A message from the Principal
Sue Taylor

“Welcome to our new look newsletter for the Ribble Valley. Please let us know what you think of it! I am delighted to take up my new role as Principal of the College this term, and have grand plans for our work in the Ribble Valley.

Over the past year or two, we have been working quietly with a range of partners in the Ribble Valley, to build a vibrant and exciting range of programmes for our Ribble Valley residents. This is going from strength to strength, and we currently deliver education and training programmes to around 600 young people and adults at locations in the Ribble Valley. This termly newsletter gives a flavour of some of our activities, and celebrates the fantastic achievements of some of our Ribble Valley learners.

We would love to hear from you with your ideas on how we can continue to improve our Ribble Valley offer. We look forward to hearing from you!”

Students help Michelin starred Chef Lisa Allen bring her menu to life

Students from Accrington & Rossendale College’s Catering Department got a life-changing opportunity when Michelin starred Chef Lisa Allen took over the kitchen at Eatery 1853 for the day and taught them how to bring one of her fantastic menus to life.

Lisa, who is Head Chef at Northcote in Langho and who has successfully appeared on the Great British Menu spent the day at the College’s Eatery 1853 teaching the catering students the techniques and skills needed to cook her menu.

Lisa said, “I’m really impressed with this group. There are some really enthusiastic young chefs here, some who had already done a shift and volunteered to come back in the evening, so I’m really impressed with their attitudes. I think it’s important to work with young people in the catering industry, try to inspire them and show them what they can achieve.”

Chef Lecturer, Lee Hyatt commented, “This is a fantastic opportunity. It’s not every day you get to work alongside a chef of Lisa’s talents and I was pleased to see the students make the most of it. Lisa is really enthusiastic and passionate about food and she tries to communicate that to the students.

Everything she has achieved has been through hard work and talent and for the students to see just how much preparation, thought and hard work goes into making food of that standard is really valuable. The students were absolutely thrilled to be working with her and we’d all like to thank her for giving up her day off to come and work with our students.”

The AccRoss Ribble Valley Hub

Accrington & Rossendale College in partnership with Ribble Valley Homes, has established a base on Station Road, Clitheroe and started operating in October 2012. Up to that point, all unemployed customers in the Ribble Valley had to travel to Accrington, Blackburn or over to Yorkshire to undertake training.

Our work with Clitheroe Jobcentre Plus has seen courses set up and run for specific groups of customers. For example we have run courses for Employment Support Allowance customers with physical and mental disabilities around goal setting and confidence building and motivation with long-term unemployed. We have run a Care Sector Based Work Academy where customers were offered work experience and interviews and also worked with Jobcentre Plus to run targeted employer events at the premises where the unemployed attend and market themselves to local employers who have work placements, apprenticeships and vacancies available.

We are working with Ribble Valley Homes to refurbish the room and have invested in new equipment and facilities and are looking at ways to use the facility which will enhance and improve the lives and prospects of Ribble Valley residents.

Accross College - the first choice for a career-focused education!
**Accross Military Academy**

The best possible head start for your armed forces career.

We had 32 students complete the course in 2012/13 with an overall success rate of 91%.

Accrington & Rossendale College's Military Academy (held at Bowley Scout Camp, Great Harwood) is proving to be a hit, with 70% of its graduates entering the military or the application process and local schools requesting day release sessions.

The Military Academy is now celebrating its first full year and the six-month courses see students dress in military uniform, perform drills and comply with military rules, with the aim being to produce military ready candidates.

Course leader Chris Ashworth explained, "We have a uniform, we have standards, we have rules - a much higher level of discipline than for most college students. That gives people a realistic taste of what it is like.

Though the armed services are not necessarily interested in qualifications or experience, they want a very specific type of person to train up. That person is someone who is good at teamwork and has a good fitness level. When we tell people they need to be able to run a mile and a half in 10 minutes they can be surprised, but that's just the minimum requirement."

The academy doesn't focus primarily on fitness, however. Graduates leave with a Level One Diploma in Entry to Uniformed Services, First Aid at Work certificate and have worked extensively on team work, communications skills and survival skills as well as English, Maths and Information and Communications Technology in addition to fitness.

If you would like to know more about the College's Military Academy you can email info@accross.ac.uk or call 01254 389933.

We are recruiting now for Course 2 starting in February 2014.

**In their own words...**

Nathaniel Shaw
Military Academy Programme

Nathaniel attended Military Academy Course 2 from December 2012 to April 2013 at Accrington & Rossendale College, progressing straight into the Army and onto his Phase 1 (basic) training at Pirbright Army Training Centre after the end of the course.

"The Military Academy programme really benefited me," says Nathaniel, "What I learnt about discipline and teamwork really helped during Phase 1, especially having to be in the right place at the right time with the right kit! The physical training also really helps, as I had a much higher fitness standard on entry than other recruits, and even the basics such as learning to iron your kit, polish your boots, and prepare your kit to a set standard took the pressure off".

"I really enjoyed the Military Academy. As well as it really helping me prepare for basic training I enjoyed the physical training, the adventure training, and learning about the armed forces and their roles ... I even enjoyed the classroom lessons!"

Nathaniel is now progressing onto his nine month Phase 2 (trade) training to become a Vehicle Mechanic. After Phase 2 he hopes to be attached to the 1st Battalion of the Parachute Regiment (1PARA), who as part of 16 Air Assault Brigade are the UK's Quick Reaction Force, and also work as part of the Special Forces Support Group (SFSG).

Calderstones partners with Accross College for healthier learners

Accrington & Rossendale College have teamed up with Calderstones NHS Trust in Clitheroe to offer learners courses designed to improve their independence, health and fitness and teach them a range of valuable skills.

The Community Foundations Team began working with clients at NHS Calderstones in November 2012 and 37 clients successfully completed the Level 1 Award in Personal Money Management course between November 2012 and August 2013.

The programme of study incorporates many interactive tasks focusing on real world skills such as sensible banking, shopping around for the best deal & avoiding payday lenders, but also emphasises communication skills, team-working, literacy and numeracy. Feedback from clients and staff at NHS Calderstones has been consistently excellent and has resulted in new courses being requested and introduced such as Personal & Social Development which started recently.

Another partnership success story is the health and fitness programme the college delivered at Calderstones. Course tutor Becky Coleman comments, “This has been a really worthwhile project. Teaching people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing is really important and week by week we’ve seen our learners grow in confidence and start enjoying themselves more. We’re really pleased with the 100% attendance records on the course, which shows they’re enjoying it and it’s a genuine joy to see their enthusiasm and smiles at the beginning of each session.

In addition to the achievement of qualifications, introducing the sessions has also started to have an impact on the problem of obesity within the hospital, which was an issue originally raised by the managers. The learners have an opportunity each week to undertake physical exercise under our instructions and as we work through the qualification they’re learning different methods of improving their health and wellbeing, as well as teaching others to do the same.”

Pictured are tutors Becky Coleman and Helen Witts.
Ribblesdale High School have teamed up with Accrington & Rossendale College in a partnership which will see 30 learners enjoying courses such as Salon Services (Beauty Therapy and Hairdressing), Motor Vehicle Engineering, Construction, Hospitality & Catering and Health, Social & Child Care this year.

Andy Davidson, Deputy Head Teacher at Ribblesdale High School commented, “The Government’s withdrawal of funding had a devastating effect on school links with colleges, however I am pleased to say that through ‘out of the box thinking’ and a creative approach by both parties, students from Ribblesdale are attending Accrington and Rossendale College on a weekly basis this year.

All students are following the school’s ‘Employability Skills’ programme and have been selected to attend their chosen course via a rigorous selection process with desire and attitude in terms of career aspirations being at the heart of proceedings.”

The students attend our Broad Oak Campus every Friday. Andy Armiger from Accrington & Rossendale College commented, “This promises to be a great collaboration with a high school that really prides itself on the employability experiences and education it gives to its youngsters. Students get to use our facilities and explore possible career routes which they are interested in, in a very practical, ‘hands on’ way. I’m sure many of the group will want to carry on with higher level courses in their chosen programme areas when they leave school at 16, which makes it a really exciting partnership.”
Sue’s piece

“Having been born and bred in Clitheroe, I am proud to be helping Accrington and Rossendale College, in my role as Vice Principal, to make a positive difference in the Ribble Valley.

At the college, our main goal is to help people improve their lives through education. Importantly, we do this by teaching people the skills needed to gain employment when they leave us. One way that we achieve this is by working with schools, businesses and community groups to identify and meet the needs of Ribble Valley residents.

We are really proud to say that our success rates have been in the top 10% of colleges nationally for many years now and we continue to provide outstanding education to all ages in a safe and friendly way.”

Sue Collinge
Vice Principal

Accross Carpentry & Joinery students sweep the board at the Carpenters’ Craft Competition.

Accrington & Rossendale College’s Carpentry & Joinery Department is celebrating after four of their students swept the board at the 2013 Carpenters’ Craft Competition and the Ribble Valley was well represented, with two local carpenters finishing in the medal positions:

Daniel Dewhurst (NLTG Learner) - Clitheroe
• Second Place Under 20’s North West

Stephen Noblet (C&J Technician) - Longridge
• Second Place Over 20’s North West
• Third Place Over 20’s Nationals

The Institute of Carpenters’ Craft Competition was first held in 1972 and it recognises the most talented woodworkers in the country. The aim of the competition is to encourage young people to develop their skills and craftsmanship and achieve the very highest standards of woodworking and carpentry. The judging panel this year was made up of members of the Carpenters’ Company and the Institute of Carpenters and was chaired by John Taylor, MBE.

Programme Area Leader for Carpentry and Joinery, Marc Wilkinson explained, “We look for talent from day one with all our learners and we are committed to helping these students reach their full potential through giving them extension tasks in practical sessions. By taking the top 2 spots in each regional heat and finishing 2nd and 3rd in the Over 20’s Nationals I think we can safely say that they have proved their talents both to themselves and respective employers.

It’s important, however, to realise that these things don’t just happen. Their tutors, Gary Nolan and Clive Lovell, have put in countless hours of additional individual coaching to get them to this standard and the students themselves have worked their socks off to be able to compete at this level and bring home the medal positions. It’s a real team effort and I couldn’t be more proud of the entire department!”

Enrolling NOW on all courses for adults and school leavers.

Contact us on 01254 354345 or email us at info@accross.ac.uk to find out how we can help you.

Accross Colleges
FREE Travel Service

We now have a FREE College mini-bus service from Clitheroe which goes via Whalley, Read and Simonstone Monday to Friday.

For more details please contact the Student Administration Team on 01254 354031 or email studentadmin@accross.ac.uk

Ribble Valley Networking

The Ribble Valley is proud to host both highly successful international companies as well as a plethora of award winning rural businesses. The Ribble Valley continues to build on its reputation as a compelling and positive location for entrepreneurs who are inspired to set up their own company, benefiting from a proactive and supportive business community and skills base.

Ribble Valley Networking aims to bring together businesses from the Ribble Valley and surrounding area to network, support each other, offer advice, put on events such as educational seminars, business to business exhibitions and occasional social events.

We meet monthly at different host venues around the area. Everyone is made to feel welcome. Our meetings are friendly and informal, whilst being business focussed and affordable. We do not have an annual membership fee. Events are run on a ‘pay as you go’ system. Networking events are charged at £10 per person which includes food and refreshments.

This is what one of our regular attendees has to say “There’s no pressure at Ribble Valley Networking, the businesses and people that attend are really interesting and varied. I’ve already received a lot of work for whY-us and passed work to others. The two business exhibitions have been really well attended and its great to see people like Kath Bell and Gillian Taylor committing their hard work and time to benefit businesses in the Ribble Valley and surrounding area.” Richard Singleton, why-us.co.uk

Why not come along and see for yourself?

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, drop us a line to:
info@ribblevalleynetworking.co.uk