

Universe

Summer 2010

National Science and Engineering Week

Sixty Year 10 and 11 students visited The University of Northampton to take part in workshops on flint tool making and the evolution of bacteria as part of National Science and Engineering Week.

The students were attending 'eVolution', a day of lectures and workshops around the theme of evolution – run by the University's Schools of Science and Technology, Health, and Social Sciences.

There were also talks, including a lecture on human evolution from Dr Margaret Clegg from the Natural History Museum.

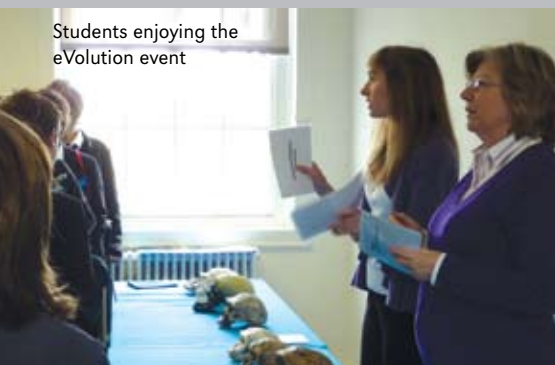
A further 45 students took part in the University's 'Be. Switched On' event, which encourages the study of Computing at further/higher education level. Sessions on offer included robot programming, software engineering and 'chatbots' – using online software for a question and answer dialogue with a computer.

National Science and Engineering Week is a ten-day programme of science, engineering and technology events and activities across the UK. The aim is to encourage young people to study and follow a career in science and engineering.

Dean of the School of Science and Technology, Professor Kamal Bechkoum, commented:

"The importance of science and technology in our daily lives is often taken for granted but it is continuously used to improve our economic, social, environmental and cultural well being."

Students enjoying the eVolution event



Students attending the HE conference



Over 6,000 students attend HE Conference

Over 6,000 students visited The University of Northampton in March to attend the annual Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Higher Education (HE) Conference 2010.

Aimed at sixth form and college students interested in going into HE, students had the opportunity to talk to 130 exhibitors from HE institutions across the UK.

The two-day event provided a full range of information highlighting the benefits of further study in subjects such as health, arts, science, technology, social sciences, business and education. Throughout the conference students had the opportunity to attend special talks on finance, accommodation and student life.

David Seaton, Schools and Colleges Liaison Officer at The University of Northampton, explained: "The University is delighted to be leading the way in opening new doors to HE for prospective students by hosting this new-format conference, and also giving visitors as wide a perspective as possible by welcoming colleagues from other universities and colleges to our Park Campus."

The event was held in partnership with Connexions Northamptonshire, Aimhigher and Milton Keynes Council, and is supported and part-funded by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

Graduate success celebrated in day of ceremonies

Over 1,300 students graduated from The University of Northampton at the Winter Award Ceremonies.

Amongst these graduands were the first cohort from the School of Health's highly successful FdSc Paramedic Science course and a group of five students from Dubai, the first to graduate from Northampton Business School's MA International Human Resource Management programme.

Honorary Awards were conferred on local businessman and Chairman of Northampton Saints Rugby Club Keith Barwell, who received an Honorary Fellowship, and former Daily Telegraph war correspondent and author Tim Butcher, who received an Honorary Doctorate.

Students reach final of national law competition

Two Law students from The University of Northampton won a place in the finals of a national law competition.

60 teams from 34 institutions across England and Wales recently took part in the regional heats of the Negotiation Competition 2010. Victoria Hajba and Camilla Graham were one of 12 teams to win a place at the national final in London.

In the competition Law students work in teams of two and negotiate complex legal scenarios against a team of students from a different institution. The students' negotiation skills are judged by a panel of three judges.

Margaret Roberts, Senior Lecturer in Law in the University's School of Social Sciences, explains: "The Negotiation Competition is sponsored by the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution and is supported by the College of Law. It is an excellent annual event which helps Law students to develop essential skills in negotiation."

The University of Northampton appoints new Vice Chancellor

Professor Nick Petford DSc has been appointed as the next Vice Chancellor of The University of Northampton. He will succeed Ann Tate, the current Vice Chancellor, who retires this summer after eight years in the role.

Professor Petford, a geologist by training and currently Pro Vice Chancellor for Research and Enterprise at Bournemouth University, will join The University of Northampton on 1 September 2010.

School of Education help to develop new teaching skills in Estonia

Staff from a school in Estonia learnt new approaches to teaching during a visit to The University of Northampton.

Four teachers from Kaagvere School spent ten days in Northamptonshire as part of a new project to improve the social and emotional development of students in Estonia. The project is being run in collaboration with the Centre for Special Needs Education and Research (CeSNER) in the University's School of Education.

The visitors attended workshops at the University, and worked with local teachers and students. The workshops looked at the use of creative group work approaches and developing social and emotional aspects of learning, and included ways to integrate these approaches into the social curriculum of the school. These are new techniques for schools in Estonia.

Barry Groom, Senior Lecturer with CeSNER, has been working with the school for several years. Barry said: "We offer a range of advice and consultancy based on our own experience of working with young people that have challenging backgrounds."

University awarded official Fairtrade status

The University of Northampton has been accredited with Fairtrade University status, having its application noted as 'excellent' by the Fairtrade Foundation.

Work on the University's Fairtrade accreditation commenced in May 2008, led by a project team co-ordinated by Paul Taylor, Sustainability Officer. Paul commented:

"The University of Northampton has worked hard to achieve this status and it is a fantastic milestone for us. Fairtrade guarantees producers in developing countries a fair and stable price for their products that covers their costs and enables them to support their families and invest in a better future."



Sue Allen (centre) talks to Students in the new Paramedic Skills Laboratory



New facilities provide students with realistic training experiences

Students in the School of Health at The University of Northampton are gaining valuable practical experience thanks to two new training facilities.

Dr David Zideman, a Queen's Honorary Physician and Clinical Lead – Emergency Medical Care for the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games, officially opened the Paramedic Skills Laboratory. It includes a modified ambulance and separate living space that will be used to train students on the University's Foundation Degree in Paramedic Science.

The University's new Dental Suite was opened by Barry Cockcroft, Deputy Chief Dental Officer for England. It provides access to fully operational dental equipment and gives students on the Dental Nursing Foundation degree programme the opportunity to gain practical experience using key professional tools.

Sue Allen, Dean of the School of Health at The University of Northampton, said: "The new Paramedic Skills Laboratory and Dental Suite show our commitment to providing excellent teaching and training facilities that will enhance the skills and learning experiences for our students."

[Re] Fashion Show showcases recycled clothing

The University of Northampton recently held a charity Fashion Show and fundraising evening with an emphasis on 'recycled' fashion.

The [Re] Fashion Show formed part of the events held during National Student Volunteering Week 2010.

Year 1 BA Fashion students designed garments from unwanted charity shop stock, recycled and reclaimed materials.

Other student and staff volunteers got involved by managing the event, modelling, designing hair and make-up, and creating a video documentary and photographic record.

HE update

Some of the recent HE headlines hitting the press...

Over 50% of young women attending university

Provisional figures for university entrance in 2008/09 show that a record 51% of young women in England are going into Higher Education. Twenty years ago only about one in five young women studied on a university course.

Students see university as worthwhile investment

The Sodexo-Times Higher Education University Lifestyle Survey has revealed that more than one-in-ten students changed their course or career plans as a result of recent economic conditions. However, it also found that most students are confident that attending university is a worthwhile investment in their career.

University funding revealed

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) have announced how much of a £7.3 billion fund universities will be allocated for 2010/2011.

There will be an increased concentration of funding to universities with the highest quality research.

Record number of foreign students

The number of foreign students coming to study at UK universities increased to record levels during 2008/09 according to official figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (Hesa). There were rises of nearly 5% in students from mainland Europe, and 9.4% in students from outside Europe.

Business demand for postgraduates

A new report indicates that there is a high demand amongst businesses for employees with higher degrees.

The 'Talent Fishing' report by the Council for Industry and Higher Education – carried out for the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills – explores businesses' requirements for postgraduates, and how business and Higher Education Institutions can work together to improve postgraduate skills.

Sources: BBC News online – www.bbc.co.uk, Times Higher Education – www.timeshighereducation.co.uk, Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) – www.hefce.ac.uk, Council for Industry and Higher Education – www.cihe.co.uk

Northampton Business School welcomes Claire Young

The University of Northampton's Business School hosted a guest lecture by Apprentice 2008 finalist Claire Young.

Claire spoke to an audience of students, staff and University alumni about her career, how to start your own business and what it was like to be in the boardroom with Sir Alan Sugar.

Claire, who runs her 'Elegant Venues' business from Northamptonshire, commented:

"After thoroughly enjoying my university experience, I find it refreshing to take a couple of hours out of the 'business world' to step back into education and appreciate the grounding it gave me.

"I work with universities across the country on a regular basis and the quality of Northants students I met during the event really stood out – they were articulate, proactive and passionate – I have no doubt they will go on to succeed."

Claire Young



Students attend a presentation at the 'Be. An Inspiration' event



Be. at University

The University's popular 'Be.' programme of higher education guidance activities and resources is well underway for 2009/10.

We have held four highly successful taster days that have brought around 300 regional Year 12 students and equivalent onto campus so far this academic year:

- 'Be. In Business' (Business and related courses)
- 'Be. Creative' (The Arts)
- 'Be. An Inspiration' (Education)
- 'Be. Switched On' (Computing)

We will be holding 'Be. Biological' (Human Biosciences) and 'Be. Legal' (Law) in June.

The programme of on-campus activities is supported by a higher education guidance website and a monthly e-bulletin, 'Be. mail'. To use the online resources students (and their advisers) can visit www.be4university.com

Around 6,000 regional students have taken part in the Be. programme since its launch in September 2007.

For more information about how your students can get involved, please contact Melanie Fowler, Recruitment and Liaison Manager, on **01604 893299**.



For more information about how we can help you, contact Melanie Fowler, Recruitment and Liaison Manager, on 01604 893299 or email schools.liaison@northampton.ac.uk

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