

HAPPY FIRST BIRTHDAY ALG!

GRANT HELPING OVER 200 DERBYSHIRE LEARNERS FULFILL THEIR POTENTIAL

CASH INJECTION PROVIDES HEALTHY START FOR DERBYSHIRE STUDENT

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As the Adult Learning Grant today celebrates its one-year anniversary since the national roll-out in 2007, figures show that the scheme has soared to success over the past 12 months, providing financial support to 212 adult learners across Derbyshire. Take-up in this first year of national roll-out has hugely exceeded expectations and has proved just how popular the scheme is.

Further research by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has also revealed that adults make fantastic learners, with 77% of adults in LSC funded further education provisions being successful in their courses. This proves that although adults may face some of the biggest hurdles when it comes to going back to education, they make some of the best learners.

In fact, ALG, which offers adults up to £30 per week to go back to learning, was so successful when initially piloted across the UK in 2003-2006, that the national roll-out was brought forward a year.

Dean Stirland, 19, from Clay Cross near Chesterfield is getting a healthy start to his dream career in nursing, with help from the Adult Learning Grant (ALG).

Dean has accepted a place on the Adult Nursing course at Derby University from September, after studying for a BTEC National Diploma Level 3 in Health and Social Care at Chesterfield College.

Dean said:

“From secondary school I wanted to be a nurse but I was really lacking confidence. I left school and started a job as a sales assistant. Doing the job for a year was good for me and gave me a massive confidence boost, however the job was not for me.

“I started a BTEC First Diploma in Health and Social Care and thought I could get a job after that in my chosen field. Then I heard about the ALG and I realised that was my chance to do what I’d always wanted to do. I thought this is it, it’s now or never. So I started the National Diploma. I wouldn’t have been able to study this without the money as it’s helped with my fuel, books and other things that I need for my course.

“Being a nurse is what I’ve always wanted to be and now I’m on my way to achieving it.”

Dean's tutor at the College Kathy Armitage said:

"Dean is a very enthusiastic student and has made the most of every opportunity Chesterfield College has to offer, but the added help with living costs meant that he could devote his efforts to studying and placement work.

"For someone like Dean, with all the right personal qualities to study for a new career, the Adult Learning Grant allowed him commit to a full time study route that leads towards his ambition - to go into Nursing."

Trevor Clay, Chesterfield College Director of Corporate Services said:

"I think the growth in adult learners choosing to study full time at Chesterfield College owes a lot to the Adult Learning Grant. We have also introduced a range of Gateway courses designed for people with time constraints so that choosing a new career, or working to gain new qualifications does not have to depend so much on your circumstances."

Mick Brown, Area Director for the Learning and Skills Council in Derbyshire, said:

"The Adult Learning Grants are having a great impact on the lives of adults across Derbyshire, offering so many learners a helping hand in education. The grant can be used to help with anything from the cost of books and materials, through to childcare costs and really does give critical support to adults who might not otherwise have the opportunity to go back to learning."

If you are thinking about going back to college it's time to start looking at your options. ALG could help you – to find out if you are eligible visit www.direct.gov.uk/alg or call 0800 121 8989 today.

- ENDS -

For more information please contact:

Helen Clarke at COI News and PR on 0115 971 2787

Notes to Editors:

Learning and Skills Council

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

ALG is available to low income adults in England aged 19 or over who are studying full time for their first full level 2 (5 GCSE's at grades A* to C or an NVQ2 or its equivalent) or a first full level 3 (2 A levels or an NVQ3 or its equivalent) qualification.

**ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL BY COI
NEWS AND PR. T: 0115 9712787**