

MCAST LINK

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Leah Gallo at the Language Lab

EDITOR'S MESSAGE



Caroline Balzan
Communications
and PR Manager

This issue features an interesting article by Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO, on the introduction of courses developed for the newly emerging green energy technologies industry. A BSc Hons programme in Power and Renewables and a BSc Hons programme in Construction and Building Services are among the eleven new degree programmes that the College will be launching in September 2011. Besides these degree programmes, MCAST is also providing the Solar Thermal Installation training programme and the Renewable Energy Systems and Photovoltaic (PV) Installation Course. Further details on these new courses as well as on the collaboration between MCAST and Max-Born vocational College in Germany, can be found inside the magazine.

An important event for the College was the Graduation Ceremony whereby eighty nine MCAST lecturers received the Post Graduate Certificate in Vocational Education and Training. The Vocational Teacher Training Unit coordinates various courses to provide MCAST lecturers with the required key knowledge, understanding and practical skills for successful teaching. The course included training on the philosophical and psychological aspects of learning, assessment procedures as well as innovative teaching methods. Well done to the lecturers that graduated!

On the 13 May 2011 the Institute of Community Services collected nearly €20,000 during the '36 Hour Community Challenge'. This marathon, previously known as the Hair and Beauty Marathon, has now grown to include varied activities including hairdressing and beauty services, street soccer tournaments, book sales, vegetable sales and car wash services amongst others. The beneficiary of this year's Challenge event was Puttinu Cares. Well done to all those that participated!

The Institute of Art and Design has embarked on an interesting project aimed at raising awareness on internet safety. The material produced by the students includes an activity book, a comic book and an animated cartoon. These resources will be used by the Office of the Commissioner for Children and will also form part of the EU-funded 'BeSmartOnline' awareness campaign.

Ms Elaine Mifsud Scicluna, Senior Lecturer within the MCAST Learning Support Unit, writes about the new Paired Reading Programme. Paired Reading is a reading method whereby students read in pairs. This new method helps students with reading difficulties to develop better reading skills, foster a love for reading and also helps their self-esteem. This method is currently being piloted at MCAST.

Another academic year has gone by and Summer is round the corner. May I wish all readers enjoyable Summer holidays!

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Caroline Balzan', with a horizontal line underneath.

MCAST PREPARES STUDENTS FOR GREEN JOBS



Professor Maurice Grech,
Principal and CEO

Now in its tenth year of operations, MCAST is more than ever determined to increase its momentum in building the capacity of Malta's labour force. In line with the College's resolve to provide the most relevant and up-to-date training in newly-emerging areas of vocational expertise, e.g. the clean energy sector, MCAST is now launching courses for installers of solar thermal systems as well as renewable energy and photovoltaic (PV) systems. These courses have been set up by MCAST's Gateway to Industry Ltd., in conjunction with the Malta Resources Authority (MRA), and are supported by the Energy and Environment Committee within the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry.

The 50-hour Solar Thermal Installation training programme is designed by the MCAST Institute of Building and Construction Engineering and is intended for those who already have ample knowledge and skills in relevant work sectors, viz., plumbers, pipe fitters, engineers, facility managers, contractors, Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) specialists, inspectors as well as apprentices enrolled in one of these trades. Learners are expected to have a good working knowledge of written and spoken English for them to be able to take full advantage of the programmes of study.

Candidates who finish the course successfully and who are also in possession of a number of approved qualifications and experience, namely, Level 3 and/or Level 4 qualifications in relevant areas which are recognized by the Malta Qualifications Council (MQF) and three years proven experience in the trade (plumbing), shall receive the Solar Thermal Installation Certificate from the MRA. Those who have a school leaving certificate and two full years of proven hands-on experience in solar thermal system installations shall also be eligible.

On the other hand, the 60-hour Renewable Energy Systems and Photovoltaic (PV) Installation courses, also endorsed by the MRA, are being organized by the MCAST Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering. Significantly, these courses are a partial requirement for the recognition of future installers and follow the Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC.

Candidates applying for the Single-Phase Installers programme must have a good working knowledge of English and the Wireman's Licence A. The successful completion of the course, together with an MQF Level 4 qualification in a related trade and two years relevant experience or an MQF

Level 5 relevant qualification, shall entitle the candidate for a PV Installation Certificate from the MRA.

A top-up course for Three-Phase Installers is also being provided. Candidates holding an MQF Level 5 relevant qualification and the Wireman's Licence B shall be eligible to apply for an extra 10-hour module which shall also be certified by the MRA accordingly.

In order to ensure that staff and students attending MCAST are constantly aware and responsive to the developments occurring in this specialist field of technology across Europe, the College maintains collaborative and proactive practices with expert partner colleges overseas. The exchange programmes involving work placements in industry for Maltese staff and students with the Max-Born vocational college in Recklinghausen, Germany, for example, are in fact exclusively concerned with this priority sector, namely, alternative sources of energy combined with sustainable growth.

Collaboration between MCAST and Max-Born started several years ago. Between 2005 and 2008, for example, the MCAST Institute of Building and Construction Engineering coordinated a technologically-oriented Comenius project entitled "Roofs of Europe". Four countries participated in this project which took a closer look at the physical and mechanical properties of materials used for roofing. The project formed part of the Lifelong Learning programmes funded by the European Union.

A second project entitled "Prima Klima Box" studied heat transfer relating to the thermal behaviour of buildings. It is known that at least a third of the energy consumption of industrialised countries is lost on creating acceptable thermal and lighting conditions in buildings. Between them, these two projects led to the mobility of thirty-six students. A new project, which builds on the earlier experiences of both colleges, has already been submitted and is now being evaluated.

While on the subject, it is also pertinent to point out that, among the eleven vocational degree courses which MCAST shall be launching in September 2011, there is a BSc Hons programme in Power and Renewables and a BSc Hons in Construction and Building Services. The latter shall also include a number of study units relating to efficient buildings.



During the last four years, MCAST has been collaborating closely with Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, Europe's largest applied research organization, who has already been responsible for the design and delivery, in conjunction with various German Universities, of no less than eight degree courses, between BA Hons and BSc Hons, in various specialist vocational areas.

Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft is one of the world's leading research organizations for solar energy technologies. It draws on a network of scientists offering a broad portfolio of skills covering the entire process chain of solar energy systems research, from materials research and production technologies to power electronics, energy storage, energy



SOLAR THERMAL INSTALLERS

course set in conjunction with
MRA

The MCAST Institute of Building and Construction Engineering is organising a comprehensive course, which has been set up in conjunction with the Malta Resources Authority (MRA) and also supported by the Energy & Environment Committee within the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry. This course is a partial requirement for future installers of Solar Thermal Systems as per requirements set up in the Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC.

Solar Thermal Installation

This is an intensive and practical course which consists of 50 guided learning hours. The objective of the course is to equip learners with the necessary underpinning knowledge and practical competencies associated with the effective installation of solar thermal systems.

COURSE FEE: **€390**

COURSE DURATION: **50 HOURS**

Entry Requirements

Candidates should have a good knowledge of English and hot and cold water plumbing skills, including knowledge of handling bulk items, power tools and how to recognise site safety precautions. The successful completion of this course, together with MQF Level 4 or MQF Level 3 and 3 years proven experience in plumbing, or school leaving certificate and 2 years proven experience in solar water heating installation, shall entitle the candidate to a Solar Thermal Installation Certificate from MRA.

Applications are received online on www.mcastshortcourses.gov.mt or at the Office of Part-time Courses, MCAST Gateway to Industry Ltd., Administration Building, MCAST Main Campus, Corradino Hill, Paola, between 0830hrs and 1630hrs.

MCAST Gateway to Industry Ltd.,
Administration Building,
MCAST Main Campus, Corradino Hill, Paola, PLA 9032.
Tel: 00356 23 987 103/116
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www.mcast.edu.mt



management and testing. In October 2010, Fraunhofer won the European Innovation Prize for developing new solar cells with double the efficiency levels of conventional silicon-based cells.

Benefiting from the European Regional Development Fund, MCAST has installed close to 600 PV panels which are expected to generate approximately 200 megawatt hours yearly. This is equivalent to 15 % of the total consumption on the MCAST main campus.



MCAST
Gateway to
INDUSTRY



MCAST
MALTA COLLEGE of ARTS, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY





PV INSTALLERS
course set in conjunction with
MRA

The MCAST Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering is organising comprehensive courses, which have been set up in conjunction with the Malta Resources Authority (MRA) for the recognition as a partial requirement for future installers of PV Systems as per requirements set up in Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC.

Renewable Energy Systems and PV Installation

These are intensive and practical courses which consist of 60 guided learning hours. The contents include the principles of operation and the interpretation of the national and international legal requirements of different types of Renewable Energy Systems. The programmes focus heavily on the practical aspect of PV installation.

Single-Phase Installers
Candidates should have a good knowledge of English and Wireman's Licence A. The successful completion of this course together with MQF Level 4 and 2 years experience or alternatively MQF Level 5 shall entitle the candidate to have a PV Installation Certification from MRA.


COURSE FEE: €375

COURSE DURATION: 60 HOURS

Three-Phase Installers
Candidates holding an MQF Level 5 and Wireman's Licence B may take a top-up module of 10 hours at an additional cost of €60 to be eligible for PV Installation Certification from MRA.

Applications are received online on www.mcastshortcourses.gov.mt or at the Office of Part-time Courses, MCAST Gateway to Industry Ltd., Administration Building, MCAST Main Campus, Corradino Hill, Paola, between 0830hrs to 1630hrs.

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INFORMATION



NEW ESF PROJECTS AT MCAST

Following MCAST's success in its ESF bid for the Vocational Degrees Project 2009 -2012, and for the purposes of Cohesion Policy 2007 – 2013, Operational Programme II - Empowering people for more jobs and a better quality of life - the College is presently awaiting the outcome of three applications, namely:

1. Inclusion for Employment
2. Increasing Accessibility, Flexibility and Innovation at MCAST
3. Making VET Education more Relevant and Attractive.

1. Inclusion for Employment is intended to review the present curricula of the 'Pathway to Independent Living Programme' as well as the Levels 1, 2 and 3 programmes to facilitate the progression of vulnerable students to higher level vocational programmes with an aim to securing employment. The project will involve a thorough review and redesign of syllabi with an emphasis on accreditation. It will also provide the necessary support in the form of teaching material and staff professional development.

The operational objective will contribute towards the integration, retention and progression of disadvantaged groups in Malta and Gozo, and through innovative activities and initiatives it will focus on the promotion of an inclusive society.

John Bartolo, Director Information and Student Support Services, will be the Project Leader.

2. Increasing Accessibility, Flexibility and Innovation at MCAST is designed to increase the attractiveness, accessibility and flexibility of the MCAST lifelong learning offer and thus contribute to the consolidation of the skills base of the workforce. This operational objective will focus on continuous training and education to ensure that

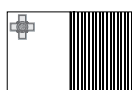
those already in employment, prospective workers and the unemployed can adapt to shifting economic scenarios while ensuring their employment prospects.

Blended learning and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL and eAPEL) are two innovative interventions which the project's overall objective will address. Blended learning integrates e-learning techniques with traditional teaching methods. Through the accreditation of learning that has occurred formally, informally and non-formally, an individual's prior learning is mapped, assessed and credited accordingly. The economic sectors which shall benefit from this project are the following: ICT, the Creative Industries, Engineering, Health, the Green Economy and Agriculture.

3. Making VET Education more Relevant and Attractive shall involve an upgrading exercise which is also aimed at updating existing courses to make them more relevant to current economic needs. A second objective is the design and launching of new courses in line with present economic requirements. The Malta Qualifications Council shall be one of the prime partners identified for this project, particularly in view of the accreditation of home-grown courses which shall become compulsory by 2015.

The project has multiple operational objectives and will contribute to increase student participation in various fields of study at both further and higher education levels with science and technology and ICT as prime contenders. The addressing of skills mismatches (one of which is specifically intended for Gozo) resulting in a general improvement in the quality and relevance of educational experiences is also envisaged.

Vince Maione, Director Quality Assurance, will be the Project Leader of the two above projects.



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

NEW DEGREE COURSES STARTING IN SEPTEMBER 2011

This September 2011 the College will launch eleven new degree courses and other courses at various levels.
The new degree courses are:

Institute	Course Title	MQF Level
Agribusiness	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Animal Management	6
Art & Design	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Media (Moving Image)	6
Building & Construction Engineering	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Construction Engineering	6
Community Services	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Health and Social Care (Management)	6
Community Services	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Health and Social Care (Practice)	6
Electrical & Electronics Engineering	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Electronic Communications	6
Electrical & Electronics Engineering	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Power Generation and Renewables	6
Electrical & Electronics Engineering	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Biomedical Engineering*	6
Mechanical Engineering	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Mechanical Engineering (Plant)	6
Mechanical Engineering	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Mechanical Engineering (Manufacturing)	6
Mechanical Engineering	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Marine Engineering	6
Mechanical Engineering	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Biomedical Engineering*	6

*The course "Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Biomedical Engineering" is featured under the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering and the Institute of Mechanical Engineering. Students will choose whether to follow the Electronic stream or the Mechanical stream.

THE OTHER NEW COURSES ARE THE FOLLOWING:

Institute of Agribusiness

1. MCAST/BTEC Diploma in Fish Husbandry

Institute of Art and Design

1. MCAST Diploma in Printing
2. MCAST/BTEC HND in Photography

Institute of Community Services

1. MCAST/BTEC HND Early Years

The Gozo Centre

1. MCAST Introduction Certificate in Care and Hairdressing
2. Diploma in Hairdressing
3. MCAST/BTEC Diploma in Mechanical Engineering

MCAST LECTURERS COMPLETE POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING

On Wednesday 1 June 2011, eighty-nine MCAST lecturers were awarded an MCAST Postgraduate Certificate in Vocational Education and Training. The presentation ceremony was held at MCAST Main Campus, Paola and was preceded by a Thanksgiving Mass celebrated by the MCAST Chaplain, Rev. Fr John Curmi.

The one year course was organised by the College as part of a project co-funded by the European Social Fund. Through this project, MCAST is offering several professional development programmes for its staff as well as its successful vocational degree courses for students. The Postgraduate Certificate in Vocational Education and Training course gave MCAST lecturing staff the opportunity to develop practical teaching methodologies based on researched knowledge, an important requirement for the successful completion of further education.



Prof Grech delivering his speech

Ms. Tatjana Chircop from the College's Institute of Community Services, addressed the guests on behalf of the graduands. "The course gave us the tools to improve our students' learning experience, both in the lecture rooms, as well as in our workshops. Ultimately, the benefits of this initiative are reaped by our families, our country's workforce and our nation as a whole."

Professor Maurice Grech, MCAST Principal and CEO, presented the certificates to the graduands. In his address, he explained that the College's Continuous Professional Development Programme offers several opportunities for lecturers to further their education and gain new vocational experiences locally and abroad. In fact, some of the lecturers who obtained their Postgraduate Certificate in Vocational Education and Training will spend three months in Germany to continue their studies at Masters level, under the guidance of Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, the largest international research institute in Europe with a vast experience in every sector of the industry. Continuous professional development forms part of MCAST's strategic plan and the College can only reach its ambitious targets if its staff maintain, update and broaden their knowledge and skills, while developing the personal qualities required in their professional lives, he maintained.

"Our mission is to give our students the relevant skills and competencies that adequately provide for the ever-changing needs of industry. This is the only way that we can guarantee that their years at MCAST are the key to a prosperous future. Achieving this goal is the essence of a lecturer's success – this is why we will always continue to encourage our academic staff to keep themselves updated with the latest trends in their respective sectors, as well as with the most advanced teaching skills," Prof. Grech said.



The MCAST lecturers who received the Postgraduate Certificate in Vocational Education and Training with Prof. Maurice Grech, MCAST Principal, Mr. Anthony Saliba, MCAST Deputy Principal, Mr. Ray Farrugia, MCAST Registrar, and Ms. Veronica Sultana, Co-ordinator MCAST Vocational Teacher Training Unit.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE TECHNOLOGIES SEMINAR



On 29 March 2011 MCAST held a one day seminar on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Technologies. The content of this seminar was delivered by lecturers from Max-Born Berufskolleg of Germany, a vocational college with whom MCAST has a long standing partnership agreement. Each year a number of students and academic staff from both colleges undertake exchange visits and placements in industry in the respective countries.

The seminar was attended by students from the Institutes of Building and Construction Engineering and Electrical and Electronics Engineering. The sessions were interactive and covered topics which included solar energy, wind energy, biomass and other similar technologies. Max-Born lecturers presented a number of students' projects which were carried out in Germany. A session was also held to discuss the relative European legislation and the targets to be met by 2020.

Following the seminar a session was held between the German lecturers and their Maltese counterparts to explore the possibility of further cooperation between the two institutions, including the setting up of an online platform for project management and module development.

This will enable both colleges to develop a joint professional curriculum for specific training, on full and part-time basis, in the areas of green technology.

MCAST and Max-Born Colleges will be intensifying their exchange of lecturing staff and students which will give Maltese students an opportunity to carry out work placements in German industries.



Dr. Reinhold Hülsewische, International Coordinator, Max-BornBerufskolleg



From left Emanuel Attard, Project Director, Mr Ronald Curmi, Deputy Director Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering and lecturers from Max-Bonn College

MASTERS RESEARCH IN FOREIGN INSTITUTIONS

Sixteen lecturers, presently completing their Masters programmes under the ESF 1.36 project, will be benefiting from a 12-week scholarship in Germany, England and Scotland during which time they shall be involved in research placements in connection with the preparation of their thesis.

The lecturers, six from the Institute of Community Services, seven from the Institute of Mechanical Engineering and three from the Institute of Building and Construction Engineering, will be returning to teach on the new degree programmes to be launched at MCAST later this year in September 2011. Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft are in charge of securing placements for the College lecturing staff as well as all the logistics in connection with their travel and accommodation.

ITALIAN AMBASSADOR VISITS MCAST

On Tuesday 17 May 2011 His Excellency Efsio Luigi Marras, Ambassador of Italy to Malta, visited MCAST. He was greeted by Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO, and Mr Donald Friggieri, Consultant.

Prof Grech provided a detailed presentation on MCAST which included information on the College's aims, vision, the Institutes and the courses on offer as well as the College's links with industry. After the presentation His

Excellency Efsio Luigi Marras was given a tour of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, the Aviation Workshops within the Institute of Mechanical Engineering, the Institute of Community Services and the Library and Learning Resource Centre.

During the meeting Prof Grech and His Excellency Marras discussed future collaboration between the two Institutions.



His Excellency Efsio Luigi Marras, Ambassador of Italy to Malta, Prof Maurice Grech, Principal and Mr David Bonello, Deputy Director Institute of Mechanical Engineering, at the Mechanical Engineering workshop



Prof Maurice Grech, Principal explaining the new campus model



His Excellency Efsio Luigi Marras, Ambassador of Italy to Malta and Prof Maurice Grech, Principal meeting with Mr John Sciberras, Director Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering.

LECTURERS PRESENT DISSERTATIONS

On Thursday 5 May 2011, Ms Tatjana Chircop and Ms Simone Restall, two lecturers at the Institute of Community Services, presented two dissertations to Prof. Maurice Grech, Principal and CEO and Mr Emanuel Attard, Projects Director, which were part of a Masters Degree awarded to them in January 2011.

Ms Chircop and Ms Restall were two of a cohort of 19 Maltese and Gozitan students who read for a Masters Degree in Environmental and Intercultural Management of Schools from Università Ca Foscari, Venice, Italy, in collaboration with the University of Malta, co-ordinated by Profs. Paul Pace. This EU-funded course was offered for the very first time and was offered simultaneously in other collaborating European countries which included Bulgaria, Portugal and Romania. The course leading to this degree involved online tutoring, online forums, collaborative learning, face-to-face seminars, project work on placement and a dissertation. Both Ms Chircop and Ms Restall chose to do their project work and research within MCAST itself, creating proposals which could be included in the MCAST new campus master plan which will be implemented in the coming years.

Ms Chircop's dissertation - "An Action Plan for Introducing Performing Arts Courses at MCAST", includes the proposal of a strategic plan for performing arts courses which could be introduced and included within the MCAST master plan. Through research of existing literature as well as performing arts colleges and curricula in other European countries, in-depth interviews with various Maltese performing arts students and MCAST administrative staff, this research outlined a strategic plan of action with the main focus being the inclusion of performing arts as an integral part of vocational education, within the concepts of sustainable development.

Ms Restall's dissertation - "The Proposed Introduction of a Green Public Procurement Plan for the MCAST New Campus Project" maps out a procurement plan methodology to ensure sustainable products and services are used in this project. The dissertation holistically involves all stakeholders, including staff and students, in the procedure and active planning of the purchasing function introducing sustainability criteria also as part of targeted curricular didactic modules in every Institute. The objective is to ensure that through the new campus project, with the integration of the GPP plan, MCAST becomes a benchmark for sustainable best practice within the local and national community.



From left Ms Simone Restall, Eur. Ing. Emanuel Attard, Prof Maurice Grech, Ms Tatjana Chircop

GRADUATES, INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHT EFFECTIVENESS OF MCAST VOCATIONAL DEGREES

Two years after the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) launched its first vocational degrees, representatives of local industry and of the first graduates expressed their satisfaction at the way these courses are turning students into the successful, experienced professionals that the Maltese industries require.

On Wednesday, 18 May 2011 MCAST held a seminar entitled Supporting Industry at The Corinthia Hotel, St. Julian's, to inform industry stakeholders with the first results and upcoming developments related to the college's vocational degree programme launched in 2009. The founding of these courses is part of a €6 million project co-funded by the EU's European Social Fund (ESF), and is being coordinated in collaboration with Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, the largest research institution in Europe with over 15,000 scientists, university professors and engineers and over 70 research institutes in various countries.

The seminar was addressed by Ms. Ann Marie Attard and Ms. Antoinette Mamo, who were among the first students to graduate from MCAST. Ms. Mamo, who read for a BA Hons Degree in 3D Product Design and Interiors and who now works for a well-known design company, explained that the degree studies were "characterised by tight deadlines, presentations that taught us how to sell our ideas, and exchange of ideas with foreign tutors who are still practising the subject they teach. All of this proved crucial once I started working."

Ms. Attard, who graduated with a BSc Hons in Software Development and is now employed as a developer at Crimsonwing Ltd, said that through the degree course she acquired different views inspired by different cultures and experiences. Important aspects of her studies included the modules that gave her a better idea of how companies operate, and the work placements. "Thanks to the commitment of our Fraunhofer and MCAST lecturers, most of the students in my class acquired a good job. Some of them started their own companies, and are already moving ahead with remarkable success."

Prof. Maurice Grech, MCAST's Principal and CEO, explained that the College sought the assistance of Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, with its vast experience in every sector of industry, because it wanted to provide vocational degrees that were practically based and closely linked to the industry. The courses were designed in collaboration with local industries and with the input of Fraunhofer's professors to ensure that the curricula address the present and future needs of industry, while injecting new international dimensions. "Presently we are delivering eight degree programmes and in the coming weeks we shall be launching new degree courses in 11 different subjects." The MCAST degrees are already widely recognised locally and abroad, as some graduates have already been accepted for Masters Programmes in local and foreign universities, including the world-renowned Cranfield University, Prof. Grech concluded.

Dr. Tonio Portuguese, Director at ST Microelectronics (Malta) said that his company employed three of the first engineers who graduated from MCAST, and the company noted that they immediately proved themselves. He urged MCAST to increase the number of graduates in the electrical and mechanical engineering streams. "You can never have enough engineers in industry – they generate increased production levels, which in turn, boost turnover." In this regard, he welcomed the news that in September the College will be launching new degree courses in plant, manufacturing, communication, marine and biomedical engineering as well as in power generation and renewable sources of energy.

Mr. Anthony Saliba, MCAST Deputy Principal and the project leader of the ESF project that financed the launching of the vocational degrees, said that in two years, the number of degree graduates doubled, and next year it is expected to exceed 300. "We urge the numerous private sector representatives attending this seminar to continue helping MCAST strengthen these courses by providing work placement opportunities to students as well as by giving them the chance to carry out their degree dissertation projects within the industry. Such collaborations will benefit the students, the employers, and ultimately, our country."



STUDENT PAGE BY JURGEN BORG



I am very satisfied with the response and feedback that I have received from these articles and look forward to providing you with more interesting interviews. This month we are heading towards Italy, interviewing Andrea Prezioso. During the interview Andrea spoke about himself, his brother Giorgio and fellow singer, Marvin, all of whom have left their mark on European dance music.

A sneak peak about Andrea Prezioso and Marvin

Andrea and Giorgio Prezioso's history within the dance-music scene spans decades. At fourteen and eleven respectively they had their first club experience at 'The Much More', one of Rome's top clubs. In 1991 they started to produce records. Andrea's first record was entitled 'Dukkha'. After a couple of years Andrea and Giorgio decided to start producing music

together. Their first single 'Get On Up' was followed by the 'Corporation of Three' project. Soon after Alessandro Moschini joined the group. After a few attempts, Giorgio, Marvin and Andrea finally produced 'Tell Me Why'. And since then none of them has ever looked back.



INTERVIEW

Q: How did it all begin?

It all began in 1995. I was looking for a musician and Giorgio's friend introduced me to Marvin (Alessandro Moschini). We immediately clicked as we both enjoyed the same music and later started to produce dance music together. And after producing a couple of records with Media Records our hit 'Tell Me Why' came to life in 1999.

Q: How long have you been collaborating together?

Marvin and I have been working together since 1995, but my working relationship with Giorgio began in 1991.

Q: Tell us about that one definite moment when you realized that you have a hit in your hands...

Well I think that when you are happy with the song and able to hear it over and over again on your computer... you are pretty much guaranteed a hit!

Q: From where do you draw your inspirations?

Any kind of 80s music, rock, soul and electronic... music draws inspiration for further music.

Q: Name a few memorable gigs...

The Danube festival in Vienna in 2001 produced a crowd of one million people and the Love Parade in Berlin during that same year also drew hundreds of thousands of eager fans!

Q: In your opinion, how would you describe the current clubbing scene in Europe?

The scene today is filled with various styles...house, techno - but the commercial sound seems to be making a comeback lately!

Q: Future plans?

We are always on the move, cannot reveal much for now. All I can say is that we are in the studio... fingers crossed!

Q: And the usual closing question... any advice for upcoming artists?

Be original! Copies of other works never work...listen to the music, be curious and creative... you might come up with something genial!

After a quick trip to Italy I would like to thank you again for your continuous support and I urge you to look forward to my next interview. Who knows what the clubbing world will be offering next? Until then take care and as always be safe!

www.djprezioso.net

www.facebook.com/preziosoandmarvin

Suggestions could be sent to:
jurgen@oldskoolpromo.com



COMMUNITY SERVICES

36 HOUR COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

The MCAST Institute of Community Services once again organised the 16th edition of what was previously called the 36-Hour Hairdressing and Beauty Marathon. This year the committee felt the need to change the name to The 36-Hour Community Challenge due to the fact that the activities, which in previous years concentrated mainly around hair and beauty services, have now increased to include many more activities offered by a larger number of students specialising in various fields of study.

The challenge started on Sunday 17 April 2011 at 10:00 hrs and came to an end on Monday 18 April 2011 at 23:00 hrs. Activities included hairdressing and beauty services, street soccer tournament, zumba sessions, treasure hunts, food and drink section, mocktails bar, experiments show, car wash service, plant, cake, vegetable and book sale, bingo session for the elderly, an easter village for the kindergarten children, glucose and blood pressure testing, abseiling and a camping village.

Close to Euros 20,000 were raised from all the above-mentioned activities as well as the phone-ins and smses received during the two-hour programme televised live on NET TV on the Sunday morning. The beneficiary for



this year's challenge is Puttinu Cares who are currently working hard to raise Euros 3,000,000 to build a block of apartments in the U.K. to be able to help more children and their families as well as other people who ask for their assistance when fighting the cancer battle.

Praise goes to all the Institute lecturers, students and members of staff who gave dedicated time and energy to make this activity happen in such a short span of time. A great big thank you also goes to companies who sponsored the event, ITS for its participation. Photos on pages 18 and 19.

HAIRDRESSING AND HEALTH STUDIES STUDENTS HELP AT THE ST. BENEDICT'S MARATHON

On the 13 May 2011 students from Hairdressing and Health Studies helped St. Benedict's College in Kirkop to raise funds for Puttinu Cares. Hairdressing students offered consultations, head massages and blow-dries to attendees

of the marathon whilst Health Studies students organised the car wash. MCAST students were guided by Ms. Kathleen Cassar and Ms. Marcelle Cutajar, full-time lecturers at the Institute of Community Services.

HAIRDRESSING AND BEAUTY THERAPY STUDENTS HELP OUT AT THE OPEN WEEKEND AT GIRGENTI PALACE

On the 9 and 10 April 2011, Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy students assisted Richmond Foundation at the Open Weekend held at the Inquisitor's Palace in Girgenti. These students are currently being taught by Ms. Stephanie Formosa and Ms. Helen Bottiglieri. Students offered relaxation services such

as hand, neck and head massages against a donation which went in aid of the Mental Health Association of Mount Carmel Hospital, the Richmond Foundation, the St. Jeanne Antide Foundation and the Thursday Club (Caritas). This event was organized under the patronage of Ms. Catherine Gonzi.

THE INSTITUTE PROVIDES TRAINING FOR KINDERGARTEN ASSISTANTS

The Institute of Community Services offered a 140 hr extension course to current Kindergarten Assistants working in state and church primary schools. The course was co-ordinated by Ms. Josette Pulis, Institute Co-ordinator for Early Childhood Education at the Institute of Community Services. The certificates were awarded to 141 successful candidates by the Hon. Minister Dolores Cristina in a ceremony held at Siggiewi Primary School on the 29 April 2011.

The ceremony commenced with an address by Ms. Micheline Sciberras, Director General of Education and this was followed by an address by Prof. Maurice Grech, MCAST Principal and CEO. The ceremony was concluded with a short reception for the candidates and their families in the school foyer.

LET ME LEARN WORKSHOP FOR WASTESERV PROJECT CANDIDATES

On the 27 April 2011 Ms. Katya DeGiovanni, Director of the Institute of Community Services and also Trainer and Consultant of the Let Me Learn Process, delivered a workshop entitled 'Discovering Your Learning Profile' to forty candidates attending the Wasteserv Project Course.

The workshop kicked off by a team hands-on exercise where the candidates discovered their different leading roles within a group. The eight groups working on the project came up with different solutions and interpreted the instructions in

different ways. This means that individuals with difficult learning profiles process information in different ways and consequently come up with different solutions. Following the group work activity the candidates talked about their learning experience and also completed the Learning Connections Inventory (Johnston & Dainton, 1996).

Ms. DeGiovanni then concluded the workshop by delivering a short presentation on the four patterns making up an individual learning profile.

COMMUNITY SERVICES STUDENTS CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIETY

HAIRDRESSING STUDENTS HELP OUT AT 'MICHAEL JACKSON – THE TRIBUTE'

On the 25, 26 and 27 March 2011 Hairdressing students supported Cut Coiffeur senior stylist Mr. Alex Lapira in 'behind the scenes' work for 'Michael Jackson – The Tribute' performed by the Yada Dance Company at the Malta Fair and Conventions Centre at Ta' Qali. By means of this activity, students had the opportunity to experience a different dimension in hairdressing practice from

the usual salon work which they experience on a regular basis. This project was co-ordinated by Ms. Natalie Camenzuli, Institute Officer in collaboration with the hairdressing lecturers namely Ms. Kathleen Cassar, Ms. Annadora Spiteri, Ms. Stephanie Formosa and Ms. Doriette Abela.

36 HOUR



COMMUNITY CHALLENGE



AGRIBUSINESS

WORK EXPERIENCE ON FUNNY FARM HORSE RESCUE ASSOCIATION

BY STEPHANIE THAKE HND IN ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

The Funny Farm Horse Rescue Association is a non-profit organization whose aims are to provide shelter for abandoned, neglected or ill-treated equines. The majority of the horses, eighteen in total, have either been saved from being put down unnecessarily and being sold for horse meat or have been donated to the association as unwanted 'pets'.

Working at the Funny Farm was beneficial to me as it helped me get acquainted with the different kinds of work carried out on a farm. This involved handling and caring for horses and dogs, cleaning the place and fundraising. The employees and volunteers at the Funny Farm have many years of experience and this helped me learn quite a lot.

Sue Arnett, the farm owner, said that she would be very willing to teach me anything I needed to know, especially if I came across a problem on site, which happened on more than one occasion. Horses are very large animals and I was quite intimidated by them, albeit awed by their beauty and grace. Not knowing anything about their behaviour made me feel a little wary, yet I soon got used to them and began to understand their mannerisms and different moods and felt I could handle them better.

It was established that the work I would be doing was going to be dirty and included cleaning stables and dog pens. This work is necessary and needed to be done on a regular basis in order to minimize the risk of disease and give the place a general cleaner appearance. I also helped with feeding and changing the water of the horses and the dogs.

I loved my experience at the Funny Farm as I put the theory I learnt at College into practice. I also made some great friends and obtained a newfound appreciation for the care of horses and their situation on the island. I still keep in touch with the owners and, when I have free time, still go and spend a day there helping out.



FIRE BELLY NEWTS

BY BEN CAMILLERI, STUDENT FOLLOWING NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN AGRICULTURE (ANIMAL MANAGEMENT).

Newts are amphibians forming part of the Salamandridae family. They are classified in the subfamily Pleurodelinae of the family Salamandridae. Newts can be found all over North America, Europe and Asia. A newt goes through metamorphosis in three stages in its life; it starts off as an aquatic larva, moving to juvenile and then adult. Adults possess a lizard-like body and are either fully aquatic creatures, or semi-aquatic depending on the surrounding environment they are in.

Chinese Fire Belly newts are beautiful animals which can come in shades of black or dark brown with an orange or red underbelly, hence their name. Being carnivorous, these newts will feed on anything from worms, small insects, brine shrimp and even tadpoles. An amazing fact about these creatures is that, like lizards, they can regenerate lost limbs very rapidly and even any organs which are damaged.

When setting up the enclosure one must keep in mind that a third of it should be land, meaning pebbles, gravel and rocks. Female newts will hatch their eggs on land on a piece of leaf and then roll the leaf on itself for protection, so if your intentions are that of breeding, this is very important to keep in

mind. The land components used have to be sloping into the water, thus making it easy for the newts to access it. The water content required should be quite deep for these animals.

When it comes to temperature, Fire Belly newts will do well at room temperature, although you should consider purchasing a heater for the colder months just to be sure. Tap water can be used to fill up the enclosure, and keep in mind that some newts may reject food bought in pellet form but will eat live food such as bloodworms.

Filters can be set up in the enclosure, although if the water is changed every couple of weeks the water will be good and toxin free. If a filter is purchased, make sure that it does not produce strong currents. Fire Belly newts should have a light spectrum on average of twelve hours light, twelve hours dark and do not need any specific lighting equipment.



INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS AND COMMERCE

ERASMUS LIFELONG LEARNING EXPERIENCE

BY ANNEMARIE SPITERI AND MARILYN CAMILLERI

During April and May 2011 we had the opportunity to carry out a three-week placement in Rotterdam as part of the Erasmus Lifelong Learning Programme.

Rotterdam is the second largest city in the Netherlands and has the largest port in Europe. Starting as a dam on the Rotte River, Rotterdam has grown into a major international commercial centre. We stayed in Barendrecht which is a town in the western Netherlands, in the province of South Holland.

Finding yourself in a bigger and different country and being away from your family and friends and your home country is difficult. Yet we did our best to integrate with the Dutch and at the same time learn new things during these three weeks together. Our host family was very helpful and made it easy for us to adapt and fit in.

Both of us were placed at different companies. Annemarie worked for Santon Holland BV, a company that manufactures switching equipment for industrial purposes, while Marilyn worked for Worldwide Energy Logistics BV, a company that provides full and comprehensive freight forwarding and project logistics handling service for both international and domestic services. We were both very happy at our placements as our colleagues were very kind and helpful.

During our free time we also visited Delft which is the oldest town found in the Netherlands, the Rotterdam zoo, the Royal Family Museum, the Wind Mills, the Historical Museum, the World Art Museum and Amsterdam.

It was a wonderful experience! We would like to thank our International Programmes Office and Mr Yke Hoekstra, our Host Coordinator, for all the preparations and arrangements carried out. Last but not least we would like to thank the companies for accepting us and offering us this unforgettable work experience which will definitely help us a lot in our careers and studies in the future.



From left: AnneMarie Spiteri and Marilyn Camilleri

VARIOUS THEMATIC TALKS AND SEMINARS

Throughout the academic year, students at the Institute of Business and Commerce have the opportunity to participate in various Thematic Talks, Seminars and similar events which bring them closer to key exponents from the local business community. The opportunity to benefit from sharing of experiences from international speakers is also given its due importance.

Focusing on the most recent similar events which took place over the first six weeks of the second semester, our students have had different opportunities in meeting up with various local organizations as well as foreign speakers.

In February, second year Diploma in Banking and Financial Services students had the opportunity to participate in an interactive session facilitated by Mr Trevor Russell representing the UK based Institute of Financial Services. The sessions facilitated by Mr Russell were very informative and likewise motivated the students to further their studies and read for a Foundation Degree in Banking Practice and Management.

Thanks to the very valid cooperation of Malta Enterprise, students studying Business at different levels, had the opportunity to attend a number of sessions, mainly facilitated by Ing Dennis Vella, focusing on carrying out business beyond our shores. These sessions tackled the concept and logistics of Foreign Direct Investment, as well as various operational tips which one needs to consider when planning business with foreign countries both within and outside the EU.

The "Know your Industry" series continued during the second semester, and took up from the sessions which were done during the first months of the academic year. Mr Michael Portanier from FIMbank plc gave a detailed exposure of the objectives and mission of this financial services organization. Amongst other matters, the thematic talk delved into the nature of its operations as well as its organizational structure, especially the work done by the Corporate and Institutional Banking Department.



Daniel Grech, Business Market Manager, delivering the lecture

Mr Daniel Grech, Business Market Manager at Vodafone Malta, delivered a similar session through which students had the opportunity to better understand the logistics, operations and objectives of one of the major key players

within our economy. An interesting aspect of the thematic talk was the analysis of the performance of the organisation against its stated aims and objectives.

Throughout this semester an emphasis was laid on the importance of appreciating and understanding the not-for-profit organizations which operate on professional lines and are giving a special contribution to society. Besides other similar organizations, our students had the opportunity to be addressed by Dr Petra Bianchi, President, Din I-Art Helwa. Ms Paula Doumanov, Therapies Services Manager at MSR and Ms Marisa Cannataci, Relations Manager at Inspire addressed our students. Mr Albert Debono from YouTheme presented the services offered and work done by this organization active within the ever increasingly important area of youth work.

Another international speaker who delivered a session at the Institute was Ms Susan Hayes. Ms Hayes comments on economic, banking and investment matters regularly on Irish national and regional radio stations including RTE Radio 1, Today FM and Newstalk. She speaks at a wide-ranging, diverse range of events in different European countries.

Her experience includes working with the InvestR Centre where her role was that of training hundreds of people in how to be successful in the stock market as well as co-ordinating several investment clubs and delivering training to numerous groups of people in this area.

Together with Ardle Culleton, Susan Hayes introduced "Wall Street to the Classroom", by designing an eight week module and delivering in-service to teachers all over Ireland. She is a stock market investor herself, with a particular interest in value stocks and options trading.

Through her thematic talk, our students have had the opportunity to benefit from Susan Hayes' baggage of experience in the financial service sector.



Susan Hayes

ENCOUNTER WITH MALTA ENTERPRISE CHAIRMAN

Students at the Institute of Business and Commerce, have had the opportunity to meet up with Mr Alan Camilleri, Chairman at Malta Enterprise. It was a very interesting encounter, and those who participated in this session expressed satisfaction at the varied information which was given by Mr Camilleri during this session. The Encounter was facilitated by a Higher National Diploma in Business second year student. Other students from the same cohort, asked questions to Mr Camilleri.

Amongst the topics which were touched upon, Mr Camilleri gave further information about Malta Enterprise's participation in a European pilot project entitled Simple Procedures Online for Cross-border Services (SPOCS). Emphasis was placed on the ultimate scope of this project and how Maltese SMEs are benefitting effectively from it.

Malta Enterprise's representation on WES - the European network to promote women's entrepreneurship - was also tackled. Sharing of good practices in this area was also highlighted. The merger of Malta Enterprise and Malta Industrial Parks was also looked at from the perspective of benefits to Maltese micro-enterprises and SMEs.

The students were interested to learn more about the services which Malta Enterprise offers to those who are planning to set up a new small business enterprise. Corporate Village, one of Malta Enterprise's most ambitious and major projects, was also on the cards during this remarkable Encounter. Students appreciated the fact that Mr Camilleri as Malta Enterprise Chairman found time out of his very busy and hectic schedule to meet up with them at MCAST.



Mr Alan Camilleri, Malta Enterprise Chairman at MCAST

ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING

VISIT TO VOCATIONAL COLLEGE LAPPIA, FINLAND

Mr John Sciberras, Director of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, recently visited Finnish vocational college, LAPPIA. Meetings were held with representatives of the vocational college at a number of Universities which offer degree programmes in line with those offered by MCAST.

The programme also included visits to other educational units in Tornio, Loue, Kemi and Keminmaa as well as trips to various industries interested in participating in students' work placements.



INSTITUTE HOSTS STUDENTS FROM DENMARK AND FRANCE

Two students from Aarhus Tekniske Skole in Denmark participated in a three-week Leonardo Mobility Programme entitled 'Electronic Exchange with Malta' at the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering.

After carrying out an evaluation of their curriculum, the students joined second year students following the MCAST Diploma in Industrial Electronics. They also attended lectures and workshops in Electronics and Microprocessors. Supervised by Mr Charles Agius and Mr William Dimech, Lecturers at the Institute, and their Danish mentor, the students had the opportunity to learn how to build and test circuits with op-amps as well as communicate with microcontrollers.

Two French students from the French UIT University are currently following an intensive project development experience at the Institute. Their role is to research and develop projects for their studies that will be submitted to

their University in partial fulfilment of their qualification. The research they are carrying out focuses on two different areas, namely Digital Electronics and Renewable Energy Systems and Power Generation.



WORK PLACEMENTS WITHIN LOCAL INDUSTRY

The Institute also played an important role in finding work placement programmes for mobility students. This is due to the excellent relationship that the Institute enjoys with local companies. Thanks to Carlo Gavazzi Ltd (Malta), MSC (Malta)

Ltd and Elektra Ltd, a considerable number of students from Belgium, Finland, Denmark, and France were successfully placed within the local industry, gaining practical work experience in an industrial environment related to their studies.

ART AND DESIGN

A 'STATE OF THE ART' TV STUDIO AND EDITING SUITES TO BE INSTALLED AT THE INSTITUTE OF ART AND DESIGN

Green lights have finally been given for works to begin on the development of a state-of-the-art TV Studio and Editing Suite at the Institute of Art and Design. The Institute was awarded funds through Operational Programme 1, falling under the EU Cohesion Policy 2007-2013, "Investing in Competitiveness For a Better quality of Life". Thus, through this European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Institute has obtained co-financing for the design, supply, delivery, installation, testing and commissioning of a complete digital HD virtual television studio and editing facilities. More specifically, the project involves the purchasing of equipment and subsequently the setting up of a Multimedia Laboratory consisting of a TV Studio, Video and Sound Control Rooms, 30 Editing Suites and Graphics Laboratory.

Works have commenced in earnest, and the Institute premises are buzzing with excitement, as planning and development for the setting up of the Virtual TV Studio and related amenities is well underway. Following the successful launch of two Media (Moving Image) programmes at Levels 4 and 5 in September 2009, students, lecturers and administration members cannot wait to see these facilities in place, and up and running.

The primary objective of this project was to open up educational opportunities within the local media sector,

by providing learners with industry-standard tools and equipment, which may allow them to develop their creative and technical competences within the media sector. Thanks to these facilities, new programmes of study may now be launched, including the top-up degree leading to the BA (Hons) in Media (Moving Image), which is due to start in October 2011. This also means that a greater number of students may benefit from a wider variety of courses, including evening programmes aimed at up-skilling or re-skilling adult and mature citizens. Additionally, individuals from within the media industries with relevant skills obtained through informal and non-formal learning routes, may also be able to obtain certification by following stand-alone modules.

The HD TV Studio and Editing facilities will also open up new prospects for the Institute and its students, in terms of planning and developing productions for broadcast. Furthermore, the purchase of this equipment will give the Institute the opportunity to strengthen its links with foreign vocational colleges offering similar qualifications, as partnerships may be developed through the application for National and EU Funded programmes. This may include student and staff exchanges, joint development courses, E-Learning projects and so on.

ART AND DESIGN STUDENTS HELP OUT DURING NSTF SCIENCE WEEK 2011

For the sixth consecutive year, the Institute of Art and Design was invited to participate in the annual NSTF Science Week. The event, held at the Malta Council for Science and Technology, Kalkara between 3 and 10 April 2011, involved students following the Diploma in the Creative Arts. Under the coordination of Mr. Mark Theuma, Deputy Director at the Institute of Art and Design, students were responsible for the running of interactive science workshops for primary school children. These popular workshops instil curiosity and interest in science as from an early age by presenting the subject in a creative and practical way.

It does not take an established scientist, amidst sophisticated equipment, to observe and appreciate the

science occurring within our surroundings. Every year, the workshops make use of common household materials as effective learning resources. The first part of the workshop involves a presentation outlining the featured theme. Presentations are purposefully simplified and interactive so they provide children plenty of opportunity to participate and share their thoughts and observations with their peers. The second part is more practical. According to the subject, children get to construct a functional, scientific model with the use of everyday items. Following completion of their 'projects', they proudly take their finished toy back home. This encourages further interest and research on the subject and expectantly invites parents to the learning process.

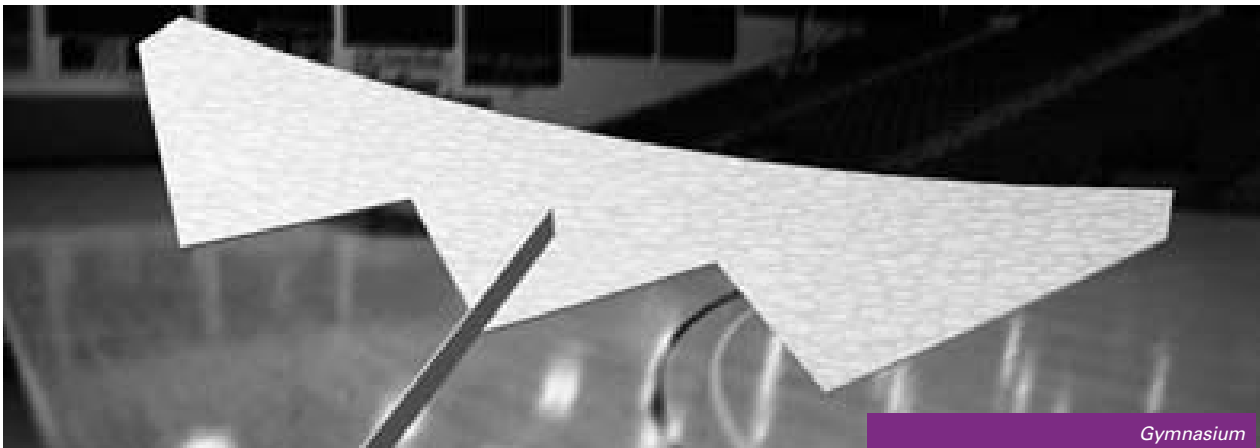
The MCAST Art and Design students team



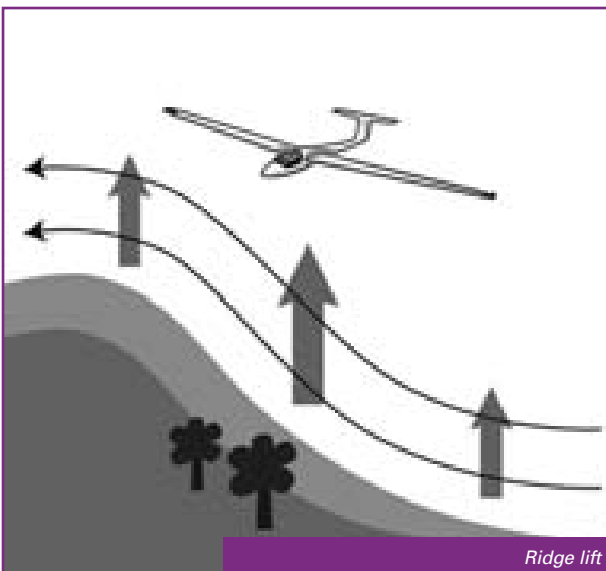
Workshops in previous editions of Science Week included water rockets, parachutes, kaleidoscopes, pinhole cameras, star constellation viewers, tower building, a pendulum, and insect flight amongst others. This year's theme involved gliding. This is the process by which birds of prey capitalise on natural atmospheric conditions to remain airborne, for extended periods of time, without the need of flapping their wings. Many managed to observe and replicate this mechanism and ultimately design gliders that could remain in the air for hours without the need of an engine.

The children quickly recognised the three main conditions that glider pilots use to fly, namely: Thermals, Ridge Lift and Wave Lift. With the help of MCAST students, the aspiring

scientists constructed walk-along gliders cut from thin, polystyrene sheets that could be flown indoors for several minutes at a time. With practice, children could skilfully follow their glider with a cardboard sheet, specially adjusted to create the necessary lift for longer flights. The process that makes this possible resembles ridge lift whereby wind incident on a cliff-face, hill or mountain is redirected upwards to create an ascending current of moving air. This provides enough energy to keep the gliders aloft. Likewise, when the walk-along glider pilot walks (or runs!), the cardboard sheet creates the necessary updraft for the glider. The Institute of Art and Design and NSTF would like to thank the Diploma in the Creative Arts students for contributing to another successful edition of Science Week.



Gymnasium



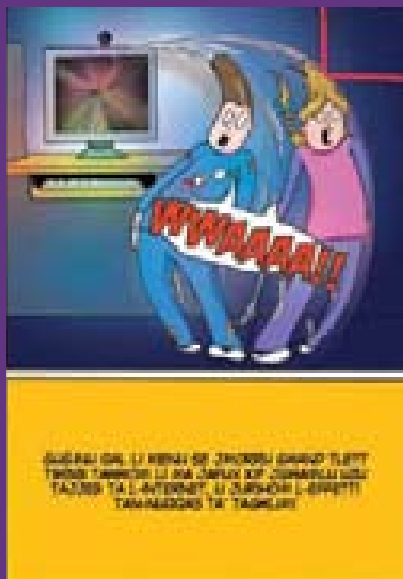
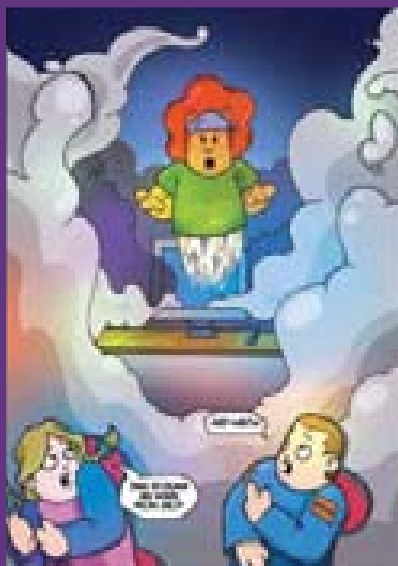
Ridge lift



Walkalong Glider

INTERNET SAFETY CAMPAIGN

The Institute of Art and Design has forged a strong link with the Office of the Commissioner for Children over the past months. Following numerous consultation meetings with the Commissioner herself, Mrs. Helen D'Amato, four different groups of students were assigned to work on the first of what is hoped to be a series of projects aimed at raising

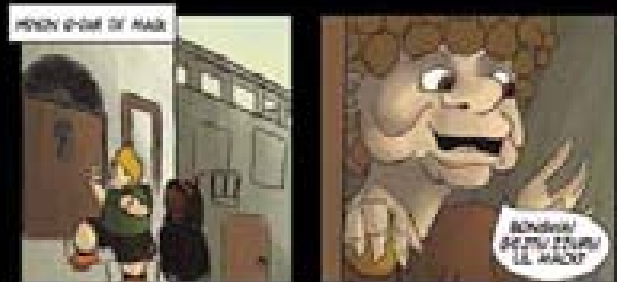




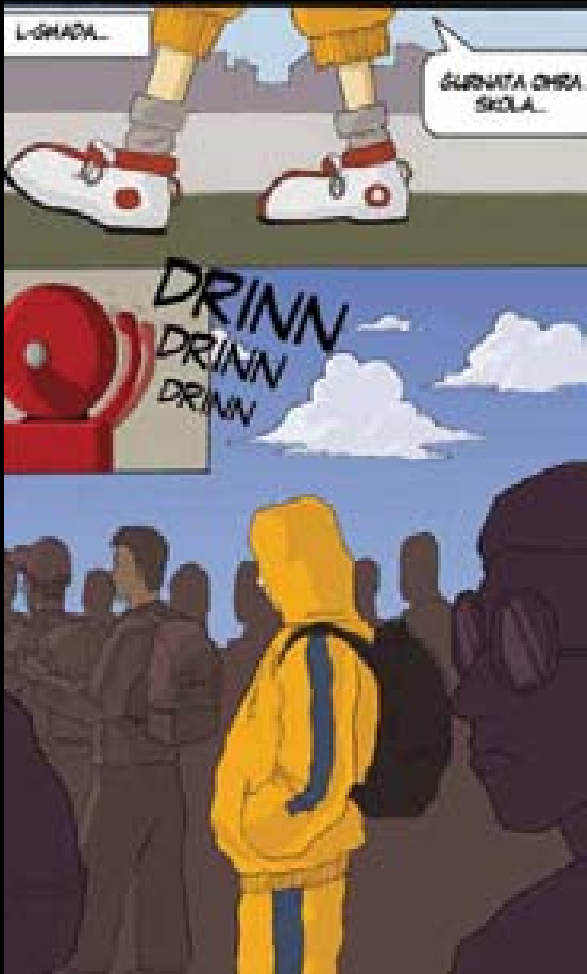
awareness on internet safety among children of various ages.

The National Diploma in Design Crafts students designed and produced an activity book aimed at 5 to 7 year olds; The Higher National Diploma in Graphic Design students designed and produced a comic book aimed at 8 to 11 year olds as well as an animated cartoon aimed at 11 to 15 year olds; The Higher National Diploma Media (Moving Image) students had to ideate, film, edit and produce a video clip aimed at teenagers aged between 16 and 18.

Mr. Stephen Vella, Director of the Institute, presented the Commissioner with the finished material produced by students as part of their coursework. Mrs D'Amato said that the resources produced by the students are invaluable as they are giving the opportunity to use locally produced material as seen through the eyes of the young persons themselves. The Commissioner for Children will be sharing this material with other stakeholders, and some of these resources will be used as part of the 'BeSmartOnline' awareness campaign which is co-funded by the European Union. The Office of the Commissioner for Children is one of the partners of this project together with the Directorate for Educational Services, the Foundation for Social Welfare Services - Appogg, the Malta Police Force, the Directorate for Catholic Schools as well as the Malta Communications Authority, which is the lead partner in this campaign.



"This is another successful collaboration with external stakeholders. Participation in this type of projects, with real briefs coming from real clients, has become one of our main goals, so that our students may benefit from the exposure that their work deserves," said Mr Stephen Vella. "We feel that this fulfils our mission, which ultimately is to prepare our students for the workplace and other



entrepreneurial activities. Through such projects, students get the opportunity to gain first-hand experience of a rapport with a client. Additionally, the students' work is exposed outside of the College boundaries, and this serves as promotion not only for the students themselves, but also for the Institute of Art and Design. "



BACH, ST MATTHEW PASSION FILMED BY THE INSTITUTE OF ART AND DESIGN STUDENTS

The Institute of Art and Design has been entrusted with the filming of the Oratorio of St Matthew Passion, known as one of the most striking works in the vast musical repertoire of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). This was a first in many senses, not least because it was the very first time that the oratorio was performed in Malta. The event, which was held in aid of the Puttinu Cares Foundation, took place at St Paul's Metropolitan Cathedral in Mdina on Friday 8 April 2011.

It was also the first time that a concert of this calibre and magnitude has been filmed locally, using not less than six HD cameras linked directly to an outside broadcasting unit. The assignment involved a complement of 25 students and 5 lecturers, and it goes without saying that such an endeavour was a huge challenge for all participants. The voluminous script, worth of two and a half hours of performance, was studied in accordance with the choir's, soloist's and orchestral entries, which allowed for the

direction of the six cameras and resulted in a perfectly executed choreography of shots.

Bach's St Matthew Passion has the reputation of being one of the greatest sacred choral works ever composed. The work has been described as the greatest classical composition in the entire field. It would appear that Bach saw a significant phase of his life drawing to a close and took the opportunity to produce a work that would synthesise and surpass all that he had previously done in the realm of liturgical music. Yale historian, Jaroslav Pelikan (1923-2006) characterised the St Matthew Passion as "the supreme choral version of Michelangelo's Pietà".

The oratorio included two choirs, the St Monica Choir and the members of the Cologne Cathedral Choir, singing simultaneously, at times in two different languages. These, together with a number of soloists, were accompanied by the Brandenburg Young Philharmonic Orchestra from Berlin.



OLD MOTORS CLUB CAR SHOW

Many agree that cars are works of art in motion, a fine example of kinetic art mingled with remarkable engineering achievement. Others consider them as a form of human expression, an extension to oneself, icons or even objects of desire to behold and acquisitively keep to oneself. Cars are known to reflect one's status, personality and attitude. Quite a few, however, merely see them as boys' toys or simply a means to get noticed!

Seeing classics all lined up in front of the Institute of Art and Design one could not think of a more appropriate place for a classic car show. Not less than fifteen, impeccable classic cars adorned the Institute's car park on 22 February 2011, when members of the Old Motors' Club agreed to showcase their prized possessions to students who certainly appreciate fine art when they see it!

What never fails to astonish is the care these lucky owners provide to their cars. The bodywork is flawless, not a speck to be noticed apart from the occasional, insensitive bug hailing from one of the nearby fields. The cars, in all shapes and sizes, attracted male and female students alike. While her peers discussed the vehicle's specs with one of the owners, one student even took the occasion to check her hairdo in the rear, chrome bumper! Nevertheless, the overall results certainly reflect the meticulous restoration work that took months and sometimes even years to

complete. The classics on display were certainly in showroom condition. One would need to remind him/herself that most cars were thirty to forty years old, at times even older. The success achieved in the design of these cars is timeless and remarkable to say the least, considering that they still turn heads when gracing our roads on a sunny, Sunday afternoon.

Perfection was not just skin deep. Under the bonnet, one could notice the heart and soul of each machine, painstakingly polished for the occasion. Chrome found itself in here as well, just in the right places. The gleaming cylinder head proudly displayed the car's brand, whereas the tubing and wiring were all neatly clipped and methodically set up. The engine looks were unfailingly complemented by the sound. No one could turn away from the red MG when its flamboyant driver roared its V8 for all bystanders to breakdown in a fit of jealousy!

One must congratulate Old Motors' Club for their achievements in keeping these treasures on the road for present and future generations to enjoy. One must also mention the Club's constant efforts to promote safe driving and reduce road accidents throughout their numerous awareness campaigns. We thank the committee and members of the Club for sharing their cars and experiences and wish them many more years of successful projects.



TOLY DESIGN CHALLENGE

BY DORIEN BIANCO, HEAD OF MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, TOLY PRODUCTS LTD.

Toly, a global supplier of high-quality plastic packaging components sold around the world by leaders in the cosmetic, skincare and fragrance industry has always been at the forefront of education-business linking initiatives. Over the 40 years it has been operating, Toly has not only favoured life-long learning opportunities for its 800 employees spread over its office and production facilities located worldwide, but has also held links between business and academia in very high regard. The Group has endorsed academic courses and committed a number of sponsorships, organised student visits to its production facilities and supported student work placement schemes, amongst other initiatives.

At Toly, we strongly believe in a long-term vision; in fact this is ingrained in our core values. We continually strive to grow our business by investing in not just our equipment, but also our people in the long-term, and this view is also extended to the communities within which we operate. By providing students with practical case studies to put their coursework into practice, Toly reaffirms its commitment to strengthen the younger generations and give them the opportunity to gain a better knowledge of the world of work.

The Toly Group is proud to collaborate with the MCAST Institute of Art and Design on various initiatives and has pledged its support through a sponsorship which will encourage students to become more confident and which will help them to recognise the enormous potential that a global company like Toly can offer. The innovation which exists in our organisation puts mechanisms into place and allows the students to employ some form of 'open innovation'.

Over and above this sponsorship, the group will be presenting cash prizes linked to the current Toly Design Challenge whereby the students whose designs place first, second and third will be awarded €300, €200 and €100 respectively.

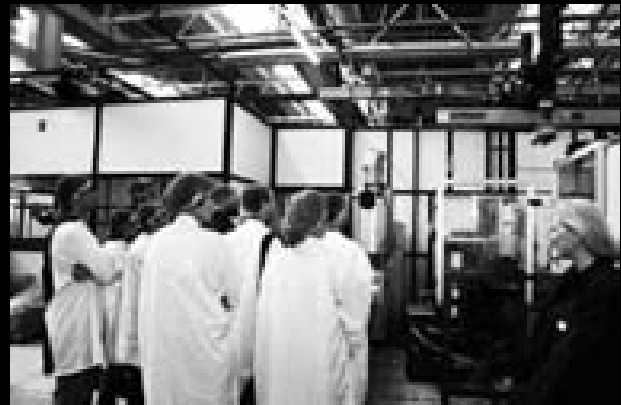
We are very pleased with the outcome of the current initiative, whereby students, as part of their course work, had to present innovative ideas and designs they believed would benefit the consumer in terms of application systems, second use or additional functions. A diverse range of concepts was submitted by the students. It is impressive to see the high calibre of innovative ideas and designing techniques demonstrated by these students, who were also encouraged to deliver presentations of their respective projects to the Toly officials. We were also pleased to note that the majority of the MCAST students participated in this assignment with a high level of commitment, registering for the e-catalogue of all Toly products to which the company gave them access and raising relevant queries throughout their visits to the Toly premises.

The current initiative is at the evaluation stage of each project, which will be marked in terms of research,

relevance to the brief, presentation and idea creativity.

At Toly, we are indeed happy to see such a wide array of projects and look forward to inviting the student who is awarded the first prize to join the Toly team for a 1-month internship in July 2011.

The Group also looks forward to start working with the Institute on the next initiatives relating to packaging, exhibition stands, brochure and website designs. Its experience in this collaboration has been very positive and commendable to any other business establishment having a firm belief that its responsibilities go beyond merely meeting its commitments to its customers but also to the communities in which its customers and indeed itself operate.



MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

THANK YOU MR. ZAHRA!

Mr Emmanuel Zahra's last day as Director of the Institute of Mechanical Engineering was the 18 May 2011. A thanksgiving mass was organised by staff and students at the Institute to celebrate his retirement. The mass was animated by a group of Mechanical Engineering students and staff under the direction of Angelo Borg.

Malcolm Sammut, a Higher National Diploma student, thanked Mr Zahra on behalf of all students for his dedication and patience during the past years. He said that every time he approached Mr. Zahra with a problem, he was always ready to listen and to give his support. Malcolm also assured him that he will be missed by the students and wished him a happy retirement.

After mass Mr. Zahra addressed the students for the last time. He said that even though he will not be missing work, he will certainly miss each individual. He gave each student a bookmark as a thank you token which contained two quotations: a quote on education by Henry Ford and a spiritual quote by Blessed John Paul II.

Mr. Zahra told the students that he has a lot of faith in young people and that he enjoys being in their company. He encouraged them not to be afraid or embarrassed to do what is good, whether at school or in everyday life. He also advised them to keep on learning as they are the ones who can bring about change to our society. Mr. Zahra thanked everyone for the support shown to him during the past eight years and asked those present to show the same support to the newly appointed Director, Aurelio Micallef Grimaud.

The staff at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering wishes to thank Mr. Zahra for the past eight years of service and support. We have learnt a lot from your valuable work experience. You were a true leader who guided us on the right path and with your assistance we were able to face problems with confidence. Your dedication and hard work have always been a motivation for all the staff. We all wish you a very happy retirement!



INDUSTRIAL VISITS

This academic year was a very busy one for lecturers at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering. Despite having a very tight lecturing timetable and intense career advancement commitments, lectures sought to give students the opportunity to experience theory as applied in practice through the organisation of several industrial visits to important manufacturing companies within the Maltese industry.

On the 13 April 2011, Ms Mariella Fenech, Mr Frank Farrugia and Mr Christopher

Gauci, Lecturers at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering, accompanied Higher National Diploma students to an industrial visit at Magro Brothers Ltd in Gozo. The students found the visit extremely interesting and had the opportunity to better understand and appreciate how automated production lines fit within the product production processes of several food products produced by Magro Brothers. They observed how



E.R.R.C abseiling event

the company enhanced its production efficiency by investing in high-end manufacturing technology and production process re-engineering throughout the years. Since the visit entailed a one-day visit in Gozo, lecturers took the opportunity to organise extracurricular activities. An abseiling session, held with the assistance of the Gozitan E.R.R.C abseiling group, contributed to the group's team building skills.

During the same month Higher National Diploma students visited the Simonds Farsons Cisk plc beverage production plant in Mriehel. Accompanied by Mr Keith Genius, the students toured the new brewery production plant and saw the production lines for the bottling of Cisk and Budweiser.

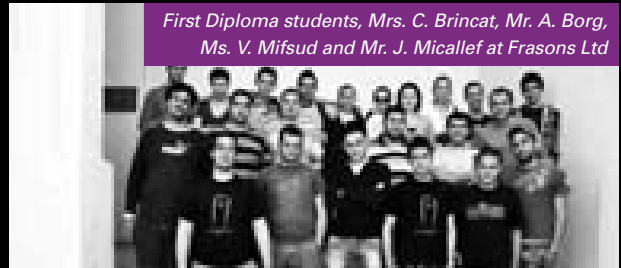
Mrs Claire Brincat together with Mr Angelo Borg, Ms Vanessa Mifsud and Mr Joe Micallef also organised a visit to Simonds Farsons Cisk plc for the First Diploma students at the Institute of Mechanical Engineering.



First Diploma students, Mrs. C. Brincat, Mr. A. Borg, Ms. V. Mifsud and Mr. J. Micallef at Frasons Ltd



HND 2 students, Mr. C. Gauci, Mr. F. Farrugia at Magro Brothers Ltd



First Diploma students, Mrs. C. Brincat, Mr. A. Borg, Ms. V. Mifsud and Mr. J. Micallef at Frasons Ltd

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING STUDENTS AND STAFF CONSTRUCT A PLAY AREA FOR A HOSPITAL IN TANZANIA

Mechanical Engineering members of staff, Mr Disma Azzopardi and Mr Andrew Micallef, together with the students designed and constructed a play area for the children at the Makiungu Hospital in Singida, Tanzania.

Makiungu Hospital caters for a population of about 400,000 inhabitants, a population which is spread out on a very vast area of land, mostly semi-desert. This hospital is run by the Medical Missionaries of Mary and among them is a Maltese Nun, Sister Maria Borda.

While in Malta Sister Maria Borda saw the play area and met the students that worked on it. She was extremely

appreciative and happy with what she saw and said that such a play area made by Maltese students made her proud to be Maltese. Sister Maria said the children of Makiungu would appreciate the play area and would spend many happy hours playing on it as this was something completely new for them. They are used to playing in the soil and climbing up trees but this play area would be a safer and better way for them to spend their spare time while undergoing treatment.



Play area designed and built by Mechanical Engineering students and staff

GOZO CENTRE

VOLUNTARY WORK INITIATIVES

On Monday 18 April 2011, students attending the MCAST Gozo Centres participated in a number of voluntary activities with a number of Gozitan philanthropic and non-profit making organizations.

A group of twenty-two students following ICT courses spent the day at the Arka Respite Centre in Għajnsielem where they were assigned a variety of tasks ranging from ICT-related work to maintenance works on wooden apertures and cleaning.

More than fifty other students volunteered to carry out maintenance work at different heritage sites managed by Wirt Għawdex. At Mgarr ix-Xini Tower, a group of twenty students along with two lecturers performed several hours of maintenance work required to keep the place in good shape. Large areas of grass were cut, raked and cleared while wooden doors, windows, stair-railings and even the drawbridge were sanded, cleaned and re-painted. Another group of fifteen students and two lecturers spent the day at different sites on the Cittadella, namely the Gunpowder Magazine, the Battery, Silos and WWII shelters. The sites were swept and weeded out. Other students sanded

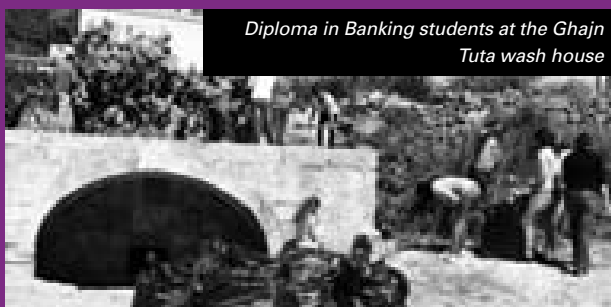
down a number of items and prepared them for painting. Eventually, doors, gates, cannons, cannon-carriages and cannon-balls were painted. Two other lecturers accompanied a group of thirteen students to Kercem where they were assigned to join other Wirt Għawdex volunteers to clean up the Għajn Tuta wash-house. The group collected and separated the rubbish that had accumulated in the area for the past year, removed invasive weeds and vegetation, including a large amount of prickly pear shrubs that were weighing down the roof of the old wash-house. In all, the group removed seventeen large bags of artificial and natural vegetative waste. This initiative was organized in collaboration with the Kercem Local Council.

On the same day, another group of students and staff donated blood at the Blood Donation Unit of the Gozo General Hospital.

On another separate initiative, on Saturday 7 May 2011, a group of hairdressing students volunteered to carry out hairdressing services organized at the Duke Shopping Complex in Victoria as part of a programme of fund-raising activities in aid of Puttinu Cares.



Gabrielle Azzopardi performing laundry work at the Arka Respite Centre



Diploma in Banking students at the Ghajn Tuta wash house



First Diploma in Care students performing maintenance works on the Mgarr ix-Xini Tower



National Diploma Networking students cleaning the windows at Arka Respite Centre



Two Foundation students cleaning the cannons at the Cittadella

SPORTS DAY AT THE GOZO CENTRE

The Gozo Centre Annual Sports Day was held on Friday 8 April 2011 at the Gozo Seminary gym. A programme of different sports activities and games was prepared by lecturers Joseph Cefai, Victor Saliba and Victoria Sultana in collaboration with Adele Muscat, MCAST Sports Co-ordinator, and some of her students. Students and staff were actively involved in the event. The programme included football, handball, billiards and table-tennis tournaments as well as a variety of fun games including a sack-race and a tug-of-war competition.

Students were also invited to join in gym sessions during the day under the supervision of a gym instructor. A number of lecturers were keen to demonstrate their athletic prowess and everyone enjoyed the event. In fact, the Annual Sports Day gives students and staff the opportunity to interrelate in a totally different and relaxed environment. Throughout this annual sports day, the Gozo Centre tries to develop an appreciation of concepts of fair play, sportsmanship, self-discipline and respect for rules, together with an understanding of the importance of exercise in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

MCAST STUDENT COUNCIL

Student Council visit European Parliament

by Christian Calleja

We have all heard a lot about the European Union in Brussels and all wondered what really goes on in there! The MCAST Student Council organised a three-day visit to Belgium in order to get a good overview of the European Parliament and how it works.

With the help of the European Multiplier Scheme a group of 30 students had the opportunity to visit Belgium. It was not the first time for MCAST students to participate in such trips, yet it was the first time that the visit was organised by the MCAST Student Council. The group left Malta on 3 May 2011 and stayed at a little village called Wavre, just outside Brussels.

On the morning of 4 May 2011 the group visited Brussels Central and spent a whole day attending meetings and viewing some of the most important venues of the European Union. The group first visited the European Parliament where they were welcomed by Mr Ryan Meilak. Mr Meilak gave an informative presentation about the structure and purpose of the European Parliament and how legislation and important decisions are handled throughout the EU system. The group also had the opportunity to meet Maltese MEP Mr Louis Grech who gave a very interesting briefing about his experience and his role as MEP.

The students also visited the famous round parliament and also got the chance to visit Dar Malta which is not very far from the Parliament. They were given some information about the function of Dar Malta and also its purpose in Brussels. From there they went to the Commission where they were introduced to the role of the Commission and Commissioners by Maltese staff who work there. Commissioner John Dalli also took some of his time to meet the students.

The students also found time to visit a Natural History Museum, the Grand Place and other locations of interest.

The whole group was extremely satisfied with this visit to Brussels. The Student Council strongly suggests that students do not miss out on these kinds of opportunities as they provide students with knowledge, understanding and an awareness of what is happening around them.



CHILD CARE CENTRE

MAGIC WONDERS CELEBRATES ITS SECOND ANNIVERSARY



This year the MCAST Child Care Centre, Magic Wonders, celebrated its second anniversary. To mark this occasion the Centre organised a sing-song performance by the children attending. This was held on 9 May 2011 in the presence of MCAST staff and the children's parents.

Following the party, the children sang and mimicked their well-known songs with great enthusiasm and cheer whilst

wearing their second anniversary party hats. Upon finishing, each child blew a kiss to their parents and presented a small bunch of flowers to their mothers. The celebration then proceeded with the children blowing out the candle and cutting the Magic Wonders Child Care Centre's birthday cake.

The Centre is satisfied with what it has achieved so far. The number of children attending has more than doubled over the last year whilst attention and personal care for each child has remained constant. The introduction of child-minding sessions held during the afternoons has also been a success.

The dedicated, qualified and experienced child care staff work hard to help children reach their full potential socially, emotionally and mentally through fun organised activities and games.

This July the Centre is setting up its first Summer Club for children and toddlers. Summer activities will include water and sand play, outings, colouring and painting, cooking, various crafts, face painting, puppet shows, physical education activities and games, music and much more.

Those interested in booking their children for the Summer Club kindly contact Magic Wonders Child Care Centre on 23987370 between 08:00 hrs and 16:30 hrs or e-mail magic.wonders@mcast.edu.mt.



Ms Irene Bugeja, Administration Manager and Ms Sandra Darmanin cutting the cake



Children attending Magic Wonders Child Care Centre

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

LEARNING SUPPORT UNIT



An Introduction to Paired Reading by Elaine Mifsud Scicluna B.Ed. (Hons.), M.A., LSU Senior Lecturer

“Reading is about understanding written texts. It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought.”

(Bernhardt et al., 2003)

The aim of teaching students to read is not simply to provide them with the skills required for reading basic material, but also to provide students with the skills necessary to engage in activities that involve reading as a means of attaining other goals (Garton & Pratt, 1992). The reading issue has now gained local importance, especially since the publication of the National Policy for the Attainment of Core Competences in Primary Education (January 2009). The importance of reading and literacy in adults is well documented and amongst others, the PIAAC (The Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies) states that literacy is an indispensable tool for adults as it opens up several opportunities.

“Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.” (PIACC, 2003)

The National Standards (UK) describe adult literacy as the ‘ability to read and write and speak in English at a level necessary to function at work and in society in general’. (DFES, 2001)

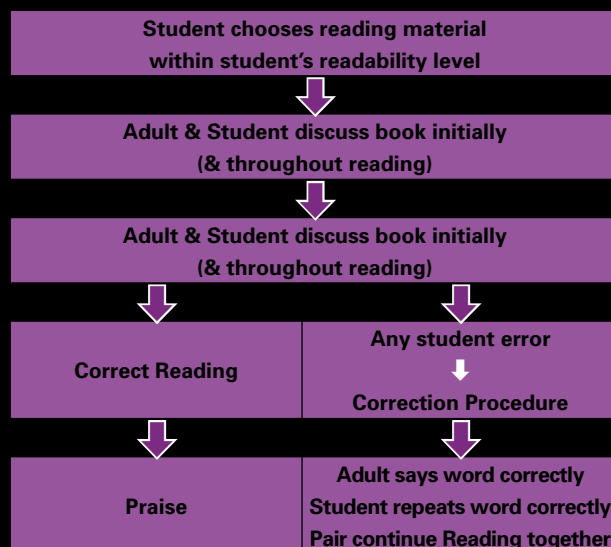
Literacy is one of the principal goals of education and also one of the principal means by which it is carried out. It could be conceived of as simply reading and writing, but is often defined in a more complex way. A number of authors and organisations have put forward ideas to better comprehend literacy.

Ongoing discussions on the subject are a continuous issue nowadays. Various leading local experts argue about the effectiveness or otherwise of current methods with alternative methods utilising the ‘literacy whole’ approach in our particular setting. The whole language approach highlights the importance that reading should be taught without breaking language down into smaller units (Susan et al. 1999).

What is Paired Reading ?

Paired Reading is a straightforward and enjoyable way to help readers develop better reading skills. A 'buddy' or reading friend and a student read the text simultaneously. The reading friend needs to be at a higher reading level than the student. The 'buddy' encourages the student to read 'little and often'. The student has the facility to select reading material which is of intrinsic interest to him. An essential element of a literacy programme is the need of reading to students every single day, several times a day. Reading to students is one of the most researched and proven practices for developing literacy (Krashen 2001; Stanovich, 2000). This is one of the reasons the author introduced Paired Reading at MCAST. A main aim of these sessions is to encourage students with reading difficulties to carry on reading. It is very important that students read, reread, and share and discuss ideas about their reading. Paired Reading follows a series of steps which are illustrated in the figure.

Paired Reading Flowchart (adapted from Topping, 1995)



Topping (1995) argues that there are various benefits from Paired Reading. It is not only improvement in reading comprehension, accuracy and fluency which takes place, but the students develop a better attitude towards reading and also improve their self-esteem. At the end of such a course, any positive attitude should be acknowledged by some reward which should act as a positive reinforcement during the Paired Reading Programme. An important feature of the Paired Reading method is that it increases the amount of practice in reading whilst ensuring that this practice is positive and successful. Paired Reading is likely to free the struggling reader from laborious decoding thus enabling other reading strategies to come into play. This is one of the factors which makes Paired Reading such a positive experience. Paired Reading has also been shown

to help develop fluency. Fluency includes: rate, accuracy, phrasing, melody and expression (Strecker, Roser and Martinez, 1998). A student who reads fluently decodes text quickly and automatically. In actual fact, researchers maintain that the ultimate aim of reading instruction is that students become fluent readers (Morrow, 2005).

Locally, not much research has been carried out on Paired Reading. Scicluna (2010) carried out mixed method research on young students and results indicate general positive improvement in reading and better attitudes towards the reading process from children, parents and tutors. The following table shows the improvement registered by the students after the Paired Reading Programme.

	Student 1 before	Student 1 after	Student 2 before	Student 2 after	Student 3 before	Student 3 after	Student 4 before	Student 4 after
Reading Words	98	136	99	139	85	121	98	136
Reading Level	7	17	8	18	4	12	7	17
Reading Words	98	136	99	139	85	121	98	136
Reading Level	7	17	8	18	4	12	7	17
Reading Words	98	136	99	139	85	121	98	136
Reading Level	7	17	8	18	4	12	7	17
Reading Words	98	136	99	139	85	121	98	136
Reading Level	7	17	8	18	4	12	7	17
Reading Words	98	136	99	139	85	121	98	136
Reading Level	7	17	8	18	4	12	7	17
Reading Words	98	136	99	139	85	121	98	136
Reading Level	7	17	8	18	4	12	7	17

MCAST Pilot Study

The Paired Reading Programme has been adapted for MCAST students and will be piloted with four different classes from Levels 1 and 2 within the Institutes of Mechanical Engineering, Electrical and Electronics Engineering and Community Services. The tutor has identified 5 students as non-readers and another 7 students have been identified as 'at risk'. Therefore the project started with 12 students. The Paired Reading Programme was adjusted for the age group and is geared towards non-readers and readers at risk. The initial assessment was based on internationally acceptable reading tests including the PM benchmark testing kits. Students were grouped according to similar Reading Levels. The Paired Reading Programme is being run intensively and on a daily basis. It was launched on 16 March 2011. Students have a 30-minute session of reading together with their tutor in a group of not more than 3 students. Students choose the reading material during the session and are expected to keep

a reading record in their Paired Reading Diary. They were assessed before the programme, and will be assessed also at the end of the course to trace any progress.

The data and experiences from the pilot project will be continuously monitored and evaluated and eventually used to better fine tune the programme to the needs of MCAST students in subsequent Learning Support Unit programmes.



MCAST LEVEL 1 AND LEVEL 2 STUDENTS BY NADIA MARIA VASSALLO, LSU SENIOR LECTURER

B.ED (HONS), MA LITERACY & LANGUAGE (SHEFFIELD), PG DIP. DYSLEXIA & LITERACY (YORK), AMBDA

Students following Level 1 and Level 2 courses at MCAST have different academic abilities and needs. There are various reasons why they opted for MCAST to further their studies; some chose MCAST because they wanted to have another go at education whilst others chose MCAST due to the vocational nature of courses.

Whatever the reason for them being at MCAST, they need to use the time spent at College to develop and improve their academic and vocational skills in order to find employment. Lecturers need to address students' organisational, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. These skills can only develop if the students begin to acknowledge and appreciate their own abilities. In order to do this they need a system that moves away from the rigid/formal methods of teaching to a system that takes the students' academic background into consideration.

Students that embark on Levels 1 and 2 would have fared very poorly on the initial assessment tests carried out prior to the beginning of the course, however this does not mean that they are clean slates. On the contrary, when a relationship of trust between the students and their teacher is established, they begin to show more interest and both their motivation and their self-esteem increase. Assigning a mentor (lecturer) to the student will yield positive results.

It is important that the students understand the relevance in what they do. This is why the system should be different from Secondary Schools. Some students were alienated and lost within a system that focused mainly on reading and writing. MCAST provides students with both the practical aspect of subjects as well as the academic side.

It is also important that methods of assessment truly gauge the students' development and improvement. Time can be an

important factor to determine whether the students succeed or fail. One must keep in mind that students following Levels 1 and 2 try to patch up and fill in the gaps that were missing during the eleven years of schooling. As mentioned earlier students have different needs, so the syllabus and the scheme of work should be flexible and negotiated with the students throughout the year. This would ensure that the teaching meets the students' needs and not the other way around.

Another important factor that could improve teaching and the students' learning the availability of technological resources which could be used by Learning Support Unit staff and students. It is very disturbing for students to learn in inadequate rooms and work on outdated computers.

In conclusion:

- Students following Levels 1 and 2 courses need to be respected and understood
- Students' strengths and backgrounds should be regarded as a starting point
- Students need to be included in the negotiation of topics and issues regarding their teaching
- Methods of teaching and assessment should not be a replica of Secondary Schools which focus solely on writing but make use of other modes including the use of technology
- A mentor who supports them throughout the course could be useful to help them settle in as quickly as possible
- Students should be given the right support to develop their organisational, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills.

When students are empowered their sense of belonging will increase and they will be more likely to successfully complete the course. In turn this will impact their motivation and their achievement and eventually their self-esteem.

LEARNING SUPPORT UNIT AT THE FOREFRONT OF PROVIDING SUPPORT SERVICES AT ALL LEVELS

A FIRST DIPLOMA FOCUS

BY SANDRA MARY PORTELLI, LEARNING SUPPORT UNIT LECTURER B.A.
HONOURS UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, P.G.C.E. UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

I have been working at MCAST since 2004. Throughout my career at MCAST the Learning Support Unit has prided itself on offering support to students following courses at different Institutes and on different levels including Foundation, First Diploma as well as the higher levels. Even students enrolled on higher level courses, including National Diploma and Higher National Diploma, have requested assistance. My experience at providing support has been a very fruitful one and I have the pleasure that I have helped them as they mature into young women and men with careers and bright futures ahead.

The first year at MCAST is quite a challenging one for students. This is because students are still getting used to what it means to be attending College where lecturers' expectations are more than they expected. For the majority of students at MCAST this is a natural process and students adjust to lecturers' expectations. Unfortunately it can be a stressful and uncomfortable process for some and this is where our services are needed.

It is for those students still finding their way, who have not quite grasped the skills to research and write assignments simply based on lecturers' notes, or for those who find it hard to research material and put information into their own words, that the Learning Support Unit provides its services.

Providing assistance to First Diploma students is not always a matter of grammar and spelling tips. Typical Learning Support sessions include referencing skills or training for

job interviews. My favourite types of lectures are practical sessions performing role play and creative writing tasks that help learners with team building and thinking skills. Introducing learners to fun and challenging web sites is also a must in my lecturing methodology.

Communication and fluency are often assessed in the English lecture room as small groups are provided with individual attention and prompting throughout the session. Individuals can also be given one-to-one sessions as needed by our team of Learning Support Assistants (LSAs).

Students at this level can reap a lot of benefits from LSU support and it can make or break many students' motivation, drive and ambition to carry on in their chosen career path. I have seen young people make decisions that helped them change their career path and move on to make different career choices. However making those career choices based on a well thought out plan is far better than making a quick decision just to get out of "all that writing!"

I have seen time and time again students who have benefited from the smaller lecture groups, individual attention and that extra push in the right direction that is so valued by the individuals who knock on the LSU doors.

No matter how difficult the road ahead appears to be, the lecturers of the Learning Support Unit and the team of LSAs are here to help individual learners reach their goals.



INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES OFFICE

AGRIBUSINESS STUDENTS IN ITALY

Jolene Falzon and Janika Vella, two students enrolled at the Agribusiness Institute, were chosen to undergo a three-week work placement in Copertino, Italy between the 15 January and 5 February 2011. Both students had the opportunity to experience two different work places. In the morning they worked in a sanctuary which homes injured and abandoned dogs, and in the evening in a dairy/cattle and sheep farm.

While working at the sanctuary the students had the opportunity to assist the vet while neutering, castrating and treating animals against certain diseases. The students also had the chance to help the vet conduct operations. During the rest of the week, the students helped the owner of the sanctuary by feeding, cleaning, medicating the dogs and taking care of the puppies. The students also had the opportunity to rescue and treat the dogs' emergency cases.

On the other hand, while on the farm, the students were responsible to milk the dairy cows, teat dip after milking to prevent any infections, feed the cows and sterilise the milking equipment for the new born calves. They also had the opportunity to see how the Italian cheese and ricotta are made and tasted this mouth-watering cheese. Moreover, the farmer was very helpful as he explained about the daily use of a computer programme used to manage the farm.

In their free time, they went around Copertino and various other cities in the region including Porto Cesareo and the nearby city of Gallipoli. They also visited Napoli which was a four-hour drive away from Copertino. During one

of the weekends they visited a wildlife centre of injured exotic animals which are released back in the wild upon recovery. This was an excellent and unique experience for the Agribusiness students as they had the chance to come across some exotic animals.



Janika Vella feeding the dogs in Italy



Janika Vella together with her Italian colleague at the home for abandoned animals



Jolene Marie Falzon assisting an Italian vet during a dog operation



Jolene Marie Falzon and Janika Vella feeding cows in a cattle farm in Italy

ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERING STUDENTS IN BELGIUM

Electrical and Electronics Engineering and Mechanical Engineering students Juan García, Simone Grech, Aaron

Cutajar and Mark Azzopardi carried out a three-week training placement in Belgium.

Juan and Simone inside the premises of Punch Power Train together with Belgian colleagues



Juan and Simone, MCAST Electrical Engineering students together with Punch Power Train colleagues in Belgium





Visiting MCAST Engineering students in Belgium. From left to right: Aaron Cutajar, Juan Sarcia, Malise Chetcuti, Simone Grech, Mark Anthony Azzopardi and Sandra Bellizzi.

COMMUNITY SERVICES STUDENTS IN HARDENBERG, NETHERLANDS

Two students from the Institute of Community Services, Malise Chetcuti and Sandra Bellizzi, following the BTEC National Diploma in Health and Social Care, followed a three-week work experience in the Netherlands funded through the Leonardo Da Vinci programme. They left the islands on the 30 January and returned on the 20 February 2011. Preparation was quite a hectic period alongside all the other course requirements, so it was not easy to leave the country in such a short time span.

The placement involved a three-week work experience in a pre-school with children aged between two and four years. Although communication at the placement was quite difficult due to language barrier, they overcame this language barrier by using facial expressions and gestures. They were also helped by the other care workers. Moreover, the Dutch care workers managed to teach the Maltese students important Dutch vocabulary to better communication skills, while they

also tried to involve them a lot and translate in English where necessary. Apart from the language difference, the Maltese students were amazed at the different environment and the use of wooden educational toys for children.

Apart from the work experience, the students had the opportunity to attend lectures concerning their area of study at ALFA College. This provided the opportunity to meet fellow Dutch students and observe differences in the mentality and learning environment.

On a cultural note, both students managed to enjoy their free time exploring the land of bikes, tulips and windmills. They visited the capital city Amsterdam and they even managed to spend their last weekend in Tongeren, Belgium, where another group of MCAST students were following their placement at the time.

BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING STUDENTS IN AUSTRIA

Between the 6 and 26 February 2011 two Building and Construction Engineering students, Massimo Polidano and Louis Grima, were chosen to follow a three-week work placement in Pinkafeld, Austria.

Both students worked in an office and produced detailed CAD drawings from sketches. These drawings included several details like scale, doors and windows indications, sanitary accessories, kitchen layouts, hatching etc. The students then had to insert the address and indicate the area of each room as well as the area of a whole apartment. They also had the opportunity to go onsite and measure certain buildings in order to be able to produce missing parts of the plan.



In their free time, they went around Pinkafeld by bikes that were provided by the hostel. Skiing was also included in their schedule of weekend activities. A visit to Vienna could not be missed, as well as, and nevertheless an afternoon at one of Austria's largest shopping complexes, the EO in Oberwart. During the last weekend, they had some free time and travelled to Bratislava, Slovakia. This was an adventure for the students since they had to use several means of transport including train, double-decker bus and underground tram.



ART AND DESIGN STUDENTS IN GERMANY

"I have been impressed with the urgency of doing. Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough; we must do." Leonardo da Vinci

It is appropriate to open with one of Leonardo da Vinci's quotes. Two students from the Institute of Art and Design had the opportunity to be part of the student mobility placements under the Leonardo da Vinci Programme.

Annabel Cutajar and Ezekiel Vassallo were assigned to follow their work experience mobility in Recklinghausen, a west-northern city in Germany. The two students had the advantage to experience two different work placements.

Annabel Cutajar's first placement was working with advertising agency 'Archie Design'. Annabel's work consisted of producing advertisements using particular software to create different kinds of texts and design, cutting texts using plotters and other elaborated machines for graphic artworks. Additionally, she was also into the process of foil digital printing of films.

Ezekiel Vassallo had the opportunity to carry out his first placement with the company 'Rick's Werbung' providing a vast advertising and printing service. Ezekiel was involved in working on various sites to service marketing boards with repairs and additional materials, produce artistic material and other adverts for the company's own shop/showroom windows, helping out to lay filming material and tinting films to body cars and windscreens, assisted in the printing and finishing process of banners and was also using certain programmes for photo manipulation and editing.

Both Annabel's and Ezekiel's second placement was with a company called 'Typovilla' located in Marl. They were assigned on different work which consisted of gathering research information of a particular company's corporate image so that an analysis is projected to enable them to create a more effective image. Other works were on DTP for digital devices, working with source code, quality checking of programmes and also using programmes appropriate for the job.

During the three-week work placement, these two students enjoyed visiting Oberhausen, Marl and Dortmund.



Katherina Hensel at MCAST

MY INTERNSHIP AT MCAST BY KATHERINA HENSEL

My internship at MCAST started on 11 April 2011. I was welcomed by Mr. Robert Cassar, Career Adviser, who gave my friends and I a brief overview of MCAST. This was followed by a tour of the whole campus. It was interesting to learn about MCAST, the Maltese education system and the differences compared to the German education system.

At first I was a bit nervous to work in Malta due to my blond hair and fair skin. I thought that everyone would treat me differently. But when Mr Cassar showed me round the classrooms everyone was very friendly and I therefore did not feel like a stranger any longer.

I also felt very welcome while working at the MCAST Administration Block. My colleagues were helpful and friendly and did their best to make me feel at home. I had the opportunity to work on various clerical tasks including photocopying, scanning and updating databases. It was interesting to note differences between the Maltese and

German work cultures. For example it is acceptable to wear jeans and t-shirts at office in Germany yet this was not acceptable at MCAST.

During the second week of our stay we were invited to participate during mass on the occasion of Our Lady of Sorrows. There were also differences in the way the mass is celebrated. Mass in Germany is rather boring compared to mass in Malta.

During the beginning of our stay we encountered communication problems as our English was not so good. Yet our English improved during our stay. We also learnt several words in Maltese and also several Maltese traditions. In our free time we visited several museums and also attended the Good Friday processions.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the MCAST staff and students for their hospitality.

COUNSELLING UNIT

The Counselling Unit contributes to the well-being of the students in a number of ways, amongst which are the seminars that are held throughout the year. These seminars cover a variety of themes and target different audiences.

SEMINAR FOR MARITIME STUDENTS - OIC PHASE 1

Between the 23 and 25 March 2011 the Counselling Unit organised the annual seminar for Maritime students following the OIC Phase 1 Course. This year it was spread over three days. The first day was held at the Maritime Institute and the following two days at Fort Madalena in Madliena.

Students following the OIC Phase 1 Course embark on vessels for a year of ocean experience as part of their intensive training in preparation for their future careers as 'Officers-In-Charge'. This ocean experience demands a high level of self-control and independence from the students, having to live without family and loved ones, sports activities, entertainment as well as without a number of simple 'daily luxuries' such as internet access and use of mobiles. To help them better understand what the experience is like, two students who have just returned from their year at sea were invited to share their own experience and gave tips for easier adjustment. The rest of the time was spent on awareness of each individual's particular needs and ways on how to prepare for such a separation. Through team-building exercises the students also strengthened their solidarity which will serve as support to each other. Notwithstanding the above, the positive aspects of these experiences, including the opportunity to visit different countries, were also mentioned.

A note of thanks goes to the St John Rescue Corps for providing the use of Fort Madalena, the training school of this organisation.



Group session – OIC Phase 1 Maritime students



Self-awareness Session – Kris Debono and Shaun Ciantar

OFFICER CADETS THAT WISH TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE COUNSELLORS CAN EMAIL THEM ON THE FOLLOWING ADDRESSES:

SILVIA.GALEA@MCAST.EDU.MT

MARTHESE.VASSALLO@MCAST.EDU.MT

COUNSELLORS@MCAST.EDU.MT

SEMINAR FOR STUDENTS AT THE INSTITUTE OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

While at College students are introduced to the world of work and the demands associated with it. In order to prepare students for this new challenge in their lives, the Counselling Unit organised a seminar which addresses these concerns.

The seminar focused on where the individual stands vis-à-vis one's private life and work. Should the employer intrude in one's private life, family, relationships, weekend parties, sexual behaviour and alcohol intake? An impulsive answer to this question would be a sheer NO, yet at a second glance it is an employee's duty to act responsibly at the workplace with colleagues and also within society as an adult. These and other similar issues were tackled throughout the day. The students' voice was given its deserved attention during this seminar and Counsellors gave their input on the different topics mentioned, whilst highlighting both the negative and positive consequences of one's choices.

Thanks goes to the Maritime Institute for providing the use of Villa Portelli.

SEMINAR ON THE COUNSELLING SERVICE FOR MEMBERS OF STAFF

On 13 April 2011, for the third consecutive year, the Counselling Unit organised a seminar on the Counselling Service for Institute Directors and their members of staff. The Counselling Unit coordinated this event together with the Institute of Building and Construction Engineering.

Lecturing staff work closely with the students and often come across situations of concern for them. The lecturer's attitude and intervention with the student has an impact on the implicit curriculum from which the student learns about himself and how others see him thus influencing one's global self-concept. Research has shown that low self-esteem hampers academic achievement. During the seminar the Counsellors offered lecturers their professional advice on alternative ways of dealing with students in order for them to successfully progress in both their professional and personal lives.

During this seminar a description of the work of the Counsellor in an educational setting, particularly at MCAST, was presented. Following this a number of case studies were discussed in a workshop setting and later evaluated within the whole group. Counsellors also provided information about how to refer students to the counselling service.

The cooperation of the Directors and staff from the relevant Institutes contributed to the success of these seminars. One must not fail to mention the constant support from Mr. John Bartolo, Director Information and Student Support Services, and all colleagues from the same department.



STUDENT 2 STUDENT NETWORK

The Student 2 Student Network is an initiative of the Counselling Unit which aims to train students to offer help and support to other students while on Campus. These students have voluntarily attended a 30-hour course in their free time to enhance their listening skills and their ability to be of help and service to fellow students. This is the third consecutive year that the counselling service has organized this type of course as part of the services of the Student Support Service. This course is being requested by an increasing number of students.

The programme covers various helping skills and includes topics like attentive listening, empathy, attending to peers who are going through a rough time, awareness regarding issues of suicide ideation and addiction, relationship problems etc. Students are taught to identify situations where they can be of help to others and when they need to seek help for their colleagues through referring to the College Counsellors.

Although the main aim of this course is to engage students to help others, skills learnt from this course can be used to enhance personality development of course participants and therefore students taking up the course tend to gain on both counts.

Students' participation is deservedly acknowledged by a certificate of attendance and participation. In these past three years, this certificate award ceremony has been held in the Principal's board room indicating the appreciation of

MCAST for students who are willing to involve themselves in building an empowering and caring student community.

These kind of student networks exist in a variety of different educational settings as research acknowledges the effectiveness of students helping their peers in a variety of ways. Our programme was adapted from that of Trinity College, Ireland. College Counsellors are aware of the contextual differences and leave room for creating diverse opportunities as to where the course can be applied and where students who have undertaken the course can offer their services. In fact this year a group of students have taken the initiative to offer help and act as mentors to Foundation students. Another group of students worked on creating a facebook page and are also working on website information. Two students have participated in the inauguration of a new youth agency – Agenzija Žgħażaġħ and another two were involved in issues as diverse as the sustainability of pensions in the future and problems that youths are facing at this moment in time.

The future of the Student 2 Student network looks bright. It is envisaged that as more students enrol on this programme and as more students gain experience working in this network, the network will establish itself as part and parcel of college life. Students helping in this network are supervised by the MCAST Counsellors thus assuring that the students offering their help are well supported and cared for.

THE COUNSELLING SERVICE IS ALSO OPEN TO MEMBERS OF STAFF. FOR APPOINTMENTS KINDLY EMAIL:

SILVIA.GALEA@MCAST.EDU.MT

MARTHESE.VASSALLO@MCAST.EDU.MT

COUNSELLORS@MCAST.EDU.MT

SPORTS DEPARTMENT SPORTS DAY 2011

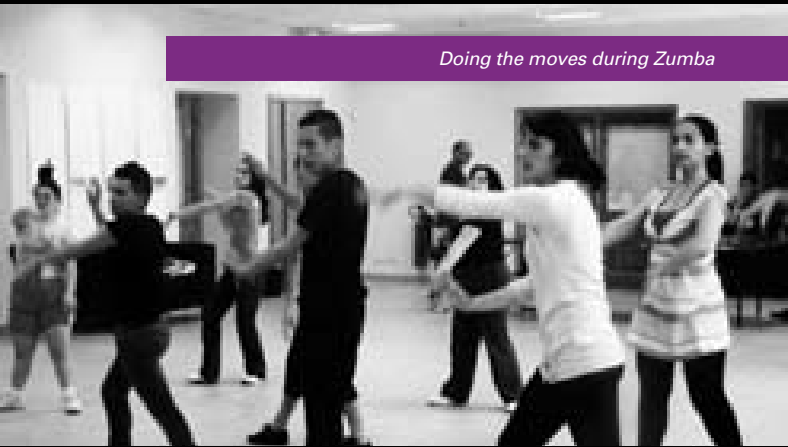
This year Sports Day was held on the 6 May 2011. The sport activities were very varied and included amongst others football, bocci, fun games, aerial ropeway, boxing, zumba, hip hop, chess, billiards, table-tennis, tennis, volleyball, dodgeball, athletics, fittest male/female on campus and more. This was a great opportunity for students and staff to mingle, have fun and try a different sport. The most popular sport was football with 30 teams participating. Other sports with a good turnout included basketball, volleyball, billiards, tennis and table-tennis. Thanks goes to all those who helped out including the Armed Forces of Malta, the Malta Boxing Federation, the Malta Cricket Federation, MEHFA, Jungle Fever, Malta Outdoors, LaserTag Malta and Hip Hop.



Institute of Building and Construction Engineering staff team



Dodgeball was popular



Doing the moves during Zumba



Winners and runners up of the football tournament



Females tryout boxing too



Director John Sciberras proud of his gold medal



Weight-lifting



Louis Sciberras and Alexander Farrugia during a chess game



Learning self-defence techniques

ROUND GOZO 2011

This year the Round Gozo Trek was held once again over three days during the month of April. Participants had to trek with a backpack including all their belongings for 3 days and camp overnight. It was a very enjoyable though tiring activity for all those present!





WOMEN'S DAY RUN

This March 2011 the Women's Commission within the Maltese Olympic Committee once again organised the

Women's Day Run. MCAST students and staff members participated in this activity held at Marsascala.



SUMMER ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

A number of adventure activities are planned as usual for the summer months. Those students interested in trying their hand at sports such as sailing, windsurfing, canoeing, trekking, camping, climbing, abseiling and more are to contact the Sports Co-ordinator at adele.muscat@mcast.edu.mt.

BOXING AT MCAST

Boxing sessions are being held every Tuesday at 12:30 hrs for all MCAST students and staff at the old gym. These are being conducted by coach and secretary of the Malta Boxing Federation, Marc James. All those interested in the sport are welcome to join in.

KARATE AT MCAST

Karate is also being held every Tuesday at the old gym at 13:30 hrs. Sessions are conducted by 3rd year sports student Darren Bezzina. All those interested can just turn up.

ZUMBA AT MCAST

This is being conducted for all staff and students on Thursdays at 17:00 hrs at the gym in Corradino in collaboration with FunFitFriends. Everyone is welcome to join in.

TRAINING FOR TAXI DRIVERS



TAXI DRIVER AND AREA KNOWLEDGE CERTIFICATE (TDAKC)

Course Fee: €195 – New Taxi Driving Licence: Initial Qualification

For enquiries, applications and more information please contact:

**Office of Part Time Courses,
MCAST Gateway to Industry,
Administration Building,
MCAST Main Campus,
Corradino Hill, Paola.**

Telephone:

2398 7103, 2398 7116, 2398 7219, 2398 7220.

Email:

mg2i@mcast.edu.mt

Online Applications:

www.mcastshortcourses.gov.mt

**TRANSPORT MALTA
APPROVED COURSE**





FULL-TIME COURSES 2011/12

MCAST
MALTA COLLEGE of ARTS, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) will be receiving NEW Applications for full-time courses as follows:

Dates	Applicants with Surname starting with letters	Time
Monday 25 July 2011	A – B	08:30 – 12:30
Tuesday 26 July 2011	C – F	08:30 – 12:30
Wednesday 27 July 2011	G – P	08:30 – 12:30
Thursday 28 July 2011	Q – Z	08:30 – 12:30

Further Information :

- 1) Applicants who cannot present their application on the above dates may apply on Friday 29 July 2011 between 08:30 hrs and 12:30 hrs
- 2) Applicants who will be abroad between 25 and 29 July have to submit their application before these dates at the Registrar's Office, Room 113, Administration Block, MCAST Main Campus, Paola. The airline ticket must be shown as a proof that the Applicant will be abroad.
- 3) Applicants who wish to apply for courses held in Malta and who, during the week of Receipt of Applications are residing in Gozo, may submit their application at the MCAST Gozo Centre, Xagħra.
- 4) Applicants may ask another person to present their application as long as the application is signed by the Applicant and all the necessary documents are attached to the application. The person presenting an application in the name of another person must also present his/her ID Card.
- 5) Applications without all the necessary documents and entry requirements will not be accepted.
- 6) Foreign Applicants have to submit their Application at the Registrar's Office, Room 112, Administration Block, MCAST Main Campus, Paola.
- 7) Application Form A is to be filled in by those applicants who were not students at MCAST in 2010/11 and by those who wish to restart a course.

Venues where to apply :

Agribusiness courses	Institute of Agribusiness, Triq Hal Luqa, Qormi
Art & Design courses	Institute of Art and Design, Targa Gap, Mosta
Building & Construction Engineering courses	Institute of Building & Construction Engineering, Triq il-Kbira, Naxxar
Business & Commerce courses	Institute of Business & Commerce, MCAST Main Campus, Corradino Hill, Paola
Community Services/Applied Science courses	Institute of Community Services, MCAST Main Campus, Corradino Hill, Paola
Electrical & Electronics Engineering courses	Institute of Electrical & Electronics Engineering, MCAST Main Campus, Corradino Hill, Paola
Gozo Centre courses	Gozo Centre – Xagħra, 132, Triq it-Tigrija, Xagħra
ICT courses	Institute of Information & Communication Technology, MCAST Main Campus, Corradino Hill, Paola
Maritime courses	Maritime Institute, Villa Portelli, Marina Street, Kalkara
Mechanical Engineering courses	Institute of Mechanical Engineering, MCAST Main Campus, Corradino Hill, Paola

Method of Application

All Applicants must fill in the official Application Form A (in triplicate) and submit it together with the following documents:

- **Original Certificates** (or Result slips) + photocopies
- **Original School Leaving Certificate** + photocopy
- **Valid ID Card** + photocopy of both sides. Applicants in possession of a 14+ or 16+ ID Card must make sure that it is not expired.