



This project is funded by:



Individual Case Study

University of Central Lancashire, Ambassadors for the Future

Project Overview

The Ambassadors for the Future programme aims to engage and inspire 16-19 year olds that are not in education, employment, or training (NEET), or those at risk of becoming NEET, through a range of interesting and stimulating 'energiser' courses, designed to progress young people into volunteering, education or training.

The initiative is delivered across Lancashire; in Preston, Chorley, South Ribble, Lancaster, Morecambe, Burnley and Pendle. Throughout the two year duration of the programme, five different energiser courses are available including; music production, film production, broadcasting, sports leadership and new business workshops on topics such as finance, marketing, media and communication. The courses provide participants with a taste of the different career options on offer.

The Ambassadors for the Future project is run through the International School for Communities, Rights and Inclusion at the University of Central Lancashire. The University works with five partners to deliver each of the energiser courses, they are; Lancaster University Volunteering Unit, Lancashire Sports Partnership, CSV Training and Enterprise, Burnley Telematics and Teleworking Centre and Prescap.

The University of Central Lancashire received funding for the programme from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) as part of its 2007-10 European Social Fund (ESF) Co-finance Plan.

How it Works

Participants are recruited onto the scheme via various routes such as self referrals, through training providers, pupil referral units, Lancashire County Council's Young People's Service and advertisements in local schools.

As well as getting the opportunity to learn new skills, beneficiaries can also gain qualifications, for example through the Lancashire Sport energiser course they can work towards an accredited Sports Leader qualification. Other courses such as the Prescap community radio station energiser have volunteer journalist and DJ places available to those young people who are interested in expanding on the work they do on the course. All young people that complete an energiser course gain an AQA Unit Award in 'Completing an Energiser' and receive a reference from the University of Central Lancashire.

The project aims to engage young people and inspire them to carry on with their development. Once participants get a taste for learning through the energiser courses it's hoped that they will want to further what they have learnt and progress into volunteering, education or training.

Impact and Success

Seventeen year old participant, Richard Walmsley, was referred to the Ambassadors for the Future programme through Lancashire County Council's Young Peoples Service. Living in supported accommodation, Richard had no family or friends to support him and was beginning get into trouble with the police for anti-social behaviour.

Richard said: "The Ambassadors for the Future programme was the turning point in my life, I was going down the wrong route but the course provided me with the opportunity to turn my life around."

Richard saw the Lancashire Sport energiser course as a way to gain qualifications and progress onto a career in sport, going on to achieve a Sports Leader qualification and proceeded to take advantage of the progression opportunities offered to him.

Richard continues: "Following the course I got offered a work placement at West View leisure centre in Preston. I've also been volunteering as a Coaching Assistant

working with young children across a range of sports such as basketball, football and circuit training as part of a programme called Streetwise Sports.”

Richard now has a Junior Football (JFO) Level 1 Futsal, which certifies that he has been trained to plan and deliver safe football training sessions and lead basic football practices and tournaments. He has also completed over 180 hours volunteering at West View leisure centre.

Richard said: “I have been able to get my head down and stuck into something that really interests me and now I have more confidence and motivation to achieve my goals. It’s changed my life, gone are the days of getting in trouble with the police, now I spend my time being active and working towards further qualifications.

“I am set on a career in the sports industry and the programme has provided me with the opportunity to discover this ambition and make it a reality.”

With a fresh approach to learning Richard is currently applying for an Apprenticeship and is committed to moving onwards and upwards.

ENDS

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