the Institute of Business and Commerce in Malta. The project entails the provision of a state-of-the-art Language Laboratory. The equipment provision will include the hardware and software for 30 stations/positions at the Institute of Business and Commerce. The stations/positions will be controlled by a master console and will facilitate the management, monitoring and intervention by the lecturer to assist the students undertaking language training. The software to enable the Language Laboratory to operate will be an intrinsic part of the provision.

UPGRADING AND EXPANSION OF THE MCAST INSTITUTE OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING MALTA AND GOZO

The project includes the construction and finishing of an additional floor on the Mechanical Engineering building and the setting up of automation manufacturing control, mechatronics and plant maintenance laboratories and woodworking and mechanical workshops. The three laboratories will be housed at Corradino, Malta and the two workshops at Xewkija Gozo Centre.

ERDF Project no. 62

Language Laboratory overview:

- Video and audio to be controlled by one master console.
- Lecturer: Master Controller, Computer (including operating software), Master Recorder.
- Student: Computer, Media Controller, Audio cable, Video cable.
- Network equipment: Switching Hub, LAN cable.

The furniture and fittings will be customized and conducive to a language training facility in order to create the conditions, atmosphere and aesthetics of a professional technology provision.

ERDF Project no. 63

SETTING UP OF CONTACT CENTRE FACILITY AT MCAST CORRADINO, MALTA AND XEWKIJA, GOZO

This project involves the provision of a Contact Centre training facility within the Institute of Business and Commerce in Malta and a smaller provision at the Gozo Centre. The project entails the provision of a simulated Contact Centre at each location that will enable simulated training to be undertaken as would be expected in a live scenario. The equipment provision will include the hardware for 20 stations/positions in Malta and 10 positions in Gozo. The stations/positions will be controlled by a master console and will facilitate the management, monitoring and intervention of live calls. Telephone calls and telephone traffic will be displaced as would be the case in an operational Contact Centre. The software to enable the Contact Centre to operate will be an intrinsic part of the provision.

The furniture and fittings will be customized and conducive to a real working environment in order to create the conditions, atmosphere and aesthetics of a commercial Contact Centre operation.

ERDF Project no. 65

COMPUTER SYSTEMS AND COMPUTER LABORATORIES AT MCAST MALTA AND GOZO

The project consists of the supply of new computer systems/laboratories for the MCAST Institute of Information and Communications Technology at Corradino and for the Gozo Centres. A total of eighteen laboratories will be equipped with modern ICT equipment. Of these, ten laboratories in Malta and two in Gozo will be upgraded, and five new laboratories in Malta and one in Gozo will be set up.

ERDF Project no. 101

EXPANSION OF THE MCAST INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING

The project involves the upgrading and expansion of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering through the upgrading/setting up of five laboratories at the MCAST Main Campus in Corradino. One laboratory, the PLC software Development/Application lab will be upgraded whereas four new laboratories namely Electronics, Microelectronics, Precision Electronic Training and Electrical Training will be set up.

ERDF Project no. 66

INSTALLATION OF RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES AT MCAST

The project involves the installation of electrical power generating systems complete with all the necessary associated hardware and monitoring systems on MCAST buildings' roofs at the College's Main Campus in Paola. These installations will be complemented with a wind turbine. This equipment is expected to generate a peak of 130kW and 4kW respectively.



Operational Programme II – Cohesion Policy 2007-2013
Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life
Project part-financed by the European Union
European Social Fund (ESF)
Co-financing rate: 85% EU Funds; 15% National Funds



Investing in your future

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND PROJECTS 2007-2013



ADDRESSING SKILLS MISMATCHES IN THE AVIATION MAINTENANCE INDUSTRY

The project is intended to offer basic training European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) PART-66 category A - Aircraft Maintenance, EASA Part 66 category B1 - Aircraft Maintenance Advanced and EASA PART 66 category B2 - Avionic Systems and Aircraft Structures, and Composites training which lay the foundations for expert knowledge, competences and licensing in the aviation maintenance sector.

ESF Project no. 1.34

INCREASING ICT STUDENT CAPACITY IN MALTA

MCAST will embark on a project called Increasing ICT Capacity in Malta in order to ensure that the country's objective to increase capacity building in the field of ICT is attained. New students aged 16-25 years (most of them finishing compulsory education) will be trained on full-time basis in an area related to ICT. This project will involve a number of Private Training Providers (PTP) which, under the coordination of MCAST, will deliver full time tuition at various levels.

ESF Project no. 1.33

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES FOR MCAST STAFF AND STUDENTS' TOP-UP DEGREES

The project has three main objectives:

1. The professional development of Academic and Administrative staff at MCAST;
2. The improvement of quality of courses offered by MCAST;
3. The launch of Vocational Degree Programmes.

Staff Continuous Professional Development will be achieved mainly through Masters and top-up degrees offered by universities/research institutes of repute and delivered by visiting professors from the same Institutions. Scholarships will also be offered in key areas.

ESF Project no. 1.36



Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life
Project part financed by the European Union
European Social Fund (ESF)
Co-financing rate: 85% EU Funds; 15% National Funds



HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICE

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY STAFF DEVELOPMENT AT MCAST

This year, forty nine MCAST staff members from various Institutes/Departments have successfully completed the Lifesaver First-Aid Course. This course was organised by the MCAST Health and Safety Office and was targeted for all levels of staff. The lectures were delivered by the St John Ambulance and all the five courses were held at the MCAST Main Campus, Paola. The successful candidates were: Mr Mario Joseph Salerno, Mr Paul Spiteri, Ms Jeanette Farrugia, Mr Joseph Psaila, Mr Charles Pace Briffa, Ms Melanie Mizzi, Mr Adolf Formosa, Mr Raymond Ellul, Mr Edward Vella, Mr Paul Privitera, Mr Philip Galdes, Mr Victor Cumbo, Mr Emanuel Abdilla, Mr Joseph Galea, Mr Francis Darmanin, Mr Mario Ellul, Mr Quentin Farrugia, Mr Ivan Fabri, Mr Jesmond Gatt, Mr Jonathan Calleja, Mr Ryan Attard, Mr Ivan Briffa, Mr James Decelis, Mr Mark Anthony Farrugia, Mr Aaron

Gusman, Mr Frankie Inguanez, Ms Louise Mallia, Mr Christian Micallef, Ms Sephora Said, Mr Conrad Vassallo, Mr Roderick Micallef, Ms Catriona Cassar, Mr Trevor Caruana, Mr Disma Azzopardi, Mr Andrew Micallef, Mr Emmanuel Psaila, Mr Richard Craus, Mr Michael Chetcuti, Mr Vincent Grima, Mr George Mercieca, Ms Marthese Galea, Ms Abigail-Anne Agius, Ms Diana Cilia, Ms Crisania Gatt, Ms Mary Josephine Grech, Ms Graziella Schembri, Mr Jason Muscat, Mr Stephen Bezzina and Mr Joseph Farr.

The President of the MCAST Board of Governors, Mr Paul A. Attard, presented the certificates to all the successful participants during a ceremony held at the Institute of Business and Commerce on the 9 of July 2009.

FURTHER BASIC FIRE AWARENESS COURSES, FIRE WARDENS COURSES AND FIRST-AID COURSES

The Health and Safety Office plans to once again offer the Basic Fire Awareness Course and the Fire Wardens Course. The aim of these courses is to provide the participants with the necessary tools to meet their obligations under Act XXVII – the Occupational Health and Safety Authority Act. These courses will focus on action planning and theory and will cover Fire Precautions (Workplace), Developing Fire Procedures, the Chemistry of a Fire, Role of the Fire Warden, Evacuation Procedures, Fire Safety and Prevention and Health, and Safety at Work. Both courses will enable the participants to look at ways to reduce risk and to take action where necessary.

Taking a practical course in first aid is the best preparation for dealing with an emergency. However, even if anyone is untrained there are simple measures that can be taken at an emergency scene in order to save lives. The first-aid courses are aimed to provide individuals with clear instructions to help them deal with common first aid situations, should they arise.

Anyone interested in attending any of the above-mentioned courses is kindly requested to contact the Health and Safety Office on 23987405 or via e-mail to peter.micallef@mcast.edu.mt



Participants during a practical session



Successful candidates that completed the Lifesaver First-Aid Course

A EUROPEAN CAMPAIGN ON RISK ASSESSMENT

2008-2009

<http://osha.europa.eu/en/campaigns/hw2008/about>

The overall aim of the Healthy Workplaces campaign is to promote an integrated management approach that takes into account the different steps of risk assessment. The two-year risk assessment campaign seeks to convey clearly that risk assessment is a systematic examination of all aspects

of the work undertaken to consider what can cause injury or harm, whether the hazards can be eliminated and, if not, what preventive or protective measures are, or should be, in place to control the risks.

PAST EUROPEAN WEEK CAMPAIGNS

The Agency has run an annual European Campaign since 2000. With more than 30 countries participating, and some 4 million information materials distributed in all official com-

munity languages, the European Campaign has become one of Europe's largest annual awareness-raising campaigns.

European Week 2007:

Lighten the Load. Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs)

European Week 2006:

Young People

European Week 2005:

Stop that Noise

European Week 2004:

Building in Safety

European Week 2003:

Dangerous Substances, Handle with Care

European Week 2002:

Working on Stress

European Week 2001:

Success is no Accident

European Week 2000:

Turn your Back on Musculoskeletal Disorders

SPORTS DEPARTMENT

MCAST SPORTS DEPARTMENT

The Sports Department would like to wish all new MCAST students a warm welcome to MCAST and encourages all students to participate in the sport and exercise activities held on a regular basis both on campus as well as outside the College.

The MCAST Sports Department organizes a number of activities every year. These include sports leagues between teams from different institutes. Male and female students can choose from football 5-a-side, basketball, volleyball, table-tennis, darts and chess leagues. Mixed teams are welcome. Those students who may not like to compete can opt to borrow some of the sports equipment from the gyms in their free time.



Students may make use of the various gyms at MCAST. The main gyms are situated at the Corradino Campus where one can make use of the indoor courts, the weights room which has a number of cardiovascular machines as well as weights, the games area as well as the football pitch. A number of classes and introductory sessions into various sports are held regularly here too.

Those students who would like to represent MCAST at the School Sports events organized regularly against other post-secondary institutions should give their name to the Sports Co-ordinator. Every year MCAST participates in football, basketball, volleyball, handball, snooker, table-tennis and athletics events.

Students may also wish to participate in other activities organized by the Sports Department which take place outside



the College. Such activities may include canoeing, sailing, climbing, abseiling, camping, trekking, shooting, karting and beach games.

Every year MCAST Sports Department also offers students the opportunity to get involved in national and international sporting events being held on the island. Any students wishing to volunteer to help out will greatly benefit from this experience. Students may also opt to enroll into one of the regular courses organized by MCAST Sports Department in collaboration with various sport associations. Courses may be on coaching, introduction to the sport and certificate in officiating.

Every year a number of students also have the opportunity to travel abroad on a youth exchange being held in another European country. This is greatly enjoyed by all as various new sport activities are held during these exchanges. These may include floorball, ice-skating, Capoeira and Via Ferrata to mention a few.

Students are to take note of the sport notices in their respective institutes and at the gym. Anyone wishing to receive emails regarding the events being organized are to contact the Sports Co-ordinator Adele Muscat at adele.muscat@mcast.edu.mt or on 23987367 or 23987382.



MARTIAL ARTS CLASS AT MCAST

Mr. Christopher Cassar, an MCAST ICT Lecturer and an instructor in three different Martial Arts Self Defence disciplines, recently organized a self defence class open for MCAST students. The course was free-of-charge. Fifty students participated in this session.

To begin with, a couple of warm-up exercises were carried out followed by some basic self - defence moves. At advanced stages, Martial Arts training gets much deeper than merely self defence moves – the mind, body and spirit are trained and combined together. Martial Arts prepares you for the unexpected which does not necessarily mean a defence method against physical aggressions but also as a form of defence against psychological aggressions – for instance, peer pressure and bullying.

Anyone who is interested to know more or participate in self defence classes at MCAST can contact Mr. Christopher Cassar by visiting www.hunggarmalta.co.nr or on hunggarmalta@gmail.com.

*Mr. Christopher Cassar,
Instructor*



MCAST STUDENTS AND STAFF PARTICIPATE IN THE GAMES FOR SMALL STATES OF EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN GAMES PESCARA 2009

Between the 26 June and the 5 July 2009 Adrian Borg and Francesca Psaila Savona, both Sports Diploma students at the Institute of Community Services, were selected to represent Malta in the Mediterranean Games held in Pescara, Italy. Adrian Borg formed part of the 11 a-side football team which played against France and Turkey whilst Francesca formed part of the Basketball Team which played against Turkey, Albania, Serbia and Greece. The games against these countries were obviously very tough but served as a good opportunity for our student-athletes. Sports Co-ordinator Adele Muscat also formed part of the contingent. Her role was that of Sport Psychologist of the team as well as Malta Olympic Committee official. Most of the Maltese contingent was accommodated in the Mediterranean Games Village together with all the athletes from other nations.



The opening ceremony



Juliana Tiziana Apap in the Small Nation Games in Cyprus

Youth Exchange European Event 2009: Auchengillan, Scotland

Between the 4 and the 11 July 2009, five students and a lecturer from the Institute of Mechanical Engineering attended a European event at Auchengillan in Scotland. The students who participated in this event were: Louisa Bonnici, Keith Bonnici, Jacqueline Micallef, Vanessa Pisani and Godwin Xuereb and the lecturer accompanying them was Ms. Vanessa Mifsud. The topic of the exchange was the History of European Citizenship over the last 100 years.

The countries which participated in this exchange were Scotland, France, Portugal, Germany and Sweden. In the beginning of the youth exchange there were a lot of icebreakers, exercises which allow the participants to get to know each other and feel more comfortable together. On Sunday, 5 July a cultural tour was organized and all the participants were taken to Mugdock Castle since in the vicinity of this castle there was a Victorian-styled tea party.

Since the exchange was based on the history of European citizenship, there were a lot of exercises about the EU. The exercises included quizzes, drawings, mini-games, treasure hunts and acting. Each country had to perform a show which was called the 'Eurovision Song Contest'. Each country participating had to write and perform a song about Europe and mention their country. Additionally, the participants had to create a soap opera.

On Wednesday 8 July, a cultural tour was planned and all participants were taken to Edinburgh Castle. Edinburgh Castle hosts three military museums which tell the stories of the regiments and the 'bonny Scots fighters' involved in famous conflicts through the centuries. Among the many

weapons on display is the impressive Mons Meg, a giant gun given to James II in 1457 – it weighs six tons and needed 100 men to haul it into battle. The big star is the castle rock itself, the remnants of a great volcano formed 340 million years ago which makes Edinburgh Castle such an impressive sight and such a formidable fortress.

On Thursday 9 July, all participants were divided into five groups and participated in a treasure hunt in Glasgow. Additionally, in Glasgow a tour of the Glasgow City Council – the City Chambers, was organized. The City Chambers is the headquarters of Glasgow City Council – the largest of 32 local authorities in Scotland. The City Council is active in promoting the economic development of the city and works closely with Scottish Enterprise Glasgow, the Glasgow City Marketing Bureau, the Greater Glasgow Health Board, voluntary and community organizations, and local business.

A cultural night was also organized by each country. The Maltese team filled a table with brochures about the Maltese islands, information about MCAST, and typical Maltese food and drinks. The other countries were impressed with the delicious food prepared especially the cheesecakes and the 'qassatat'.

This exchange was a great adventure for all. Overall this was a very successful exchange as stated by all participants. This experience helped not only to create awareness regarding the history of European citizenship over the last 100 years but it helped to create better understanding and tolerance of cultures and to develop leadership skills among the participants.



Malta team at the Cultural Evening



Outside Edinburgh Castle

STUDENT EXPERIENCES

MY EXPERIENCE AT THE 49TH SESSION FOR YOUNG PARTICIPANTS INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC ACADEMY, GREECE

by André Buhagiar

On the 30 April I received an e-mail from Adele Muscat, Sports Co-ordinator at MCAST and Director of the Maltese Olympic Academy, confirming that I had been chosen to represent the Malta Olympic Academy in the 49th session of Young Participants, organized by the International Olympic Academy.

The International Olympic Academy provides a unique opportunity for students, academics, athletes, artists and officials from all over the world to exchange ideas and share this "state of mind" in Ancient Olympia. It offers a wide variety of educational sessions, academic programmes and in-depth research studies to function as an International Academic Centre, to preserve and spread the Olympic spirit. It brings together people from all over the world, in a spirit of friendship and cooperation and motivates them to use the experiences and knowledge gained in the IOA productively, in promoting the Olympic Ideals in their respective countries. This year's topic was: The Olympic Games as a Celebration: Evaluation of the Olympic Games of Beijing and the course towards the Olympic Games of Vancouver.

On the 9 June, I, André Buhagiar, a Sports Science student at MCAST, met the other Maltese that accompanied me to Athens, where we would meet the other participants before leaving to Olympia.

The next day started with a visit to the famous archeological site of the Acropolis, the stadium built for the first modern Olympics in 1896, the Acropolis Museum and the National Archeological Museum. In the evening we had the official opening ceremony on the hill of the Phynx overlooking the Acropolis. The Greek President, the Mayor of Athens and other distinguished guests were present at the ceremony.

The day after we left for Olympia via Delphi. Travelling was long but it was a great opportunity to get to know some of the participants while travelling. At noon we arrived at Delphi, an archeological site up on the mountains. In the evening we arrived at the famous Academy. Hidden by hills and decorated by tall palm trees, turf grass and rose plants, the Academy was a place that welcomes you. There I shared my room with seven other participants from Singapore, the Seychelles, Mauritius, Peru, Spain, Poland and Nigeria. The following day we visited ancient Olympia, the site where the first Olympics were held in 776 BC and where the Olympic torch is lit and starts on its way to the hosting city of the Olympics. In the afternoon we had another opening ceremony ending with the laying of the wreaths at the stele of Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of modern Olympics.

A regular day at the Academy used to start at 7.00 am for the early birds, with morning exercise organized by other participants. At 8.30 am sharp, lectures started. Lecturers from all over the world shared their experiences on different subjects such as the effect of the Beijing Olympic Games on China, Western perception on China before and after the Olympics, Olympic education programmes of different countries, the effect of the media on the Olympics and other related subjects that taught us the importance of Olympic Education. After the lectures we used the information gained and our knowledge on the subject and perceptions to discuss varied themes in the discussion groups. Every discussion group was made up of 15 participants from different countries. After lunch we could participate in art or dance classes, followed by another session of discussion and then volleyball/ basketball/ football/ tennis and table tennis tournaments. The day finished with International Evenings

Back row: 4th from left, President of the IOA together with André Buhagiar and other participants from all over the world



with typical performances from different countries or social gatherings near the cafeteria or at Zorbas, a local bar. Other activities organized included swimming, athletics, torch relay and Olympic day run.

The session ended with presentations from the discussion groups, the presentation of certificates and talks by the lecturers, group leaders, the IOA president and the Dean of

the Academy. Leaving the Academy was very emotional. I am very honoured that I was one of the 170 participants, representing Malta among other 93 countries, and also proud that I had the chance to participate in the 49th session of Young Participants where I learned the meaning of the Olympic Ideal. One big world joined together without any type of discrimination, working, having fun together and supporting one another.

Opening Ceremony



Cultural evening in olympia



Living the Olympic ideal...



THREE GOLD MEDALS IN THE SCHOOL SPORT TRACK AND FIELD MEET 2009

by Steve Camilleri

I started athletics at the age of five. I wanted to do something different since football is the sport everyone starts with. I started with long distance till I was 12 and then by coincidence I switched to track and field. I am registered with Athlete Pembroke Athletics Section and my coach is the Bulgarian Jivko Jetchev. At the age of 15 I decided to focus on sprints events. My main event is 200m but I also compete in 100m or 400m.

I was selected to compete in the "European Kids Athletics Games" where in my first international race I finished 4th in the 60m race final and 8th in the 300m. It is an indescribable experience when representing your nation. One month after I attended a training camp/competition in Bulgaria. I placed third in the 100m and 5th in the 200m and I think these two experiences helped me to focus more on my sport.

In 2007 I won the U17 National Champion in 100m and 200m and was selected to compete in the FISEC Games. I managed to qualify to the final 100m and 200m where I finished 5th and 6th respectively. We also managed to finish 2nd in the 4 x 400m relay. One month after, we managed to break the 4x100m relay Junior National Record in 43.89sec.

Being motivated because of high level competition in 2009 I had to train harder because I knew it was not an easy season ahead. I attended another training camp in Sofia, Bulgaria with my coach and athletes for two weeks in the Christmas Holidays. This I think was the main asset in achieving results.

I also managed to win the 300m which was not easy at all when considering I was running against 3 x Medal winner in Cyprus who also competed in the Beijing Olympics 2008, Nicolai Portelli. It is also the fastest 2009 time in Malta (36.09sec).

Joining Clayton Sheldon, Michael Fraser and Andy Grech, we managed to break again the 4 x 100m Junior Record in 43.64sec. Competing in the World Island Games, in Palma De Majorca, I finished fifth in the 400m which was one of the best experiences. Last July, I also competed in European U18 Olympics, Finland in the 200m where although not in

the best conditions I ran 23.70. It is a great experience to compete in high level competitions because, apart from the experience of the competition itself, there is a great environment even between the athletes themselves.

In everything we do, we need to prepare for difficult times and in athletics it can either be injuries, bad performance or not being chosen for international competitions.



300m Race



Library and Learning Resource Centre

WHAT DOES THE LIBRARY OFFER?

The MCAST Library and Learning Resource Centre (LLRC) is your source of information, an essential element to better your studies. The Library offers information in different formats:

- print (books and magazines),
- electronic (CD, DVD and on-line)
- Audio Visual (A-V DVD and VHS).

Besides information for study and edutainment purposes the library also offers:

- IT equipment (practising MS Office and other programmes, keying in and printing assignments, scanning documents, internet access etc.)
- Study spaces for silent individual and group work
- Audio visual equipment to watch films and listen to music
- Assistance by qualified library staff on how to use the library.

So if you are new to any of our six libraries (Main Library in Paola, 4 Institute Libraries in Malta and 1 Gozo Centre Library in Xaghra) and want to use the library, come and register at any of these libraries and you will be able to use them all. For further information visit www.mcast.edu.mt/llrc/

THE LIBRARIAN ATTENDS LIBRARY CONFERENCE

Registration



On the 14 and 15 July 2009 Mr. Laurence Zerafa, MCAST Librarian, attended the bi-annual CILIP Umbrella (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals - UK) conference

that was held at the De Havilland Campus of the University of Hertfordshire near Hatfield, north of London. Over 700 participants attended, mainly UK library professionals, but there was also a fair number of foreigners as well. The theme of the conference was 'Making Connections: The power of people, partnerships and services'. It was a good opportunity to network with and listen to diverse experiences from many library professionals, and to meet up with a good number of librarians who were already in Malta in March 2009 as guests of MaLIA (Malta Library and Information Association). Finally the extensive exhibition of library suppliers covering books, periodicals, electronic information, furniture, security systems and all sorts of specialised services, proved very useful too.

PROJECTS CARRIED OUT OVER SUMMER

When you return after your holidays you should notice several changes in the libraries both physically and electronically as follows

Main Library in Paola

- Sound proofing partitions on the 1st and 2nd floors
- Silent study area on the 1st floor
- 3 new important software are now available: AutoCAD, Proteus and MathLAB
- Lockers near the main entrance
- Reorganisation of the periodicals collection to make it easier to find back issues.

All Libraries

- Many new books have been bought to support new courses especially the new Degree courses

- Reference books (books that cannot be borrowed) are now found on the same shelves with lending books to make it easier to find everything we have about the same subject. Check out what we have by using our On-line Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) at www.mcast.edu.mt/llrc/ 'Search our Catalogue' page
- If you wish to find out which collections are useful for your studies then refer to the following web-page 'Your Course and the Library' found at www.mcast.edu.mt/llrc/.

Agribusiness Library

- The Library has now started to house a small collection of models which so far includes models of the jaw of a cat and a dog. More models will follow by the end of the year
- A number of subject DVDs on plant and animal biology, agriculture and animal husbandry are now available for loaning.

LEARNING SUPPORT UNIT

Value and Success inside the classroom

by Ernest Spiteri, Learning Support Unit lecturer

What I am about to reveal are very advanced teaching methodologies which when mastered may determine students' success in the classroom regardless of their perceived level of competence in the subject.

Let us first of all define what one may understand with the teacher having value or prizability in a student's eyes. Having value means that when a student is not validated by the teacher he or she will view that lack of validation as a loss. Many lecturers and teachers ascertain that in order to have value, a teacher must be authoritative and make what they say as rule of law. Others claim that in order to gain respect the teacher must establish good rapport with the students. Both these claims have got some truth in them and in most cases having either frame results in many successes, unfortunately there are many flaws in establishing either frame.

The authoritative frame suggests that a teacher must be shown respect as that is what is demanded by the institution and what is normally accepted. This may sit well with the rule abiders but not with the rebels. To deal with a rebel most often the authoritative teacher would at some point be forced to access instinctive feelings such as frustration, indignation and most often anger. Having forced the rule of respect and not gained it, such teachers run the risk of being tested constantly by rebellious students because to such students the teacher has as much value to them as a regular city cop would have for a drug dealer.

Establishing good rapport with the students is an important factor. However, many teachers confuse building rapport with vibing. Rapport leads to respect and comfort; vibing leads to attraction and comfort. When people are having a meaningful and interesting conversation where they share their ideas and learning from each other and even discovering commonalities, they are building rapport. When two people are vibing, they both understand where either is coming from, are bantering about and sharing experiences through their conversation which are often perceived as fun.

Even though when vibing with students everyone is having a good time and at the same time learning, such a situation will most probably have serious repercussions, as the teacher



is no longer viewed as an external subject of authority but an internal big brother everyone looks up to. Having this social frame students will start taking things for granted as they know that if they did not bring the necessary material to school for instance, they might crack a joke about it and get away with it and even if the teacher playfully commands the student to get the material, in the long run rebellious students will keep on performing these tests until the teacher gives up. Both the teacher and the students are now on the same level of the interaction thus both parties can feel comfortable misbehaving from time to time.

Thus the teacher has to be reasonable in his or her actions. Rapport as well as authority must be established. The more value a teacher has in the students' eyes the more the self-fulfilling prophecy can be enacted. Whatever the teacher expects from his or her students will become reality.

Expectations on their own however may not be enough to draw students into succeeding, teacher value is also required. Students will subconsciously thrive into fulfilling your expectations of them as your disappointment resulting from their failures would be viewed as a great loss no matter how arrogant students may be.

As an exercise, pick a class and for each student write down on a piece of paper what your expectations of them are and notice how they perform in the following test or assignment you give them. Start contemplating on whether your expectations are moulded according to their perceived ability or if your expectations themselves affect their performance. Then try raising your expectations of each student by just a notch and see what happens. If you have enough value in students' eyes they should start performing better. In the next article I will show how to increase teacher value.



INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES TO MCAST BENEFICIARIES OF EU-FUNDED PROGRAMMES

The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) presented certificates to more than 105 beneficiaries of EU-funded programmes on Tuesday 26 May 2009 at the Westin Dragonara, St Julians.

MCAST has benefitted substantially from EU funds under various EU-funded programmes such as Leonardo Da Vinci, Erasmus, Comenius, Grundtvig and Youth in Action. Throughout the 2008-2009 academic year MCAST benefitted from a total sum of nearly 240,000 Euros.

During the 2008-2009 academic year the College ran two Leonardo Da Vinci projects. The student mobility project entitled Maximising Opportunities for Beneficiaries of International Learning Experiences (MOBILE) comprised a budget of more than 72,000 Euros. Fifty-five students from various Institutes have benefitted from a three-week mobility programme in six different EU member states. The partner institutions were from Ireland, Italy, England, Finland, Belgium and Austria.

The other Leonardo Da Vinci project, aimed at staff mobility, gave the opportunity to ten lecturing staff members to participate in exchange programmes in five EU member states. Five groups of two staff members incurred mobility in Denmark, England, Austria, Finland and Germany with the support of more than 16,000 Euros available for the project entitled Capacity Building in Vocational Education Training (CB VET). Moreover other staff members, hailing from the lecturing and non-academic staff, also had the opportunity to follow similar mobilities under the Erasmus programme. For the second consecutive year, MCAST has increased the number of Erasmus mobilities and this year (up till May 2009), three lecturing staff and seven non-academic staff have benefitted from one-week teaching assignments and staff-training mobilities respectively.

Together with their local work experience, this project provided these beneficiaries with an unforgettable and unequalled international experience that boosted their working knowledge, their employability and their overall understanding of their field of studies and/or job.

In addition, MCAST has also run two Comenius projects, CNC Train for Europe and Prima Klima Box. While the first project offered a very good opportunity for MCAST

Mechanical Engineering students and lecturers to develop a fully functional train model, the second project, which is in its first year, involves research conducted by the MCAST Institute of Building and Construction Engineering on different building materials aimed to maximise building efficiency. These two year projects involve a total sum of 43,000 Euros, 18,000 Euros for the CNC Train for Europe project and 25,000 Euros for the Prima Klima Box project. While the Prima Klima Box offers 26 mobility opportunities, the CNC Train for Europe is a 12 mobilities project. However, MCAST has managed to nearly double the amount of beneficiaries as 21 students and lecturing staff have benefitted from this project.

Last but not least, throughout this academic year, MCAST, through its Sports Department, organised a Youth Exchange under the Youth in Action programme in Malta. Students following the National Diploma in Sports were able to benefit from other youth exchanges in several EU countries.

Following this successful year the MCAST International Programmes Office held the presentation of certificates ceremony. The event included testimonials by the students, academic and non-academic staff beneficiaries. These testimonials helped disseminate the benefits of EU-funded mobilities and also helped encourage future applicants to follow suit.

Ms Joanna Batsura, a European Commission representative and Dr Joanna Drake, Head of the European Commission representation in Malta, were the main special guests of this ceremony. All projects were coordinated by Mr Bjorn Azzopardi.



MCAST senior management and special guests Dr Joanna Drake and Ms Joanna Batsura listening to the presentations



Staff member Sharon Vassallo receiving her certificate



Two Leonardo da Vinci student beneficiaries, Marie Jo Scicluna and Geraldine Grech being interviewed by presenter Ms Alana Paula Bondin.

‘A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO ENRICH YOUR CV’... MARIE JO SCICLUNA, ART AND DESIGN STUDENT, RECOUNTS HER WORK EXPERIENCE IN DUBLIN.

As soon as we arrived in Dublin we immediately retrieved our luggage and met a very friendly man who escorted us to our hosts. After meeting our hosts we embarked on an interesting tour around Ballybrack, the place where we stayed for the three weeks. The five of us had a separate host. Even though we were not living together, we were still very close to one another, so that helped us a lot. Mrs Wayan (my host) immediately gave me a package with all the details and information.

Sunday was a very relaxing day and to my surprise it snowed, something that in Malta one does not really get to see. The weather was very cold but pleasant unlike the humidity that penetrates the bones in Malta. That evening I was very excited as our journey was about to start. The first three days were spent at the Yacht Club. This was a school for foreigners to improve their English language enabling them to cope with the language whilst at work. To their surprise all five of us were very fluent in English (little did they know that it is our second language). They were very impressed at how fluent we could speak and obviously understand them.

My first day of work at Seven Hats Media was a very interesting one. After getting acquainted with the surroundings and programmes that I had to use (which were

completely new to me due to the fact that at College we use different programmes) I met my supervisor Keith Wealleans. A very interesting and smart man, Jillian was my temporary colleague. One can say that we were inseparable for those three weeks.

For the next three weeks my assignment was to edit their old magazine into a new one. This included editing pictures, arranging text, adding graphics and sometimes changing the layout and giving an uplift to the magazine ‘The Player’.

Jillian used to constantly tell me to slow down and take things more easy. To say the truth I felt very proud to be Maltese as it proves that we are very hard working people. My working day started at nine and finished at half four with one hour break. My daily tasks did not take up all the time over there, so every time I finished early I used to ask for more work and Jillian used to give me other adverts that needed editing (in my opinion a whole makeover).

The three weeks were pretty much the same. I was never bored and thanked God for this wonderful experience. After our hard working days we used to meet up for a drink and occasionally for dinner. We also had time to go sightseeing and shopping.

If I ever had to repeat such an experience I would immediately accept, however, I would never trade Malta with any other country in the world.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to thank once again the staff at the Institute of Art and Design and the

MCAST International Office for giving me such a wonderful opportunity to enrich my curriculum vitae and to experience working abroad at such a young age.



From left: Denise Gatt, Radhika...



Marie Jo Scicluna at work

THE UNFORGETTABLE FINLAND EXPERIENCE

The experience all started with five people who didn't know each other. They met at Luqa airport, they checked-in and went through security. On the bus, on their way to the aircraft entry point, they took photos and then, aboard the Lufthansa aircraft, they had an aerial view of Malta, of the Mediterranean sea, of Italy's mountains covered with snow and of course Frankfurt. Frankfurt was a blast, running around the airport and looking at the latest technology and fashion. From Frankfurt they were off to Helsinki where the flight was awesome; they chatted, joked along the way and took paparazzi style photographs. Once they arrived, they got off the aircraft, picked up the luggage and found themselves in the freezing snow. Actually it was not bad at all! Goodbye Frankfurt, Hello Helsinki! The taxi was posh, blue lights filled the ceiling and the heaven outside was white. They arrived at the hostel where they spent a night before travelling to Jyvaskyla.

Four hours of jokes, laughter and chattering later, there it was...Jyvaskyla! There they spent the rest of the days shopping, dining, entertaining and of course Placement. Mark J Borg and Brain Borg were at a multimedia institute where they were trained using the latest Adobe software which included Flash. Here their task was to create useful software solutions with Adobe Flash CS4. Over the four weeks, intros, navigational systems, pre-loaders, an image gallery and many other applications including a game, were created to show the students what can be done using Flash and imaginations beyond their thoughts. On the other hand, Mark Micallef used their intranet system 'Optima', to create tutorials for students in his branch where they learnt numerous installations and configurations which later were translated into Suomi. Diandra Galea went around visiting different homes for mentally, disabled and elderly people, which taught her valuable lessons on how they handle this kind of people to make their life easier. Creativity could not be forgotten. Sefora Vella created artistic metal works and took photo shots at her work placement, which later were enhanced using the latest Adobe Photoshop CS4.

The four weeks went as fast as lightning. In a blink of an eye, they returned to Malta, back to their old lives. It was an experience of a lifetime, something that they will never forget. Are you ready to embark on an adventure and experience this too? Ask for it and you won't be disappointed!

SHARING THEIR EXPERIENCEAN INTERVIEW WITH BELGIAN ENGINEERING STUDENTS IN MALTA

ANY UNDERLYING REASONS FOR CHOOSING MALTA?

Malta is a beautiful country with a Mediterranean climate. It is full of culture, history and interesting places to visit. The Maltese people are very friendly and helpful. Malta is a small country with an easy public transport system. So everything you need is very close to you. In Malta everyone can speak English and everyone is very polite and friendly.

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY FOR A LEONARDO STUDENT IN MALTA?

The day starts with breakfast and preparing for work. After work we go back to our apartment, rest a bit, have dinner and discuss our plans for the evening. These usually include going to the cinema, watching a movie on television, going to Paceville or attending salsa lessons, going for a walk or doing the grocery shopping, laundry, dishes, ironing, etc....

WAS THE GRANT SUFFICIENT?

Yes. The public transport, flight, accommodation, culture trips, food were all paid through the Leonardo grant. We only spent €150 of our own money throughout the four weeks.

OVERALL BENEFITS OF SUCH AN EXPERIENCE

Overall benefits of such an experience:

It's a once in a lifetime chance. We experienced living alone without the help of our parents. We had to live together with other students, make our own food, do the dishes, the laundry and the cleaning.

Belgian students in front of the Azure Window, Gozo



GOOD POINTS / NEGATIVE POINTS WITH REGARDS TO MCAST AND THE PLACEMENT?

The placements were excellent. Our colleagues were very friendly and helpful and immediately accepted us like co-workers. MCAST also provided us with the opportunity to follow some extra English lessons and internet lessons. We appreciated this a lot!

SEEK HELP

MCAST

SEEK HELP RIGHT FROM THE START

IN NEED OF HELP IN MATHS,
ENGLISH AND MALTESE UP
TO 'O' LEVEL STANDARD?

DON'T WORRY, WE CAN HELP YOU.

CALL MR DAVID MUSCAT, MCAST LEARNING SUPPORT UNIT CO-ORDINATOR ON
23987517/8 OR SEND AN EMAIL TO BASICSKILLS@MCAST.EDU.MT

FITTEX L-GHAJNUNA

MCAST

FITTEX L-GHAJNUNA MILL-EWWEL

GĦANDEK B'ZONN L-GHAJNUNA FIL-
MATEMATIKA, L-INGLIŻ U L-MALTI
TĦABBILX RASEK. NISTGĦU NGĦINUK.

ĊEMPEL LIS-SUR DAVID MUSCAT, KORDINATUR TAT-TAQSIMA GHAJNUNA FIT-TAGHLIM
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