



**OAKLANDS ATHLETICS ACADEMY  
FIRST YEAR OF THE PROGRAMME  
HAS THE FINISH LINE IN SIGHT!**

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Thank you to all those who have contributed to this issue of The Buzz magazine.

If you have a story or article you would like to include in the next issue, please email: [news@oaklands.ac.uk](mailto:news@oaklands.ac.uk)

## Baroness Morgan visits Oaklands College



On Thursday 1st May, Baroness Morgan, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Intellectual Property and Quality, and Government Spokesperson for The Department for Innovation Universities and Skills visited Oaklands College.

The Baroness visited Oaklands to see the broad range of vocational learning on offer at the College. She met with students from the student council and a variety of learners in such diverse areas as Animal Care, Construction trades - including the new £1m wood trades centre - and a number of learners from the sports academies, including the Saracens Rugby Club and St Albans FC.

The Baroness was very keen to gain further insight into the wide range of skills development programmes that the College provides for local businesses. She met with a group of employers who have apprentices and learners on the Train to Gain programme as well as visiting Xerox to meet apprentices and other employees who have progressed through the college.

Principal, Mark Dawe said, "We are honoured that Baroness Morgan chose to visit Oaklands College. It was a great opportunity to show her the range of high quality learning that we deliver here at the College. I was particularly pleased that the Baroness was able to meet the students, employers and staff who contribute to our success."



After her visit the Baroness wrote to Principal Mark Dawe to thank Oaklands for the visit and express her pleasure at being able to see first hand the fascinating range of programmes on offer at the Oaklands College Smallford Campus.

# Oaklands BTEC Music Practice Students Play Lakeside Gig

On Tuesday 18th March the second year BTEC National Diploma Music Practice students gave a performance at Lakeside school for learners with severe and complex learning difficulties and disabilities.

They performed a selection of songs they have been working on for their Final Major Production, including versions of classic songs by artists such as Bjork, The Specials and Radiohead as well as some of their own compositions.

The performance was a huge success and the learners at Lakeside responded enthusiastically by dancing and clapping along.

Nathan Loughran, Music Lecturer said "our learners had little experience of a learning environment of this kind and found the experience to be both challenging and rewarding. I am happy to say they performed excellently and conducted themselves impeccably."



# Indian Percussionist Sirish Kumar at Oaklands

The music department at Oaklands College was pleased to receive renowned Indian Percussionist Sirish Kumar on April 29th.

Sirish gave a three hour performance of exceptional quality, demonstrating and explaining the various techniques of playing tabla, and some of the historical aspects of classical Indian music. Sirish was accompanied by music lecturer Chanan Hanspal who played guitar.

Students participated in various practical exercises instigated by

Sirish where they were able to perform some of the complex rhythms used in Indian music.



# Oaklands BTEC IT Practitioners visit Computacenter

Edita Strelciunaite, a tutor on the BTEC National Diploma for IT Practitioners programme took the group to Computacenter based at Hatfield Business Park in May this year for a fantastic field trip. This report from Kate French, one of the students on the trip, gives you a chance to see how they spent their time at the facility.



We were greeted in reception by the company's Technical Operations Manager who gave us an introduction to the history of Computacenter and information on his role as Technical Operations Manager. We were told what services Computacenter offer such as Managed Services, Support Services, Technology Solutions, and Technology Disposals Management.

After the initial briefing we were then taken through to the facility to start a behind the scenes tour. The tour was extremely beneficial to all the students on the course as it covered all aspects and departments of the Computacenter office including the warehouse, repairs, projects, configuration, security and warranty.

We saw how Computacenter manage and monitor service operations 24/7 and analyse their service in their multi vendor solutions centre. One of the most

amazing parts of the tour was when the Technical Operations Manager showed us around the automated German conveyer belts that they use in the warehouse, which were colossal!

The group saw how Electric Static Discharge is controlled to prevent component damage by having anti-static wrist straps, anti-static flooring and workbenches which we have learnt about whilst in practical lab classes at College. In addition to this once the computers have been tested the technicians run a system computer check for 24 hours to ensure there are no faults.

Upon leaving the premises we experienced the impressive security measures enforced. Our bags were scanned and we had to walk through a security scanner like you would at an airport. The trip really showed us what the working environment is like, how technology has developed and industries have grown using the

appropriate technologies to provide a service of advice and solutions to other businesses.

One of the group said of the visit; "I believe the trip was very worthwhile and gave us great insight as to what the computing industry is like in the work place. When we arrived we took a little detour by accident, which turned out to be quite interesting as the size of the building was vast, something you just do not realise until you are there."

Edita Strelciunaite who took the students said "On behalf of Oaklands College I would like to say a big thank you to Computacenter for the opportunity and the experience of visiting one of their branches."

**You can visit**  
[www.computacenter.co.uk](http://www.computacenter.co.uk)  
and look for the services link to share a similar experience and discover the virtual tour.

# Health & Social Care Activity Day Success

On Wednesday 14th May the Health & Social Care Team held an Activity Day for Learners.



The day consisted of activities and workshop sessions which learners attended in place of their normal Wednesday lessons. The activities were designed to get the learners thinking about the different options available to them when they leave the college and to point them in the right direction to find further information.

The day consisted of practical and fun workshop sessions and ended with a Health & Social Care Jobs Fair.

The team listened to guest speaker Dawn Richmond-Cook, Registered Manager at Halcyon Days Care Home (Goldcare Homes) discuss her career and how she got to where she is today focusing on Continuing Professional Development.

There was a practical session led by Carlton Lomax, Environmental

and Health Promotion Manager at St. Albans District Council on 'Infection Control – Handwashing', an issue that all Health and Social Care workers need to be aware of.

A DVD and quiz took place with £10 gift voucher prizes for the beauty salon at WGC Campus kindly donated by 'Oasis at Oaklands'. Bonnie Freeman (1st Diploma – Level 2), Emma McBride & Hayley England (National Certificate – Level 3) all won.

The team also attended a job fair where local employers came to talk to the learners about career options. Monkey Puzzle Day Nurseries, Asquith Day Nurseries, Hightown Praetorian & Churches Housing Association, St. Christophers Nursing Home (Bupa) and Gold Care Homes all came along to meet Oaklands Learners.

The feedback on the event showed it to be a great success with over 85% of learners saying that they had learned something new. 50% said the day had given them some options for their career that they had not thought of before and over 41% said they wanted to progress onto another course at Oaklands after completing their current course.

The day was a huge success and Thelma Sansby, Work Placements Organiser for Health & Social Care, would like to thank all the Employers and Guest Speakers who attended as well as all the Health & Social Care staff who helped out on the day. And of course a thank you to all the learners who participated so well by asking lots of questions and taking part in the practical session.

# Christine Moore completes the 2008 MoonWalk

Walk the Walk is a registered charity and the MoonWalk is their flagship event. It is the only Power Walking marathon in the world that starts at midnight with thousands of dynamic women and men wearing bras to raise money for Cancer Research.

Christine is a Learning & Development Co-ordinator - read her fascinating account of how it felt to do this amazing feat for charity.

**"I did it, and I have a medal and photo to prove it! What a fantastic night."**

I finished the 26.2 mile walk and achieved it in 6.5 hours (4 miles per hour) which I was so pleased with as it was an hour quicker than the first time I did it in 2005. I am really chuffed that all the hard training paid off.

The experience was great, just as it has been for the last three years; everyone is there with the passion to raise as much as possible for Breast Cancer. The pink marquee was really buzzing with excitement and enthusiasm, especially as it was so cold. We were all there to keep as warm as possible before venturing outside to begin either the 13.1 or 26.2 mile challenge.

There were between 16,000 and 17,000 men and women, although the women outnumbered the men! Many people were wearing amazingly decorated bras.

I began the walk at 11.45 and finished at 6.30, stopping a couple of times for comfort breaks. I started walking with t-shirt and fleece fully zipped up but there were lots of brave women (and men) showing their bras under the plastic cover supplied to us in case of rain. At about 12 miles I was warm enough to take off the

fleece as we had finished walking along the embankment. By 14 miles I bit the bullet and took the t-shirt off to show off the bra I had decorated for the occasion. It was cold but I was adamant that I would finish the walk in this attire! Support around the route was great, cars beeping horns, supporters and stewards clapping and cheering you on, also people out clubbing wishing us luck along the way.

"Overall I have been pledged £400.00, which is great. Before I started I thought this would be my last year but with such a good feeling of achievement afterwards come October I expect I will be looking at entering again!"

Christine would like to thank everyone for their support.



# PASE Scheme Season Update

The Boreham Wood FC PASE Scheme U18's Team have achieved a lot this year, as Chris Watters tells us.

Between August 2007 and May 2008 The Boreham Wood FC PASE Scheme U18's Team accomplished a huge number of accolades:

- Southern Counties Youth League Winners
- Southern Counties Youth League Champions Elect Winners
- Runners Up in Conference National Cup
- Runners Up in Isthmian Youth Cup
- Runners Up in Brian Hitchings Challenge Cup
- 2nd Round Proper of FA Youth Cup
- 7 Students trialling with Watford FC

Making it to the 2nd round of the FA Youth Cup was a massive achievement for the team who lost to Swansea City FC who are a professional team and were the lowest ranked team in the whole country left in the competition.

This was an extremely successful season for the team, so congratulations to all involved!

## What is the PASE Scheme?

The PASE (Programme for Academic and Sporting Excellence) at Boreham Wood FC is an educational scheme for boys and girls, aged 16 - 18 who wish to continue with their education whilst receiving daily football sessions from Licensed Coaches that have experience in coaching national and professional squads.



## Oaklands Cisco Networking Academy

As a Cisco Networking Academy, Oaklands have offered several members of the IT support staff the opportunity to gain valuable additional professional CCNA qualifications in Cisco Networking. They along with several BTEC National ICT Year 2 students started the rigorous CCNA course in January and will

be endeavouring to complete the final exam in June.

Two former Foundation Degree students Nigel Cowin and Amit Parbhu were recently presented with their Cisco CCNA Part I Networking qualification. Both Nigel and Amit studied for their CCNA Part I in addition to

their Foundation Degree in Computing. They are now both at the University of Hertfordshire and will use their newly acquired qualifications to complete their remaining year to get their BSc in Computing and Networking and to progress with their CCNA studies.



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# Oaklands College Athletics Academy

The first year of the programme has the finish line in sight.

In September 2007 Oaklands College, in conjunction with leading sports performance company elite-performance.org, launched a combined programme of academic study and performance coaching in track & field athletics.

Below is an in-depth look in to the academy and what it's all about.

## The Academy

The programme is designed to allow young athletes the opportunity to develop and receive support in both their studies and athletic disciplines. In addition to formalised academic study, athlete lifestyle education forms an integral part of the programme. Athletes are guided on how to live their lives as athletes with time management education, drug awareness programmes and sports psychology support.

The Athletes follow BTEC National Diploma -Performance and Excellence- at Oaklands College. Students initially undertake the two year programme with progression routes on to both UK and International Universities.

In year 1 of the programme there was an intake of 24 students who met both the performance and academic criteria.

These students are studying areas that are vital to their athletic development such as nutrition, lifestyle and reflective practice, as well as modules that will help in career aspirations such as coaching and working with children. The course also covers academic topics such as psychology, ethics in sport and sport and society. Students also undertake additional coaching qualifications



to compliment their study. This year has seen 12 students undertake and successfully complete their Level 1 athletics coaching award. This has been with the support of the Herts Sports Partnership. These students are now in the process of delivering various enrichment activities to fellow college students and assisting local schools with sports days.

## Athlete Profiles

The academy currently has 23 athletes, 5 of whom are non-track & field (karate, judo, badminton and swimming).

The academy has worked with national governing bodies and the English Institute of Sport to make programmes accessible to high performers of other sports who benefit from the support services of the academy and utilise the strength and conditioning facilities.

"I was taken aback by the performance of the Oaklands students competing against athletes 3 or 4 years older."  
Team Manager; Keith Wilson

## Our Rising Stars

### Ronnie Sparke

16 year old Ronnie joined the academy in September 2007 and is a resident athlete, living on-site, in student accommodation. Ronnie has had a great winter. Whilst representing England he came 5th at the recent World Schools Cross Country Championships. He also came 2nd at the recent Adidas London mini-marathon. Other performances in the past winter include: 1st at the South of England Championships X/C and 3rd at the National Cross Country Championships at Alton Towers.



### Rhys Glastonbury

Welsh International Rhys joined the academy in September 2007, and shares a house with fellow training partner Ronnie on site at Oaklands. Rhys won bronze in the 1500m at last years National Championships and at the UK School Games. He secured a silver medal at the Celtic International for Wales last year over the same distance. Rhys is current Southern Students' Indoor Champion.

### Tonderai Tomu

Zimbabwean born Tonderai continues to improve dramatically with every race. Tonderai posted a lifetime best of 48.00 in the 400m at the recent Southern Students Championships. The winter of 2008 saw Tonderai return to his homeland for a few weeks and two days after his return posted a very fine performance at the National Indoor Championships in Sheffield over 200m.

### Bunmi Awokoya

Bunmi joined the academy in September 2007 as a young multi-eventer. After a very solid winter Bunmi has already posted English schools qualification marks in 3 separate events for 2008.

### Staff

The academy works on a "coach led" philosophy, and have recruited a strong performance team.

### Gary Anderson

Director of Performance. Gary is a former world class coaching



"An ideal opportunity for young athletes to combine academic learning and sporting excellence in a key stage of their development. This scheme will allow athletes to make the transition to senior sport. A great concept"  
Mike Hay, Performance Manager  
British Olympic Association

consultant with UK Sport and is highly experienced in performance sport having taken athletes to major championships and Olympic Games.

### Graham Beasley

Assistant Director. Graham is a former international athlete and now mentor and advisor.

### Keith Wilson

Performance Coach. Keith is a former professional boxer and is now a respected performance coach.

### Hilana Marais

Hilana is a member of the support staff and is a multi skill coach and International triathlete.

### Richard Thurston

Performance Coach, Endurance. Richard has coached a number of athletes to international honours.

### Liam Cain

Performance Coach. Liam is a former UKA staff coach, and has coached a number of athletes to international honours.

### Jamie Bath

Performance Coach & Regional throws Co-Ordinator. Jamie has coached a number of athletes to international honours.



### Recent Successes

Representing the college the academy has had major success at the recent South of England Student Championships both indoors and outdoors. Competing against athletes 3 or 4 years older Oaklands took honours in the following:

#### SESSA Indoor CHAMPIONS 2007

- Gold Medallists  
Tonderai Tomu – 400m  
Rhys Glastonbury – 1500m  
Bunmi Awokoya – Shot
- Silver Medallists  
Bunmi Awokoya – Long Jump  
Ronnie Sparke – 1500m  
Tonderai Tomu, Rhys Glastonbury, James Cook, Kenny Howard - 4 x 200m relay
- Bronze Medallists  
Kenny Howard – 60m  
Chantelle Bazzoni – 1500m

They also won the Open University road relay cup.

#### SESS Outdoors 2008

- Gold Medallists  
Tonderai Tomu 400m  
James Cook – Javelin  
4 x 100m relay team (Webb; Warner; Lawson; Tomu)
- Silver Medallists  
Chantelle Bazzoni 800m  
Bunmi Awokoya 200m
- Bronze Medallists  
Michael Lawson 100m  
Cameron Webb 200m  
Jordan Warner 400m

# Oaklands College Florists Take Part in Another Year at the Prestigious Chelsea Flower Show

The Oaklands College Advanced National Certificate students and National Certificate Floristry students took part in the 2008 Chelsea Flower Show this year.



Oaklands College was invited to attend the prestigious annual show again this year, which enables Learners to showcase their talents in the Floral Design Marquee to members of the public.

Beckie Bates gives us the lowdown on the event.

Any nerves that had emerged in the lead up to the event were soon dispelled with lots of positive feedback from visitors to the show who were suitably impressed with the stunning designs & arrangements the students produced on the day.

The feedback was of course very encouraging & boosted the confidence of the Oaklands College florists immensely. One admirer commented "Oh look, its Oaklands College, they always produce such fantastic designs". Needless to say the team were glowing with pride!

This year the team produced a range of designs & accessories suitable for a dinner party or celebration, using a colour palette of zingy greens and hot pinks. They decided to incorporate a selection of fruit & vegetables such as broccoli, radishes, limes & apples to complement the

flowers which ensured an inspired reaction from the public!

The Learners were also able to have a look around the Show where they managed to gain inspiration from the beautiful array of flowers on display, and of course managed to spot a celebrity or two!

Special thanks must go to the Floristry Team - Stephanie Lui, Rebecca Dixon and Beckie Bates - for all their hard work in preparing for this world renowned annual event.



# Relay for Life Needs Your Support

The second Relay for Life at Oaklands College is fast approaching and will be taking place on Saturday 28th through to Sunday 29th June. There are many ways in which you can support this worthy cause.

The Relay lasts for 20 hours, so the teams camp out overnight. During the day the celebration is in full swing and a party takes place around the track, whilst team members take turns walking laps. The event is a celebration of all the fundraising carried out throughout the year and is a chance for everyone involved to recognise the important contribution they have made to help beat cancer.

At Relay For Life, anyone who has heard the words 'you have cancer' is considered a survivor. Relay For Life is a celebration of survivorship as survivors show

the progress and success of research and the reason why communities continue to raise money for Cancer Research UK. As Relay For Life's Guests of Honour, cancer survivors of all ages start the Relay by walking the first lap. They are cheered on by family, friends and teams from the community who have come together to celebrate their achievements.

A big part of Relay is the support from the local community on the day, so bring your family and friends along and show your support to the teams taking part. There will be plenty of

entertainment throughout the weekend, starting off at 3pm on Saturday with Elvis Shmelvis, the UK's number 1 Elvis tribute artist, followed by the official opening with UK singer/songwriter and cancer survivor Beverly Craven. The committee, participants and entertainers are all donating their time for free to make this event a success, so your support and encouragement will be greatly received.

We look forward to seeing you all there.



# Listening to 'The Learner Voice'

Oaklands College has been taking a great deal more notice of the 'learner voice' during the 2007/8 academic year. Denise Madden reveals more.

As part of the Government's vision for the personalisation of learning, the Learning & Skills Council was tasked with making sure that every college & provider had a Learner Involvement Strategy in place from September 2007. Practice has shown that taking a proactive approach to 'listening to learners' & measuring the impact of policies & process improves the quality of education & achievement across the FE sector.

Oaklands College has had a Student Rep system for some years, but in 2007/8 a new three tier structure was introduced, where each level elected the level above:

**STUDENT CORPORATION MEMBERS (2)**

**STUDENT COUNCIL (19)**

**STUDENT REPS (200+)**

## What's been happening in 2007?

A record 184 Student Reps were chosen in elections this year and on November 30th a record 61 Student Reps attended the Student Rep Conference. Heads of Skills held termly meetings with their Student Reps to listen to their programme issues whilst Skills Areas have run their own student surveys to gather the views of their students.

Very promisingly two Student Reps represented the College on the Board of the St Albans Strategic Partnership, contributing on issues of relevance to the local community. A Student Council was also elected by the Student Reps at their briefings held in October; each teaching area having one Council member & a deputy. By the end of 2007/8 the Council will have met four times, but in 2008/09 they will increase their termly meetings to twice termly meetings.



The two Student Corporation members, elected by the Student Council have been playing an active role in meetings of the College's governing body. As a result a Learner Involvement strategy & Action Plan for the College has been written & will soon be put to the Corporation.

Students are able to participate in Open Forums held termly on each campus, where they can raise any issues they like with a panel of Staff. As a result of this process, lockers have now been introduced to City campus. eForums have been available on a variety of subjects on The Box, which are proving to be very effective. As a result of complaints about overcrowding to this 'student e-voice' double-deckers buses have been introduced on the free 601 route.



Regular reports on Learner Involvement are now required by the Senior Management team, so that activity can be monitored. This higher profile for Learner Involvement has been led from the top, with the Principals attending almost all of the Open

Forums & every Student Council meeting.

In addition to all the milestones, Student Reps have assisted the College in a number of other ways, for example as Student Ambassadors, eMentors, consulting on the Full Time Learner Handbook. Student Council members have also been invited to meet visiting civil servants from DIUS & also the Baroness Morgan.



## What's next?

The experiences of 2007/8 will lead to adjustments in Learner Involvement at Oaklands College in 2008/9. Only 66% of the courses elected Student Reps in 2007/8. The number of Student Reps is expected to rise next year since Learner Involvement will be part of the Key Performance Indicator matrix. Teaching areas will not be able to get a level 2 at Self Assessment unless they have elected a Student Rep for each tutor-group.

A great deal of the success of Learner Involvement at Oaklands College depends on the assistance & participation of all Staff & not just those in Learner Services. Student Reps can be a great help to teaching staff as sounding boards for new ideas & as two-way conduits between Staff & students. Please help us to enable Learner Involvement at Oaklands College to make equally large strides in 2008/9 as it has done in 2007/8.

# Oaklands College hosts the 2008 St Albans Rotary Clubs Annual Charity Cycle Ride

The 2008 St Albans Rotary Clubs Annual Charity Cycle Ride took place on Sunday 18th May with warm, sunny weather encouraging an extra 300 cyclists to join the hundreds of others already taking part.

The last minute entrants made the final participants total an impressive 1,565. Cyclists met at the Oaklands College Smallford Campus on the Hatfield Road, St Albans, to set off on the 40, 30, 20 and 10 mile routes around the

Herts countryside to raise money for charity. Rotary chose Grove House day hospice, ShelterBox, The Wheelchair Foundation, The Parkinson Disease Society, Water Aid and Youth Talk to benefit from the event.

Refreshments were sold between 10.00am and 3.00pm at the Oaklands College campus where the race also finished. There was a jazz band and a barbecue provided by the local Scouts Groups to add to the atmosphere

of the day. Medals and Certificates were given to all those completing the course.



**Last year's event raised a fantastic £46,000 for the charities being supported.**

## Terry's Dark Tales...

Oaklands College's Terry Grimwood publishes new collection of dark tales 'The Exaggerated Man and Other Stories'.

Oaklands College Pathway Team Leader in the Electrical Installation Department, Terry Grimwood, has recently published a book entitled 'The Exaggerated Man and Other Stories'. The anthology of dark tales collected from work that has appeared in a variety of magazines, journals and books since 1996 contains two stories that have been given Honourable Mentions in 2001 and 2003 Years Best awards.

Gary McMahon, author of the British Fantasy Award nominated novella 'Rough Cut', who writes the introduction to the book said..."the most important thing I know about Terry Grimwood – the thing I want everyone else to be aware of – is that he writes one hell of a tale of dark fiction." Darja Malcom in 'Strange Horizons' said "Terry Grimwood interweaves wry social commentary with lively narrative."

Terry asks readers.....Come on, take my hand, don't be frightened, along the way we'll descend deep into the earth, visit worlds where breathing is banned. We'll find out what really happened when the fat lady sang, the Liberator set us free, Cathy's husband came back and why Nathan's hands are as red as blood. We'll revisit Snow White and discover the real and terrible meaning of beauty. Then meet the awful friends of Mike Santini, a young woman who hates the light and is as pale as death and, of course, the Exaggerated Man himself...

Terry's book is available from [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com) and he also has a second book, 'The Places Between', due out from Pendragon Press later in the year. His wife Jessica Lawrence's book "Dreams of Flight" is also available from [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com).



# Oaklands College are pleased to announce the launch of the brand new

# Adult Learner Guide

2008-2009

## Unlock Your Potential

If you are aged 19 to 119 or anywhere in between Oaklands College aims to help you reach your personal goals. Simple as that!

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# eInnovations VideoBooth Kiosk success

eInnovations have produced some very successful projects so far this year. One in particular is standing out above the rest.

The VideoBooth, which was devised by eMentors in collaboration with the Quality team, is an £11,000 video and sound booth. It will be used as a feedback kiosk to capture the Oaklands College learner's voices in 'Big Brother' style.

Students can give feedback to the kiosk by answering questions on screen using their finger, talking to the kiosk with the built-in camera or just a simple voice recording. This information will then be fed back to the appropriate department in electronic form.

So far the kiosk has been purchased with a red top around the screen for it to stand out at any location around the college.

The proposed first use of the kiosk will be The Celebration of Success Awards Evening. This will be a fantastic test ready for its first installations in September 2008 across the Oaklands Campuses for Oaklands College inductions, open forums, eLearning Days.

If you would like more information please email James Belmont – eMentor on [james.belmont@oaklands.ac.uk](mailto:james.belmont@oaklands.ac.uk).

## Oaklands College Performing Arts Student crowned Miss Herts 2008

18-year-old Laura Nuttall has been crowned Miss Hertfordshire 2008.

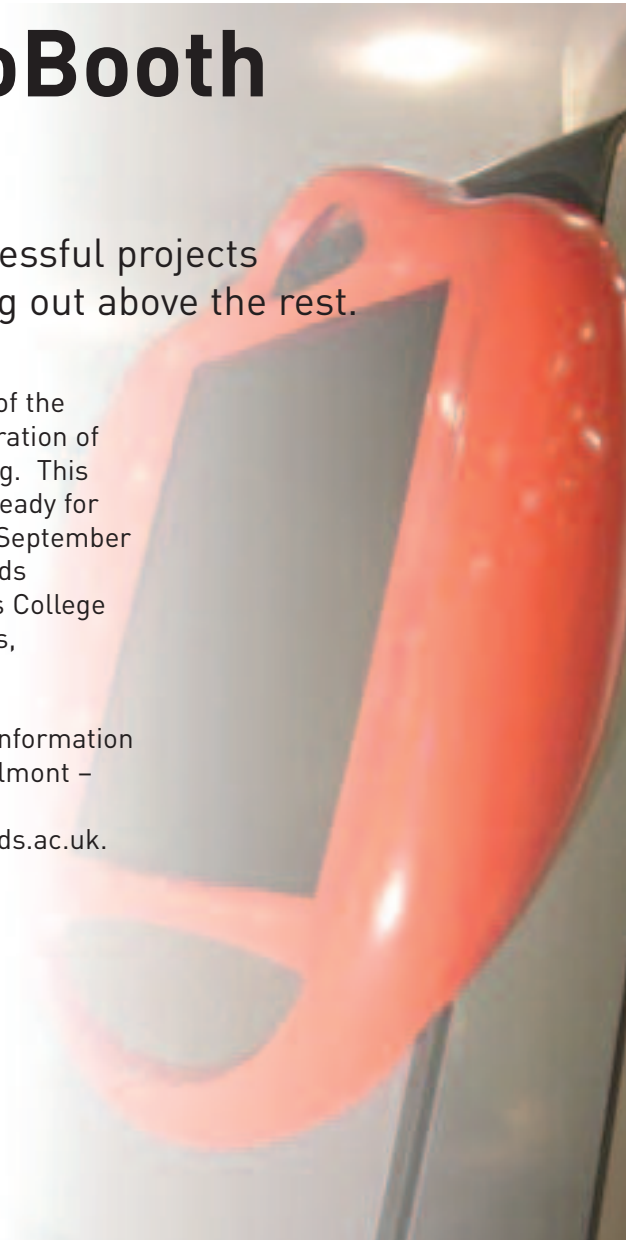
Laura, who is currently studying Performing Arts at Oaklands College, fought her way to the final after being chosen from more than 200 semi-finalists. The final on Sunday 18th May saw 30 girls compete for the title at a contest at Tewin Bury Farm in Tewin, Hertfordshire.

Laura will now have the honour of representing the county at the national Miss England semi-finals.

If she is fortunate enough to be crowned Miss England at the final on June 16-17, she will go on to represent the country at Miss World 2008. This would mean competing for a top prize of £100,000 and a trip around the world. This year's Miss World competition is due to be held at the Ukraina National Palace in Kiev, Ukraine.

The performing arts student said: "It was a bit surreal - I didn't expect to win. I was really shocked."

This year all the girls in the Herts final raised more than £6,000 for the Willow Foundation.



# Oaklands College Florist Sarah O'Brien Wins at the WorldSkills UK Regional Floristry Heat

Sarah O'Brien, who is studying for her Advanced National Certificate in Floristry, won the WorldSkills UK South East regional floristry heat on Sunday 1st June.

The competition was organised by WorldSkills UK who arrange skills competitions for young people and adults across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The competitions range from bricklaying to beauty therapy, graphic design to engineering and floristry.

Sarah entered the intermediate competition for florists across the UK. She competed against 14 others at Writtle College in Essex. The competition relies on entrants using their spontaneous creativity to design four individual pieces around one theme.

The theme was Last Night of the Proms at the Royal Albert Hall.

The entrants were asked to design and create an arrangement for the grand piano, a presentation bouquet to be given to the guest soprano, an imaginative body adornment for the soloist to wear and one surprise item which was a chaplet design to be worn on the bust of a statue.

During the debrief competitors were told that Sarah's chaplet design was an excellent example of what the judges were looking for.

It was then announced that Sarah had won the intermediate heat and would be going to the RHS Flower Show on 23 – 27 July at

Tatton Park, Manchester to compete in the WorldSkills UK final. The winner of the final will get the opportunity to represent the UK in the International WorldSkills Competition in Canada 2009.

Sarah said "I was shocked and slightly scared to have won such a fantastic competition and am looking forward to another challenge the final". Sarah is taking a well earned rest this week having presented Oakland's College designs at the Chelsea Flower Show and taken an exam on the Monday after the competition.

## Oaklands Summer Fayre Sunshine Success

For all those who attended you will already know that more than 4000 people took advantage of the weekend's glorious sunshine by heading to the Summer Fayre which was sponsored by GVA Grimley on Sunday 8th June.

Last year's event brought 3000 people to the Smallford Campus and this year's event far exceeded our expectations with an amazing turn out of over 4000.

Amongst the many events and activities that took place throughout the day including lamb racing, tractor rides, inflatable

slides, magicians and sandcastle building, visitors also got a chance to enjoy shows from performing arts students, fashion designers and live bands. Mercury FM was also present with a live broadcast and kept the crowd entertained throughout the day.

St Albans City FC played a fantastic match against staff from Oaklands College with Principal Mark Dawe playing in goal.

The final score was a respectable 8-0!

Check out next terms issue of Buzz for a full report on the fantastic event.

