

MCAST LINK

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

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On the cover: Alana Paula Bondin at the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE



Caroline Balzan
Communications
and PR Manager

Over 900 graduates received Higher National and National Diploma certificates in one of the three Graduation Ceremonies held in December 2009. Over two hundred of them were awarded the Higher National Diploma, which is equivalent to the completion of the first two years of a degree. New courses at this year's graduation ceremonies were the MCAST Diploma for Pharmacy Technicians, the MCAST Diploma for Dental Surgery Assistants and the MCAST-BTEC Higher National Diploma in Animal Management. Next year the College will see seven cohorts of degree students graduating from four different institutes. The President's and the Principal's messages, three student speeches as well as the full list of graduates can be found inside the magazine.

Another important event was the Presentation of Awards Ceremony of MCAST students who successfully completed Aviation Maintenance Courses under the approval of the Lufthansa Technical Training School of Hamburg. The Prime Minister, the Hon Dr Lawrence Gonzi, presided over the event that was held at Lufthansa Technik premises on 5 February 2010. Professor Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO of MCAST, said: "The success of this new venture has continued to raise the training profile of the College as an institution which is able to respond favourably and in a timely manner to industry's needs. This novel initiative further enhanced the trust which the College already enjoyed in its rapport with industry. Already we have been approached by the MROs who are encouraging us to move on to higher levels of training... indeed to provide programmes which shall even lead to degrees."

The International Programmes Office presents a number of interesting experiences by members of lecturing and academic staff and students. The countries visited were varied and included Italy, Ireland, Belgium, Finland and the UK. Each visit is featured inside and also illustrated with pictures. Another interesting article is by Martin Borg, Institute Co-ordinator at the Institute of Building and Construction Engineering. Martin writes about energy utilisation and the concept of sustainable development in today's building and construction world.

For the second consecutive year the Institute of Art and Design carried out voluntary work in the community during Progress Week. Students participated in two different activities namely working with young children on art and crafts projects and producing artworks in the form of wall paintings and murals. The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering also organised several voluntary activities including carrying out electrical works at Dar il-Wens. These activities are encouraged as students are given the opportunity to experience a sense of solidarity towards others in the community and also to develop a number of soft skills, such as team work, that are vital to their personal and professional development.

I would like to wish all readers a Peaceful Easter!

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

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INFORMATION

AVIATION MAINTENANCE PRESENTATION OF AWARDS CEREMONY



On Friday 5 February 2010 the Prime Minister, the Hon Dr Lawrence Gonzi presided over the Presentation of Awards Ceremony of the group of MCAST students who successfully completed Aviation Maintenance Courses under the approval of Lufthansa Technical Training School of Hamburg. The event took place in one of the hangars of Lufthansa Technik Malta at Hal Farrug.

The cohort of students who received certificates at the Award Giving Ceremony is the last group to receive training from the Lufthansa Technical Training School of Hamburg. In October 2008 the College received its approval as a European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Part-147 Training Organisation and will from now on train the students itself. The approval allows the MCAST Aviation Maintenance Training Centre to deliver basic training at EASA Part 66 Category A1 and Aircraft Structures. The Aviation Maintenance Training Centre at MCAST has already initiated the process with the Transport Malta Civil Aviation Directorate in order to obtain approval to deliver and examine courses at Part 66 Category B level.

Fifty-nine students received certificates for successfully completing the following courses: Part-66 Aircraft Maintenance Category A1 Licence Course, Aircraft Structure and Composite Material Course and Sheet Metal and Composite Materials Course. These students have all undergone a twelve month on-the-job training period with different Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) organizations. Some of them also had the opportunity to undergo the on-the-job training in Manila, the Philippines.

Since 2004, the College took up the challenge to provide a highly-trained workforce for this fast growing industry. The College is indebted to Lufthansa Technik which pioneered the provision of technical services relating to aircraft and assisted the College in the initial setting-up stages. To date the College has already trained over 200 students who are presently working with the MROs while another 271 learners are currently enrolled on the College's full-time and part-time courses.

The College now boasts a state-of-the-art Aviation Maintenance Training Centre, qualified lecturers and



The Prime Minister, the Hon Dr Lawrence Gonzi, together with Mr Paul A Attard, President of the Board of Governors, Prof Maurice Grech, Principal/CEO, Mr Louis Giordimaina, CEO Lufthansa Technik Malta, Mr Christoph Meyerrose, Managing Director Lufthansa Technik Training, Ing Mario Cassar, Operations Manager, and Mr Ronald Curmi, Quality Manager, together with MCAST students.

examiners, training, examination and quality assurance procedures as well as its approval to provide EASA recognized Part 66 Category A1 training and certification. MCAST's state-of-the-art Aviation Maintenance Training Centre is in fact designed to EASA standards. Resources include two dedicated training workshops, one for Basic Training and one for Sheet Metal Training, three classrooms for theory lessons and two computer-based training rooms. All facilities and resources at the Aviation Maintenance Training Centre as well as members of staff are audited and approved by the Transport Malta Civil Aviation Directorate.

The College is presently offering the following courses in Aircraft Maintenance: EASA Part-66 Aircraft Maintenance Category A1 Licence Course, EASA Part-66 Aircraft Maintenance Category B1.1 Licence Course, EASA Part-66 Aircraft Maintenance Category B2 Licence Course and Aircraft Structures and Composite Material Course.

The above-mentioned courses are all funded by the European Social Fund Project ESF 1.34 - Addressing Skills Mismatches in the Aviation Maintenance Industry

under the Operational Programme II - Cohesion Policy 2007-2013, Empowering People for more jobs and a better quality of life.

Moreover the College is also offering an MCAST-BTEC First Diploma in Mechanical Engineering (Aircraft Maintenance Mechanics) course aimed at providing Maintenance Repair Overhaul organisations with trained personnel.

In his speech, Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi said that, "Government is currently investing 1.4 million every school day to ensure that we achieve our aims. Our education policy has also been responsive to changing and future economic needs. As we saw the potential of high value - added sectors contributing to Malta's economic development, my Government set up MCAST with the aim of focusing on high-quality vocational training. The success of this institution has not only proved right our foresight at the time, but has sustained the country's economic development and investment attractiveness."

SPEECH BY MR CHRISTOPH MEYERROSE
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
**AVIATION MAINTENANCE
COURSE CERTIFICATE
CEREMONY AT LUFTHANSA
TECHNIK MALTA**
5 FEBRUARY 2010



Hon Prime Minister Dr Lawrence Gonzi,
Mr Paul Attard,
Prof Maurice Grech,
Mr Louis Giordimaina
ladies and gentlemen,
parents and graduates,

It is more than two years now since I last visited Lufthansa Technik Malta (LTM). It is really impressive to be here again in this state-of-the-art and well-organized LTM facility. But

just as remarkable for me is to see such a promising number of young people who are ready to join the aviation industry. A big welcome to you all!

Now, first of all, I would like to congratulate all of you, graduates, who were successful in their studies at MCAST. I want to wish you all the very best for an exciting career in our highly attractive industry.

Representing Lufthansa Technical Training (LTT), which is the one subsidiary in the Lufthansa Group specialized

in maintenance and repair training, and which sets the benchmark for the qualification level of all technical staff in the LHT Group, it is my honour and pleasure to be here today. And it is a particular joy and privilege, because today we celebrate the success which the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), Lufthansa Technik Malta (LTM) and Lufthansa Technical Training (LTT) have jointly aspired for over a period of more than 3 years.

It all started with the ambition that Malta should be able to build its own European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) approved training organization. At that time LTM's CEO, Mr Louis Giordimaina, and MCAST's Principal, Mr Frank Edwards took the decision to establish a training school for the aviation industry, and we at LTT were asked for support.

Since then much has happened and huge efforts were made to achieve the planned targets. Initially LTT acted as consultants in specifying the infrastructure necessary for such a venture and we also conducted the first courses under LTT's approval. The German National Aviation Authority, the LBA, came to Malta and audited MCAST in those early days of our cooperation and approved our working together for the first courses.

These first courses were used to familiarize MCAST's instructors with the EASA standards, and in parallel the so-called MTOE (Maintenance Training Organization Exposition): the "constitution" and process manual of MCAST's aviation maintenance training centre was being developed.

Our colleagues still remember the intensive week we devoted for the recruiting campaign of the first courses. A team of MCAST, LTM, (here I would like to mention Mr. Schembri), and colleagues from LTT - used the proven LTT approach when assessing more than 90 motivated candidates, from among whom 47 were selected for training. All the processes for practical training were established in close cooperation with LTM. And, I must again thank LTM for providing the necessary EASA Part 145 elements for the qualification in such a professional manner.

I ascribe the achievements made in these early days, to the way we operated and the fact that we used a very international approach from the very beginning. Our team was made up of MCAST administrative staff, MCAST instructors, the young company of LTM and we at LTT, who identified and recruited instructors from the Philippines, from the UK and Germany, from the LTT training network.

We conducted the necessary training during evening courses held for the purpose. We had our challenges and we surely had our discussions. But gradually everything fell nicely into place. We were determined to find the right solutions. You will not find many projects where such an international approach is working so smoothly and reaching its targets so perfectly.

Finally, in the latter part of 2008, the national aviation authority of Malta, the Malta Department of Civil Aviation

(MDCA) approved MCAST in line with European standards to become the desired Part-147 training organization.

The success is due to the consistent efforts of many of you. But most certainly I must mention Mr. Mario Cassar, who is the acting Training Manager and, so - to speak, the heart of the school. He was restlessly working to getting everything prepared in the shortest possible time. But also Ronald Curmi, the Quality Manager, who takes responsibility for the entire quality management. He has contributed so much to the build-up, as have many others who I cannot mention in such a short speech.

What was achieved, in any case, is a training environment which many countries in Europe will be envious of, because they have nothing similar themselves yet. It is the training ground, the breeding place for aviation professionals and I sincerely hope that it will continue to draw the sustained talent we have witnessed so far towards a career in aviation.

I would like to thank Prof. Grech, Mr. Attard and the entire MCAST team as well as the colleagues from LTM. We, at LTT, were just as keen to accompany you along this way, and I see more opportunities in the years to come. I am indeed looking forward to a continued successful cooperation.

Dear graduates, as we all know, training in the aviation industry does not end with the achievement of a Cat A technician's certificate or a good pass mark on a Sheet Metal and Composite course. There are still many, many more things to learn. Remember that in such a dynamic industry, like the Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) world you have joined, the concept of life-long learning takes pride of place.

You have just received your certificate as proof of having successfully passed the first stages of this valuable qualification scheme. You were successful in both the theoretical part and the practical components of the course. Some of you, I am told, already had the chance to see a bit more of the Lufthansa Technik Group as LTM had organized your practical training to be conducted in Manila at the premises of Lufthansa Technik Philippines. I am sure this has been an interesting experience for those taking part. You were also able to witness for yourselves the opportunities offered by a company operating internationally.

I can now start to ramble on about the economic crisis and my views about the impact it had on the world's economy and how its effects moved from East to West. The recovery seems to follow the same pattern from East to West. But I will not! Today is a day to celebrate your successes. Every downswing has provoked an upswing anyhow.

So, once again, I would like to wish today's graduates all the best in their future aviation careers. I am also sure this will take them to many places in the Lufthansa world.

Thank you very much!

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR MCAST STAFF

On 28 January 2010 MCAST staff who recently attended and completed one of three short courses, organized as part of MCAST's Staff Development Programme, received certificates.

MCAST values lifelong learning for all employees and recognizes their need and desire to pursue excellence through professional development. These initiatives provide employees with opportunities for personal and professional growth and development, and contribute to the overall success of the College and its students. As an organisation, MCAST encourages each member of staff to practise continuous professional development. Having secured EU funding through the European Social Fund (ESF 1.36 – Professional Development Programmes

for MCAST Staff and Students' Top-Up Degrees), MCAST launched its Staff Development Programme in 2009 with the organisation of three short courses, and throughout this coming year the College has plans to offer a range of other courses that should appeal to many staff members.

People are MCAST's most valuable resource and the College's success relies upon each member of staff's ability to continuously develop and improve. Staff development is about enabling all individuals and the organisation to achieve future goals effectively and with confidence. Seize the opportunity! These courses are being offered to you, as a member of staff at MCAST, on a complimentary basis.



The first group of staff members who completed a short course as part of MCAST's Staff Development Programme.



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



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Paul A Attard,
President
of MCAST Board of
Governors, Speech
Delivered at the
Aviation Maintenance
presentation of Awards
Ceremony

We celebrated the successful completion of the education and training of a group of students and the award of a Higher National Diploma in the field of aircraft maintenance and servicing that has broken new grounds in vocational education and training in Malta. This event indicates another major achievement in the development and growth of MCAST

MCAST's mission is to deliver universally accessible vocational and professional education and training with an international dimension, responsive to the needs of the individual and the economy. And we are delivering this mission.

The standards demanded by the European Aviation Safety Authority (EASA) as regards to curriculum content and delivery as well as facilities and resources for training are exceptionally high and overstretches an institution's capacity. MCAST has reached these standards within a short time and acquired the related EASA licence with the collaboration of the technical expertise and experience of Lufthansa Technik – Germany and Malta - and the Civil Aviation Department, Malta.

MCAST is at the service of our students, at the service of industry and at the service of the national economy. Our students are at the centre of all that we do at College. We provide them with the knowledge, competences, skills and attitudes not simply to obtain a job but to follow a career successfully and fruitfully within a lifelong learning dimension. A career in aviation is a worthwhile challenge.

MCAST has developed the dynamism, the flexibility and the responsiveness to satisfy the skills needs for new industry jobs. Malta Enterprise regularly brings to the College investors who are thinking of establishing business in Malta in order to find out whether the skills they require actually exist and to assess MCAST's potential to deliver them.

MCAST is ready to adapt existing courses as well as to develop new courses in order to cater for the emerging skills needs of industry. We have responded effectively and fast to various requests. The way MCAST met the skills needs of Lufthansa Technik Malta, and the other enterprises in this field, is but a typical and concrete example of the way MCAST thinks, plans and operates.

I remember clearly our meetings between the interested parties. MCAST was expected to face a huge challenge in a relatively new field of study and training. However, we did not waste time to declare "Yes, we can, and yes, we will." The rest is now already history.

Satisfying students' aspirations and industry requirements means making a substantial contribution to the development and growth of Malta's economy, an economy based on knowledge in a continually changing technological environment in a highly competitive world.

However, this is not the end of the road but simply a major step in the way forward. In the name of the Board of Governors I feel I must congratulate all concerned, Lufthansa Technik, Germany, Lufthansa Technik, Malta, Civil Aviation Department, and Malta Enterprise for their collaboration with and support to MCAST. A very special word of appreciation goes to the highly professional and committed members of staff who found no difficulty in exploring and delivering a new area of knowledge and competences. Do allow me to mention here two members of staff who were instrumental in reaching our ambitious goals, namely, Mr Mario Cassar, Operations Manager, and Mr Ronald Curmi, Quality Manager, who together with their Directors and colleagues and the central administration led by the Principal, who is acting as Accountable Manager to the project, made MCAST and Malta proud yet once more.

Congratulations, of course, to our students and now skilled workers who have successfully completed their course. I am sure they have not yet reached their full potential and that they will continue to upgrade themselves throughout their career as Malta needs competent young men and women.

The Prime Minister and his government have set education as a priority area in the 2015 vision now being implemented. I am confident that government will continue to invest heavily in vocational education and training, as it has been doing in MCAST, as an investment that never fails and as the basic foundation for more and better jobs, sustainable economic growth, social inclusion and cohesion – ambitious targets for an ambitious nation.

NEW APPOINTMENT



Katya De Giovanni,
Director Institute of
Community Services

Katya De Giovanni graduated with an Honours degree in Psychology from the University of Malta. Her dissertation entitled "Occupational Stress in Nursing: The Maltese Context" attained the best dissertation award in 1997. In 1998 she read for a Post Graduate Certificate in Education specialising in Inclusion and attained her permanent warrant in 1999 when she was teaching Form 2 students at Fra Diego Bonanno Opportunity Centre for Girls. After following a staff development programme on differentiated teaching she applied and was selected to become the first full-time peripatetic teacher in the Let Me Learn Process where she trained and gave staff development courses to teachers in both primary and secondary state schools. Katya in fact attained the Trainer and Consultant Certificate in the Let Me Learn Process from Rowan University, USA in 2002. Her work in this area fueled an interest in Professional Development so she decided to read for an MSc in Occupational Psychology from the School of Management and Organizational Psychology, Birkbeck College, University of London.

Katya's first appointment at MCAST was in December 2002 when she was transferred on attachment as Assistant Lecturer to the newly setup Inclusive Education Unit. Her work in this unit consisted of teaching Mathematics to students following the Pathway Programme and also of providing support to students with additional needs following mainstream courses. She remained in this post until she was selected to set up the Vocational Teacher Training Unit in 2004 where she mainly lectured Initial Assessment, Support Services, Learning Theories, Teaching Techniques, Communication Skills and Research Methods. In December 2008, Katya was appointed Deputy Director of the Institute of Community Services where her main responsibilities included student placements and BTEC courses.

Having successfully completed her MSc in 2003, Katya attained the status of Chartered Occupational Psychologist within the British Psychological Society of the United

Kingdom granting her eligibility to Chartered Scientist Status. She has also furthered her studies in Psychometric Testing and has attained Level A and B Certificates also issued by the British Psychological Society. She has also recently attained Registered Professional Status in Malta since she has demonstrated considerable experience in both consultancy as well as staff training in local and international companies.

Katya also holds the FTCL in Music Education as well as the ALCM and ATCL diplomas in pianoforte performance and has taught pianoforte and theory of music privately between 1998 and 2008. Apart from her own private practice as psychologist and music teacher, Katya also tutored and advised undergraduate and graduate level dissertations for students following courses at the University of Malta. She has taught Research Methods, Psychology of Work, Guidance Theories and Placement Skills in courses offered by the Faculty of Education and the Centre for Labour Studies and has also presented a good amount of papers in both local and international conferences. The European Commission has also appointed Katya as National Consultant to conduct research on ECVET in Malta. Between 2004 and 2008, Katya has also given contribution to the Euroguidance project and has also represented MCAST on a Grundtvig Project entitled Edu-Action aimed at analysing strategies for reducing student dropouts in Italy, France, Spain, Sweden and Malta.

Ever since she started her work at MCAST, Katya was always interested in the ways in which secondary school students coped with their transition to Further Education. For this reason, she is currently completing a PhD (Education) at the University of Nottingham on the subject. Her plans are to continue nurturing the positive learning environment and to develop a culture of research and development at the Institute of Community Services.

Katya is the mother of two-year old Izak and is partner to James Catania.

AGRIBUSINESS INSTITUTE

MALTESE MEDICINAL HERBS – TRADITIONAL AND MODERN THERAPEUTIC USES

BY DAVID COLEIRO, B. PHARM (HONS), M.Sc. (AGRIC. VET. PHARM.), SENIOR LECTURER – AGRIBUSINESS INSTITUTE

The study of the pharmaceutical activity of medicinal herbs is known as Pharmacognosy coming from the Greek words pharmakon (drug), and gnosis or "knowledge"¹. The Mediterranean region is endowed with numerous medicinal plants and herbal medicine has flourished in our region for hundreds of years. The traditional use of herbs has been on a decline as new and more efficient synthetic drugs have taken over the pharmaceutical market especially in the last

hundred years. However most people fail to recognise that the precursors of these new medicines were the herbs that were either cultivated by our forefathers or grew in the wild. These herbs are now being re-discovered not only for their traditional use but for modern therapeutic uses in the field of medicine and aromatherapy. Two such herbs, abundantly found in the Maltese islands are Borage (Fidloqqom) and Rosemary (Klin).

BORAGE

Borago officinalis L. is a tap rooted annual herb that grows in our countryside, having a characteristic blue-violet flower. The white flowered cultivar known as 'alba'² has also been recorded in Malta but grows on a much smaller scale in specific locations. Borage has been used as a folk remedy to relieve coughs and colds (infusion of leaves and flowers)³, to treat boils and to reduce pain associated with gout. Recent studies have focused mainly on borage seeds containing a fixed oil rich in gamma linolenic acid (GLA). This essential fatty acid is a dietary factor that has been found to relieve many chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes mellitus, atopic eczema and the premenstrual syndrome⁴.

Local studies have shown that Maltese Borage contains a good quantity of oil (up to 32.19% (w/w)) containing about 19.5% GLA⁵. As the market for this nutritional supplement is continually on the rise, there maybe a potential in creating a niche market for the cultivation of Borage, especially on poor calcareous, shallow soil that may not support many other crops.



Borage

ROSEMARY

Rosmarinus officinalis L. is a very popular herb mostly used for its culinary properties. It is a very hardy plant that once established, will turn into an evergreen shrub. Local folk uses include as a fumigant to treat influenza, to relieve indigestion, coughs and colds³. Its powerful essential oil has been used to scent babies' baths and as an insect repellent.

Modern therapeutic uses have mainly focused on the essential oil which is composed mainly of camphor, α -pinene and 8-cineole⁶. These give the oil its powerful aromatherapeutic properties. Other chemicals found in Rosemary are being considered for their potential therapeutic use. The results of a particular study suggest that one of these substances, carnosic acid, may shield the brain from free radicals, lowering the risk of strokes and neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's and Lou Gehrig's⁷. Another important chemical is Rosmarinic acid which has been found to have considerable antiviral, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties⁸.

The cultivation of this herb has never been attempted on a commercial basis in Malta. However the potential exists especially when one considers the high price of Rosemary essential oil and also the varied therapeutic uses that may become available in the near future.



Rosemary shrub

- 1 Heinrich *et al.*, 2004. Fundamentals of Pharmacognosy and Phytotherapy. Churchill Livingstone Publishers.
- 2 The Herb Society of America, 2006. Promising Plant Profiles. Retrieved at: <http://www.herbsociety.org/promplant/whiteborage.php> [Accessed 13 January 2010]
- 3 Vella Haber, K., 1993. Personal Communication
- 4 Braun *et al.*, 2007. Herbs & natural supplements: an evidence-based guide. Elsevier Publishers, Australia.
- 5 Coleiro, D., 1994. The Pharmacognosy of *Borago officinalis* L.

- 6 Salido *et al.*, 2006. Chemical composition and seasonal variations of rosemary oil from Southern Spain. Journal of Essential Oil Research.
- 7 Burnham Institute for Medical Research, 2007. Rosemary Chicken Protects Your Brain From Free Radicals. ScienceDaily. Retrieved at: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/10/071030102210.htm> [Accessed 13 January 2010]
- 8 Wikipedia, 2010. Rosmarinic acid. Retrieved at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosmarinic_acid [Accessed 5 January 2010]

OPEN WEEKEND

AT THE INSTITUTE OF AGRIBUSINESS MAY 2010

Towards the end of May 2010 the Agribusiness Institute will be organising an Open Weekend to promote the Institute and its several activities. This Open Weekend will include various events related to animal care, horticulture and Maltese traditional food products. Students will perform activities such as pet grooming, horse riding, and practical tips on house-plant care and apiculture.

A children's play area will be also available. Several activities such as pet handling will also take place. Tours of the Institute facilities will also be held.





ART AND DESIGN

ART AND DESIGN STUDENTS ENGAGE IN VOLUNTARY WORK

For the second year running, MCAST Art and Design students have taken advantage of what has become known as Progress Week at the end of semester one, to engage in a series of voluntary activities in the community. This is the time when lecturers are busily working on assessments and preparing assignments for the remainder of the academic year.

Taking the cue from similar successful exercises in the past, and following last year's success at the NGOs, the Institute managed this year to place as many as four hundred students in ten different schools, the majority of which were government primaries and kindergartens. The students participated in either one of two different activities: many of them worked with young children on art and crafts projects while others produced artworks in the form of wall paintings and murals.

This year the MCAST Institute of Art and Design thought of again placing the students' talents to good use. At the Institute of Art and Design there is an excellent reserve of artistic creativity. During this week students were able to appreciate what a small voluntary contribution of theirs can make in the lives of others. The heads of schools and teachers alike were all very excited about the project and very impressed with the enthusiasm shown by the students and the children themselves thoroughly enjoyed the experience, especially since this also involved making new friends with Art and Design students.

"We strongly believe that, as educators, it is our duty to actively expose our students to values of solidarity, sharing and giving," said Mr Stephen Vella, Director of the Institute of Art and Design. "Furthermore, through such activities, students may nurture a number of soft skills, such as communication and team work, which are essential in any sphere of one's life."

Needless to say, this initiative involved intensive coordination between the MCAST Institute and the respective organisations towards student allocation, scheduling, the preparation and organisation of materials required for the project, and the planning of custom-designed activities which targeted the specific needs of the different locations and groups of children. The activities were undertaken in the Colleges of St Margaret, St Benedict and St Claire, as well as in the St Francis Primary School in Cospicua.

"We are very proud of the students, who throughout the week demonstrated their ability to perform and work to given briefs and within set time constraints," said Melanie Mizzi, Deputy Director of the Institute of Art and Design. "They gave evidence of maturity in their approach and attitude, in their sense of initiative and their determination to deliver work of the highest standards."

The coordinators from all the participating schools, who were typically the heads of school, were also positively impressed by the students' diligence and pride taken in their work as well as with their mature attitude.



INT MIN INT? - THE FIRST TV PROGRAMME LAUNCHED BY MCAST INSTITUTE OF ART AND DESIGN MEDIA STUDENTS

The Institute of Art and Design is committed to pursue in developing skill sets that encourage professional working ethic in the creative industries. Earlier this year MCAST launched new media courses that prepare students towards correct practice in both academic and practical principles of producing professional media projects. National and Higher National Diploma in Media (Moving Image) courses aim to bring to the local media industry a new wave of professional film and TV content producers. Students learn to develop new ideas and to seek to break through conventional styles of local TV broadcasting that one might find as common when browsing through our local channels.

As a product of this initiative the Institute of Art and Design has launched its very first TV programme researched, developed and produced entirely by Higher National Diploma Media students.

'Int min Int?' is a local culture show produced by MediaCast, an in-house media branch within the Institute. 'Int min Int?' gives an opportunity to young professionals to have a voice in our local TV broadcast. "Int min int?" is a current affairs programme that includes profiles of local and foreign artists and media practitioners, weekly features of young artists, interviews and discussions about current events, and a showcase gallery of MCAST creative productions. Features include local artists' point of views in relation to what audiences are expecting from local events. "Int min int?" is a creative catalyst that brings together education in the search of media professionalism using broadcast technology in order to give HND Media (Moving Image) students the opportunity of professional broadcast work experience.

On Thursday 21 January 2010 the first episode of 'Int min Int?' was broadcast on the educational channel, Education 22. To launch this programme students and lecturers organized an evening to celebrate the first transmission of 'Int min Int?' This event brought together students, parents and staff to watch the programme live whilst sharing thoughts in a social venue. The President of the Board of Governors, Mr Paul. A. Attard, and Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO of MCAST, started off the evening by congratulating the Art and Design students on the very first TV programme, produced entirely by MCAST during the first year of the Higher National Diploma in Media (Moving Image). The Director of the Institute of Art and Design, Mr. Stephen Vella, stated that, "the programme 'Int min Int?' is a manifest of good concept and hard work in which staff and students collaborated in order to promote good interactive TV content in the light of professional practice and working environment. 'Int min Int?' is one of many future projects that aim to explore professionalism by giving students opportunities to express creativity and learning production skills as well as networking with more advanced industry players."



The Cast of Int min Int? together with their Lecturers and the Institute of Art and Design Administration



LEONARDO CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROJECT SCOTLAND VISIT

Together with two other colleges in Denmark and Scotland, the MCAST Institute of Art and Design is participating in a Leonardo Cultural Exchange Project which will span over two years. This project will see students from the three countries working on a hair and fashion project which will ultimately feature on a specially-designed website, as well as being filmed by our media students.

Following an initial coordination meeting in Denmark last October, the first event was organized in Scotland in the form of a Master Class, where the participating countries contributed to the setting up and management of a fashion and hair show at the Adam Smith College in Kirkcaldy.

This event involved seven mobilities for both the Maltese and the Danish partners, with students actively participating in the planning and preparation of the event itself. This allowed students ample time to get to know each other, and to learn about each other's cultural outlook and educational and skills background.

We were all warmly greeted in cold Scotland! Students and staff alike thoroughly enjoyed the cultural trip organized by the Scottish hosts to Edinburgh Castle, with its fascinating architecture and awe-inspiring views. Our students, with their art and design background, could not help taking the opportunity to visit the two main art museums of the capital, namely the Scotland National Gallery and the Scotland National Museum of Modern Art. This was, to say the least, a breath-taking experience for all of us!

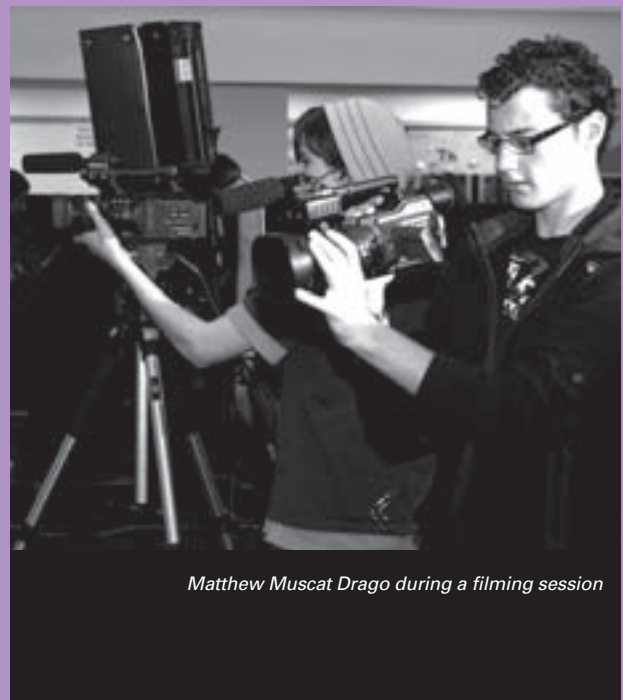
Coincidentally the 30 November 2009 was St Andrew's Day, and our hosts delighted us with a concert of Gaelic music and song performed at the University of Edinburgh. The following day, we also visited the main campus of Adam Smith College, with particular emphasis on the Media and Graphic sections. Thus we could observe the facilities and equipment, as well as some of the teaching methods adopted in these areas.

Following a rigorous selection process, four students from the MCAST Institute of Art and Design participating in this mobility were selected from HND courses in Media, Graphic Design and Interactive Media. Their contribution was essential since they took care of the filming and photographic process by liaising with their Scottish counterparts. The footage and material collected will now be used to set up a website featuring all the events and activities pertaining to this project. Our students have also been charged with the design and production of the branding of the project, including the logo and identity, as well as web design elements.

A number of meetings were held between different lecturers from all participating countries to discuss both the ongoing event as well as plans for future mobilities. Among other things, it was decided that the next meeting/event will be held in Malta in March 2010. The project is set to conclude by June 2011, with a grand finale in Malta.



From right to left: Mark Julian Borg, Melanie Mizzi, Deputy Director Institute of Art and Design, Stephen Vella, Director Institute of Art and Design, Clinton Galea, Paul Camilleri, Lecturer; front row: Matthew Muscat Drago and Roxanne Gatt



Matthew Muscat Drago during a filming session

THE COMMUNITY ART PROJECT

ST. PAUL'S BAY PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN SEE THE WORK IN PROGRESS

by Alfred Camilleri, Tutor-in-charge of Project

It was an exciting visit to the Institute of Art and Design for a group of Year Five students from St. Paul's Bay Primary School on Monday, 11 January 2010. Led by their Headmistress Ms. Lina Deguara and accompanied by her staff members Mr. Mark Azzopardi, Ms. Charlene Farrugia and Ms. Esther Galea, the group was met by the Director of the Institute, Mr. Stephen Vella. The event was organized as an opportunity for all to see the work in progress on the murals destined to embellish their school's empty wallspaces as part of Unit 14 Community Art project for this year.

The expression on the Primary school childrens' faces was that of astonishment as they entered Art Studio 7 where a group of National Diploma in Art and Crafts students were

making their final touches to their individual murals. The whole spectrum of colours, the shapes, the variety of figure characters, brushes and paints all over the place proved to be an unusual attraction for the students. They were guided around the numerous murals, observing our students at work, some asking questions while others listening to the explanations of some of the messages behind the colourful works. To complete the visit the group was led around the main areas of the Institute where they saw the fully equipped studios and workshops. The visit proved to be an impressive experience for the visitors who now look forward to see the final results when the murals are placed permanently at their school. This will take place when the artworks together with the whole portfolio as requested by the assignment are finally assessed and verified accordingly.

SLOVAK AMBASSADOR'S VISIT TO THE INSTITUTE OF ART AND DESIGN

The Slovak Ambassador, Mr Stanislav Vallo honoured the Institute of Art and Design with a courtesy visit on Friday 11 December 2009. The visit was organized to officially present Foundation Certificate student, David Camilleri, with a first national prize in a competition organized by the Slovak Republic. The competition was open for students in the Art and Design field. Participants were invited to submit entries in the form of paintings, photographic images or graphic design manipulations inspired from the theme "Why I am Happy to be in the World."

Accompanied by the Maltese Honorary Consul for the Slovak Republic, Mr Godwin E. Bencini, the Ambassador awarded David Camilleri his prize, consisting of a variety of art-related products. David was also informed that his winning entry would participate in a touring exhibition together with the winners from the other participating European countries.

The Institute of Art and Design presented the Ambassador with a remembrance token in the form of a ceramics art piece produced by one of the Institute's lecturers, Mr George Muscat. This visit augurs well for the Institute of Art

and Design, and it promises the opening up of a number of opportunities for the students. In fact initial talks have seen the budding of the possibilities of joint ventures with Slovak institutions through the EU and other projects.



Slovak Ambassador, Mr Stanislav Vallo presenting a gift to David Camilleri, Art and Design student in the presence of Mr Paul A Attard, President of the Board of Governors, Prof Maurice Grech, Principal/CEO, Mr Stephen Vella, Director of the Institute of Art and Design and Mr Godwin Bencini, Maltese Homorary Consul for the Slovak Republic

PREPARATORY VISIT IN EISENBERG, GERMANY

Between the 13 and 16 December 2009 Charles Pace Briffa, lecturer from MCAST Art and Design, together with Vanessa Vella and Christine Borg, both students studying Media Production, travelled to Eisenberg, Germany for a Comenius Bilateral Preparatory visit.

During the past years Socrates - Comenius Projects have offered a great opportunity to work with colleagues from other European countries. Nevertheless, the aim of this visit was to start and prepare for a fresh two-year Comenius bilateral programme about Noise Pollution as a factor problem experienced in all European countries. The approach is to show how noise pollution can affect each individual. The students experienced these effects by themselves while dealing closely with the topic "Disturbia", thinking about possible reasons for being disturbed and creating a theatre play to express the border crossing impact of on the one hand disturbing and on the other hand being disturbed. The coordinators and participants in this activity are Germany and Malta.

The discussion meetings were held in Eisenberg, Germany at the College BBS Donnersbergkreis. The main aims were to ensure that both institution partners will put forward

their strength to ensure the success of the new project, to discuss cooperation and distribution of tasks between partners so all bodies will be actively involved in the setting up of the working programme, to integrate the project as part of school curriculum, to exchange the previous Comenius experience and to develop together methods and approaches which meet the needs of the new programme.

Since every college has its specific strengths, the following workflow was planned. The BBS Donnersbergkreis College will work to develop the individual scenes (roles, text) and subsequently the MCAST Art and Design classes will organise the technical realisation (decoration, stage design, lighting, etc.). With the help of a learning platform the required information can be exchanged and during the meetings reduced to practice. These meetings include concerted rehearsals (students of both schools play the roles) and the realisation of the "technical details".

While in Eisenberg lecturers had the opportunity to meet the Director and the management staff during a reception held for them and to visit places of interest and museums around the village.

INNOVATIVE AND CREATIVE CRIBS FOR THE PRESIDENT OF MALTA

In October 2009, the staff and students at the Institute of Art and Design were presented with the opportunity to participate in a unique and exciting project. Requiring not one, but two nativity cribs to adorn the courtyard at the Presidential Palace in Valetta and the private grounds of his Palace at San Anton for the Christmas celebrations, His Excellency President George Abela requested that these cribs be created by the innovative and creative team at the Institute of Art and Design.

Having established that both cribs were to be site-specific in nature and that accordingly each piece should be constructed with its intended surroundings in mind, in November, the sizeable task of designing and building two entirely different works began in earnest with Art and Design Lecturer Sinead Rice coordinating the build of the crib for the Palace at San Anton and ceramic lecturer George Muscat directing the build of the crib intended for the courtyard at the Palace in Valetta.

Due to the very specific requirements of each space, the two cribs were totally unique in their requirements in relation to all aspects of design, construction, materials, techniques etc. However, despite these vastly alternative designs, neither crib could have been executed without the co-operation, dedication and vision of the staff and students who voluntarily invested their time and energy in the project. All creative departments of the Institute of Art and Design became involved and this was reflected in the interdisciplinary nature of the finished works.

The crib which was placed at the Palace at San Anton incorporated both the materials and technical expertise of those working in wood, metal and textiles while demonstrating strong design principles informed by a fine art aesthetic. Drawing on such influences from Giotto to abstraction, symbolic colouring and the prevalent use of gold from the early Christian masters was emphasized. Comprising of eight individual figures and designed specifically for the adjoining corner archways in the private courtyard, this crib utilized colour, texture, light, shadow and transparency through a variety of materials in order to create one aesthetic whole.

The crib installed at the Palace in Valetta however was monolithic in nature, and was created using recycled materials which were firstly formed into one solid block and then carved to reveal the close family unit of St. Joseph, the Madonna and baby Jesus. Incorporating primarily sculptural and ceramic techniques, the figures in this crib were as though carved by time from a giant earth red rock, evoking a sense of unity and the eternal.

Overall the commission provided both staff and students alike with the fantastic opportunity to work together on a major project. Our ability to design in a site-specific manner was developed, alternative methods and techniques for making artwork were experienced, interdisciplinary practice was encouraged, new technical skills were learned, the unique talents of peers and students were recognized and at the end of the project, the resulting cribs served to stand as a testimony to the innovative and dynamic team at the Institute of Art and Design.



INSTITUTE OF BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING

ENERGY UTILISATION BY MARTIN BORG, INSTITUTE CO-ORDINATOR

The concept of sustainable development has received growing attention ever since it was formulated in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). To this day, a practical definition of sustainable

development remains somewhat elusive but the concept has evolved to incorporate three main dimensions – economic, social and environmental.

1987	WCED	Sustainable development defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations
1988	Montreal Protocol	Stratospheric ozone depletion due to CFCs and other gases addressed
1988	Intergovernmental panel on climate change	Establishment of a UN body to scientifically assess the issue of climate change
1992	Earth Summit (Rio)	New era for sustainable development policy launched by the UN
1997	Kyoto Protocol	Carbon dioxide emission targets proposed in the protocol
2000	Millennium Summit	Establishment of eight development goals for improvement of human conditions
2002	Johannesburg Summit	Political declarations and plan of implementation for sustainable development policy
2009	Copenhagen Summit	UN climate change conference (COP 15)

Environmental issues are gradually being regarded as central factors for policy design. The depletion of non-renewable energy resources and the environmental impacts due to energy utilization have raised concerns on our consumption patterns. The International Energy Agency (IEA) maintains that over the last two decades, carbon dioxide emissions have increased by 43%. This increase has also been accompanied by a shift in the major contributor of energy consumption. The energy consumed in buildings, in EU countries, accounts for 37% of the total energy used. The other two main contributors are associated with transport (32%) and industry (28%).

The high percentage associated with energy consumption in buildings is linked with three main factors, namely, growth in population, enhancement of building services and improved levels of comfort inside the buildings. The table below presents a clear indication of the end uses of energy in the residential sector.

End use	Percentage
Space cooling/heating	68
Domestic hot water	14
Lighting and appliances	18

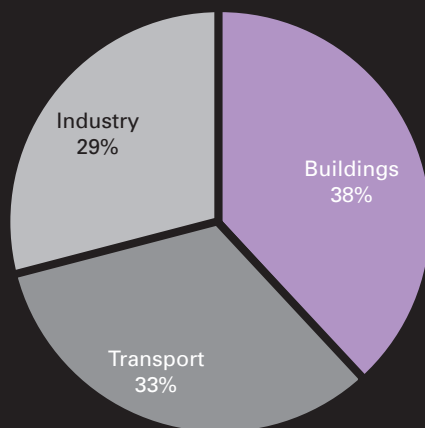


Figure 1: Energy distribution by sector (Source: A review on buildings energy consumption information, 2007)

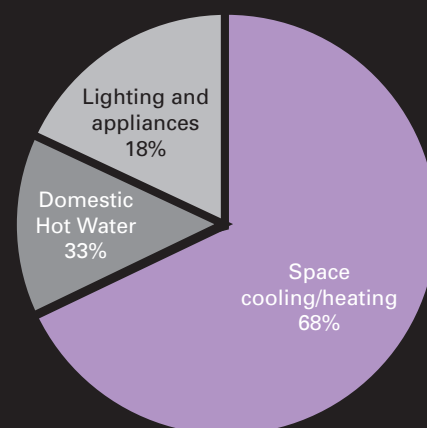


Figure 2: Energy end uses in EU countries – residential sector (Source: A review on buildings energy consumption information, 2007)

Space cooling/heating dominates the energy consumption profile in buildings and in this context, improving the building envelope itself is essential. Studies indicate that new buildings could be 50% to 70% more efficient than existing buildings. Apart from the building fabric itself, energy efficient lighting and appliances can reduce the energy consumption by an appreciable amount. The existing technologies of solar water heaters can also play an important role in reducing the energy profile in the residential sector.

The International Energy Association (IEA) has proposed a number of recommendations to improve energy efficiency across seven priority areas. The main recommendations, proposed by the agency, associated with buildings are listed below:

- Building codes for new buildings
- Passive energy houses
- Policy packages to promote energy efficiency
- Building certification schemes.

BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING STUDENT AWARDED THE CITY & GUILDS GOLDEN AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE!

It was Friday 8 January 2010, Quintin Grech's birthday, when he received a phone call from MCAST Main Campus informing him that he was awarded the City & Guilds Award for Excellence. This was the best news he ever had during his academic years! Quintin is also being nominated by the Institute for the International Lion Award.

Quintin Grech has followed a four year course, the MCAST Foundation in Construction Engineering Skills and the MCAST Certificate in Construction Engineering Skills specializing in Carpentry. During these years he was sponsored by three different employers, SAW Limited, MZ Woodworks, and DJ Woodwork.

Throughout the course Quintin sat for the City & Guilds Certificate in Timber Vocation and for the Diploma in Timber

Vocation. In 2009 he attained a pass in the Journeyman Certificate.

Quintin acknowledges all those people who backed him to achieve this prestigious award. He expresses his gratitude to the former Director of the Institute, Mr. James Pearsall, to Mr. John Vella, the Director of the Institute; the carpentry Lecturers, Mr. Paul Privitera and Mr. Anthony Esposito, and all the lecturers who taught him during the course.

Furthermore, he thanks his family, who were always a source of strength, his girlfriend Maria Anthea Borg for her never ending patience, and last but not least, his companion of this venture, his classmate René Grixti who has encouraged him throughout his academic years.



From left: Mr Paul Privitera, Lecturer, René Grixti, Quintin Grech, Award Winner and Mr Anthony Esposito, Lecturer

INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS AND COMMERCE CELEBRATE LIFE

One of the main pillars upon which *Comunio* has been set up to operate, is the promotion of social awareness campaigns linked to the aspect of character formation of students forming part of the Institute of Business and Commerce.

To this effect a number of social awareness campaigns are planned and have been implemented throughout this academic year.

One of these is the Celebrate Life Week. A number of varied events and initiatives were organized during the first week of December 2009. The focus was placed on the various facets of Life and how these can be promoted as positive and considered as an element to Celebrate, if we sincerely appreciate the value of life.

Besides a variety of Life Encounters which were addressed by well known media personalities who shared their positive outlook of Life with those present, there was an ongoing artistic event set up in the Institute's foyer themed "Life Expressions". This year's Celebrate Life week characteristic was mainly that of coming up with a number of different encounters (in small groups) during which a number of young people who have gone through rehabilitation programmes, shared their experience. These encounters turned out to be very interesting and most importantly an eye opener to many of those attending.

The main theme underlying Celebrate Life Week was also the subject of various media interviews for which *Comunio* was invited throughout the initiative.

This year again, both Institute's blocks were decorated with a number of Life Awareness messages which emphasized the value of Life. AIDS Awareness ribbons were distributed on the eve of World AIDS Awareness Day.

An innovation in this year's Celebrate Life Week was a Tree Planting session which was held at the Ta' Qali National Park as part of the Tree for You Campaign. Twelve trees were planted by *Comunio*, together with a number of other trees which were planted on behalf of academic and other members of staff. This is set to be an annual initiative, given the very positive feedback. It was one way of Celebrating Life... the natural way!



Fr John Curmi planting a tree



LEADERSHIP TRAINING

At any point in life, we will all end up in one situation or another where we will take up a leading role.... even if it is simply a matter of taking a basic decision for ourselves. So why not dedicate some time to focus on the relevance and importance of Leadership in our society, and consider the benefits of such self-training?.

One of the first initiatives taken up this academic year by Comunio – a students’ organization which has been active within the Institute of Business and Commerce since even before the setting up of MCAST – was a Leadership Training programme.

The training programme was aimed for young people who wish to better equip themselves with the skills they would need to participate effectively and lead, whilst being of service to society within various voluntary organizations and NGOs – civil, political, cultural, sports, formative and so on.

A considerable number of young people opted to take up this invitation and committed themselves to a number of sessions which touched upon various aspects related to Leadership. These aspects varied from intra personal skills and team building exercises, right on to event management, preparing logistics for an initiative, as well as how to market such events organized by an NGO.

A number of guests facilitated the sessions, primarily focusing on workshop style methodology. The comments left by participants at the end of the Leadership Training programme which spanned over November and December, were varied and showed the interest by all participants. In fact the programme was a really motivating and positive experience, just because all those who took part gave their utmost to share with the others, under the excellent guidance of the session facilitators who really did a very good job.

There are a number of young people at the Institute of Business and Commerce who have approached Comunio to enquire whether another Leadership programme is on plan. The answer is a definite yes... so watch out for the promotion of the next training programme in this area. Based on the feedback given by participants, we are sure that the forthcoming training will likewise be a very fruitful experience.

The end product saw a group of dynamic young people who wish to give and receive.



During the training session

CHARITY AND SOLIDARITY...

AN ALL-YEAR-ROUND AFFAIR

Throughout this academic year, Comunio has opted to stress on the maxim that charity is not just a Christmas feature or a matter which is quickly resorted to when in need. Emphasis is being placed on the importance that charity and solidarity are an all-year-round affair.

A number of events and initiatives have been taken up as part of an ongoing Charity Campaign. Every month, young people at the Institute of Business and Commerce are urged to contribute to a Mega Shopping Bag for Charity. Till now, various institutions have benefited from the Shopping Bags which have been donated during the first four months of the academic year. The January shopping bag was dedicated to the Haiti earthquake victims, and this in itself saw a variety of donations which are not usually collected during the other Shopping Bag charity stunts.

More than EUR 500 were collected in December in aid of the Malta Community Chest Fund. This amount was collected over two days and a considerable number of students and members of staff gave their donation.

However, one particular matter which Comunio is working hard upon is the Gift Certificates campaign. The idea behind this campaign is that, rather than donating money or some other items, young people donate on a regular commitment some of their time in doing voluntary work. The main voluntary work which has been taken up, focuses on children in residential institutions. Besides regular opportunities for young people to share some time with children in playing, doing crafts and helping them with their homework, there are also one off events such as the organization of a carnival party for the children at one of the homes with a considerable population.

These initiatives are being coordinated by the Social Care Ministry within Comunio. A number of other events are being planned and will be promoted over the coming weeks. Of particular interest is "D Missionary Challenge" which a group of students intend to take up in the summer holidays.

***INTERESTED IN JOINING?
YOU SURELY ARE, AS YOU
SURELY CARE FOR OTHERS. YOU
ARE ONLY AN EMAIL AWAY:
COMUNIO@MCAST.EDU.MT***

INSTITUTE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES EUROGUIDANCE SEMINAR



Mr Robert Cassar, Career Guidance Officer, during the presentation



The Conference

On 9 November 2009, members of the Counselling and Guidance team attended a Euroguidance Seminar with a focus on Social Exclusion. The different Euroguidance services were outlined for the numerous guidance practitioners. This information will assist the MCAST Career and Counselling team to merge ideas for possible EU funded projects in the field of lifelong guidance and international mobility.

During the first half of the conference, Ms Katya De Giovanni, now Director of the Institute of Community Services, outlined MCAST's portfolio of courses with a focus on the maturity clause. Her themes also underlined the need for more research in vocational guidance particularly on the need for more knowledge on the experience of students in their transition between compulsory and further and higher education in the Maltese Context.

Mr. Robert Cassar, Career Guidance Officer, presented a case study that highlighted the importance of dissemination of information regarding innovative practices in career guidance. The second half of the seminar was dedicated to an insightful presentation by Mr. Daniel Hailemariam from Stockholm University, Sweden. This feature highlighted the many elements that contribute to social exclusion and how guidance professionals can be the agents of change.

The last part of the seminar was dedicated to thematic workshops. This proved to be the first opportunity to meet with recently appointed trainee career advisers that are working within the ten state colleges.

INNOVATIVE APPRENTICESHIPS

In September, 2009, Ms. Katya De Giovanni, now Director of the Institute of Community Services, and Dr. Damian Spiteri, Senior Lecturer in Health and Social Care, attended a conference on Innovative Apprenticeships in Turin, Italy. They presented a paper entitled 'The transition from secondary school to Vocational Education and Training. What students in Malta following a first diploma course in Health and Social Care at the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) have to say about it'.

The conference was focused on vocational education and training (VET) and the presentations that were delivered were clustered thematically into three areas. The first of these was entitled 'Managing the transition from general schooling to vocational careers'. Participants at the conference were engaged in reflecting on issues such as the drop-out rates in VET in a European context, the influence of career guidance on young people taking up VET rather than furthering their studies in the overall field of general education, and on the role of trainers in different evolving VET systems in Europe. The second area into which the presentations were classified was that of 'Building a vocational identity: a central task of apprenticeship/competence evaluation and development.' This was focused more specifically on how apprenticeship could be more innovative and looked into such aspects as forging a stronger link between school and enterprise and on exploring ways in which young people could be engaged more in work-based learning. The third area on which the presentations were focused was that of 'Levels of governance and the role of stakeholders in apprenticeships'. This looked at aspects of VET such as differences in the organization of apprenticeships in Europe, the role of social partners in VET provision, and different overall experiences of the development of VET provision in different countries, particularly European ones.

Ms. De Giovanni and Dr. Spiteri's paper focused on exploring how students reading for their First Diploma in Health and Social Care at MCAST manage their transition from general schooling to vocational education. A cohort selected from amongst these students were invited to form into small groups (focus groups) and explore how they perceived their transition from secondary school to VET and whether the ideas that they had of VET when they were younger, or more specifically, when they were in their secondary school years, were still the same after their having joined MCAST and their having started studying a vocational educational area formally.

Many of the students said that they were unsure why they had chosen Health and Social Care. Some students explained that since Health and Social Care was still very new in Malta, they had started the course without being sure what this career entailed. Some also expressed concern about whether they would find an appropriate job for their level of qualification particularly if they proceeded in their studies to degree level at MCAST. (MCAST will be offering top-up degrees in Health and Social Care for the first time in 2011.) Stating this, they gave a lot of importance to their work placements during their studies at MCAST in helping them to define for themselves what the roles are that health and social carers take up. The placements were undertaken in Adult Training Centres, Old People's Homes, Children's Homes and Special Schools. The students also complained that they lacked effective career guidance during their secondary education. They said that they had heard much more from their guidance teachers about academic courses than they had about those that are vocational in nature. One of the students praised MCAST for assigning its counsellors to go to secondary schools to speak about the different courses offered but said that the school-visit that the MCAST counsellor had carried out was by far too short, implying that certain possible career choices were not mentioned.

It emerged from the study that the participants saw their future as very much depending on them as pioneers in the field of qualified personnel working and operating in the Health and Social Care field in Malta. In their paper, Ms. De Giovanni and Dr. Spiteri argued that these students appeared to see themselves as engaged in a process of 'influential navigation.' By this, Ms. De Giovanni and Dr. Spiteri were inferring that the students do not present themselves as passive recipients of the services of MCAST undergoing a transition to the labour market. Rather, they saw themselves as 'navigating' (from an informed position) by empowering themselves to influence both their own transition to VET and the transition of other people in the present and in the future. They believed that by becoming better qualified and by offering a professional service, they would be readily acknowledged by society at large and thenceforth rewarded accordingly. More young people would come to know of Health and Social Care as an area of VET provision.

HAIRDRESSING STUDENT PLACES THIRD IN INTERNATIONAL HAIRDRESSING COMPETITION

Mark Mamo Amato, a student following the City and Guilds Diploma Course in Hairdressing at the Institute of Community Services, placed third in an international hairdressing competition entitled "Trend Vision Award".

Mark was one of the youngest competitors amongst some of the most experienced professionals on the Island. However, after a lot of encouragement from his family he decided to go in for the challenge. He stated that after all if he did not classify with the top three, it would have still been a worthwhile experience. Mark decided to choose the trend which emphasizes up-styles and he created a unique bridal style which made use of a head dress also

designed by himself. Once he designed the hairstyle and the headdress, he recruited a photographer who gave him the developed photographs for subscription to the competition. These were sent to Germany where judges were appointed to assess the work.

In the award-giving ceremony Mark was seated amongst hairdressers with years of experience and he thought that he would never get the award. However, he was astonished when the announcer said that he placed third in the Young Talent Category. This award gave him the courage to pursue his studies and to enter other competitions with greater confidence.

The hairstyle and headdress by Mark Mamo Amato



SELF-DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SPORT

BY DELICIA FARRUGIA

Looking back at my childhood days I definitely feel that my extracurricular activities have significantly contributed to my personality development, my studies, and also equipped me with the necessary qualities needed to develop my career. Because of this I constantly encourage my students to engage in other activities and develop their interests after school hours. I believe that apart from releasing their stress, this will help them develop their identity and also assist them academically.

Back in my days at secondary school I started playing volleyball with a group of friends during break time. Little did I know that this would be the start of a lifelong passion, which has significantly marked who I am today.

I first started playing competitively when I was fifteen. Then five years later, together with four other girls, we formed a new club which has been winning the national volleyball league for the past six years. Since that time, our club expanded from a senior females team to teams in the Under 18 and Under 15 sections. Thanks to this expansion and a number of sponsors who constantly believed in us throughout the years, we also get occasional opportunities to host foreign teams in Malta. An invaluable experience which is further enhanced when we get invited by those same teams in their respective countries.

One of these opportunities came just a few weeks ago, when a team from Catania invited us for a training camp spread over three days following their successful camp in Malta back last summer.

We departed Malta early in the morning, and after a very short flight, we were in Catania. We settled in our room and went straight to their training complex followed by a first friendly match. Even though the league in Malta is very competitive, it is a very good opportunity to play against a new opponent, especially Italian opponents, who are very well known for their expertise in volleyball. In fact they have training sessions every day from Monday to Saturday including a match on Sunday. This is undoubtedly showing its results since this team is scoring first in the Serie C and has a very good possibility to be promoted to Serie B next year.

On Friday night we gathered in one of our hotel rooms and watched the recording of our previous game. This was followed by instructions from our coach about what we can do better to improve. After this we all collapsed in bed and had a good rest to set the stage for the second day of our training camp.

Staying true to their good name in cuisine, the breakfast was a grand affair, and we could all indulge in all sorts of calorie packed snacks and muffins with the excuse that we were all going to burn it all later. The day started with a shopping spree in the markets of Catania which are so famous with us Maltese. Then early afternoon we were back in our rooms and later joined our hosts for their Saturday session. It was very interesting to learn their training regimes, some of which we will definitely be incorporating in our upcoming sessions – especially whilst coaching our younger players in our nursery.

In the evening once again we joined our Sicilian counterparts for a meal and some socialising. We gathered back in our rooms to have a good rest to set us all for the final day of our training camp.

This time round they brought in some supporters, which was very interesting for us, especially the younger players who are not used to many supporters during local games. The game was very interesting and both teams were very closely matched, which helped us to do our best and stretch our potential. By the end of the match we were all exhausted but at the same time felt very satisfied.

I believe that this camp was another opportunity for our club to grow. We all received an invaluable experience and insights into the way they approach their favourite sport. As a team we also got closer together and strengthened our personal ties.



The group in Sicily

INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING

Outdoor Activities for Students and Staff

Christmas 2009 saw the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering organizing various activities. Students and staff participated in various sports activities such as football and volleyball tournaments, as well as a paint ball challenge. It was a successful event which was well organized by a group of lecturers leading to a large number of team members in all spectrums of activities.

The morning started off with the 'Beat the Staff' volleyball tournament which was held at the MCAST gymnasium. A total of five teams, representing various classes throughout the Institute, participated in the event. It was a successful event which attracted an even larger number of spectators. The students displayed team spirit and great enthusiasm for the game, with spectators encouraging their fellow classmates. The tournament was won by the staff team who is looking forward to further challenges in the coming year.

Paintball was another triumph, with staff and students having fun, with the emphasis on playing fair. These events hopefully give students the strength to withstand the pressures of the pack. According to the participants, paintball is a good way of relieving stress. The students enjoyed having one day where they were on a par with the staff, with everyone running and shooting at each other. Certainly to be repeated again!

We definitely cannot miss out on football. There was a good turnout of students who participated in this event. These were divided into ten teams, one of which was formed by staff members. Throughout the games, students were enthusiastic and cooperative. Lecturers were surprised by the competitive attitude among the teams, however one must also underline the fact that the students played fair throughout the tournament. We look forward to another great match!

On the initiative of the Institute Director, a tennis tournament was also organized to encourage students and staff to participate in such disciplines. The event took place at the Tennis Club, Kordin where a series of encounters took place. First a mixed doubles was played between the central MCAST administration, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering and the Institute of Art and Design. This was followed by a round robin singles tennis tournament between the males. The participants involved were John Sciberras (Director Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering), Victor Caruana (Clerk, Purchasing Dept), Grace Barbara (Clerk, Vocational Teacher Training Unit), Anna Ancilleri (Lecturer Institute of Art and Design) and Eugene Debono (Institute of Information and Communication Technology).

The Institute also dedicated an afternoon for staff development focusing mainly on team-building and interpersonal skills. Apart

from various focus groups, the staff participated in some outdoor activities, including badger carting. Staff had the chance to let their hair down and spend the afternoon in an informal setting, making the flow of conversation more engaging. The winners of the tournament were lecturers Alun Weaving Baluci and Joshua Bugeja, placing first and second respectively, with the Director John Sciberras following in tow, placing third.

The students enjoyed the opportunity to challenge the staff during these activities and are encouraged to participate again in these character building events.



From left to right: Charles Agius, Clive Seguna, John Sciberras, Alex Wright, Andy Bugeja, William Dimech, Bjorn Azzopardi



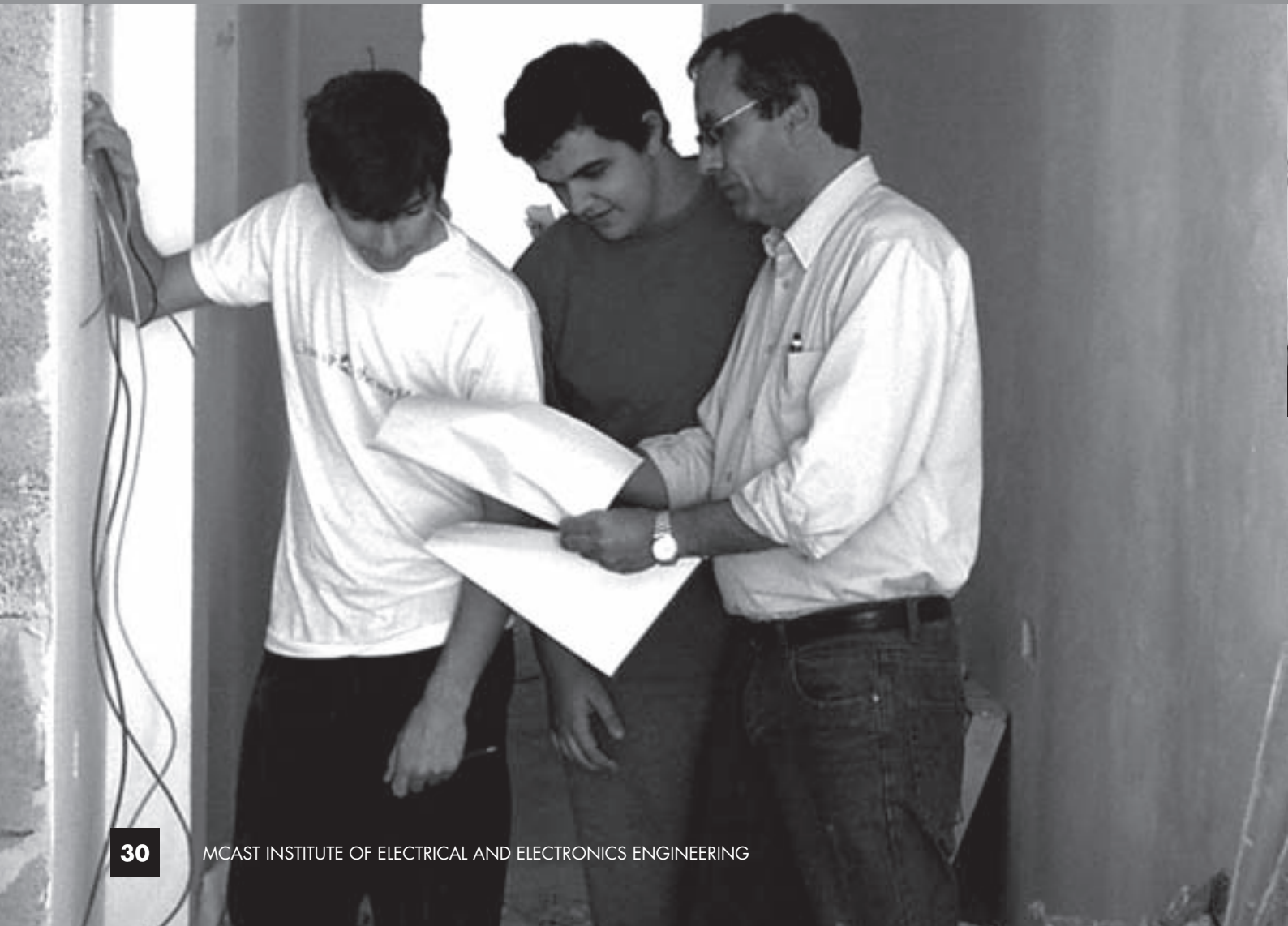
VOLUNTARY WORK AT DAR IL-WENS

The saying "Where there is a will there is a way" sums up the event that took place on Thursday 26 and Friday 27 November 2009. Students following the City and Guilds course 2330 at the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering gave their utmost to help those in need at Dar il-Wens.

Earlier this year Ronald Galea, the person responsible for overseeing further developments at Dar il-Wens, contacted the Director of the Institute, John Sciberras, to discuss the possibility of carrying out the installation work of the new floor at the above-mentioned house. After a number of meetings an agreement was reached on the work to be carried out by the students. From then onwards Alfred Mizzi, Course Coordinator at the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, with the assistance of one of the group's lecturers, Richard Ellul, coordinated the full installation of the floor, including a complex but successful three phase installation.

The students were first grouped and assigned specific tasks across the floor. They were then asked to develop everything themselves under the guidance of the activity's organisers. After completing the installation plan, each student was assigned a task to work on individually so as to be more efficient and perform the job in the shortest time possible. This task also provided an opportunity for students to be more proactive and develop time management skills.

Students finished the whole installation within just two days. The students finalised the project by carrying out a series of installation tests while observing health and safety regulations in line with Institute policy. As the project came to an end, one could witness the students' enthusiasm and satisfaction knowing they had participated in a voluntary activity while practising technical skills learnt in class in order to create a fully functional installation.



GOZO CENTRE

GOZO CENTRE OPEN DAYS

On the 10 and 11 December 2009, the Gozo Centre opened its doors to hundreds of secondary school students in order to provide them with the opportunity to get a better idea of the vocational training offered by the College in Gozo as well as giving them the opportunity to view the new workshops and facilities that were inaugurated in 2008. In collaboration with the Principal of the Gozo College, Chev. Frank Gatt, and the various Heads of Schools, all Form 5 students from the various state and church schools were hosted at the Xewkija Centre in a well-organised orientation and informative tour.

For the event, a number of stations were set up, with each station representing a particular vocational area of study available at the MCAST Gozo Centre. Secondary school students and their accompanying teachers were presented with appropriate power-point presentations and/or practical demonstrations by the Gozo Centre lecturers. In some of these stations, MCAST students were engaged in practical assignments. The visiting students had the opportunity to get a first-hand account of training in various vocational sectors.

The centre was also open for visits of the general public on the evening of Sunday 13 December. A number of prospective students visited the Centre a second time accompanied by their parents.



Mr Sammy Mifsud addressing a class from Agius De Soldanis Girls' JL Sec School during the Open Days



A group of fifth formers from the Sacred Heart Seminary in the Mechanical workshop

SEMINAR ON ABORTION

The second seminar from a series of three was held on Wednesday 20 January 2010. The guest speaker for this half-day seminar was Nina Sansone from Rachel's Vineyards, Fr. Ray and Dr. Paul Vincenti from Gift of Life.

Dr. Vincenti started this seminar by showing the attendees a dvd about abortion. The short video showed how abortion is the effective termination of a pregnancy by the removal or expulsion from the uterus of a fetus, resulting in or caused by its death. The speakers explained how an abortion can occur

spontaneously due to complications during pregnancy or can be induced, in humans and other species.

The best part of the seminar was the client's personal experience. The attendees remained dumbfounded when a woman narrated her personal experience and trauma that lasted eighteen years following the abortion.

This half-day seminar ended with a presentation by Dr. Paul Vincenti who spoke about the general consequences of abortion.



INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

ALLIANCE BETWEEN MCAST AND ITS ICT PRIVATE TRAINING PROVIDERS

Like any other organization, MCAST must function within established parameters which are in turn regulated by the College's policies and procedures and which may at times be influenced by unforeseen circumstances.

The issue of student recruitment and progression features among MCAST listed policies. MCAST's popularity may easily be perceived if one were to consider the expansion in learner numbers over the last few years. With a staggering increase of 16% in its student population this year alone, the College is at times experiencing difficulty to accommodate all requests for places which situation is at times exacerbated by both the preferred and the ever increasing number of courses offered.

In line with standard practice in contemporary educational institutions, students at MCAST must complete a number of study units, which are in turn based on learning outcomes and which the learner must satisfy as per programme requirements. Needless to say, there are instances when students do not manage to satisfy the standards required in certain units. While some students manage to remedy the situation straight away following a resit, others do not. This notwithstanding, MCAST is still prepared to allow these students to return the following year to reattempt the study unit or units and to satisfy the outstanding learning outcomes to achieve their full diploma.

In view of the expansion referred to earlier, however, this opportunity has to be limited to courses which still have available places. In this regard, the Institute of Information and Communication Technology was this year constrained to decline to give students yet another chance at passing the failed study units. This was because the number of computer stations, large as it stands, necessary to allow these students to resit the failed units with attendance, had been taken up by new applicants.

With an aim to accommodating these students, MCAST looked into a number of options, for example, holding extra classes in the evening, or supporting them through an ESF programme. Yet, none of these options proved feasible. Through MCAST's determination, however, a solution for the 34 students was found with the help of the Private Training Providers, namely Computer Domain and St Martin's College, who are already involved in delivering MCAST courses. Not only were they prepared to accept these students, but they did so free of charge. This sign of solidarity with MCAST is indeed laudable and augurs well for the future in terms of collaboration.

MCAST would like to take the opportunity to publicly thank Computer Domain and St Martin's College for the interest they have taken to resolve this problem for the wellbeing of our students.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK AT THE INSTITUTE OF ICT



Students present for the talks at the Student House



Ms. Claudine Cassar from Alert Communications delivering a speech on entrepreneurship

Global Entrepreneurship Week was celebrated between the 16 and the 20 November 2009. The Institute of Information and Communication Technology celebrated this event through a partnership with the University of Malta who was the local host for the events.

The two events were aimed at promoting the spirit of entrepreneurship. Affluent local entrepreneurs shared their experiences with students while exploring how the drive to become an entrepreneur emerged. Ms. Claudine Cassar from Alert Communications, Mr. John de Giorgio from Shireburn Software and Mr. Malcolm J. Naudi from Know

Now Ltd., delighted students with their presentations and factual anecdotes.

A panel session entitled: 'We define entrepreneurship as the ability of a person to identify opportunity in an uncertain environment and take the risk to create a product or process of value' was held followed by a Question and Answer slot.

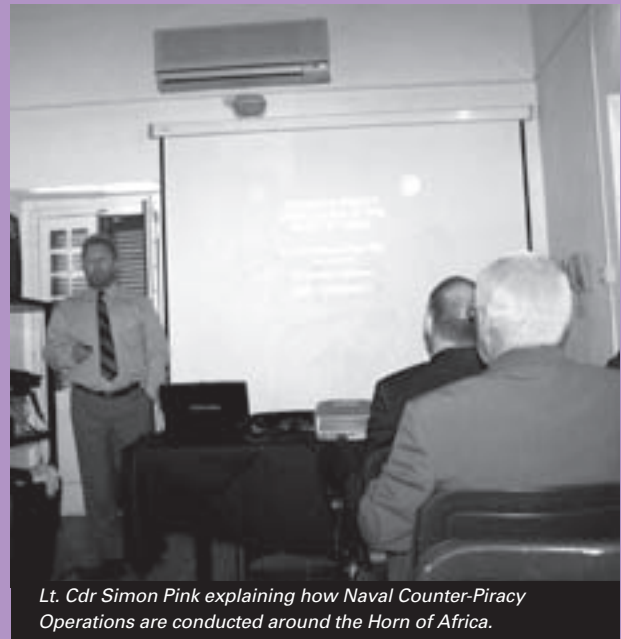
The Institute of Information and Communication Technology would like to thank the guests who kindly accepted the invitation to talk about their journeys in the entrepreneurial world.

MARITIME INSTITUTE

Presentation on Counter-Piracy Operations in the Gulf of Aden

On the 26 November 2009, the Maritime Institute in conjunction with the Malta Branch of the Nautical Institute organized a morning presentation on "Counter-Piracy Operations in the Gulf of Aden" for deck officers and officer cadets, Nautical Institute (Malta Branch) members and other guests from the local maritime sector. The presentation was delivered by Lt. Cdr Simon Pink, PGDip, AFRIN, MNI, RN who is currently the Executive Officer on board HMS Cornwall and who was in Malta together with the ship's company on their return from the Gulf of Aden where HMS Cornwall was conducting counter-piracy operations as part of Standing NATO Maritime Group 2, on operation "Ocean Shield".

Cdr Pink gave a very interesting presentation with supporting photographs, of how the multi-national force of warships is trying to counter the ongoing problem of piracy around the Horn of Africa and what effective methods are being used by merchant ships to prevent piracy attacks. The presentation also opened up a discussion as to whether merchant ships should - or should not - be armed to defend themselves against piracy attacks.



Lt. Cdr Simon Pink explaining how Naval Counter-Piracy Operations are conducted around the Horn of Africa.

Presentation on the Nautical Institute (Malta Branch) to Officer Cadets at the Maritime Institute

In its effort to increase recruitment of new members to the Nautical Institute, the Malta Branch has embarked on a recruitment campaign also aiming at recruiting members in the grades of Student Members. To this end, the Malta Branch organized a presentation on the 14 December 2009, on the Nautical Institute and benefits of membership for Deck Officer Cadets currently studying at the Maritime Institute which is Malta's only accredited institution for the training of merchant marine officers.

As an incentive, and after talks with representatives from the Malta Government, Officer Cadets will be allowed to have their Nautical Institute student membership payment reimbursed from the Malta Government as part of the "Smart Card" stipend initiative. A group of 37 Officer Cadets attended the presentation, which was jointly delivered by Capt. Reuben Lanfranco, FNI, and Capt. Mike Pagan, MNI, Branch Chairman and Hon. Secretary of the Malta Branch respectively. Following the presentation on the Nautical Institute, most of the Officer Cadets were keen to join and asked for membership application forms and further details. It is hoped that a large number of the Officer Cadets enrol as Student Members as the Malta Branch firmly acknowledges the fact that these young Officer Cadets will eventually be the Branch's future and leading members.



MCAST Maritime Institute Officer Cadets attending the Malta Branch Nautical Institute Presentation.



Italteam Shipping Srl commence Training Courses at the Maritime Institute

On Monday 1 February 2010, the Maritime Institute commenced a series of refresher training courses for Italteam Shipping Srl through the Italteam Malta Branch, represented locally by S. Mifsud & Sons Ltd. The training consists of refresher courses for Deck and Engine personnel as well as courses in Maritime English. Training commenced for personnel who are already employed as Master Mariners or Chief Mates and for those employed as Chief Engineers and Second Engineers. A new component on the management and manning of Superyachts was also

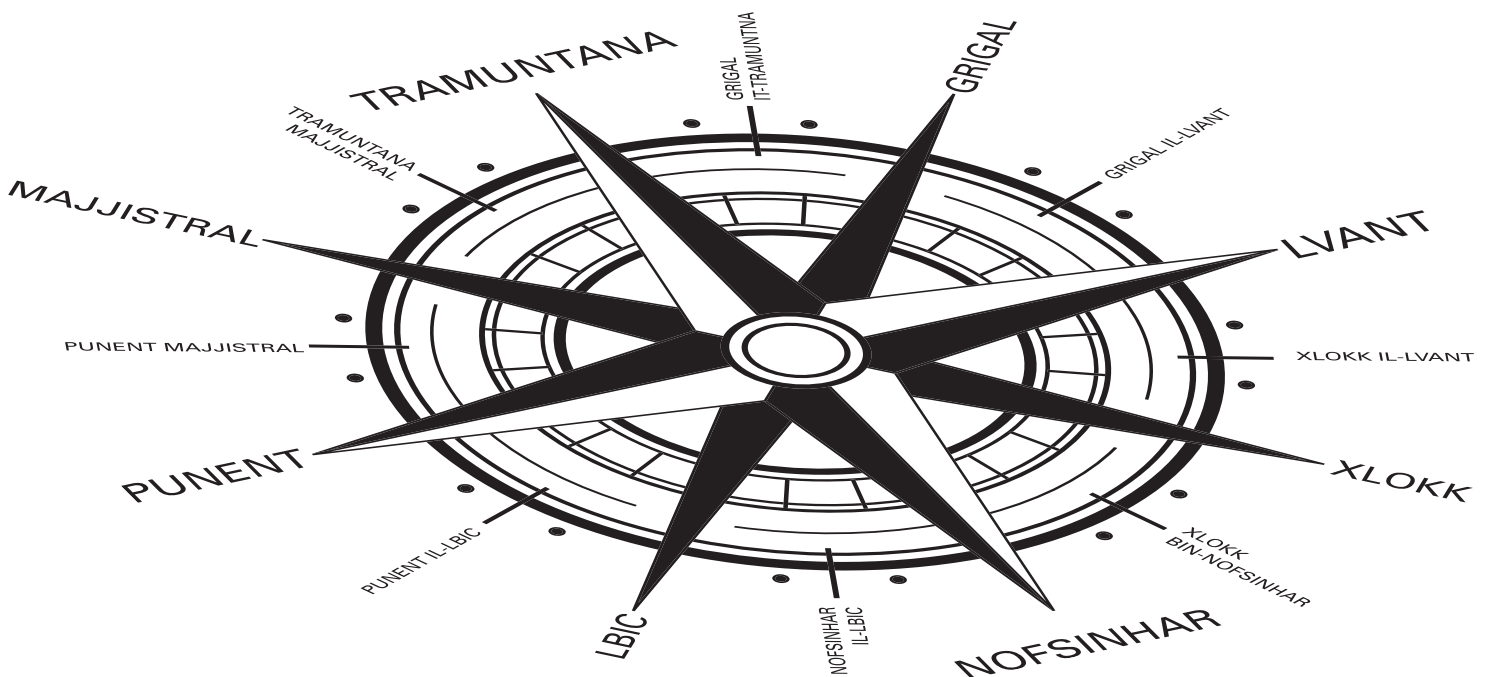
introduced in the training programme for all deck and engine personnel. The emphasis of the training is that despite the different nationality of the students attending, all courses are being delivered in English to enhance the communication skills of the participants in this language.



OFFICER CADETS AT SEA

The following Officer Cadets were at sea on the following vessels during the period this article was written:

Cadets at sea	Vessel	Date embarked
Pierre Mangion	MSC Boston	9th August 2009
Alexia Fenech	MV Sorrento	16th December 2009
James Sammut	MV Grande Buenos Aires	17th August 2009
Fabrice Bonello Dupuis	MSC Alexandra	15th February 2010
Benjamin Borg	MV Grande Francia	23rd August 2009
Christian Coleiro	MV Grande Colonia	8th December 2009
Luke Fenech	MV SCI New Delhi	22nd September 2009
Gordon Lungaro	MV Grande Sicilia	4th October 2009
Kenneth Ciantar	MT Paradise Bay	5th October 2009
Max Galea	MV Grande Napoli	8th October 2009



INSTITUTE OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING PANEL BEATING AND SPRAY PAINTING
STUDENTS ENJOY A COLOURFUL TRIP TO ITALY

IN NOVEMBER 2009 THIRD YEAR MECHANICAL ENGINEERING STUDENTS FOLLOWING THE PANEL BEATING AND SPRAY PAINTING COURSE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO TRAVEL TO ITALY TO PARTICIPATE IN A COURSE ON SPRAY PAINTING. MR.DONALD AXISA, LECTURER IN SPRAY PAINTING, AND MR KENNETH BORG, ALSO JOINED THE GROUP.

THE EXPERIENCE BY BERNARD BORG

"Sunday, the 29 November 2009 had arrived. Getting out of bed, I realised that I still had to pack my luggage for the upcoming trip. Clothes, a magazine or two, some snacks, camera...oh yes....and my sparkling, brand new passport.

I arrived at the Malta International Airport about five minutes before everyone else, leaving me wondering why I woke up early. Soon however, friendly faces appeared through the sliding doors. Within 15 minutes our whole class, that is, the third year Panel Beating and Spray Painting students, had converged in the Departure Lounge. We were also greeted by a cheerful face, that of Mr.Kenneth Borg. He was the person who organised the trip to Italy.

In a matter of minutes we were on the aeroplane discussing the antics we would be up to in Italy. At precisely 2:27 pm, we took off, leaving our families and loved ones behind. First we would be going to Fiumicino Airport in Rome, followed by an inter-city flight that would take us further north, to Bergamo. The weather in Italy was dreadful when we landed but that did not extinguish any of the enthusiasm each and every one of us was experiencing.

The next day we had the opportunity to visit a factory that produces spray paints. Luigi, a representative for Palinal's extensive product range, welcomed us and immediately began a tour around the factory.

There, we got a good glimpse of the actual production line; how paints are produced with their respective pigments. It was also very interesting to see how the colours of their paint products are matched to those of individual car producers. Mismatches are also stored in a highly organised database which includes all colour 'recipes', just in case a future colour match it. We were also told that Palinal produces new colours for vehicle manufacturers such as Piaggio. Health and safety regulations are high on their agenda, whether it is within the factory or when producing their products.

We then visited a spray painting shop that was full of high-end equipment all related to the spray painting industry. Brand new spray guns designed by Pininfarina and SATA graced the walls. Paint-mixing machines and spray gun washers all had their designated areas throughout the shop. Different tools to



The group



Marvellous view

suit every need were tidily stored away. Everything was kept in excellent condition, exactly as it should be. We were taken into a room, given a quick briefing and provided with safety gear.

Next thing I knew, we were walking into the cleanest spray booth I had ever seen. Palinal's water-base paint is extremely quick-drying, helping with time management within a sprayshop. We all tried our hand at spraying some of the most beautiful colours in production on the Palinal line.

The next morning the rain had stopped, the clouds had disappeared and it was not so cold. As I drew the curtains and walked out onto the patio, I felt as if I was on the set of the Sound of Music. The sun shone brightly on the snow capped tops of the Alps and glistened on the ripples of the Lago D'Iseo. It was breathtaking!

Back at the sprayshop, we began some blending techniques. Blending is an extremely important technique in spray painting that is used to repair a paint job in a localised area. That is, one must try to match the paint they are using to the original colour of the vehicle. Palinal also have a product, 'fade out', that is used during blending, to help fuse new and original colours harmoniously. It is always interesting to learn about new products and tools that facilitate production.

Were it not for our teachers Donald and Kenneth, this experience would not have been possible. However, on behalf of our class, I would also like to thank Mr. David Bonello The Deputy Director within the Institute of Mechanical Engineering, for his ongoing interest and investment in us. This was an extremely enjoyable experience that I would recommend to anyone!"

CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES AT THE INSTITUTE



The first term at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering ended with three well attended events: the Christmas barbecue, the Hobbies Exhibition and the annual football tournament.

Staff and students worked together to organise the Christmas barbecue, which was held at the Auto Section. For the first time, live entertainment was provided by the Institute of Mechanical Engineering band, coordinated by Angelo Borg. The band is made up of two lecturers and nine students who had been meeting for rehearsals during their free time during the weeks preceding the barbecue.

The members of the Association of Model Engineers kept their annual appointment with the Institute and participated in the Hobbies exhibition. A few members of staff and students also exhibited some of their work.

The football tournament was held at the Hibernians football ground and was won by a group of National Diploma students. The winning team was made up of Keith Muscat, Steve Sciberras, Andrea Vassallo, Darryl Vella and Christian Borg.



The Institute of Mechanical Engineering Band

GRADUATION CEREMONIES 2009

912 STUDENTS GRADUATE FROM MCAST

Nine hundred and twelve students graduated from MCAST at the Graduation Ceremonies held at the Hilton Malta on the 9, 10 and 11 December 2009. Two hundred and fourteen students were awarded a Higher National Diploma, which is equivalent to the completion of the first two years of a degree, while 698 students received National Diplomas.

The ceremonies started off with speeches by MCAST Graduates. Mark Philip Camilleri, a graduate from the Institute of Information and Communication Technology, Ritienne Zammit, a graduate from the Institute of Art and Design, and Anne Marie Cachia, a graduate from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, delivered the speeches on the 9, 10 and 11 December respectively. The students' speeches were followed by addresses by Prof Maurice Grech, MCAST Principal and CEO, and Mr Paul A Attard, President of the Board of Governors.

In his speech, Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO of MCAST, referred to the educational framework of the College, its assessment methods and quality assurance mechanisms. He highlighted the fact that MCAST's qualifications framework has various entry points and exits to the world of work. He explained that assessment methods at the College are continuous and may vary and include home based assignments, field work, time constrained examinations and other. The first stage of the quality assurance process involves internal verification which is carried out by a senior lecturer chosen from the specialist area of study. The latter would review all the assignments prepared by the examiner and a sample of students' assignments and examination scripts. These

will again be reassessed by an external examiner who would prepare a report on each course. "These extensive quality assurance measures have prompted Edexcel, an international institution responsible for the accreditation of most of MCAST courses, to honour the College with the prestigious Centre of Excellence Award," stated Prof Grech.

In his speech Mr Paul A Attard, President of the Board of Governors and Policy Adviser to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, stressed that the student is at the heart of all that MCAST does. He also mentioned the close links the College has with industry and from which benefit both the students and the economy.

On Wednesday 9 December 2009 certificates were awarded to students from the Institutes of Information and Communication Technology and of Building and Construction Engineering; on Thursday 10 December 2009 to students from the Institutes of Art and Design, Business and Commerce, Maritime and Agribusiness, and on Friday 11 December 2009 to students from the Institutes of Mechanical Engineering, Community Services and Electrical and Electronics Engineering.

The new courses at this year's graduation ceremony were the MCAST Diploma for Pharmacy Technicians, the MCAST Diploma for Dental Surgery Assistants and the MCAST-BTEC Higher National Diploma in Animal Management. Next year MCAST will see seven cohorts of degree students graduating from four different institutes.

The College has experienced additional growth this year with a record number of applicants for the full-time courses

amounting to 3532. It now boasts of over 5500 full-time students, equalling a staggering growth of 16% from last year's student population. There are approximately 4000 students following the evening part-time courses.

In September 2009 the College started offering vocational degree courses in four Institutes, namely Art and Design, Information and Communication Technology, Business and Commerce, and Electrical and Electronics Engineering. These degree programmes are designed specifically around the needs and strengths of MCAST students and are meant to be different from, even though at the same level with, those offered by most universities. These degrees are offered in partnership with Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, a world-renowned German research institution, that undertakes applied research. In September 2011 other vocational degree programmes will be offered within the Institutes of Mechanical Engineering, Building and Construction Engineering and Community Services. This means that, in the years to come, all MCAST students will have the opportunity to read for a vocational degree, a higher education alternative to the existing, traditional university education.

For the first time this year MCAST has provided persons aged 23 years and over with the opportunity to further their studies and apply for the full-time courses as mature students. This initiative was very well received with over 86 persons applying. The College is now working on enhancing this provision by offering access courses and also academic support, through its evening courses.

Since its inception, MCAST has established strategic alliances with various institutions within the industrial and business sectors. It is working closely with the aviation maintenance sector, the banking, information and communication technology, printing and marine industries. The College welcomed the news that SR Technics are investing and building a new maintenance facility in Malta. One of the reasons for choosing Malta is the quality-

training provided by MCAST. Since 2004, the College took up the challenge to provide a highly-trained workforce for this new industry. It now boasts of a state-of-the-art aviation maintenance training centre, qualified lecturers and examiners, training, examination and quality assurance procedures and its approval to provide internationally recognized Part-66 Category A training and certification.

MCAST is very proud of Philip Cardona, an MCAST Diploma in Industrial Electronics student, who placed second in the European Union Contest for Young Scientists held in Paris, last September. The European Union Contest for Young Scientists (EUCYS) is an annual European competition for young scientists, all aged between 14 and 20, and coming from 38 countries across Europe – as well as Canada, China, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea and the USA. Eighty-seven winning projects from national competitions covering a wide range of scientific disciplines from engineering to biology, mathematics, chemistry, physics, medicine, computer and social sciences were submitted. Philip presented his award-winning 'Cappuccino Logo Printer' project, a concept he developed, whereby pre-defined logos are printed on the froth of a cappuccino in a cup using food colouring. Philip Cardona had also placed first in this year's NSTF Contest for Young Scientists held at St James Cavalier Centre for Creativity during the annual National Student Travel Foundation (NSTF) Science Week in March 2009.

MCAST gives a lot of importance to the holistic development of students. Students learn entrepreneurial and interpersonal skills, which are embedded within the course programmes. They are encouraged to engage in sports and voluntary work and are also given the opportunity to participate in the various European funded exchange programmes such as Leonardo Da Vinci, Erasmus, Comenius and Youth in Action. Students and also members of staff have the chance to embark on these opportunities and enrich their professional and personal development.



Mr Paul A Attard, President of the Board of Governors, delivering his speech



Prof Maurice Grech, Principal/CEO, delivering his speech



The Graduates

SPEECH BY RITIENNE ZAMMIT, GRADUATE FROM THE INSTITUTE OF ART AND DESIGN



Ritienne Zammit

Għeżież President tal-Bord tal-Gvernaturi, Prinċipal, Mistiedna, Membri tal-Istaff, Studenti, Sinjuri

Jien illum ġejt magħżula biex nagħmel dawn il-kelmtajn żgħar li jirriflettu l-proċess li jgħaddi minnu kull student.

Nehodha mil-lat personali. Fi tmiem l-edukazzjoni sekondarja tiegħi, għalkemm dejjem kelli f'moħħi x'ser ikunu l-perspettivi tal-futur tiegħi, dawn ma kinux ċari biżżejjed. Meta ddeċidejt li nidhol għal-Istitut tal-Arti u d-Disinn hassejt li bħala kunċett ta' tagħlim kien totalment differenti minn dak tal-iskola sekondarja.

Nista' ngħid li jien bdejt mill-qiegħ nett ġewwa l-Istitut tal-Arti u d-Disinn. Bdejt mill-kors preparatorju u llum wasalt sa livell ta' degree vokazzjonali. Tul dawn is-seba' snin ta' studju fl-istitut nista' ngħid li mmaturajt kemm fix-xogħol kif ukoll fil-personalità. Tgħallimt nosserva aktar u tgħallimt napprezza dak li hemm madwari. L-impenn u l-entuzjażmu f'dak li tagħmel, flimkien mad-dedikazzjoni, jgħinuk fil-kreattività kif ukoll biex ittella' b'suċċess proġetti ta' livell. L-aktar haġa importanti hi li temmen f'dak li tkun qed tagħmel u tibqa' tissielet sa ma tilhaq l-għanijiet tiegħek. Li kieku ma kinitx id-dedikazzjoni sħiħa tal-għalliema tagħna li dejjem emmnu fil-potenzjal tagħna l-istudenti, flimkien mal-kapaċità u l-entuzjażmu tagħna, ma konniex nimxu 'l quddiem. Minn hawn nixtieq nurihom l-apprezzament tagħna u ngħidilhom "Grazzi".

Minix ngħid li dan iż-żmien ta' tagħlim u esperjenzi kien kollu ward u żahar, iżda fis-snin li qattajt fl-istitut kelli mument diffiċli hafna meta saħansitra spiċċajt "broke" li lanqas biex nixtri flixxun ilma ma kelli għaliex kont inkun infaqt kollox fuq il-proġetti tal-iskola. Għalhekk nahseb li wasal iż-żmien li nagħtu spinta lill-istipendji għaliex nemmen li hin għall-part-time jobs ma tantx għandna. Hafna mill-istudenti jiddependu fuq l-istipendju tagħhom. Barra li l-maġġoranza tal-istipendju jintefaq fuq proġetti, allura ma tantx ikun għad fadal finanzi għall-hajja ta' kuljum.

Napprezza hafna l-iżviluppi u l-opportunitajiet li qed jiġu offruti lill-istudenti biex ikomplu l-istudji tagħhom fuq livell aktar avanzat bis-saħħa tal-introduzzjoni tal-Malta Government Scholarship Scheme. Nemmen li f'dan il-perijodu l-gvern qiegħed japprezza iżjed l-importanza ta' setturi importanti fosthom l-Arti u d-Disinn. B'hekk qed jiġu rikonnoxxuti zviluppi bħal ma hi l-young creative entrepreneur.

Nemmen li l-għan aħhari ta' kull student, barra li jmur 'il quddiem finanzjarjament, għandu jkun ukoll il-progress tal-pajjiż kif ukoll il-benefiċċji li joħloq b'dak kollu li jipproduċi.

Nemmen ukoll li aħna l-istudenti li qegħdin preżenti llum għamilna hilitna kollha biex nilhqu 'l quċċata tal-istudji tagħna. Aħna l-futur ta' Malta. Aħna l-generazzjoni li rridu nżommu l-ekonomija miexja 'l quddiem. B'hekk għandna nkomplu nissieltu biex nilhqu l-għanijiet prinċipali tagħna. Grazzi hafna.





SPEECH BY MARK PHILIP CAMILLERI, GRADUATE FROM THE INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY



Mark Philip Camilleri

Għeżież President tal-Bord tal-Gvernaturi, Prinċipal, Mistedna, Membri tal-Istaff, Studenti, Sinjuri Il-Lejla t-tajba.

Jiena Mark Philip Camilleri u llum ser niggradwa mill-Istitut tal-ICT.

Ilni student ġewwa I-MCAST għal dawn l-aħħar 4 snin u bdejt l-istudji tiegħi wara l-O levels bil-kors tan-National Diploma in Computing. Dħalt I-MCAST kontra l-pariri ta' ħafna nies li dak iż-żmien ħasbu li kont qiegħed naghmel għażla ħażina; apparti minn hekk ħadd minn shabi tas-sekondarja ma għażel dan il-kors u spiċċajt fi klassi fejn ma kont naf lil ħadd. Mat-tieni ġurnata diġà kelli klikka żgħira ta' erbat iħbieb u fil-ftit jiem ta' wara spiċċajna klassi sħiħa nigru wara xulxin. Il-1ND7. X'memorji!

Tul dawn is-sentejn tan-National Diploma segwejt ukoll żewġ part-time evening courses. Fit-tieni sena tan-National Diploma kellna naghmlu l-ewwel software project tagħna. Kien f'dan l-assignment, bil-ħegga li tani s-Sur Ryan Attard, li ħloqt l-ewwel website tiegħi. Kont għadni qatt ma għamilt xi ħaġa simili u għalhekk din kienet ħaġa ġdida għalija. Wara dan il-proġett, dik is-sena stess, is-Sur Borg Manduca bagħtilna waħda mill-ħafna e-mails ta' job opportunities li jibgħat. Weġibt u wara interview intgħazilt għall-job ta' Web Developer

ma' ChooseMalta.com. Jiġifieri mis-sajf ta' wara n-National Diploma sibt xogħol; għaddew kważi tliet snin u għadni bl-istess job; naħdem part-time waqt is-sena skolastika u naqleb full-time fis-sajf.

Meta lestejna l-kors tan-National Diploma jien u shabi studenti kellna għażla importanti x'naghmlu: jew insibu xogħol full-time jew inkomplu nistudjaw għall-Higher National Diploma. Jiena personalment kont ilni sa mill-bidu determinat biex inkompli nistudja sa l-ogħla livell possibbli.

Il-kors tal-HND kif mistenni kien iktar iebes min-National Diploma iżda minkejja dan irnexxielna nkomplu għaddejjin u saħansitra tul l-ewwel sena għamilna evening course ieħor. Kien żmien iebes fejn nhar ta' Tlieta u nhar ta' Ħamis konna naghmlu mit-tmienja ta' filgħodu sat-tmienja ta' filgħaxija I-MCAST, imbagħad naqbd u tal-linja lejn id-dar fid-dlam; nieklu, norqdu u nerġgħu nqumu filgħodu biex inkomplu r-rutina. Ta' min jgħid li f'dawn il-lectures ta' filgħaxija s-Sur Mark Farrugia kien jimpressjonana bil-kapaċità u paċenżja kbira tiegħu.

Diġà semmejt li tul iż-żmien id-Direttur kien jibagħtilna ħafna opportunitajiet ta' jobs. Opportunità oħra li tfaċċat kienet meta s-Sur Conrad Vassallo qalilna li kien ser jorganizza kompetizzjoni fil-MCAST fejn ir-rebbieħ kien ħa jitlea' Rotterdam biex jikkompeti fil-EuroSkills 2008. Ikkompetejt, intgħazilt

u f'Ottubru tlajt Rotterdam flimkien ma' grupp ta' studenti mill-Istituti differenti tal-MCAST. Kienet esperjenza inkredibbli fejn ikkometejna ghal tlett ijiem shaħ ma' nies minn pajjiżi differenti tal-Ewropa; kulhadd fis-settur differenti tiegħu. Inzila lura bi tliet medalji tat-tieni post; Shawn Sciberras u Stephen Zahra ġew it-tieni fl-Electronics Workshop Competition u jien it-tieni fil-Cross Media Publishing bħala Website Designer. Filwaqt li nringrazzja lis-Sur Sciberras talli ha ħsieb din l-attività, nixtieq inhegġeġ biex jibqgħu jiġu organizzati dawn l-events fis-snin li ġejjin. Kontra l-aspettattivi ta' hafna wrejna li l-istudenti Maltin tal-MCAST kapaċi jikkometu f'livell internazzjonali u jirbhu l-medalji.

Waslet it-tieni sena tal-Higher National Diploma u din id-darba kellna nagħmlu l-famuż Software Project. Is-Sur Mark Farrugia insista hafna biex l-istudenti jużaw l-istess proġett tas-software project għall-Imagine Cup; kompetizzjoni mondjali tal-Microsoft. Jien u tnejn minn shabi ħdimna lejl u nhar għal tliet xhur shaħ biex ippreparajna l-proġett tagħna. Ikkometejna ma' proġetti oħra interessanti mill-MCAST stess u għaddejna għall-Finals Lokali fejn kellna nikkometu mal-STC u l-Università ta' Malta. Kienet lejla mimlija tensjoni u l-judges kellhom biċċa xogħol iebes biex jiddeċiedu liema kellu jkun il-proġett rebbieħ bejn tagħna u tal-Università. Għad-diżappunt tagħna ġie mażgħul dak tal-Università. Għamilt xi ġimgha biex irkuprajt imma insomma... meta nħares lura nħossni ferm kuntent li rajt il-lecturers tagħna determinati daqsna biex ngħaddu minn din il-fażi. L-ikbar parti mid-diqa tiegħi kienet li forsi ddiżappuntajnihom. Id-Direttur assiguran li kien kburi hafna bl-isforz tagħna u rnexxielu jgħollilna l-moral.

F'dawn iż-żewġ opportunitajiet ta' kompetizzjoni li kelli dejjem sibt il-lecturers li kienu lesti li jagħtu s-sapport tagħhom; saħansitra barra mill-hin tax-xogħol u barra minn ġol-klassi. Il-kommitment li bih jidhru għal dawn l-attivitajiet jaffaxxinani u niddubita tistax issibu f'kulleġġi oħra.

La qiegħed nitkellem fuq il-lecturers, nixtieq nikkummenta fuq karta li hemm imwaħħla mal-bieb tal-istaff room, "Do not knock - send us an email instead" b'fonti kbar. Ma nafx hix kontra xi regola tal-Kulleġġ; imma kollna kemm ahna dejjem konna mmorru u nħabbtu xorta, u dejjem fethulna mingħajr ma jahtfu lil hadd! Jigifieri anke fl-istaff room kont issibhom available mhux imbilli jwaħħlu l-karti!

L-Imagine Cup għaddiet iżda l-proġett tagħna ma miex hemm. Jiena u t-tnejn minn shabi li konna qegħdin naħdmu flimkien issa bdejna nagħmlu xi freelance work għal rasna u qegħdin qrib hafna li nifthu kumpanija bejnietna, filwaqt li l-istess proġett li bdejna bih ha nillanċjawh fi ftit zmien ieħor! Għandna ufficiju żgħir u klijenti iktar milli nistgħu nlaħħqu magħhom diġà! M'hemmx dubju li l-module tal-Entrepreneurship Skills tana n-knowhow u l-kuraġġ li kellna bżonn biex nibdew business żgħir.

Kull ma tkellimt dwaru s'issa kien dwar l-edukazzjoni tagħna fl-MCAST; iżda importanti li nsemmi li f'dawn l-erba' snin ma ħadniex edukazzjoni biss. Grazzi għas-sistema fejn il-klassijiet jinbidlu biss bejn kors u ieħor, fil-klassijiet inbnew ħbiberiji kbar. Kull meta fil-bidu tas-sena rċivejt it-timetable dejjem gergirt li l-klassi tagħna għandha l-agħar wahda'; breaks twal bejn

lecture u ieħor, jġifieri hafna ħin mohli. Imma issa li għaddew vera grat li nzerajt dawn it-timetables; kellna breaks twal li fihom dejjem rajna x'ivvintajna biex ngħaddu l-hin; jekk ma konniex qegħdin fil-canteen bil-laptops inqatgħu xagharna ma' xi biċċa code konna mmorru x'imkien fejn il-baħar, jew nilagħbu l-football fil-ground tal-Hibs jew inkella nivvintaw xi post ġdid fejn nistgħu nieklu. Ma naqsux dawk il-breaks fejn qgħadna mimdudin mal-art inharsu lejn is-sema u nqabblu xi poezija tad-dahk jew inkantaw xi diska ta' Frank Sinatra jew Bob Marley. L-istess haġa kien jġri fuq tal-linja lejn id-dar kull filgħaxija; sakemm ahna lkoll xtrajna l-karozzi tagħna fit-tieni sena tal-HND.

Żmien mill-isbaħ u kieku nista' mmur erba' snin lura! Kif jgħid is-Sur Bajada, "Kienu good times, good times."

Meta d-Direttur għajjalni biex nagħmel dan l-ispeech qalli biex ma' noqgħodx niddejjaq nikkritika; u hekk sa nagħmel. Naħseb diġà indunajtu li kont kuntent hafna ġewwa l-MCAST ICT, iżda haġa li dejqitni tul dawn l-erba' snin kienet li fl-ICT ma għandniex wireless internet! Naħseb kull student għaddietlu minn rasu xi darba jew oħra; għax ahna tal-ICT kulhadd jġri bil-laptop u jekk ma jkollokx internet naqra fjakka l-haġa. X'taħsbu?

Haġa oħra - u din forsi mhux kulhadd jaqbel miegħi dwarha - għalfejn l-Istituti kollha għandhom uniformi u ahna tal-ICT m'għandniex? Taf x'biċċa xogħol kull filgħodu biex tagħzel x'tilbes, l-iktar jekk tkun bħali, mill-Mosta u tqum fid-disgħa nieqes kwart u trid tkun Raħal Ġdid fid-disgħa! Is-Sur John Muscat qatt ma ħalliheli lixxa; għidli int kif ser nispejgalu li nasal tard għax ma nkunx naf x'se naqbad nilbes! L-iskuza tat-traffiku ma tantx kienet taħdem.

Kif qiegħed fuq is-suġġett tal-irqad, nixtieq nringrazzja 'l omni ta' kemm-il darba nħanqet biex forsi jirnexxilha tqajjimni filgħodu!

Daqshekk ikkritikajt u daqshekk iċċajtajt; f'isem shabi nixtieq nringrazzja lil-istudenti kollha lill-istaff tal-MCAST; lid-Diretturi, lill-Assistenti, lis-segretarji, lill-bqija tan-nies li jkunu ġewwa l-ufficiji. B'mod speċjali nringrazzja lil-lecturers; bis-saħħa tagħkom il-koll kellna esperjenza skolastika mill-isbaħ. Jien u xi ftit minn shabi li qegħdin nagħmlu d-degree ha nibqgħu ndejqukom tul din is-sena wkoll imma ma tantx fadlilna hemm. Ċert li ha nimmissja l-ambjent ta' dan il-Kulleġġ u naf li kważi impossibbli ssib din it-tip ta' familja f'istituzzjoni oħra ta' dan il-livell.

Naħseb preġju kbir li għandna ahna tal-ICT huwa li niffaċċjaw hafna loġika fix-xogħol tagħna; dan mhux biss jgħin biex nagħmlu programmi aħjar imma naħseb li jagħmilna kapaċi niddiskutu u nirraġunaw b'mod matur. Fl-MCAST sibt il-post ideali fejn stajt inkun kreattiv u nesprimi ruħi. Ta' dan nringrazzja lil shabi l-istudenti; kellna diskursati jaharqu fuq kważi kull suġġett li tista' targumenta fuqu u b'hekk ksibna ħbiberiji kbar li ma jieqfu mal-ebda gradwazzjoni. Prosit guys; issa ejja niċċelebraw wahda tal-aħħar illum għax għandna d-dinja tax-xogħol qegħda tistenniena u milli smajthom jgħidu, dik ma tantx thobb tidhaqlek.

SPEECH BY ANNE MARIE CACHIA, GRADUATE FROM THE INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING



Anne Marie Cachia

Gheżież President tal-Bord tal-Gvernaturi, Prinċipal, Mistiedna, Membri tal-Istaff, Studenti, Sinjuri

Jien u nipprepara dawn il-kelmejn iddeċidejt li nibda billi niringrazzja u nrodd ħajr lil Alla għax bl-ghajnuna tiegħu wasalna sa fejn wasalna. Huwa għalhekk li llum ingbarna biex niċċelebraw is-suċċess tal-ħidma tagħna.

Nemmen li kull esperjenza sabiħa jew kerha li jgħaddi minnha l-bniedem ma sseħħ b'kumbinazzjoni iżda għax dik tkun l-esperjenza ideali li se tgħinu f'dak il-mument f'ħajtu. FI-2007, iċ-ċirkostanzi li għaddejt minnhom hassru kull pjan li kelli... iżda bħalma jgħid il-Malti, "Alla jagħlaq bieb u jiftaħ iehor." Kien iż-żmien meta ddeċidejt li nahtaf l-opportunità ta' kors ta' Higher National Diploma fl-Istitut tal-Inginerija Elettronika.

Għadni niftakar l-ewwel laqgħa li kellna mat-tmexxija tal-Istitut fil-bidu tas-sena skolastika. Kont sibt ruhi f'sala mimlija ġuvintur, hliet għal xi żewġ tfajliet oħra, iżda xorta kont determinata li nwettagħ il-holma l-ġdida tiegħi. Il-fatt li sibt ruhi f'dik is-sitwazzjoni ma qatagħlix qalbi għax dejjem emmint li mara tista' tirnexxi daqs raġel, jew iżjed, anke f'oqsma li normalment huma assoċjati mal-irġiel. B'daqshekk, fuq nota personali, dan ma jfissirx li tfajla tiffel il-femminilità tagħha. Huwa minnu li f'ċertu mumentu sibtha daqsxejn diffiċli peress li l-Istitut hu mmexxi minn maġġoranza ta' rġiel... li għalkemm jagħmlu ħilithom kollha

biex johlqu ambjent aktar komdu għalina, f'xi waqtiet xorta jinħass in-nuqqas ta' female touch.

Tul dawn is-sentejn li ilni nattendi l-MCAST innotajt li n-numru ta' studenti tfajliet f'dawn il-korsijiet żdied u għalhekk f'isem it-tfajliet, inhegġeġ lit-tmexxija tal-Istitut biex tkompli taħdem ħalli tattira aktar tfajliet. B'hekk, bil-mod il-mod, tkun qed taħdem biex tbiddel il-mentalità li l-inginerija hi biss għall-irġiel.

Sa minn mindu kont iżgħar, l-oġġetti mekkaniċi, elettroniki u t-teknoloġiji l-oħra kienu jaffaxxinawni. Kont nistaqsi l-kif u l-għaliex, u min kien il-moħħ wara dak kollu. L-unika risposta kienet li ġew kreati minn moħħ ta' inginier; hu kapaċi johlq mill-iktar haġa sempliċi sal-iktar haġa kumplessa. Kien dan li wassalni biex naghzel il-linja li qiegħda fiha llum. Bla dubju, l-inginerija toffri opportunitajiet eċitanti kemm għall-irġiel u kemm għan-nisa b'mod ugwali.

Ippermettuli naqsam magħkom ftit ħsibijiet mill-esperjenza tiegħi fl-MCAST.

Hawnhekk esperjenzajt ambjent fejn kollox għandu d-deadlines tiegħu u dawn għenuna niffurmaw, niżviluppaw u nimmaturaw il-karattru tagħna għad-dinja tax-xogħol. Għalkemm ix-xogħol hu ferm interessanti, xi drabi gergirna għax jaf ikun stressanti wkoll. Din għalina kienet l-ewwel sena tagħna fl-MCAST u ma kellniex bażi soda fl-elettronika,

għalhekk l-impenn u l-isfida li dhalna għaliha kienet ferm akbar. L-MCAST, apparti għall-edukazzjoni akkademika, huwa magħruf ukoll għall-importanza li jagħti lit-taħriġ tal-istudenti skont il-bżonnijiet tal-industrija. Peress li l-kors kien intensiv, hassejt li ma kellniex biżżejjed hin għall-prattika u allura hafna mill-apparat bl-aħħar teknoloġija li għandna fl-Istitut, ma kellniex biżżejjed ċans biex nużawh. Iżda issa għetna l-okkażjoni li nahdmu fuq dan l-apparat tant sofistikati fil-kors tad-degree li fil-preżent numru minna qegħdin insegwu. Hafna minn dan l-apparat se jservi ta' għajjnuna għalina fit-teżi tagħna għaliex jagħtina l-opportunità li nifhmu aktar x'qegħdin nagħmlu u b'hekk napprofondixxu x-xogħol tagħna. F'dan isfond niehu l-opportunità biex niringrazzja lil dawk kollha li kienu involuti f'ħidma ma' universitajiet barranin biex aħna l-istudenti nkunu nistghu navvanzaw iżjed fl-istudju tagħna għal-livell ta' degree kif diġà qed ingawdu fl-ewwel tliet xhur ta' dal-programm.

Jien għandi esperjenza ta' kulleġġi oħra, u nista' nevalwa u napprezza aktar dak li joffri l-kulleġġ tal-MCAST. Aħna l-istudenti napprezzaw il-mod kif l-għalliema b'mod professjonali jagħtu u jagħmlu kuraġġ lill-istudent. Fl-istess ħin ma nistax ma nsemmix il-mod kostruttiv li kienu jikkritikawna bih. Aspett pożittiv fl-MCAST huwa li l-lecturers isiru jafu lill-istudent b'ismu u mhux bhala numru li qiegħed preżenti fil-klassi. B'dan il-mod jien hassejtni komda aktar f'dan l-ambjent. Ambjent fejn il-lecturers jinżlu għal-livell tal-istudent u għalhekk f'ismi u f'isem shabi niringrazzjahom tas-sapport li dejjem tawna u għadhom qed jagħtuna.

Bhal f'kull kulleġġ ieħor kull student ikollu mumentu sbieħ u oħrajn inqas sbieħ, fejn mhux dejjem jaqbel mad-deċiżjonijiet li jittieħdu. L-importanti hu li f'ċirkostanzi bħal dawn ikun hemm djalogu tajjeb bejn l-istudent u t-tmexxija ħalli dak li hu ta' għid għall-istudent jitwettaq. Fost l-oħrajn qed nirreferi għal meta tlabna zieda fl-istipendju u t-tmexxija tal-MCAST intervjeniet għalina quddiem l-awtoritajiet.

Esperjenza li kellna ngħaddu minnha f'dawn is-sentejn kienet dik li rridu nipproponu proġett u nwettquh fil-ħin provdut. Għalija, u nahseb għal kull student li għadda minnha, din kienet waħda mill-aktar biċċiet xogħol

impenjattivi li kellna, peress li kienet tirrikjedi ħin u attenzjoni biex nuru 'l kulhadd il-ħiliet u l-kapaċitajiet tagħna. Hu żgur li min ħa dan il-proġett bis-serjetà swietu mhux biss biex jitharreg akkademikament iżda kienet qisha thejjija għad-dinja tax-xogħol fejn wieħed jeħtieġ jaqdef, ifittex u juża r-riżorsi li jkollu bl-aħjar mod possibbli. L-istitut tagħna bhala apprezzament ta' dan ix-xogħol li wettaqna, esebixxa l-proġetti tagħna f'wirja li ssir kull sena biex jiġu apprezzati mill-pubbliku, il-midja u l-industrija. Inghatajna l-opportunità li nieħdu sehem f'kompetizzjonijiet barranin bil-proġetti tagħna, fosthom il-Young Scientist u l-EuroSkills. Infatti f'dawn il-kompetizzjonijiet, wieħed minn fostna kiseb it-tieni post fuq livell Ewropew.

L-istitut tagħna jorganizza wkoll Open Days fejn il-ġenituri jkunu mistiedna jattendu u jaraw b'għajnejhom lill-istudenti jaħdmu fuq xi circuits jew fuq il-proġett stess waqt li jużaw l-apparat meħtieġ li jippovvilhom l-MCAST. B'dan il-mod, il-ġenituri wkoll ikunu jistghu japprezzaw il-ħidma intensiva tagħna fl-MCAST.

Ma nistax ma nsemmix l-istudenti kolleġi tiegħi, li kienu parti importanti minn din l-esperjenza tiegħi fl-MCAST. Imxejna tajjeb flimkien kemm f'dak li hu akkademiku, kif ukoll fil-ħbiberija bejnietna. Biex wasalna s'hawn, qattajna ħinijiet twal ta' studju u ħidma flimkien u għamilna ħielitna biex inkunu ta' kuraġġ għal xulxin speċjalment għal min kien qed iħossu li ma jistax jilhaq il-miri tiegħu. F'dawk il-ftit mumentu li kellna ta' rilassament, ma naqsux milli jispikkaw il-karattri differenti iżda interessanti tal-kolleġi tiegħi li, bla dubju, għenu biex din l-esperjenza fl-MCAST tkun waħda memorabbli.

Nagħlaq billi nerġa' niehu l-opportunità biex niringrazzja lilkom kollha f'isem l-istudenti shabi għax taħdmu bla heda biex aħna navvanzaw fl-istudju tagħna. Napprezzaw hafna dak kollu li għamilu magħna u niskużaw ruhna fejn forsi ma apprezzajniex biżżejjed l-isforzi tagħkom.

Fl-aħħar nett, niringrazzja lill-ġenituri tagħna li dejjem tawna kuraġġ u offrewlna s-sapport li konna neħtieġu. Grazzi mill-qalb!

WEDNESDAY 9TH DECEMBER 2009

INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

LEVEL 3

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN COMPUTING (NETWORKING & ICT SUPPORT)

Abdilla, Johann	Caruana, Luke	Grima, Carl	Scerri, Emily
Aquilina, Bernard	Cilia, Harold	Grima, Nathalie Marie	Schembri, Clayton
Attard, Kyle	Darmanin, David	Grixti, Jessica	Schembri, Kenneth
Axiaq, Mark	Darmanin, Ian	Magri, Brian	Scicluna, Luca
Azzopardi, Jeremy	Darmanin, Nicholas Greg	Maione, Giovanni	Scicluna, Maria
Azzopardi, Julia	Debono, Adrian Paul	Mallia, Chris	Stoner, Kester
Beeston, Kyle	Ellul, David	Mangion, Clayton Carl	Tanti, Aidan
Bonello, Wayne	Farrugia, Martin	Massa, Maribelle	Theuma, Neville
Borg, Daniel Patrick	Farrugia, Nicholas	Micallef Grimaud, Andre	Vassallo, Matthew
Borg, Neil	Farrugia, Philip Anthony	Micallef, Isabel	Vella, Avner
Borg, Rosanne	Galea, Nadine	Micallef, Kimberly	Vella, Lorraine
Briffa, Matthew	Galea, Roderick	Micallef, Mark	Vella, Matthew
Briffa, Therese	Galea, Warren	Mifsud, Daniel	Vella, Nikolai
Bugeja, Alvin	Garzia, Matthew	Mifsud, Dorianne	Von Brockdorff, Stefan
Buhagiar, Ryan	Gatt, Daniel	Muscat, Christian	Watanabe, Ayako Claire
Busuttil, Emmanuel	Gauci, Andrew	Muscat, Kevin	Zahra, Claudine
Buttigieg, Wilfred	Gauci, Jean Pierre	Muscat, Steve	Zahra, Dwayne
Cachia, Clayton	Giordano, Merrick	Pisani, Berthrand	Zammit, Andrew
Cachia, Philip	Grech, Anthony	Polidano, Manuel	Zammit, Georvin
Calleja, Gregory	Grech, Manuel	Psaila, Jaclyn	Zammit, Glen
Camilleri, Darren	Grech, Marcon	Psaila, Nolene	Zammit, Justin
Camilleri, Denise	Grech, Mark Joseph	Sammut, Karl Vince	Zammit, Kenneth
Camilleri, Leonella	Grech, Marlon	Sammut, Marylyn	Zammit, Matthew
Camilleri, Sarah - Anne	Grech, Stefan Francis	Scerri, Adrian	

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN COMPUTING (SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT)

Abela, Daria	Calleja, Charles	Fenech, Amanda	Portelli, Clayton
Abela, Mark	Camilleri, Annalisa	Fenech, Kimberly Jo	Psaila, Michael Kurt
Agius, Luke	Camilleri, Jonathan	Fenech, Rachel	Scerri, Myron
Anastasi, Joshua Andrew	Camilleri, Marcia	Galea, Adriana	Scerri, Steven
Axiaq, Benjamin	Camilleri, Thurstain	Galea, Charlene	Schembri, Andre
Balzan, Daniel	Cassar, Michael	Gambin, Andrew	Schembri, Lara Marie
Bilocca, Jonathan	Chetcuti, Alexander	Garzia, Carl Jan	Sciberras, Andrew
Bonnici, Gary	Ciantar, Michael	Gatt, Brandon	Seychell, Warren
Borg, Brian	Cilia, James	Grech, Nicole	Spiteri, Curt
Borg, Christopher Carl	Costa, Kylie	Grech, Simon	Spiteri, Keith
Borg, Clinton Paul	Curmi, Alexia	Magrin, Edward Luke	Vassallo, James
Borg, Ian	Debattista, Ayrton	Micallef, Anton	Vella, Dennis
Borg, Justin	Degabriele, Dylan	Mifsud, David	Vella, Jessica
Borg, Kurt	Depares Valenzia, David	Mifsud, Lawrence	Vella, Roberta
Borg, Mark Julian	Dimech, Francesco	Mizzi, Yanica	Visanich, Hannah
Briffa, Calvin	Ebejer, Hagen	Muscat, Jean Paul	Xuereb, David
Bugeja, Benjamin	Ellul, Alexander	Narwani, Dhiraj	Zammit, Charmaine
Cachia, Edward John	Falzon, Julian	Pace, Daniel	Zammit, Paul
Calleja Urry, Adam	Farrugia, Matthew	Pizzuto, James	Zerafa, Jean Marc

LEVEL 4

MCAST-BTEC HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN COMPUTING (SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT)

Abdilla, Andre	Borg, Jean	Formosa, Darrell	Pace, Christian
Agius, Kevin	Buttigieg, Angelo	Grech, Andreas John	Pace, Duane
Attard, Ann Marie	Camenzuli, Mark	Grech, Duane	Ricciari, Daniel
Azzopardi, Christian	Camilleri, Mark Philip	Grima, Stephanie	Russel, Lynn Norma
Azzopardi, Justin	Carta, Claudio	Mercieca, Emanuel	Saliba, Cameron
Baldacchino, Darryl	Ciantar, Ian	Muscat, Darren	Schembri, Richard
Balzan, Ryan	Damato, Joseph	Musu, Christopher	Sciocluna, Gabriel
Bonnici, Stephen	Delmote, Kim	Muxi, Adrian	Spiteri, Gabriel
Borg, Analise	Ellul, Ryan Joseph	Orland, Josef George	Theuma, Emmanuel
Borg, Glenn			

MCAST-BTEC HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN COMPUTING (ICT SYSTEMS SUPPORT)

Attard, Matthew	Cortis, Patrick	Micallef, Daniel	Scerri, Alan
Baldacchino, Norbert	Debattista, Reuben	Mifsud, Cheryl	Schembri, Samuel
Bilocca, Glenn	Ellul, Ian	Mizzi, Jacques	Zahra, Christian
Bonavia, Justin	Grech, Janica	Pace, Alvin	Zahra, Derrick Joe
Briffa, Michael	Grima, George	Pace, Keith	Zammit, Denise
Caruana, Suzanne	Mansueto, Dorvic	Previ, Glenn	
Casaleto, Ryan	Marquett, Adrian		

INSTITUTE OF BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING

LEVEL 3

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN CONSTRUCTION

Aquilina, Gabriel	Falzon, Karl	Micallef Sant, Martin	Theuma, Roderick
Aquilina, Ioni Ivy	Farrugia, Jean Paul	Micallef, Malcolm	Vella, Bradley
Azzopardi, William	Galea, Andreas	Mifsud, Kurt	Vella, Karl
Bilocca, Ryan	Galea, Mario	Pace, Duane	Vella, Noel
Busuttil, Raisa	Galea, Mark	Sammut, Justin	Xerri, George
Calleja, Cedric	Gatt, Tiziana	Sciberras, Hayden	Zammit Tabona, Nicky
Cortis, Nigel	Ghio, Jason	Scicluna, Dorita	
Cristina, Keith	Mangiafico, Janis	Tabone, Miriam	

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN BUILDING SERVICES ENGINEERING

Casha, Jurgen

MCAST ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN HEATING, VENTILATION AND AIR CONDITIONING

Gatt, Sergio	Schembri, Neil	Scicluna, Ilyad	Simiana, Adrian
Gauci, Kurt			

MCAST TECHNICIAN DIPLOMA IN MASONRY HERITAGE SKILLS (MASTRU)

Agius, Glenn	Casha, Joseph	Dalli, Josef	Mangion, Christopher
Attard, Glenn	Cilia, Gordon	Mallia, Melchiorre	Micallef, Elliot
Callus, Michael			

THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER 2009

INSTITUTE OF ART & DESIGN

LEVEL 3

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN DESIGN CRAFTS

Bezzina, Flavio	Ellul, Christine	Pearson, Kathleen	Tanti, Florentina
Bodishtyanu, Angelina	Fenech, Christian	Pisani, Angelica	Vella, Franjessica Marie
Borg, Matthew	Fenech, Lorraine	Schembri, Darryl	Vella, Sefora
Borg, Sirach	Galea, Nathalie	Sciberras, Antonia	Ventorino, Vania
Briffa, Jean Pierre	Gatt, Denise	Sciberras, Justin	
Cachia, Claudia	Hirsch, Nina	Sciocluna, Marie Jo	
Cachia, Sandrina	Micallef, Claudio	Tabone, Lucianne	

MCAST ACCESS COURSE TO FOUNDATION DIPLOMA IN ART AND DESIGN

Agius, Naomi Marie	Cardona, Matthew	Grech, Tracy	Schembri, Lara
Aquilina, Nicky	Caruana, Nicholas	Hickey, Emma	Seychell, Analise
Aquilina, Paul	Ciantar, Christine	Maniscalco, Nadia	Tanti, Mireille
Azzopardi, Isaac	Cini, Rachel	Montanaro, Antonella	Warzee, Nicolas
Callus, Maris	Cremona, Daniela	Muscat, Luke	
Camilleri, Kirsten	Galea, Matthew	Pace, Emma	
Camilleri, Lara	Galea, Rachel	Pisani, Tessa	

MCAST-BTEC FOUNDATION DIPLOMA IN ART AND DESIGN

Abela, Rosemarie	Ferrante, Alexander	Pace Decesare, Yana	Vella, Keith
Azzopardi, Veronique	Galea, Sara	Pace, Raul	Vella, Sarah Jane
Borg, Francesca	Gatt, Roxanne	Pace, Shawn	Vella, Steve
Bullock, Rebecca	Gauci, Adrian	Saliba, Nicole	Walker, Vanessa
Cachia, Richard	Gialanze, Andre	Savona Ventura, Elisa	Webb, Tamara
Calleja, Kathleen	Grech, Rachael	Schembri, Mark Vincent	Zammit, Brendan
Cassar, Stephanie	Jabar, Kaya	Sciocluna, Sarah Maria	Zammit, Ruth
Chetcuti, Lara	Mercieca, Gian Luca	Scudamore, Emma	
Cocker, Ishmael	Micallef, Kurt	Sims, Ayrton John	
Cutajar, Cassandra	Muscat Drago, Matthew	Vella, Carl	

LEVEL 4

MCAST-BTEC HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN 3D DESIGN

Azzopardi, Josmar	Cassar, Donna	Friggieri, Mathilde	Xuereb, Trudy
Bartolo, Sarah Ann	Cilia, Rebecca	Galea, Roderick	Zammit, Ritienne
Calleja, Antonella	Coleiro, Tatiana	Sant, Joseph	
Callus, Lorraine	Farrugia, Paul	Vella, Christabelle	

MCAST-BTEC HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN GRAPHIC DESIGN

Anastasi, Nigel
Azzopardi, Claire
Azzopardi, Jeanine
Bonello, Chiara
Camilleri, Jessica
Caruana, Joseph

Caruana, Luke
Cassar, Raycine
Cutajar, James Raymond
Cutajar, Joel Benjamin
Della, Manuel
Grech, Glenn

Mallia, Julian
Mizzi, Paul James
O' Flaherty, Kane
Pace, Roderick
Paolella, Daniel
Scerri, Cladonia

Scicluna, Mark
Stroud, Matthew Karl
Theuma, Rowena
Tonna, Jessica

MARITIME INSITITUTE

LEVEL 3

OIC NAVIGATIONAL WATCH

Bonnici, Pauline
Borg, Roderick
Darmanin, Carmen

Gauci, Steve
Mercieca, David

Mercieca, Mark
Bartolo, Giovanni

Sammut, Abigail
Vella, Edwin

INSTITUTE OF AGRIBUSINESS

LEVEL 3

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN AGRICULTURE (AGRIBUSINESS)

Abela, Andrea
Bonnici, Joseph
Borg, Gian Carlo

Chircop, Oriana Jane
Dimech, Matthew

Falzon, Ian
Gatt, Chris

Muscat, Matthew
Zammit, Manuel

LEVEL 4

MCAST-BTEC HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

Borg, Tracy

Cassar, Kenneth

Jones, Ruby

INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS & COMMERCE

LEVEL 3

MCAST CERTIFICATE IN ADMINISTRATIVE & SECRETARIAL STUDIES

Agius, Therese	Calleja, Stephanie	Fenech, Joanne	Saliba, Marylynn
Barbara, Andrew	Cassar, Marilyn	Galea, Farika	Schembri, Janice
Bonnici, Sarah	Chetcuti, Maria	Grech, Kelly	Schembri, Rachel
Borg, Melissa	De Battista, Alessia	Magro, Graziella	Sciberras, Mirabelle Anne
Briffa, Melanie	Dimech, Claire	Mamo, Elaine	Sciberras, Monique
Bugeja, Kay	Ellul, Priscilla	Micallef, Rachel	Spiteri, Daniela
Buhagiar, Graziella	Falzon, Jessica	Mifsud, Dorianne	Spiteri, Stephanie
Buhagiar, Sarah Jane	Farrugia, Yasmine	Mintoff, Kimberly	Xuereb, Matthew
Busuttil, Leona	Fava, Conrad	Mizzi, Raiza	

MCAST CERTIFICATE IN MARKETING STUDIES

Balzan, Joanna	Falzon, Christina	Micallef Cesareo, Janine	Vella, Lydon
Bonello, Donatella	Farrugia, Ryan	Sammut, Antoine	Zammit, David
Caselli, Terry	Formosa, Owen	Vella, Bernice	
Cutajar, Victoria	Galea, Taya Felicia	Vella, John	

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL CERTIFICATE IN BUSINESS

Agius, Francesca	Bonaci, Stephanie	Gatt, Annalise	Teuma, Stefania
Agius, Matthew Mark	Borg, Roderick	Mallia, Mark Anthony	Theuma, Christina
Attard, Keith	Caruana, Catherine	Meilak, Caroline	Vella, Alexander
Azzopardi, Krista	Farrugia, Jessica	Scerri, Benjamin	Zammit, Carl Patrick
Azzopardi, Rachael	Fenech, Elaine	Schembri, Raisa	Zammit, Georgina

MATRICULATION CERTIFICATE COURSE

Agius, Renita	Caruana, Dorian	Fava, Roseann	Seychell, Roger
Azzopardi, Gabriel	Cassar, Elaine	Friggieri, Maria Christina	Spiteri, Stacey
Baldacchino, Francesca	Ciantar, Vincent	Grima, Marianne	Vella, Anthea
Bonnici, Maria Theresa	Connell, Jurgen	McIntyre, Rodianne	Vella, Maria Roberta
Bugeja, Brenda	Cutajar, Rachel	Polidano, Marylaine	Zammit, Annrica
Camilleri, Tezara	Dalmas, Christina	Schembri, Triza	Zammit, Jessica
Caruana, Daphne	Farrugia, Oriana	Schiavone, Maria Victoria	Zammit, Marissella

LEVEL 4

ACCOUNTING TECHNICIAN CERTIFICATE

Borg, Matthew
Caruana, Aaron
Cortis, Steven

Portelli, Karl
Saliba, Patrizio
Spiteri, Rodianne

Spiteri, Vanessa
Zammit, Bjorn
Zammit, Daniela

Schiavone, Sabrina
Viacava, Mandy

DIPLOMA IN BANKING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

Agius, Marica
Attard, Keith
Attard, Luana
Baldacchino, Daphne
Bonavia, Karl
Bonnici, Nadine
Borg, Jessica
Brincat, Clive
Buhagiar, Joanna
Camilleri, Marilyn
Caruana, Andre

Caruana, Danelle
Cassar, Christine
Cassar, Stefania
Cauchi, Kylie
Ciappara, Maria
Debattista, David
Debono, Sharon
Dimech, Elton
Falzon, Vanessa
Farrugia, Christina
Farrugia, Emanuel

Farrugia, Giovanni
Fenech, Samuel Luke
Galea, Nicholas
Gatt, Anneliese
Gauci, Gianella
Izzo, Marie Elise
Magri, Dorianne
Mercieca, Marco
Mifsud, Diane
Mifsud, Mark
Psaila, Alison

Saliba, Sarah Jane
Sammut, Adonia
Scerri, Lesley Ann
Sestito, Elaine
Stivala, Audrienne
Testa, Shirlene
Vella, Christiana
Vella, Sarah
Zammit, David
Zarb, Amy

DIPLOMA IN INSURANCE STUDIES

Aquilina, Veronica

MCAST-BTEC HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS

Attard, Luke
Bartolo Parnis, Jack
Bonello, Henry

Bonnici, Elaine
Catania, Judy Marie

Incorvaja, Tanita
Mifsud, Eman

Schembri, Leonette
Zammit, Keith

FRIDAY 11TH DECEMBER 2009

INSTITUTE OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

LEVEL 3

TECHNICIAN DIPLOMA IN MOTOR VEHICLE ENGINEERING (C&G 3905)

Azzopardi, Ismael	Caruana, Justin	Falzon, Christian	Muscat, Luca
Caruana, Alan	Curmi, Jamie	Mifsud, Luigi	Pisani, Kane
Caruana, Christian Joseph	Debono, Carl	Mizzi, Godwin	Zarb, Daniel
Caruana, Glen			

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN AEROSPACE ENGINEERING

Amaira, Andrew	Camilleri, Mark	Magro, Shawn	Saliba, Christian
Balzia, Christopher	Camilleri, Matthew Thomas	Micallef, Daryl	Schembri, Jean Luke
Barbara, Jason	Cilia, Damian	Mifsud, Theodore	Sciberras, Paul
Borg Costanzi, Simon	Cortis, Lennie	Pace, Malcolm	Testa, James
Bugeja, Jason	Farrugia, Franco	Pardew, Francis	Zammit, Brenda
Camilleri, Joseph	Galea, Garret	Ripard, Thomas	

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE ENGINEERING

Abela, Matthew Mark	Bugeja, Keith	Dingli, Luke Paul	Mifsud, Daniel
Aquilina, Justin	Bugeja, Steven	Farrugia, Charles	Muscat, Christopher
Azzopardi, Jonathan	Cachia, Robert	Farrugia, Marlo	Muscat, Stanley
Bartolo, Jake	Camilleri, Christian	Formosa, Alan	Pantalleresco, Wayne
Bartolo, James	Camilleri, Keith	Galea, Clayton Clint	Rotin, Pierre
Barun, Lee	Camilleri, Nicky	Gauci, Amanda	Sacco, Matthew
Borg, Justin	Caruana, Christian	Magri, Kyle	Sant, David
Borg, Mishael	Cuschieri, John	Mamo, Marco	Tabone Ferrante, Alan
Briffa, Andrea	Cutajar, Bernard	Meli, Alan	Vella, Jonathan
Brooks, Clyde	Delizio, Duncan	Micallef, Robert	

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN MANUFACTURING ENGINEERING

Bonnici, Keith	Bugeja, Luca	Pullicino, Matthew	Sammuto, Malcolm
Borg, Duwayne	Mifsud, Vincent	Sacco, Matthew	Xerri, Joseph

LEVEL 4

MCAST ADVANCED TECHNICIAN DIPLOMA IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING (CITY & GUILDS 2565)

Bonnici, James

MCAST-BTEC HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

Axiaq, Andrew	Ciantar, Bjorn	Grech, Joseph	Rodenas Aquilina, Marc
Azzopardi, Jean Paul	Degiorgio, John	Grech, Steven James	Scerri, John
Baldacchino, James	Farrugia, Andre	Magro, Matthew	Schembri, Christian
Brincat, Nicholas	Farrugia, Christian	Mercieca, Glenn	Scicluna, Keith
Buhagiar, Nathaniel	Fenech, Matthew	Micallef, Christian	Trapani, Joseph
Camilleri, Dominic	Galea, Giovanni	Micallef, Matthew	Vassallo, Michael
Caruana, Justin	Galea, Joseph	Mintoff, Ronald	Zammit, Mario
Cefai, Christian	Galea, Peter Paul	Muscat, Marion	Zammit, Simon
Cesare, Felix	Gatt, Alexander	Pace, Mark	
Chan, Axel	Gauci, Daniel	Pisani, Vanessa	

INSTITUTE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

LEVEL 3

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN APPLIED SCIENCE

Baldacchino, Samantha	Curmi, Stephanie	Mula, Diandra	Scicluna, Sara
Beck, Melissa Sue	Grech, Melanie	Poggi, Sandro	Tabone, Yanica
Cachia, Sarah			

MCAST DIPLOMA COURSE FOR PHARMACY TECHNICIANS

Bonavia, Daniel	Farrugia, Ian	Scicluna, Anne Marie	Xerri, Christ
Camilleri, Ruth	Galea, Gabriel Joseph	Spiteri Maempel, Giuseppe	Zammit, Kevin
Cauchi, Roberta			

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN EARLY YEARS

Camilleri, Lisa	Gatt, Liza	Tabone, Annalise
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MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN CHILDREN'S CARE, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Aquilina, Danica	Cardona, Mary Grace	Fenech, Stephanie	Saliba, Maria Luisa
Aquilina, Stefania	Caruana, Joanna	Francalanza, Maria	Schembri, Graziella
Attard, Kristina	Castorina, Luana Rita	Gauci, Elaine	Scicluna, Daniela
Axisa, Graziella	Darmanin, Angie	Lombardi, Kimberley	Spiteri, Marija
Azzopardi, Maria	Dingli Osmond, Miriam	Mangion, Nicola	Sultana, Miriam
Bonello, Maria	Farrugia, Jessica	Micallef, Elaine	Vella, Lara
Borg, Katya	Farrugia, Maxlene	Piscopo, Leonour	
Briffa, Abigail	Fenech, Annalise	Sacco, Samantha	

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE (HEALTH STUDIES)

Gatt, Anthea	Mallia, Mark
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MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE (SOCIAL CARE)

Apap, Massimo	Galea, Diandra	Grech, Geraldine	Schembri, Joanna
Farrugia, Ann Marie	Gatt, Maria	Mercieca, Francesca	Vassallo, Elaine
Farrugia, Giorgette	Gauci, Alice	Montebello, Petrann	Zammit, Marielouise
Formosa, Elaine	Gauci, Dominique	Pavia, Elaine	Zarb, Rodianne

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN SPORT (DEVELOPMENT, COACHING & FITNESS)

Borg, Pamela	Chircop, Gabriel	DesJardins, Stephanie	Psaila Savona, Francesca
Buhagiar, Andre	Cremona, Mario	Despott, Henri	Wingfield, Dalton Mark
Buttigieg, Clint	Dalli, Nikolai	Farrugia, Mario	

MCAST DIPLOMA FOR DENTAL SURGERY ASSISTANTS

Attard, Brooke	Camilleri, Amanda	Grech, Marietta	Scalpello, Michela
Baldacchino, Justine	Camilleri, Jeffrey	Incorvaja, Paulianna	Vella, Samantha
Balzan, Marvic	Cuschieri, Cristina Marie	Mifsud, Analise	Zammit, Samantha
Buhagiar, Annmarie	Galea, Celeste	Psaila, Michelle	

ITEC DIPLOMA IN HOLISTIC MASSAGE, DIPLOMA IN FACIAL ELECTRICAL TREATMENTS & DIPLOMA IN DIET & NUTRITION FOR COMPLEMENTARY THERAPISTS

Borg Costanzi, Gabrielle	Debono, Tammy	Magri, Charmaine	Vassallo, Ingrid
Borg Saydon, Christina	Decelis, Karen	Mallia, Daniela	Zerafa, Rodianne
Cassar Gaspar, Jessica	Desira, Caroline	Schembri, Diane	
Ciantar, Suzanne	Galea, Emma	Spiteri, Josette	

INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL & ELECTRONIC ENGINEERING

LEVEL 3

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN ELECTRICAL/ELECTRONIC ENGINEERING

Abela, Malcolm	Bugeja, George	Cutajar, Karl	Saliba, Scott Andrew
Agius Delicata, Matthew	Buhagiar, Jonathan	Debono, Rodney	Scerri, Stefan
Agius, Eman	Camilleri, Paul	Fenech, Carl	Vassallo, Jurgen
Agius, Leonard	Carabott, Simon	Filletti, Daniel	Vella, Charlton
Azzopardi, Paul Simon	Casha, Ludovick	Gafa, Matthew	Vella, Mark
Bondin, Bernard	Chircop, Christmark	Gatt, Sarah	Vella, Nigel
Bonello, Nikolai	Cilia, Fabian	Grech Bonnett, Matthew	Zahra, David
Bonnici, Nicolai	Cini, Emanuel	Mercieca, Marlon	Zammit, Matthew
Borg, Jan	Curmi, Matthew	Piscopo, Christian	Zarb, Susanne
Borg, Scott	Cuschieri, Cynthia	Saliba, Karl	

MCAST-BTEC NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Bonnici, Matthew	Farrugia, Ryan	Sacco, Vinceton	Vella, Ian
Ebejer, Jonathan			

MCAST DIPLOMA IN INDUSTRIAL ELECTRONICS

Agius, Matthew	Briffa, Mark	Farrugia, Samuel	Vella, Nicholas
Bellizzi, Antoine	Cardona, Philip	Mallia, Jonathan	Vella, Stefan
Bellizzi, George	Desira, Mark	Saliba, John	Veneziani, Reno
Bezzina, Jesmond	Farrugia, Clint	Vassallo, Joseph	Zerafa, Gilbert

MCAST DIPLOMA IN COMPUTER ENGINEERING

Galea, Malcolm	Sammut, Mark	Schembri, Nicolai
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LEVEL 4

MCAST-BTEC HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN ELECTRICAL/ELECTRONIC ENGINEERING

Borg, Edric Joseph	De Giovanni, Edmund	Galea, Kenneth	Zerafa, Alexander John
Cachia, Anne Marie	Degiovanni, Emmanuel	Gatt, Diane	
Camilleri, Mark	Formosa, Nicholas	Vella, Bernard	



Ms. Silvia Galea, new MCAST Counsellor

INFORMATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES NEW COUNSELLOR

Dear students and staff,

May I take this opportunity to introduce myself as the latest recruit to the Information and Student Support Services. I am the new Counsellor – Silvia Galea. I come from the background of Psychology, Family Therapy and Counselling and have been working in the field of counselling and support for the last ten years.

I must say that I have been made to feel very welcome in my new job, both by my colleagues and the Director but also by other staff and students alike. MCAST is a community with diverse needs and in the short time that I have been working here (since end November) I am growing in my understanding that the role of a Counsellor is a much needed role in this community. I have also understood that many students and lecturers are motivated to help any person going through difficulties and the Counsellor's role in this circumstance is to help them to help others. The Student to Student peer group launched last year by Mr John Bartolo, Director, and Miss Marthese Vassallo, Counsellor, and repeated this year by Ms Vassallo and I has been a tremendous success and source of satisfaction and I thank all the students who are making themselves available to gain

more helping skills to be able to help others. The experience I had with the group I facilitated was a wonderful experience and I encourage more students to benefit from such opportunities; be it in Helping Skills or Enrichment Courses.

With regards to the counselling profession all I can say is that I truly believe that the therapeutic space created in counselling helps people go through difficult moments in life. Although counselling is by its very nature confidential and therefore achievements are often unheard and uncelebrated, I can vouch for its effective and successful outcome.

May I also add that everyone might need counselling at some point in their life; I have and still do attend personal therapy as part of my continuous personal growth and professional formation.

May I take this opportunity to augur a year filled with blessings, good health, peace and love to all MCAST staff and students.

Silvia Galea

PATHWAY TO INDEPENDENT LIVING COURSE

The Pathway to Independent Living Course is a two year programme for persons with mild to moderate intellectual difficulties/disabilities.

As from this academic year, the students taking part in the programme are participating in a classroom setting on the main campus in Paola as opposed to the previous years where it was offered at Naxxar. The students will benefit from this modification due to a strong sense of inclusion with the other students participating in the various courses held at MCAST. Consequently, they will benefit from the opportunity to join the mainstream students for sports and recreational activities such as the Foundation Day.

'Students cannot be a community, cannot feel comfortable if they feel that the price of belonging is ignoring their own differences and those of their classmates.'
(Stainback & Stainback,1990).

Through this programme, the students will acquire literacy, numeracy and personal and social development skills which are considered to be necessary so as to be able to lead a more self-determining life. Another significant area of study covered by the students is ICT, where input is also given by a number of lecturers from other courses to enrich the content.

The students taking part in the programme are encouraged to initiate self decision-making and a 'hands-on' learning scheme is adapted in relation to the numerous extra-curricular activities which shall be taking place in due course. Indeed, boosting the involvement of students is one of the prime developments on the agenda in every school curriculum. In this post-modern society the emphasis is not on having 'quiet classes'. The traditional mode of teaching usually referred to as 'chalk and talk' is being replaced by innovative ideologies entailing active students stating their opinions and making their presence felt in the school setting.

The coming years are anticipated to be crucial for this programme as it has been also launched at the Xewkija MCAST premises in Gozo. Undeniably, the future looks positive and it is the lecturers' desire that such a course will satisfy and be a helping hand for those who look forward to a brighter future.

References

Stainback, W., & Stainback, S. (Eds.) (1990). Support networks for inclusive schooling: Interdependent integrated education. Baltimore: P.H. Brookes



Students following the Pathway to Independent Living Course accompanied by one of their lecturers, Mr. Matthew Xuereb (2nd left) together with the two Gozitan Pathway Lecturers, Ms. Felicia Muscat (1st right) and Mr. Joseph Cefai (3rd left)



MCAST Pathway to Independent Living Staff - Top left Ms. M'Rose Briffa - LSA, Mr. Matthew Xuereb - Lecturer, Ms. Joanne Mifsud - Lecturer. Bottom row left Ms. Sonja Casha - Lecturer and Ms. Jane Sammut - LSA

MCAST OPEN WEEK

Between the 30 November and the 4 December 2009 the College organized an Open Week targeted at fifth-form students. More than 1000 prospective students visited the nine MCAST Institutes throughout the week. The students were first given an overall presentation on the College's Institutes and courses and were then invited to tour their preferred Institute in order to get a glimpse of MCAST students working in labs/workshops/salons.

This Open Week provided prospective students with a better idea of study and training opportunities available at MCAST. The event was coordinated by the MCAST Information and Support Services team who would like to thank all the MCAST staff who contributed in so many different ways to make this event a success.

CAREER INFORMATION SEMINAR

On 25 November 2009, the Career Guidance and Counselling Team organised a Day Seminar for the Trainee Career Advisers within the Directorate for Educational Services. The Seminar started off by an address from Mr. John Bartolo, Director of Information and Support Services. The address outlined the College's main achievements in vocational education and the student services. It focused on how the College is developing with its transitional programmes from one educational stage to another.

The second part of the Seminar was dedicated to themed workshops. Such exercises continued to highlight how career information and one's choice of study at MCAST is intertwined in many ways. Furthermore the workshops portrayed the importance of establishing strong collaborative partnerships with institutions of further and higher education together with a range of employers. The seminar was concluded by a tour of five different Institutes and the Library and Learning Resource Centre.



YOUTH FELLOWSHIP EŻERĊIZZI

Theme: 'Don't Get Left Out Forever'

Speaker: Fr Elia Vella OFM Conv

Date: 22 – 26 March 2010

Place: Gattard House, Blata l-Bajda at 7.30pm

Featuring an interactive programme and live contemporary music with rock band SALT and a concluding Mass on Friday to mark the feast of our Lady of Sorrows.

If you have questions about the end of times, if you have concerns about what will happen to you, if you would like to look to the future with hope... then this is the right place to be this Lent.

Free Parking Available

info@yffellowship.org
www.yffellowship.org
20 YEARS OF EŻERĊIZZI

don't get left out forever!

eżerċizzi for youths

es · cha · tol · o · ġy

es'ka-tol'o-ġe [es-kuh-tol-uh-jee]

A belief or a doctrine concerning the ultimate or final things, such as death, the destiny of humanity, the Second Coming of Christ, or the Last Judgment.

2010

MON 22 TO FRI 26 MARCH

FR ELIA VELLA OFM
YOUTH FELLOWSHIP
GATTARD HOUSE
BLATA L-BAJDA
7:30PM

Iż-Żgħażaġħ mal-Papa Benedittu XVI
18 ta' April 2010 - Valletta Waterfront

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Library and Learning Resource Centre

NEW SIGNS IN THE MAIN LIBRARY

Over the Summer months the Library and Learning Resource Centre installed a set of new signs in order to facilitate access to all collections and services on all four floors of the Main Library in Paola. These new signs show clearly that there are four floors in the library and indicate what each floor contains by way of collections and services. Besides these signs the Library also has on-screen presentations.

WiFi AT THE INSTITUTE OF ART AND DESIGN

Since January 2010 WiFi became available in all of the Institute of Art and Design, including the library. Internet use is now available to anybody with a wireless access lap-top. Please ask at the desk for the necessary password. Any time soon WiFi will also become available at the Main Library in Paola and other libraries. Watch out for this sign.



MORE CONTENT THROUGH THE LIBRARY ON-LINE CATALOGUE

Have you noticed two new headings in the detailed search results for items you find through the library on-line public access catalogue (OPAC)?

These are "Digital www" and "Digital other".

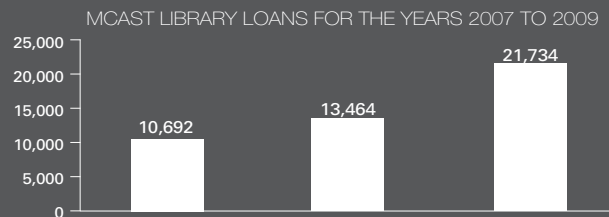
The Library is using "Digital www" to create and insert active links to free internet available content associated with the library item sitting on the shelves. Here you will find books.google.com links (partial text, digital version of books), imdb.com (everything you need to know about a film) and home pages of periodicals. On the other hand the "Digital other" gives you access to PDF files resident on the Library servers. These could be digital full text copies of items (if not copyright protected) or if freely published electronically, or else you may find the Table of Contents and summary of selected books or student projects.

Google™ books



SOME LIBRARY STATISTICS

Over the past three years all the six libraries have registered a marked increase in the number of loans of books, magazines, films that have been issued to Library users. Between 2008 and 2007 the Library loaned out 2,772 more items (an increase of 26%) and between 2009 and 2008 the Library loaned out 8,270 more items (an increase of 61%). Between 2009 and 2007 the number of loans has more than doubled (103%).



There are several reasons why there have been these very significant increases, which include:

- a greater emphasis by lecturers on research to which degree and Higher National Diploma students have responded. At the other levels students are doing more assignments.
- the Library purchased more of what directors requested and recommended thus meeting the demand for what is required. Collections have become richer.
- the Library through its systems but more so through its staff offers a good service which reflects why people come and keep coming back.

The Library wants to thank everybody for the cooperation it finds in offering this information provision service to all the MCAST community and looks forward to further growth.

SPORT

QUEEN'S BATON RELAY

On the 7 December 2009 a number of students, mainly from the Institutes of Electrical and Electronics Engineering as well as the Institute of Community Services, participated in the Queen's Baton Torch Relay. This happens once every four years in the year leading up to the Commonwealth Games. The baton tours all the Commonwealth countries promoting the Games. The next Commonwealth Games will take place in Delhi, India in 2010.

The students ran with the Baton on the Sliema front together with students from other schools. The Baton contains the Queen's message to the athletes and takes a photo of whoever touches it. Tiziana Apap, a Community Services student and national team judoka, as well as Steve Camilleri, a Business and Commerce student and national team athlete, were also chosen to join a small group of national team athletes who toured a number of schools with the Baton in order to promote sports values.



Maria DeBattista, student from the Institute of Community Services, carries the Baton



Steve Camilleri and Tiziana Apap



Steve Camilleri

PRESIDENT'S RUN

On Sunday 6 December 2009 around twenty MCAST students and staff members, mainly from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, participated in the President's Run

in aid of the Community Chest Fund. The run started from San Anton Gardens and finished at the President's Palace in Valletta.



Can you spot Mr Sciberras, Director of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering?



The President starts the run

BADMINTON WORKSHOPS

Over the past months, coach Edmond Abela from the Badminton Federation regularly held Badminton sessions at MCAST for students and staff. A good number of students have now joined these regular sessions and one student has also been chosen to represent MCAST in the national leagues. The Badminton Federation also sent Danish coach Dennis Christensen to MCAST to help promote the game of Badminton even further. Thanks goes to Mr John Attard for making these opportunities possible.



The shooting participants

SHOOTING CHRISTMAS ACTIVITY

Around 70 students and staff members, mainly from the Institutes of Agribusiness, Community Services and ICT, participated in two clay pigeon shooting activities that were organised as part of the end of term Christmas activities. This activity was very well met and students and staff enjoyed it tremendously. Some people did not hit anything but then again others, like Patrick Farrugia from the Institute of Community Services, managed to hit a good number of the clays. Thanks goes to the staff of the Hal Far Range who made this activity possible for us.



Patrick Farrugia

RURAL TREK

In November 2009 a group of around 7 students from the Pathway to Independent Living Programme attended the Rural Trek around Manikata. This was a great experience for them and they enjoyed it thoroughly.



While on the rural trek



Feeding the animals

A FIRST HAND EXPERIENCE OF RURAL LIFE: THE RURAL HERITAGE TRAIL

Koperattiva Rurali Manikata was set up by a number of farmers and residents of Manikata with the aim of safeguarding the environment, culture, and the rural economy of the region. To reach these aims, the Cooperative offers a programme of educational visits for students and adults in the fields of its members at Manikata and Ghajn Tuffieħa. Here they will be able to get a taste of rural life in a place where nature is always at hand. This is the best way that young and old can learn about agriculture and nature: not only by delving into books but by experiencing them in person.

A typical visit includes:

- A visit to a small animal farm where visitors will be able to see and learn about sheep, chickens, ducks, pigeons and rabbits. Visitors are allowed to feed the animals from behind a fence;
- A visit through the Razzett tal-Qasam, a farmstead, which up to about seventy years ago, was inhabited by families who eventually built modern-day Manikata village. Today, this farmstead is managed by KRM Ltd. which will restore it over a number of years in order to turn it into a visitors' centre and a services centre for farmers;
- A visit to a beach post built by the British military authorities around 1935 to defend the coast of Ghajn Tuffieħa. Visitors will go down into the beach post in order to get a first hand impression of what it was like to keep watch inside this small fortification from 1935 until the end of World War Two;
- A walk in the countryside and among the garigue landscape, where information will be given about different indigenous trees and local flora including carobs, pines, olives, thyme, fennel and capers;
- A visit to the fields, a vineyard as well as a market garden;
- A visit to two Roman tombs. Guests can go down one of the tombs through a narrow flight of steps. In this particular tomb one can still see the remains of its many uses along the years, mainly as a war shelter and an apiary.

The above-mentioned places are very close to each other in a traffic-free area. The whole trail takes about two and a half hours (stops in various places).



TAEKWON - DO

On 2 December 2009 Dan Taekwon-Do Jeanette Calleja conducted a Taekwon-Do Demonstration at MCAST for all interested students. Students had the opportunity to learn more about this sport, and learn some basic techniques of the sport. Anyone interested in starting this sport is asked to contact Jeanette at International Linked Taekwon-Do, Garden View, Swieqi; email at: jeancal@onvol.net or mobile number: 79784546.

SPORTS LEAGUES

The football, basketball and table-tennis leagues at MCAST are now well underway and have reached the semi-final stages. Once these leagues are over, the MCAST knockout tournaments will take place. For more information please contact the sports personnel at the Gyms.

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

THE IMPORTANCE OF ADULT EDUCATION

BY CLAIRE SEGUNA, LECTURER INSTITUTE OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

Continuous professional development is a very important asset in a world where technologies are always evolving. Vocational education prepares the aspiring technicians for jobs that are mostly manual in nature and thus my work as a lecturer at the College requires that I keep abreast with such technologies, skills and techniques.

The training course I participated in was at Technical Training Solutions, which is situated in Kent, UK, approximately 45 minutes south east of London. This training company is run by five partners who have quite a vast experience in various engineering fields. The aim of this company is to provide hands-on training techniques enabling the attendee to experience learning through performing tasks. The training centre is very well equipped with all course related equipment as well as ICT facilities. In fact I also had the opportunity to be taken round the premises and was shown the equipment which the centre makes use of for the courses being run.

The course, titled Electrical Maintenance Skills for Instrumentation Personnel, addressed both theoretical and practical competences, however the majority of the sessions were tackled through practical tasks. The theoretical sessions were tackled through interactive participation in powerpoint presentations and videos run by the course tutor. Some of the topics tackled during the course were: safe working practices on electrical systems and regulations; principles of earthing/protection/isolation; switchgears and circuit construction; types of industrial motors, their principles of operation and maintenance; fault-finding techniques and procedures on a variety of rigs developed by the training centre; appropriate use of various testing meters and cable termination tools; perform electrical isolation and 'testing for dead' on different types of electrical equipment and their respective circuitry. The group had also the opportunity to read circuit diagrams and interpret them into real components to develop a variety of circuits in typical industrial control panels with DIN rail mountings. Yet another important aspect of the course was acquiring fault-finding techniques on the circuits that the members of the group themselves developed through faults cleverly set and simulated by the course instructor.

Since the course was based on two weeks I had some time to roam about and visit some areas of Kent, namely Chatham and Rochester, both of which are steeped in history and rich in culture. I took the opportunity to visit Chatham and there I had the chance to visit Dickens' World. This is an attractions arena where one can immerse oneself in the sights and sounds of nineteenth-century England. The visitors can experience life in the Victorian era of Charles Dickens whilst coming face to face with some of Dickens' literary characters and work. Another activity was a visit to the Royal Engineers' Museum in Brompton. Through its expositions, this museum narrates the story of the Corps of Royal Engineers and the military engineering in 1000 years of British history. The museum exists to preserve and teach the history of the Corps of Royal Engineers and the displays are arranged in a way that the visitor can travel through this story. The visit to Rochester, the heart of the garden of England, was more historical and sight-seeing in nature. My visits were mainly to Rochester Castle, one of the best preserved and finest examples of Norman architecture in England; Rochester Cathedral, the second oldest cathedral in England; the famous Rochester High Street where one can walk back in time in typical Victorian shops, the Guildhall Museum which is where authentic Dickens-related objects are on display, and the Medway Bridge which links Rochester to Frinsbury and Strood.

During this training activity I acquired both pedagogical and technical insight in the field of industrial electrical maintenance. This EU In-Service Training scheme also gave me the opportunity to observe how foreign lecturers carry out their delivery in such a way that the candidates are always motivated. This experience also gave me a solid foundation of the electrical practical skills that I had been through in theory but which I did not quite have the opportunity to experience in a professional way. I have found such an experience also quite helpful in addressing the practical competences and laboratory work that the students at MCAST have to carry out. I am greatly satisfied with the training company's service and hospitality and in the way the course has been structured as it has definitely met the requirements of my training needs.



Claire Seguna with course providers and participants



Marvellous view in Kent, UK

AGRIBUSINESS STUDENTS WORKING IN COPERTINO, ITALY

BY CHARLENE DIMECH, MANDY FARRUGIA
AND SILVANA CASSAR, MCAST AGRIBUSINESS
INSTITUTE – NATIONAL DIPLOMA SECOND YEAR
IN ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

Copertino is in the south of Italy. It is a small village surrounded by agricultural land. This village is one of the regions which make up Puglia.

During our three weeks stay in Italy between 31 October and 21 November 2009, we worked in the agricultural sector in Copertino. We had two different work placements which consisted of a work placement on a beef farm and a dog sanctuary.

The three of us had the opportunity to assist in an operation done on various dogs (neutering). This was very exciting since none of us had ever assisted a vet during an operation before. Apart from assisting the vet during the operations, we also used to help the owner of the sanctuary in her normal daily routine work such as feeding the dogs and carrying out the general cleaning.

Our roles at the beef farm were helping out on the daily chores. We had to feed the bulls and clean the feeders and other equipment. We also had to feed the small calves with the bottle.

In our free time, we decided to go and explore Italy. The first place that we visited was Bari. Bari is a beautiful and busy

city made up of a lot of shopping complexes. Some of the shopping complexes which are found in Bari are Versace, Gucci, Bvlgari etc. We spent a full day doing some shopping and wishing that time will never pass.

The second place that we visited was Fasanolandia. Fasanolandia is a zoo which breeds different kinds of animals such as: elephants, giraffes, polar bears, tigers, dolphins, seals, monkeys and other different animal species. Safari tours are normally done for tourists who visit this zoo. This safari tour gave us the opportunity to pet and provide food to most of these animals.

Apart from being a zoo, Fasanolandia is also a fun park with lots of adventurous and exciting rides. In our last days in Italy, we also visited other places such as Alberobello, Otranto, Gallipoli, Lecce and some other beautiful towns in Puglia.

We would like to thank the Leonardo Da Vinci Mobility for providing a brilliant and an unforgettable work experience and a sufficient amount of money for the three weeks. Last but not least we would like to thank Bjorn Azzopardi, the International Programmes Officer, for his patience and for organizing meetings about our work experience in the foreign country.



Charlene Dimech at the farm in Copertino, Italy



Charlene Dimech assisting the Vet in an operation

BUSINESS AND COMMERCE LECTURERS AT HOGESCHOOL- UNIVERSITEIT (HUB), BRUSSELS

Last September two MCAST lecturers from the Institute of Business and Commerce had the opportunity to take part in the Erasmus Staff Mobility Teaching Assignment, funded by the European Union. The two lecturers who participated in this programme were Ilona Darmanin and Carmelina Frendo. They spent five days in Brussels teaching at the HogeSchool University in Brussels.

The programme enables participating lecturers to teach at a foreign educational institution for a period of time in order to gain further knowledge on the host school and the way they run their everyday educational activities. In return the host institution would gain practical knowledge on the guest institution and its country.

During their five day stay in Brussels, the lecturers delivered lectures about topics relating to Marketing, Logistics Management and the Influence of the British

on Maltese culture. The lecturers were also asked to give a presentation about the Maltese Educational system and about MCAST to the Dean of HUB and to a group of HUB lecturers. They were given a very warm welcome by the staff and the students of HUB. Students were very participative and enjoyed listening to the lectures on Malta's marketing environment etc.

This was a positive teaching assignment not only because of the experience gained by the participating lecturers, but also because the visit was considered the start of an international collaboration between HUB and MCAST.

Hogeschool-Universiteit Brussel (HUBrussel or HUB) is a European business school/university which was founded in 2007 as the result of a merger between three Brussels-based colleges and the Catholic University of Brussels.



Ms. Carmen Frendo (lecturer at IBAC) delivering a lecture at the HUB University, Brussels, Belgium



Ms. Ilona Darmanin (IBAC lecturer) delivering a marketing lecture at the HUB University, Brussels, Belgium



BUSINESS AND COMMERCE STUDENTS IN IRELAND

BY RACHEL PSAILA, ROBERTA MERECIECA, BRADY SAMMUT - INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS AND COMMERCE, CERTIFICATE IN MARKETING



*Business and Commerce students hanging out in Dublin, Ireland.
From left: Roberta Mercieca, Rachel Psaila and Brady Sammut*



Rachel Psaila at work in Dublin, Ireland

Dublin is the largest city and capital of Ireland. It is located near Ireland's east coast, at the mouth of the River Liffey and at the centre of the Dublin Region. We stayed in Ballybrack which is a suburb of Dublin. We lived and worked there for 3 weeks from the end of November till the beginning of December 2009.

Being away from your family, your beloved ones and from your home country is always difficult to cope with, but we have done our best in these wonderful 3 weeks together. We did not find it very difficult to integrate into the Irish life style because our host families helped us a lot, although it was totally different from our normal life.

The three of us were placed in different companies. Roberta worked for Plunkett Communications which is a full service Public Relations Consultancy located in Dún Laoghaire, about 20 minutes away by bus from Ballybrack. Rachel worked for Classic Marketing, a marketing company in Ballymount, which posed quite a tough challenge every morning, being 2 hours 30 minutes away from Ballybrack.

Brady worked for Credit Union, a type of Bank which gives loans, savings accounts, etc. located in Ballybrack, only 15 minutes away on foot from his house. We were very happy at work as our respective colleagues were very helpful and friendly with us.

While we were there, we visited the Guinness Factory, Phoenix Park, Kilmainham Jail, Forty Steps, Christchurch Cathedral, Dublinia & The Viking World, The National Wax Museum, The Dublin Zoo and Ice skating. If you are in Dublin you cannot miss out the Temple Bar Area. This area is full of pubs and some clubs too.

It was a wonderful learning experience, for which we would like to thank our International Programmes Officer, Mr Bjorn Azzopardi and our host coordinator, Ms. Veronica Cronin for all the preparation. Last but not least we would like to thank the companies for accepting and offering us this unforgettable work experience which would serve us a lot in our careers in the coming future.

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

STUDENTS IN BELGIUM

by Laura M. Haber & Raymond A. Azzopardi, Institute of Mechanical Engineering

It has always been our dream to spend some time working abroad and this became a reality when we were informed that we had been selected to follow a three week working experience in Belgium - between 31 October and 21 November 2009 - funded by the Leonardo Da Vinci Programme. We were located in a city called Sint Truiden, which is a very quiet place. Our accommodation was huge for just two students, when considering that in the previous year, there were 5 MCAST students accommodated in the same house. It was approximately 15 minutes away from work by car and we were picked up by one of our colleagues on a daily basis ... good treat!

During these three weeks, we worked for a company that creates continuous variable transmission (CVTs). It was a wonderful learning experience living on our own while also working side by side with highly qualified people who were always willing to teach us. We spent most of the time in the research and development department. We used to start working from about 7.30am till 4.30pm or later. For

this reason, we did not have a lot of free time except for the weekends which we spent visiting the area and other cities including Hasselt, Tongeren and also the Belgian and European Capital, Brussels.

It was an unforgettable experience which served to make us more responsible and feel more mature since there was no one to look after us, even though our colleagues were very helpful and they were always there.

Three weeks may seem like a long period of time to live on your own in a foreign country but when you are enjoying yourself it seems that time flies. For this reason, we are sure that if we come across a similar experience it would be an opportunity we cannot reject.

We would like to thank Mr. Bjorn Azzopardi (MCAST International Office) and Mr. Gert Brems (Belgian host) for their continuous assistance and excellent preparation.



MCAST students Ray Azzopardi and Laura Marie Haber with their Belgian colleagues at work



MCAST students with Belgian lecturers / hosts outside the Viio Nijverheid College, Belgium. From left to right: Gert Brems, Ray Azzopardi, Laura Marie Haber and Gert Surkyn

Joe Formosa recounts his experience on Grundtvig In-Service Training in the UK

The Roehampton Vale Kingston University campus is based on Friars Avenue, on the outskirts of Kingston. Students studying all Engineering courses (except for Civil Engineering) are based here. Extensive facilities on site include a wind tunnel, engineering workshops, flight simulator, a flying condition Learjet-200 plus automotive and aeronautical learning resources. A recent development at this site has seen the opening of the Hawker Wing, providing further teaching space.

I am a lecturer at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering. My area of specialisation is Plant Maintenance which includes diesel engines. I feel it is imperative that one keeps oneself abreast of the emerging technologies both as a professional interest and especially more in the interest of delivering the best possible knowledge to the learners. I chose to attend this module as it specifically addressed the new and emerging technologies in petrol and diesel fuel injection systems.

The course was held over an intensive five day period with lessons beginning at nine and finishing at five in the afternoon. Mr. Marchant, who was the course leader, gave a detailed description of the Advanced Automotive Engineering module objectives and projected outcomes. The subjects tackled were Gasoline Direct Injection and Homogenous Charge Combustion Ignition engine systems which are the latest emerging technologies. During the second day the subject tackled was alternative fuels and

later in the afternoon we had a lab session to continue on the Monday session. The rest of the subjects tackled during the week were All wheel drive and Brake by Wire Systems and High Pressure Diesel Injection, Diesel Technology – CI Engine Design, Pressure Charging, Simulation Software and Combustion Flow Diagnostics. One can easily deduce that the subjects covered during this week thoroughly investigated new and emerging technologies in gasoline and diesel engines. The main objectives of engine designers are to decrease engine capacities and hence fuel consumption, to increase the power developed and decrease exhaust emissions in view of the ever more stringent regulations being adopted by the European Union. I must say that I was completely satisfied with the course outcomes as the level of lecturing was of the highest order. Two of the lecturers are world renowned and have published several books and journals in the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE). They are Mr. Richard D. Atkins, Chief Executive of Richard D. Atkins & Associate Engineering Consultants and Dr. Y. Wang who is a senior lecturer at Kingston University.

I gained insights of the new methods of controlling injection and valve lifts to reduce emissions and increase efficiencies. Apart from this I must stress that as a lecturer I could observe teaching techniques and delivery methods such as lab sessions and the lab equipment which are available to the students in their research and project studies.



Joe Formosa while on training



Joe Formosa with his training colleagues in the UK

EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMMES AT THE INSTITUTE OF BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING

The notion of lifelong learning is now firmly established in the educational jargon of terms. An integral element of lifelong learning is provided by educational programmes such as Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius and Erasmus. The Institute of Building and Construction Engineering (IBCE) has been actively involved in educational programmes funded by the European Union since 2003. For the past six years, the Institute has participated and successfully concluded five projects under the Comenius and Leonardo frameworks and an appreciable number of learners and lecturing staff have directly benefitted from such programmes. The Institute, through these programmes, has formed a dynamic network of partners from Germany, Holland, Spain, Italy, Scotland, Austria, Sweden, Ireland, Finland and Cyprus.

The Institute is currently involved in two Comenius projects titled "Prima-Klima" and "BE in Europe". The former project will be concluded in the current academic year and two learning group mobilities are planned for Spain (February 2010) and Cyprus (May 2010). Learners following national diploma courses in construction, building services and HVAC form the learning group base. The focus of this project is based on heat transfer across materials used for wall constructions. This involves testing procedures to be conducted using a prototype box specifically constructed for the project. Temperature conditions are simulated and the

variation in temperature at specific points is observed and recorded. Results are presented by each group during the project meeting. During the project meetings learners from different colleges compare their results with respective wall constructions and analyse the relationships obtained. The final part of the project will involve the collection of data from different project meetings with different wall constructions.

The project titled "BE in Europe" was launched in Scotland (October 2009) at Adam Smith College. Apart from the Institute of Building and Construction Engineering, the partnership is formed by vocational centres from Italy, Finland, Holland and Scotland. Five distinct themes form the basis of this project and each project meeting will focus on a specific theme. Energy utilization in buildings, renewable energy, the built environment, water usage and consumption, human comfort and sustainable development are the main subject areas to be developed during the project. The first project meeting will be held in Malta and will focus on energy utilization in buildings. Learning groups will be conducting simple energy audits in specific locations at the Institute and the results will be presented in international groups. The learning group consists of students currently following a national diploma course at the Institute. The latter will also be involved in the mobility in Finland during the month of April.



MCAST MAGIC WONDERS CHILD CARE CENTRE

MCAST Magic Wonders Child Care Centre has now been operating for a few months. This is mainly accessible for children of students attending MCAST together with children of staff members and outsiders upon availability.

Over the months the children have enjoyed various activities organised by the team at Magic Wonders, such as Ice Cream Day held at the centre during the summer months. They also enjoyed MCAST Foundation Day activities. These were held on the Main Campus grounds on Friday 30 October 2009. Accompanied by the Child Care Assistants, the children explored various events and activities held to celebrate this day. They danced to music being played there, but mostly enjoyed the hobbies section where MCAST staff displayed items of their hobbies and pastimes. There they saw paintings, a collection of seashells, a group of sea cadets from the Maritime Institute and enjoyed watching and touching various animals such as horses, rabbits, cats and snakes.

During the Christmas period the children, together with the Child Care Assistants, prepared a variety of Christmas crafts which were also used for decorating the centre. These included creating Advent calendars, the colouring and decorating of a large Christmas tree, reindeer, Father Christmases, angels, bells, snowmen, ponsietta wreathes made by tracing children's hands, Christmas hats which were used for the party, mini parcels and many stars.

A Christmas party for the children was held at the centre, where Santa Claus paid a visit and gave out presents and sweets to the children. The children all had a marvellous time.

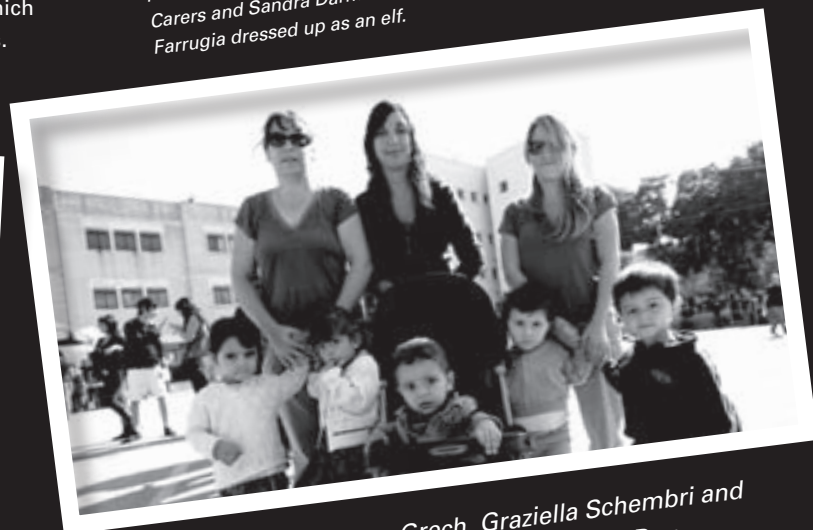
Those interested in enlisting their child at MCAST Magic Wonders Child Care Centre, may contact Ms. Sandra Darmanin, Child Care Centre Officer on 23987370 or email magic.wonders@mcast.edu.mt Should you wish more details, you can visit the centre during our opening hours from 7.45 am till 4.45 pm.



From left: Graziella Schembri, Charmaine Galea, Joyce Grech, Child Carers and Sandra Darmanin, Childcare Centre Officer with Aidan Farrugia dressed up as an elf.



Some crafts



From left: Child Carers Joyce Grech, Graziella Schembri and Charmaine Galea with the children at Foundation Day.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPLAIN

SEEING THE ROSE INSIDE



Fr John Curmi



The rose is a particular flower. It is beautiful, yet it blooms from a plant with sharp thorns. Having a rose in your hand, you can either stare at the flower or else look at the thorns. It is the same with you! You can appreciate the beauty GOD has planted in you or else despair at your defects and failures. You are perhaps doing just the same thing with your husband / wife, with your colleagues at College or at work and with your neighbours. I invite you to read and reflect on the following story:

*A certain man planted a rose
and watered it faithfully.
Before it blossomed, he examined it.
He saw a bud that would soon blossom.
He also saw the thorns, and he thought,
“How can any beautiful flower come from
a plant,
burdened with so many sharp thorns?”
Saddened by this thought, he decided not
to water the rose,
and before it was ready to bloom, it died.*

So it is with many people.
Within every soul, there is a rose:
the “God – like” qualities planted in us at birth,
growing amidst the thorns of our faults.
Many of us look at ourselves and see only the thorns, the
defects, the failures.

We despair, thinking nothing good can possibly come from us,
from our lives.

So we neglect to water the good within us,
and eventually it dies.

We never realize our potential, the God-given graces inside!

Some don't even see the rose within themselves.

It takes someone else to show it to them.

One of the greatest gifts a person can possess
is to be able to reach past the thorns and find the rose within
others.

This is the truest, most innocent, and gracious characteristic of
love:

to know another person, including their faults,
recognize the nobility in their soul, and help them realize
they can overcome their faults.

If we show them the rose, they will conquer the thorns!

Only then will they blossom, and most likely,
blooming thirty, sixty, a hundred fold, as it is given to them by
GOD.

Our duty in this world is to help others, by showing them their
roses and not their thorns. It is then that we achieve the love
we should feel for each other. Only then can we bloom in our
own gardens.

One last thing we should all know: God knows our defects...
and how well he knows them! Yet he just wonders at the little
roses inside each one of us. Thank you God. You are most

loving. Indeed great. AMEN.

If you want to meditate further here are some interesting Bible
readings, where Jesus overlooked the thorns and just saw the
rose inside:

The Samaritan Woman	Jn 4:1-42
The Adulteress	Jn 8:1-11
Zaccheus	Lk 19:1-10
The Prodigal Son	Lk 15:11-32
Matthew's call	Mt 9:9-13

MODERN CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT THE BOEING/AIRBUS COMPETITION

By Godwin Caruana Lecturer

On 15 December 2009, a new generation of aircraft, the Boeing 787 Dreamliner, flew for the first time. This date can be considered a historic day as it is the first flight of a commercial aircraft made mostly from new composite materials instead of the traditional aluminium alloys.

The aircraft industry is developing at a very fast rate and only the best companies have managed to survive. Today there are only two major players in the civil aircraft industry, Boeing and Airbus. They produce marvels of technology, the modern airliners. Whilst Boeing introduced the first composite material aircraft, Airbus was the first company to produce the 'Fly by wire' aircraft, the A320. It is due to this competition that aircrafts are becoming safer, more efficient and more environmentally friendly. So let us look briefly at the history of modern Civil Air Transport.

Civil aviation started in the early 1920s with small biplanes, however it increased in popularity in the 1930s with the flying boats. Following WWII civil air transport continued with the piston engine mono-wing aircraft until a big step was made with the introduction of the De-Havilland Comet, the world's first pressurised jet engine air liner. It was initially a success, however in a short time it turned into a nightmare, when in a short time three of these aircraft crashed, killing all passengers and crew. Eventually it was discovered that this was due to a design flaw in the windows and with fatigue the aircraft disintegrated in the skies. This led to the demise of these aircraft. England and Europe lost the lead in civil aviation to the Americans, namely Boeing.

Boeing used their expertise and technology from military aviation, plus lessons learned from the De Havilland Comet to design an extremely successful civil jet aircraft, which was the Boeing 707 introduced in 1958. It was a four engine single aisle passenger liner and could carry 156 passengers on short/medium distances. This aircraft and its derivative, the Boeing 720 (incidentally the first aircraft used by AirMalta in 1974), gave Boeing the leadership in civil air transport, leadership which lasted for decades (until the ascent of Airbus in the 1990s).



Boeing 720B

Following the introduction of the 707, Boeing introduced other well known aircraft by which it consolidated its leadership in civil air transport. In 1964 Boeing

introduced another highly successful short/medium aircraft, the three engine 727 which was produced till 1984. In 1967 the world's most produced aircraft, the Boeing 737 was introduced. It was a short/medium single aisle twin engine aircraft, and it could carry up to 170 passengers depending on the variant. This aircraft is still being produced today. In 1970 the then world's largest airliner, the 747 Jumbo, went into service. It was a medium/long range four engine, twin aisle aircraft that could carry up to 500 passengers between continents. It was also an extremely successful aircraft and is still in production today.



Boeing 737-500

In the late 1960s a new European company, Airbus, was formed (between German, French and British interests) and by 1974 the new Airbus A300 entered service. During that time Boeing was by far the largest aircraft company followed by other American companies namely McDonnell Douglas with its DC8, DC9 and DC10 and Lockheed with the Tri-star. The A300 was a new concept, medium/long range twin aisle aircraft that could carry 300 passengers but it had only two engines. This was the first twin engine wide bodied aircraft making it more fuel efficient than competition. It was the first aircraft to be produced with the 'Just in time' concept. The first production model, the A300B2, entered service in 1974 followed by the A300B4 one year later. Initially the success of this model was poor, but by 1979 there were 81 aircraft in service.

Boeing responded with the introduction of two new aircraft, the twin engine 757 and 767 which shared various components. However, whilst the 757 was a single aisle short/medium range aircraft, the CAD designed 767 was a wide body medium/long range aircraft which was to compete directly with the A300/A310. They entered service in the early 1980s.

Airbus expanded its range with the introduction of the A320 in the 1980s. This model established Airbus as a major player in the civil aircraft market. It had over 400 orders before it first flew. The A320 series introduced the most advanced technologies to compete with Boeing.

These included the fly-by wire, composite primary structures, centre-of-gravity control using fuel, glass cockpit and two-person flight deck. These resulted in an aircraft that Airbus claimed consumed 50% less fuel than the Boeing 727. Over 4000 A320 have been built with over 2000 ordered, making it the second best selling aircraft after the Boeing 737.



Airbus A320

Airbus continued to expand its range with the introduction of the A330 and A340 aircraft which came into service in the mid 1990s. Airlines purchased the A330 mainly to replace the McDonnell Douglas DC-10 and compete with the Boeing 767 as well. The A330 is a twin aisle wide-bodied twin engine medium/long range aircraft and it is claimed to be 38% more fuel efficient than the DC-10. The Airbus A340 is a long range four engine twin aisle wide bodied commercial passenger airliner which was also introduced in the mid 1990s. It seats up to 400 passengers with a range of up to 9000NM. Thus it competes with the Boeing 777 and lower versions of the Boeing 747.



Airbus A340-600

Boeing introduced the 777 in the mid 1990s and it is the world's largest twinjet. The aircraft has seating for over 300 passengers and has a range from 5,235 to 9,380 nautical miles (9,695 to 17,372 km) depending on the

model. Its distinguishing features include the largest diameter turbofan engines of any aircraft. The 777 was designed to replace older wide-body airliners like the Lockheed Tri-star and the McDonnell Douglas DC-10 and bridge the capacity difference between the 767 and 747. It was Boeing's first fly-by-wire airliner, to compete with the established Airbus Technology. It was also the first entirely computer-designed commercial aircraft.

By the late 1990s Airbus grew so much, to reach Boeing in terms of orders and eventually in terms of deliveries. Airbus then took on a huge challenge, to make the world's largest aircraft, the A380, which started deliveries in 2007. It can carry over 850 passengers in double deck twin aisle wide body compared to the Boeing's 747, which can carry maximum 520 passengers. The A380 has a wing span of nearly 79.75m compared to the 747's 68.5m.

The latest introduction of a new model was by Boeing, when in 15 December 2009 the Boeing 787 Dream liner

took off for the first time. It is the state of the art technology in all aspects, including a composite material body instead of the traditional aluminium alloys and fully CAD designed. Due to the new technologies the Boeing claims that this aircraft will use 20% less fuel than the already efficient Boeing 767. However Airbus are already at an advanced development stage of a new aircraft, the A350, which will be a twin engine twin aisle, wide body aircraft capable of carrying up to 350 passengers on medium to long range. The prototype is expected to fly next year. It will be Airbus's competitor to the 787 Dreamliner and Airbus is already claiming that it will be more efficient than the Dreamliner by up to 8%.

Both companies have new models in the pipeline, showing how intense competition is between these two giant companies. This shows how important it is to keep abreast with cutting edge technologies and to try and be one step ahead of competition.

Product list and details (date information from Airbus)							
Aircraft	Description	Seats	Max	Launch date	1st flight	1st delivery	Production ceased
A300	2 engine, twin aisle	228–254	361	May-69	28-Oct-72	May-74	27-Mar-07
A310	2 engine, twin aisle, modified A300	187	279	Jul-78	03-Apr-82	Dec-85	27-Mar-07
A318	2 engine, single aisle, shortened 6.17 m from A320	107	117	Apr-99	15-Jan-02	Oct-03	
A319	2 engine, single aisle, shortened 3.77 m from A320	124	156	Jun-93	25-Aug-95	Apr-96	
A320	2 engine, single aisle	150	180	Mar-84	22-Feb-87	Mar-88	
A321	2 engine, single aisle, lengthened 6.94 m from A320	185	220	Nov-89	11-Mar-93	Jan-94	
A330	2 engine, twin aisle	253–295	406–440	Jun-87	02-Nov-92	Dec-93	
A340	4 engine, twin aisle	239–380	420–440	Jun-87	25-Oct-91	Jan-93	A340-200 & 300: September 2008
A350	2 engine, twin aisle	270–350		Dec-06	2011 expected	mid-2013	
A380	4 engine, double deck, twin aisle [77]	555	853	2002	27-Apr-05	Dec-07	



The participants of the Malta Modeval2 Project meeting

LEARNING SUPPORT UNIT

THE LEARNING SUPPORT UNIT ORGANIZES THE THIRD MODEVAL 2 MEETING IN MALTA

Between the 29 and the 31 October 2009 the Modeval 2 partners met in Malta for the third European meeting. Modeval 2 is a Leonardo Transfer of Innovation Project aimed at developing training materials targeted towards tutors and trainers in the area of low level skilled adults. The partners were welcomed by Professor Maurice Grech, Principal/CEO, Mr John Bartolo, Director of Information and Support Services, and Mr David Muscat, Coordinator of the Learning Support Unit.

During the first day of the meeting, the Danish partner presented an updated version of the Reference Manual which is one of the objectives of the MODEVAL2 Project and which should be finalised soon. The manual includes recommendations for the construction of basic knowledge evaluation tools and the tools elaborated from these same recommendations. The Spanish team then presented its work on the establishment of a framework for training

sessions to be held with relevant target groups. The group discussed and evaluated the different formats that these training sessions could take.

The second day of the meeting focused on the dissemination and exploitation of the project. Mrs Katalin Finta described the dissemination tools that are currently being constructed, namely a brochure and a newsletter.

The meeting ended with a discussion about post-project plans. The next meeting, which was held in Barcelona between the 28 and the 29 January 2010, will discuss further the question of exploitation and dissemination, as well as issues regarding copyright.

For more information about the Modeval2 Project, visit <http://www.modeval.org/>

¹ The Modeval2 partners are the University of Barcelona, Spain; the University of the Aegean, Greece; the University of Lyons, France; the University of Kaposvar, Hungary; RADAR 1 Agency, France; Thuringen Volkshochschulverband e.V., Germany; Taleinstituttet, Region Nordhylland, Denmark; the Hungarian Radio, Budapest; AGORA, France and MCAST's Learning Support Unit, Malta

TO THINK OR NOT TO THINK: THAT IS THE QUESTION



by Ninette Pace Balzan,
Senior Lecturer, LSU

With apologies to Shakespeare, our students are definitely “being”, but are they thinking?

Post secondary education at MCAST has now entered the field of conferring degrees. This means that, hopefully, every student that enters MCAST can aspire to becoming a life-long learner and expect to be given the skills to do so, whether graduating at degree level or not.

MCAST has a well-deserved reputation of turning out employable graduates who are very much in demand for their

technical skills and ability to get the job done. Without in any way jeopardising this attribute, MCAST has to impart to its students the ability to think critically and creatively.

Critical thinking can be defined as the ability to “navigate the important decisions in learning and in life”, while creative thinking is the ability to accept and instigate change and come up with original ideas or ways of implementation.

MCAST comprises many disciplines but critical and creative thinking have characteristics common to all:

- They can be learned
- The learner is motivated through questions and issues to solve during teaching
- Teaching is collaborative to enhance thinking activity
- Assessment is assignment and project based
- Students are not given content to reproduce but are helped to problematise, discuss, formulate and justify in their writing. (Adapted from Meyers, 1986)

So let us revolutionise our lecture rooms, spend less time imparting content which by the time the course finishes might even be outdated in some disciplines, and get our students to think and become life-long learners. The ideal lecture room balances one-way ‘imparting of information’ with more exploration and problem-solving. It is up to us.

Meyers, C. (1986) Teaching Students to Think Critically. San Francisco California: Jossey Bass cited in Huang, E. (1990) Teaching Button-Pushing versus Teaching Thinking: The State of New Media Education in US Universities Convergence 2009; 15; 233



Students at the Learning Support Unit

LEARNING MATHEMATICS COLLABORATIVELY

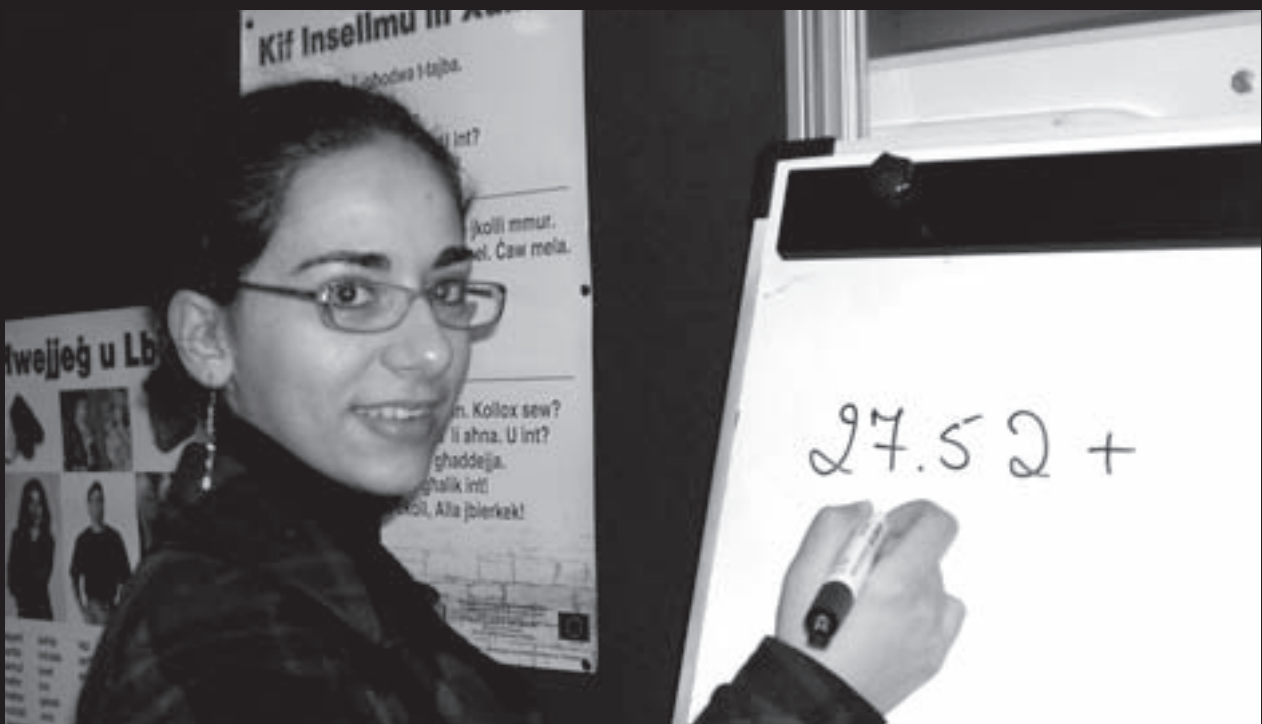
BY SHARI MARJA AZZOPARDI, LSU LECTURER

The teaching of mathematics is based on five aims: fluency, interpretations, strategies, awareness and appreciation. The development of fluency is at the top of a teacher's list of priorities, while the appreciation of mathematics in society is their lowest priority. For this reason, mathematics is usually taught via the transmission approach. The teacher explains and writes methods on the board while the students listen, copy methods from the board and work on their own. Such an approach lowers the self-esteem and self-confidence of the students.

Students do not get to school as a 'blank slate', but as actively thinking people. A collaborative approach to teaching mathematics taps into their mathematical knowledge and misunderstanding as they construct mathematical ideas within a group. Collaborative learning encourages the students to move from 'passive' learning strategies to more 'active' ones. It requires the students to share their ideas as well as thought processes behind their ideas. In this way the students are exposed to different points of view and thought processes. It encourages students to question, evaluate and inquire as they validate the knowledge constructed by the group. If this cannot

be done by a student, then that student is obliged to seek clarification from the other group members, who are also obliged to provide assistance. Through this collaborative process, all members of the group are provided with the opportunity to develop a sophisticated understanding of lesson content that any one of them could not have achieved as an individual.

Collaborative learning is a way for teachers to move from teacher-centred practices towards student-centred teaching practices. In fact, teachers reported an increased emphasis on discussion in their classrooms, a greater tendency to reflect on mistakes and a greater flexibility to move between topics after employing collaborative approaches to teaching and learning mathematics. The teachers also reported a change in the aims with which they set out to teach mathematics. The predominant emphasis on fluency has given way to a much greater emphasis on the development of conceptual understanding and problem solving strategies. Although teachers recognise the merits of collaborative learning, they rarely implement the technique due to time constraints and lack of resources.



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