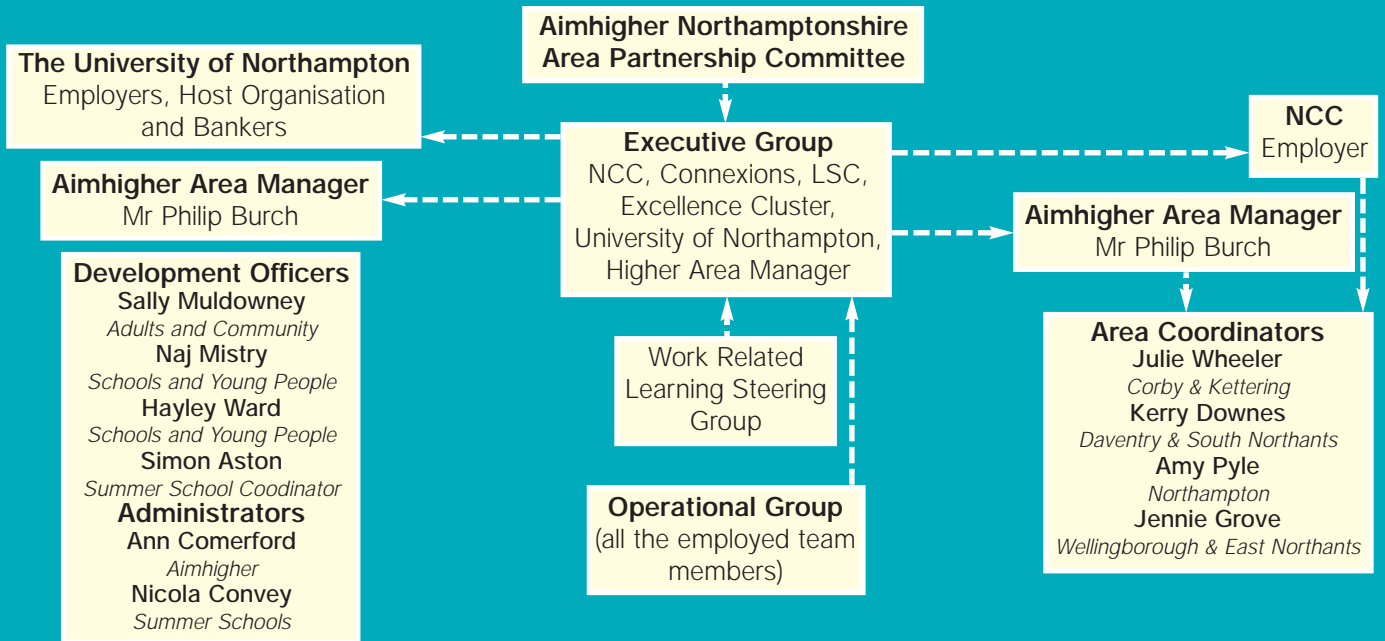


## Aimhigher Northamptonshire Management Structure



### Area Partnership Committee

We would like to express our thanks for the contribution from the members of the newly formed Area Partnership which started its life in July 2008. Some members have been associated with Aimhigher over a number of years and have assisted us in the planning and progressing of some of the partnership projects. We acknowledge our thanks for the support and commitment which they have made, and continue to make, which is a valuable contribution. Members: Jackie Hargis (LSC), David Bray (NCC), Roger Allanson (EBLO), Linda Brooks (Headteacher), Philip Burch (Aimhigher County Manager), Hannah Gauci (Moulton College), Barry Hansford (Northampton College), Pam Bairstow (Tresham Institute), Christine Hunt (Deputy Headteacher), Bill Jones (Consultant), Linda Lawton (Open University), Lee Jones (University of Northampton), Ruth O'Donnell (NCC), Dianne Panter (NHS), Heather Payne (Northamptonshire Enterprise), Sue Pilkington (Open College Network – EM), Danielle Stone (NCC Student Support), Clive Taylor (University Project Accountant), Paula Turley (Connexions Northamptonshire), Tom Waterworth (Headteacher), Mark Lester (Headteacher), Ross Parkinson (Headteacher), Sue Martin (Director of Corby Learning Partnership), Barry Willis (Northampton Training Development Partnership), Linda Green (NCC Race Equality) and Phil Mason (Educational Consultant)

## Aimhigher 2008/2011 A new Phase

The new phase of Aimhigher 2008-2011 has made a vigorous start, with many activities already taking place this term and much more booked for later in the year. I would like to take this opportunity to focus on the purpose of Aimhigher and to reiterate the programme efforts to engage hard to reach learners particularly from low participation areas, who are less likely to consider Higher Education (HE) as an option.

### What is Aimhigher?

Aimhigher is an initiative jointly funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), the Aimhigher programme operates across 44 area partnerships throughout England to

- Raise aspirations and motivation to enter HE among young people from under represented groups
- Raise attainment of potential students from under-represented groups so that they gain the academic or vocational qualifications that will enable them to enter HE
- Strengthen progression routes into HE via vocational courses
- Offer information, advice and guidance to potential students and their teachers and families

### How do we operate?

We offer a wide range of activities detailed in the Aimhigher Northamptonshire booklet available from the areas Aimhigher co-ordinators or on-line on the website [www.aimhighernorthamptonshire.ac.uk](http://www.aimhighernorthamptonshire.ac.uk) Activities include:

- Mentoring
- Progression activities
- A range of transition and motivation workshops
- Master classes, including subject enrichment or revision sessions
- Student ambassadors
- Information, advice and guidance (IAG)
- Summer schools and HE-related residential experiences
- School or college based interventions
- Campus visits

### Targeting

The Aimhigher programme targets its activities and interventions at learners from the following priority groups:

- Lower socio-economic groups (i.e. groups 4-8 in the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification, NS-SEC)
- Disadvantaged socio-economic groups who live in areas of relative deprivation often where participation in HE is low
- Looked after children in the care system

- Learners with a specific learning differences (SpLD)

Aimhigher plays a key role in bringing together practitioners from across education sectors to widen participation. As such, Aimhigher partnerships work with the following groups:

- Parents and other family members (particularly of young people from under represented groups)
- Teachers/tutors in schools, colleges, communities
- Aimhigher ambassadors in schools, colleges and universities
- Connexions/IAG personal advisers and careers advisers
- Admissions staff in HE institutions
- Employers
- Training providers

### In communicating with its target audiences, Aimhigher aims to:

- Promote and affirm the benefits of HE
- Increase awareness of the changing nature of the HE experience and its variety and diversity
- Reassure on the accessibility of the HE experience
- Reassure on the affordability of HE

### Higher Education Progression Framework

The Higher Education Progression

Framework, developed by Action on Access in 2008, is central to the 2008-11 programme.

A model for the delivery of sequential and progressive activity by Aimhigher partnerships in schools and colleges, the Framework aims to facilitate effective cross-sector collaboration by placing the emphasis on individual learner progression in line with both the aims of widening participation and school and college priorities

The Framework seeks to provide guidance based on the following core principles that the model should:

1. be targeted at designated cohorts or individual learners (and their influencers), who will be supported by a clear learner-focused journey which adds value in terms of specific outcomes
2. extend choice and secure impartiality, most notably at key transition points
3. deliver clusters of activity which are flexible, locally determined and learner-focused, ensuring coherence across providers and adding value to the activities of partners, other frameworks and improvement plans
4. seek to demonstrate a robust evidence base which evaluates the impact of a sequence of activities on progression and

attainment and which articulates with local systems to track learners

### In summary in the phase 2008/9 - 2011 Aimhigher Northamptonshire will

- Target students from lower socio economic groups (NS-SEC 4-7) and groups under represented in HE
- Implement a robust monitoring strategy
- Apply the Higher Education Learning framework (progressive and sequential packages of activity over time)
- Maintain contact with schools with cohorts, focusing intensive activities on WP cohorts
- Work closely with partners in schools and colleges to develop work with parents
- Focus on Further Education, vocational learners and access students
- Increase activity with Work-based learners ('A' Factor)
- Develop focused activity for students on one year courses in year 12 (levels 2 & 3)
- Pilot a small amount of work with younger pupils (UFA and possibly some primary students)
- Maintain summer schools until at least 2010 and possibly 2011

## The Staff Team at Aimhigher Northamptonshire 2008

Phase 2 of the Aimhigher initiative has now finished and we are into Phase 3 with many new aspects taking place which will include staffing. During the summer we said goodbye to Mary Richardson and Zara Hooley who have moved on to take up new positions. Mary has become a Director with Inspire Education and Zara is working with HELOA and some freelance contracts. The team wished them both well in their new ventures and thanked them for their contribution over their years with Aimhigher in Northamptonshire. Julie Weeler started her maternity leave in July and on the 29th August delivered a healthy daughter, all are well and we are delighted for this new family. Amy Pyle returned to us in July from her extended leave where she had been travelling and from all accounts had wonderful time in many parts of the world.

### The Operational Team

**Philip Burch**  
Aimhigher  
Northamptonshire  
County Manager



Philip joined the team as the County Manager in April

2005. He previously worked with the team in consultancy capacity establishing the co-ordinator network for the county. Formerly a senior manager in Further Education, Philip has experience of inclusion projects and disadvantaged groups, Increased Flexibility Programmes (IFP), and raising standards projects. He managed a number of vocational areas including Art, Design Media and Performance, Catering, Hair and Beauty, Leisure and Tourism.

#### What you are going to do in your role this year?

Philip is responsible for managing the day-to-day operation of the project team, for the implementation of the 2008-2011 strategic plan and monitoring progress against targets. A key function of his role is developing and maintaining the partnership activities and promoting strong links with stakeholder organisations. Philip will also oversee the development of key initiatives advocating raising aspirations, attainment, and progression to Higher Education (e.g. summer schools, masterclasses, student shadowing, mentoring, Information Advice and Guidance (IAG), and motivational events).

In addition Philip will be promoting Aimhigher priorities to engage with non-traditional entrants to Higher Education: promote and affirm the benefits of HE, increase awareness of the changing nature of the HE experience and its variety and diversity, reassure on the accessibility of the HE experience and reassure on the affordability of HE.

**What you are looking forward to most?**  
Increasing HE participation from key areas of the county, the next challenge HEFCE present and Christmas.

**What are your interests outside work?**  
Philip undertakes a variety of activities outside of work and is a busy family man. He is active with his local

church, and enjoys cooking and wine tasting and is keen on DIY and gardening.

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**Amy Pyle**  
Co-ordinator for  
Northampton



I graduated from Brighton University in 1999 having studied a BSc in Sports Science. Following this I took a year out and travelled the globe (an experience of a life time)! I then settled in Northamptonshire and worked for the Careers Service and then Connexions gaining my careers guidance qualifications, working as a Personal Adviser. During this time I also worked as a part time youth worker re-establishing and leading a local youth club. In 2003 I came to work for Aimhigher Northamptonshire as a Development officer- Schools and Young people and in December 2004 I took on the role as Area Co-ordinator for Daventry and South Northamptonshire. In 2007 I took a 10 month sabbatical from my role to, yes, you've guessed it travel the globe (again). Having had an amazing year full of unforgettable experiences and sights, I'm now back with Aimhigher.

**What you are going to do in your role this year?**

In August 2008 I took on the role of Aimhigher Coordinator for Northampton town. I'm really enjoying

this position and I'm looking forward to the year ahead!  
**What you are looking forward to most?**

Helping as many of our students as possible to reach their full potential.

**What are your interests outside work?**

I enjoy running for fun and in competitions, follow a few music bands and like to get out and about as much as I can with friends.

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**Kerry Downes**  
Aimhigher  
Coordinator  
Daventry and South  
Northants



I've worked for Aimhigher for 14 months, previously I worked for Northamptonshire County Council Youth Service as an Area Youth Worker.

**What you are going to do in your role this year?**

Over the next academic year I'll be working with the 11 schools and one college in the Daventry and South Northants area to develop the already established programme. In February and July 2009 there will be Moving on Up conferences aimed at year 11 and 12 students looking at progression routes.

**What you are looking forward to most?**

I'm looking forward to working with the new year 9's as well as building on the relationships with students in years 10-13.

**What are your interests outside work?**

I enjoy socialising with friends, camping and going to festivals. I also sit on the committee of a local charity that supports voluntary youth projects.

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**Hayley Ward**  
Area Co-ordinator for  
Corby and Kettering  
(on secondment  
covering Julie  
Wheeler's maternity  
Leave)



I have been working for Aimhigher for 4 years now. I started as a Summer School Ambassador whilst I was at The University of Northampton, before returning after a year out (to go travelling!) to work as a Development Officer. Within this role I had with primary responsibility for the Summer School programme, which provided an enormous challenge, whilst at the same time was extremely rewarding! I am now covering Julie Wheeler as Area Co-ordinator in Corby and Kettering on a six month secondment.

**What you are going to do in your role this year?**

This is an exciting new role for me so I have been busy putting together a programme of activity in schools for years 9-13. After the initial planning stages I am now out and about delivering all sorts of sessions covering anything from conducting a good interview to giving information about student life.

**What you are looking forward to most?**

I am looking forward to working with lots of students across Corby and Kettering on the new activities such as 'Get on the Right Track' and working with EBLO on

the 'Dragon's Den' challenge. I am also looking forward to working with The University of Northampton to develop the Be. The Best project that offers an intense programme of campus visits, advanced workshops and a residential to local Gifted and Talented year 10 and 11 students. This was a really exciting new project last year and we hope to develop it even further this year. One of the best things about this job, is the diversity it brings and the fact that no 2 days will ever be the same!

**What are your interests outside work?**

Outside of work I enjoy travelling to new places, albeit on week long holidays now rather than 4 month trips! I also enjoy nice food (always followed by chocolate!), reading and socialising with family and friends. I would also be lying if I didn't say that I enjoyed shopping a little bit!!

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**Julie Wheeler**  
Co-ordinator (Corby  
& Kettering) on  
Maternity Leave



**Jennie Grove**  
Co-ordinator  
(Wellingborough &  
East Northants)



I have worked with Aimhigher Northamptonshire for 5 years and have recently taken secured the position of Area Co-ordinator for Wellingborough & East Northants. Originally from Kent, I studied English & Drama at The University of Northampton, and have stayed in the area ever since.

**What you are going to do in your role this year?**

I really enjoy working with young people and I'm looking forward to getting to know the students in my area. I am keen to work with parents and carers and developed a Family Day which has now become part of the Aimhigher programme.

**What you are looking forward to most?**

I have been involved in Summer Schools and Residential and have gained a sense of achievement and satisfaction over the years watching young people gain confidence in themselves and their academic capabilities.

**What are your interests outside work?**

Outside of work I run a Brownie unit and enjoy spending time with my family.

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**Sally Muldowney**  
Development Officer  
(Adults and  
Community)



I have been working in this role for since Aimhigher began working in the County. Before this I was working with the Widening Participation team at the University of Northampton. I am a mature graduate having made a decision to undertake a degree following a big 'O' birthday. Prior to beginning my degree I was working in London for the Studios of Madame Tussauds.

The following is just a flavour of all the activities planned for the coming year as the role of working with Adults and in the Community has changed over the years. I continue to work closely with Access students at Northampton College and Tresham Institute and offer them a cluster of activities to support their progress into University.

**What you are going to do in your role this year?**

This year I will also be working closely with the Mentoring activities we are involved in to gain accreditation for the mentors and develop the activities of mentors to support our inclusion in a student associate scheme which we plan to run in 2009/10. I also offer 1:1 Information, Advice and Guidance for individuals seeking to progress their learning and careers (which I might add can be undertaken in the supermarket whilst shopping). This is currently happening on an ad-hoc basis with referrals being made from a variety of community organizations with which I network, however, I plan to develop this more by linking with members of the countywide information, advice and guidance network to provide a cluster of activities to small groups.

**What you are looking forward to most?**

All activities during this coming year will be a challenge and the development of the training of mentors and monitoring of their achievements is something that I especially am enjoying as the knowledge I have built up through work with Aimhigher and work that I have done on a voluntary basis in the community is being brought together.

**What are your interests outside work?**

I have a keen interest in local, social and cultural history and volunteer with local organisations to maintain and develop this interest. I also work with Northamptonshire Women's Network as a volunteer where we operate a very effective telephone mentoring scheme to support women to achieve their potential. With a family comprising of husband, two children and 6 grandchildren I manage to keep myself very busy.

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**Naj Mistry**  
Development Officer  
(Schools & Young  
people)



I have taken on the role as development officer for over two years working in the schools and colleges around the county. Many of the events I helped organise are

those that will be taking place on the campus which range from year 9 taster days to extended days for sixth form students.

Prior to joining the Aimhigher team I had worked as a student ambassador for three years whilst I was an undergraduate studying B.A Film & Television. Through my role I had worked on the Aimhigher summer schools and residential on the campus.

**What you are going to do in your role this year?**

This year I am looking forward to being part of the many sessions and taster days planned as they seem to be more interesting every year! I like to try and incorporate new technology on the events making the sessions as enjoyable and informative to the students with as much interaction as possible.

**What you are looking forward to most?**

Having a good year and working with some new ambassadors on a variety of projects.

**What are your interests outside work?**

Outside of work I like pursuing my interest in film and taking part in the events related to these in and around the university. I often find the issues raised in films can be beneficial on sessions relating to aspirations and goals. I try to use this medium where possible to better engage the students at times.

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**Kevin Chapman**  
Development Officer  
(Schools and Young People) Temporary Contract covering Hayley Ward



Kevin is one of the newest members to join the team here at Aimhigher Northamptonshire having graduated in the summer of 2008 from the University of Northampton. Kevin's involvement with Aimhigher began in 2006, initially as a student ambassador. This was then followed by work on the Summer Schools, where he became more interested in developing young people's true potential. Prior to attending University, Kevin worked in the retail and manufacturing sectors, holding key roles in staff development and training.

**What you are going to do in your role this year?**

Kevin aims to play an important role in the recruitment of new student ambassadors for Aimhigher Northamptonshire, with the objective of adding to an already well established and committed team.

**What you are looking forward to most?**

Kevin looks forward to delivering more aspirational days with the schools of Northamptonshire, with the hope to inspire future generations in achieving their educational or vocational goals.

**What are your interests outside work?**

Kevin enjoys outdoor activities and spending time with his nieces and nephews.

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**Simon Aston**  
Development Officer  
(School and Young People)



I started working for Aimhigher on the 10th of November. But I have worked for Aimhigher Northamptonshire before in a part time capacity as a Student mentor, Summer school guru and a Student ambassador.

Since leaving University a year ago I have worked in a School with children that have learning difficulties and behavioural issues, which was a massive but rewarding challenge. I have also spent a couple of summers working as a holiday rep, which was a magnificent experience!

**What you are going to do in your role this year**

I want to continue the amazing work that the previous development officers have done, and continue to make summer schools an unforgettable experience for both staff and students!

I want to advocate the importance of higher and further education to students and break down preconceived ideas, which people have about University. I also want to continue the amazing enthusiasm and passion that go with summer schools. Finally I want to bring some innovative and engaging ideas to make sure students have an amazing summer school experience.

**What you are looking forward to most:**

I am looking forward to and excited about the massive challenge that the summer schools present.

**Your interests outside work:**

My interests outside of work are mainly sport and keeping fit! I love football, I play cricket and golf when I get the time and I also enjoy rugby. As I said above I enjoy keeping fit, I love running and I hope to run the London Marathon in the not to distant future. I am a big Wolverhampton Wanderers fan as I guess some one has to support them! However I also love music! I would be devastated if anything happened to my iPod, it's my pride and joy. I am really into Kings of Leon and Snow Patrol at the moment.

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**Ann Comerford**  
Project Administrative Officer



Ann joined the Aimhigher team in May 2003, after previously working in the Northampton Business School at the University for ten years. Her role is to support the Co-ordinators and the Development Officers in the planning and organisation of events both internally and externally, maintain diaries and calendars and to administer all the financial planning and processes. Ann also is responsible for internal and external communications as well as monitoring the marketing and purchasing elements of the project as well as offering full secretarial support at meetings

**What you are going to do in your role this year?**

I have some new elements to my role this year and will be working to highlight elements of our communications strategy as well as becoming more involved with some of our external projects and partnerships

**What you are looking forward to most?**

Supporting and helping the team where possible to ensure that we help those students who need our support

**What are your interests outside work?**

Ann enjoys being busy and in involved with a variety of projects associated to her parish church and social welfare. She is a school governor and supports projects which help others. She enjoys cooking and travelling, playing the flute and entertaining her grandchildren.

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**Nicola Convey**  
Summer School Administrator



Before coming to work for Aimhigher I graduated in Criminology in 2005 after studying at Lancaster University. Over the three years whilst studying for my undergraduate degree, I began to gain further interest in extended fields and began to get a feel about the other departments and subjects that the University had to offer. I enjoyed my time at University so much that I decided to make the commitment to embarking on a Master Degree in Conflict, Development and Security. After graduating I came to work for Aimhigher and have now been here for almost two years. I have just returned from a 7 month sabbatical where I traveled the world on a whirlwind tour which was an absolutely amazing experience. Now it's back to reality! I have very much enjoyed contributing to the successful delivery of seven summer schools so far, and I am currently busy working on Aimhigher's next four for 2009. Working for Aimhigher and with young people has given me the opportunity to work within an area I feel very strongly about and I'm looking forward to the projects ahead of me.

**What you are going to do in your role this year?**

This year I am completing a NVQ Level 4 qualification in Information Advice and Guidance which has just begun. I will be supporting the Co-ordinator in organising four summer schools as well as managing the maintenance of the Aimhigher Northamptonshire website.

**What you are looking forward to most?**

I am looking forward to being a qualified Information, Advice and Guidance practitioner and putting this new knowledge into play within Aimhigher next summer.

**What are your interests outside work?**

Outside of work I enjoy travel, holidays, socialising with friends and family, playing netball, reading, music and I'd love to take up Piano lessons soon!

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# Sir Christopher Hatton Induction day

In July 2008, Sir Christopher Hatton School brought 50 prospective Yr 12 students onto campus to get a taste of University life. The day included a variety of exciting learning activities as well as the opportunity to have a tour and lunch in the University canteen. When the students arrived on campus they were immediately asked to take part in some fun ice breakers. Once they had all spoken to someone they did not normally chat to, the days work could begin.

Aimhigher started the day by asking students to look at what they really wanted to get out of life. The students worked through a series of exercises which ended in them setting some life goals and short term sixth form targets.



## Insight into higher education

After this students worked on a team challenge and analysed their ability to work with others.

Students enjoyed a well earned break and lunch, but many took the opportunity to view Halls of residence on campus. The afternoon involved two interactive sessions, the first being the Induction Game, a board game which takes students through two virtual sixth form years.

Followed by a highly competitive scavenger hunt round campus.

Feedback from the day has been positive from both students and staff. Aimhigher looks forward to continuing its work with Sir Christopher Hatton during the coming academic year.

"Thank you very much indeed for the two excellent days which formed part of our 11 into 12 induction and our 12 into 13 induction. Both of them hit the spot precisely - with a good mix of fun, serious consideration and an insight into higher education. Thanks also to you, and your team, for their energy and enthusiasm - that made all the difference."

*Head of Sixth Form*

## Our Friends at Workbridge

The team appreciates the support given to us via the tasks undertaken by Workbridge. There are always there with a smiling face willing to help us with our tasks and assist us with the packing of promotional bags for conferences, preparing mailings and assembling packs for a variety of events. The service is always friendly, to a high standard and meets our deadlines.

Workbridge is a user led local Social Enterprise supporting adults with learning difficulties and mental health problems in a safe and supportive environment. We provide training and work experience for 190 service users each week.

## Create employment opportunities

Having identified individuals' objectives, there are opportunities through activities in catering, horticulture and garden centre, ceramics, woodwork and maintenance, office skills and contracting, for people to achieve their goals. For some this will be to move towards and into mainstream employment, whilst for others it may be their goal is to develop their self-confidence by learning new skills or learning to work in teams. Whatever activities people choose to undertake we hope to engender a sense of self-worth and value in what they do, thus improving self-esteem.

Life is not all about work and so there are opportunities to make friends and participate in leisure and social activities, with a view to improving people's ability to access activities within the community. The work provided by the Aimhigher team enables people to learn skills such as counting,

collating, packing, communicating with each other and communicating with people from the wider community.

Using the Social Enterprise model, income generated from working with local businesses is re-invested into developing new activities and training schemes. We plan to create employment opportunities with the Workbridge environment which will support our people to become independent and realise their full potential.

Thank you to all our friends at Workbridge who help us with our work.



## Zip theatre performances

Wolverhampton's Zip Theatre were back with the production- "The Promise"! This "first rate piece of musical theatre" came to Thomas Beckett, Duston School, The Academy, Abbeyfield and Weston Favell school in October. This aspirational, energetic and thought provoking performance is designed to encourage students to think about the different options available to them and to consider Higher Education after leaving School/College. The intention is that year 9 students watching the performance will be encouraged to think about their future and to stay in learning after year 11.

## TENC Higher Education evening

On the 3rd of August over 100 parents in East Northants attended an event to find out about higher education. The evening began with a presentation from Aimhigher tackling the issues associated with University Finance. This was followed by the excellent Dr Jonathan Young from Leicester University who gave an entertaining presentation looking at the UCAS process from the eyes of an admission tutor.

Finally the highlight of the evening was the panel presentation from ex- TENC students who are currently in their first year at University. The students came from a variety of different institutions and gave the audience a true picture of a 'day in the life' of a Fresher.

**Aimhigher...**

**SUMMER SCHOOLS**

**in the East Midlands**

# A BUSY START TO THE YEAR FROM NORTHAMPTON BY AMY PYLE

## YEAR 13/2

### How to write a good personal statement....

This is an important part of the UCAS form for year 13/ 2 students. Over the last four weeks Aimhigher has been working with students, delivering informative sessions and tutorials on structuring, style, content and examples of personal statements. Duston School, Northampton College, Unity College and NSG students have all benefited.

### Money money money!

We all know that financing your way through university has become more expensive for some students and parent/carers. Aimhigher has been undertaking finance talks to students, parents/carers and budgeting activities to help make this complex subject more simple and to offer information and advice on the financial assistance available.

## YEAR 9

### Aimhigher Launch evening for students and parents/carers.

An excellent turn out for the launch of the new year 9 Aimhigher cohort. This was held at the University of Northampton on the 25th September. Just over 200 students and parents/carers obtained information about the programme. It was an informative evening with our guest speaker Tom Barwood delivering an exciting talk to everyone. We look forward to working with students & parents/carers 08/09. Thank you to schools/teachers for supporting this event.

## YEAR 10

Are you in year 10 or 11 and interested in professions in Healthcare? If so ImpAct theatre will be performing in Abbeyfield, Duston and The Academy in November. There will also be a performance on Saturday 15th November for Family members at the University of Northampton, to book a place or further information please contact 01604 893310.

We also have the Aimhigher Roadshow for yr 9 students and maths masterclasses for yr 11 students.

In you have any questions about Aimhigher activities in Northampton town please contact Amy Pyle Aimhigher Co-ordinator.

Tel: 07793 528491 or 01604 893330

### What's coming up after half term?...

### Progression routes and careers sessions yr 11-13

Abbeyfield, Kingsthorpe, Thomas Beckett, Unity college. Finishing year 11 can present a bit of a crossroads for many year 11 students. Our interactive sessions ensure that students are clear on the varied progression routes open to them and the types of learning, helping to bring an element of realism to the important choices they're making.

**Year 11 two day progression conference** for Northampton School for Girls. December 2008

### Year 10 and 11 students, be ready to be INSPIRED

Many schools- Weston Favell, Duston, Thomas Beckett, Abbeyfield, Kingsthorpe college and The Academy will have or will be talking part in workshops intended to motivate and give students practical tools to support their revision.

Year 11 into 12 evening and days for Thomas Beckett Catholic school. December 2008



# GET ON THE RIGHT TRACK

## A NEW INTERACTIVE BOARD GAME FOR NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SCHOOLS

So what qualification do you need and how much can you earn from your chosen career?

So many young people will be asking themselves this type of question and where would you be able to go to get the answers? Well help is now at hand; Mary Richardson – Aimhigher co-ordinator for Northampton has devised and developed a career game which will be launched in secondary schools in Northamptonshire this autumn. The aims of this interactive activity which is suitable for years 9-13 will be to support the careers guidance programme by offering:

- Raising student awareness of the variety and diversity of careers which are available
- Demonstrate that better qualifications are likely to lead to better paid careers with better progression and promotion prospects
- Raise student aspirations academically  
Motivate students to maximise their potential
- Collate the value of careers and salary expectations

This boxed game cover 10 careers areas and is fun as well as being informative. Mary has worked with Aimhigher for the past four years prior to this she was teaching in secondary



schools in the town for 26years Her involvement in a wide range of post-16 initiatives has included developing links between the A level curriculum and work experience and curriculum development which has focused on post -16 vocational and work related

areas. Mary has been a valuable member of the Aimhigher team in Northampton and her contribution to the town schools has been very much appreciated. Mary is now moving on to be a director of a national motivational company.

## DRAGONS DEN

On the 11th of July, East Northants students attended the semi finals of the area Dragons Den competition run by EBLO. 50 students from Manor, Rushden, Huxlow, Ferrers and Prince William School attended the event to practice their presentations for the big final.

### The Real World

Aimhigher attended and provided a presentation skills workshop to ensure

that all students felt confident and ready to face the Dragons with their ideas.

During the morning 'friendly Dragons' (local business people) listened to the students ideas and challenged them to delve deeper into the feasibility of their solutions, bringing an element of the real world into this excellent challenge.

Aimhigher would like to thank EBLO for organising this event and for the opportunity for partnership working.



## Employer Engagement

I am sometimes asked why employer engagement figures so highly on my agenda. For me the answer is two fold, firstly the only way we are going to successfully educate a wider range of our young people is if we build effective partnerships beyond our own institutions and secondly I learn something that will be of benefit to our students at every meeting. The partnership in education can no longer be viewed as just being between learners and teachers.

### Variety of pathways

It is the responsibility of a much wider community including parents, support services, employer engagement officers, Further and Higher Education, business and local groups and organisations. We have to move on from a point where the acquisition of qualifications is the main focus to a situation where they are just considered the starting point and in addition we are preparing learners to be effective communicators in the adult world. We have now been given the tools to do this by having the opportunity to explore a greater variety of pathways to this goal, ranging from the new Diplomas, through apprenticeship routes to the traditional academic routes, which will still be an effective solution for many. However none of this will work without a wider understanding of these opportunities and the networks to support them. This is why I consider every chance I can to widen the community that I engage with.

By Paul Martin from The Latimer Community Arts College

# ROBOT WARS

## COMES TO NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



On Wednesday 9th July students from Danetre School Specialist Engineering College, Kingsbrook School, Magdalen College School and Sponne School Technology College visited the University of Northampton to take part in the Aimhigher Engineering Day.

### Team work that's fun!

The day consisted of a workshop on progression routes within engineering plus Roaming Robots providing a great interactive activity where students worked in small groups to design and build a robot, which later would take part in Robot Wars type activities.

All the schools had facilitated the use of the CREST Bronze award with their

students completing the majority of research and planning work prior to the event. Sponne School designed 8 fantastic awards from Best Driver to Team Player these were awarded by Julie Messenger and Jon Parker from SETPOINT.

The day was a great success – comments from teachers and students:

*'I thought it was an excellent well planned day. Very good fun for all the pupils'*

Student's most useful part of the day:

*'Careers websites'  
'Building because it was fun and the skills are useful'  
'Making the robots because of the team work'*

## OXBRIDGE CONFERENCE 15th JULY 2008

Year 12 students from around the county attended the Oxbridge Conference at The Saints Rugby ground on the 15th July. The students had the opportunity to meet the admission tutors, Dr Paul Russell (Cambridge) and Dr Fiona Spensley (Oxford).

### Dispelling the myths

The Oxbridge Conference provided valuable information for students about college choice, personal statements, interviews and admission tests. There was also an opportunity to meet with Oxford



students who gave an insight into student life. Students and teachers all agreed that it was a useful event that raised young people's aspirations and provided vital information, advice and guidance.

Student comments:

*It has increased my confidence and passion to apply to Cambridge'  
'I feel informed and all the myths about applying to Oxbridge have been cleared from my mind'*

**Schools who attended:**

Campion School, Caroline Chisholm School, Huxlow Science College, Magdalen College School, Northampton School for Girls, Prince William School, Northampton Academy, Thomas Becket Catholic School, Weston Favell School, The Ferrers Specialist Arts College, Moulton School and Arts College.

### The Aimhigher Office

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