Contributing to the Wellbeing of Future Generations:

the role of Further Education Colleges

A Force for Good - Collaboration, Engagement and ESDGC

Project team celebrate the opening of the Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone - a collaborative venture with input from the community and business

Once an organisation has accepted sustainable development as its core organising principle, it will by definition be concerned with communicating this commitment to its staff, customers and the wider community, and seeking to promote the well-being of all its stakeholders. Is the organisation a force for good? By its actions, does it make it more likely that complex human society will still be resilient and progressing in fifty or a hundred years time or do its actions undermine the long term success or even survival of the society in which it operates?

For colleges such questions coalesce around the subject of Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship.

Case Studies from COLLEGES WALES

- Coleg Cambria's new local digital news service for the blind, Hear Here, is produced by Creative Media Production students. Read More >

- Financial literacy - The Money for Life Programme – an award-winning personal money management programme for young people and their mentors supported by Lloyds Banking Group - is co-ordinated and delivered in Wales by CollegesWales. Read More >

- Coleg Gwent is developing renewable energy teaching internationally, leading a partnership project with a college in South Africa. Coleg Gwent developed the idea into a collaborative project with fellow Welsh College Coleg Llandrillo, and the initiative secured further funding from the British Council in July 2013. Read More >

- A partnership between Cardiff and Vale College and Mind in the Vale has led to a number of Mind's volunteers progress to work as well as a university course. Their achievements are part of the College's community work, where expert CAVC staff travel across the region taking support and training out to people who might not be able to come to a College site. Read More >

- Coleg Gwent has launched two Local Community Partnerships in its commitment to meeting the needs of the local economy and the communities it serves. Each Partnership - at Crosskeys and Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone - includes a panel of appointed volunteers from the community who will advise the College on matters including curriculum, finances and performance. Read More >

Entrepreneurs for Global Good

8th May 2014 Graphic Design students from Cardiff and Vale College have set up their own company, Threads, to sell as many pairs of ethically-sourced pants as possible. They have been set the challenge as part of the Pantrepreneur Competition, run by sustainable underwear company Pants to Poverty, to raise funds for fair-trade cotton farmers in India. The competition is open to members of the Gazelle colleges group, an organisation focused on increasing entrepreneurship among students. CAVC is the only Welsh college in the Gazelle Group. The team sold their pants at markets in Cardiff. All proceeds raised in the competition went to the Pi-Foundation in India.

Enabling Students to Take The Lead

Neath Port Talbot College worked with independent consultant Plan-it Eco to develop its approach to ESDGC and environmental management. Two student "Eco Groups" were set up on two different campuses. Students led an audit of the campuses and the resulting report was handed to the Senior Management Team. The SMT used the report to develop a refresh strategy on ESDGC. A member of staff travelled to The Amazon with a UK teachers group and made a DVD to use as a teaching aid for all college departments, illustrating the impacts of choices we make in Wales on this fragile ecosystem.

Pembrokeshire's Approach to Staff and Student Wellbeing - The use of Technology

Pembrokeshire College from the air

The College and local company, LocalEyes, have developed a new digital platform for capturing students' ideas for improving the College. This initiative has been recognised by the Digital Entrepreneur Award (DEA) – the only national award body dedicated to internet entrepreneurialism. In its first year VocalEyes captured 26,000 student interactions. This resulted in action being taken in a variety of areas to improve the College, from how to develop the courtyard space that had fallen into disuse, to what extra-curricular activities students want to get involved in and issues over timetabling.

Students participating in the online consultation platform are now better able to have their voice heard, whilst student representatives and the senior management team are able to respond more effectively. Heads of Faculty own their respective area of the platform and take responsibility to feedback to management the information gathered.

In 2012 Pembrokeshire reported having the lowest staff sickness absence rate within the FE sector in the UK at 2%. The award winning Staff and Community Voucher scheme allows staff and their families to access a wide range of free courses and complimentary therapies. Staff get up to 10 days paid leave a year to pursue personal and professional development.

Construction Links With Africa

A partnership project involving Coleg Sir Gâr and industry partners is cementing international relations with an overseas construction project, aimed at improving lives in a Ugandan village. The college, in partnership with Carmarthenshire Construction Training Association Ltd (CCTAL), Carmarthenshire County Council, the Saltpeter Trust and Engineers for Overseas Development Carmarthenshire, are building a grinding mill and storage facility for a group of widows running Kachumbala Farmer's Charity Group. Tradesmen who gained their apprenticeships through Coleg Sir Gâr have been working on the project. Read More >

Plans are plans now underway to build a maternity ward in the same region of Kachumbala in consultation with the NHS. Read More >

Coleg Sir Gar in Uganda