July 2009

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON

The University of Northampton's staff magazine

PARK AVENUE

Summer Recruitment

The University's Summer Recruitment Campaign begins at the end of July with a big splash across a wide spread of media.

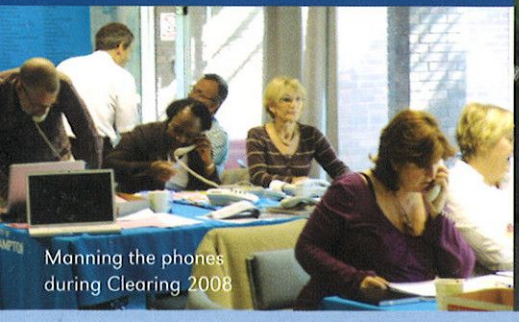
The focus on this year's campaign is to drive enquiries to the University for Clearing, which starts on Thursday 20 August, and late applications. It will also promote the University's part-time and professional provisions.

A 30 second television advert for the University will be delivered across C4 Midlands, ITV East Anglia West and E4 in August, as well as billboard posters and bus supersides in Northampton, Milton Keynes and Bedford. Radio and press adverts will also be part of the campaign.

Simon Marsh, Head of Marketing, commented:

"We are actually in a very strong position in terms of recruitment – ahead of where we were last year.

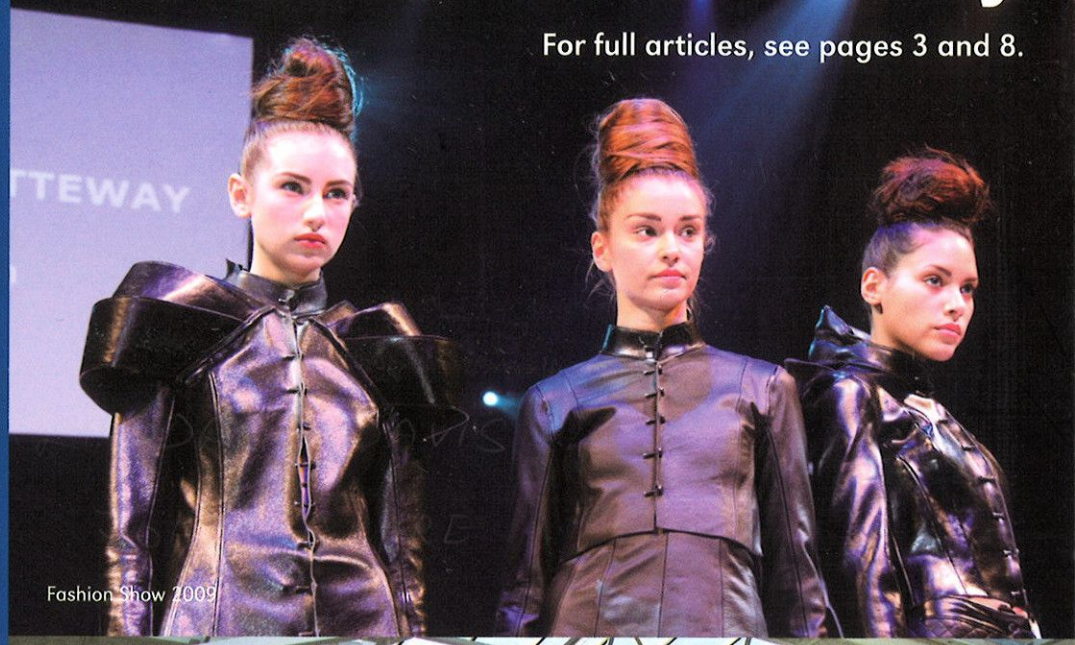
"It's business as usual on Clearing this year and we are entering it with a positive focus. We will be talking about full-time and part-time to potential students – if you can't get a place on a particular course, have you considered part-time study or a similar degree?"



Manning the phones during Clearing 2008

End of year high profile shows for University

For full articles, see pages 3 and 8.



Fashion Show 2009

Summer Show 2009

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Welcome...

Speaking proper

In the last issue of Park Avenue I talked about the need to challenge current use of workplace email and review our effectiveness at communicating with people across and outside of the University (for the latest on this see 'Subject: best use of email' on page 7).

This month I'd like to pick up briefly on another internal communication bugbear – the use of plain English versus business jargon, which seems to be continuing its steady, yet baffling creep into a variety of everyday activities.

This is a long running debate, the mere mention of which often sparks sharp concerns centred around 'dumbing down' and playing to the lowest common denominator.

However, this same issue has perhaps been best summarised by a group of MPs who recently gathered to talk about the language used by politicians and civil servants. All agreed many political and corporate speeches are gobbledygook, full of words and phrases like "amorphous challenges", "silo mentality" and "blue-sky thinking".

One pointed out that politicians could not be accused of lying if nobody understood what they had said, while another added they were particularly vulnerable to "wanting to sound more knowledgeable than they really were".

The lesson is that perhaps we should take more time in our busy schedules to consider what we mean, how to say it, and how it might be interpreted by others. At all costs I'd recommend avoiding debate on "cosmopolitan homogeneous compromises".

Mark Ferguson, Publications and Publicity Manager

Park Avenue

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Park Avenue is produced by The University of Northampton's Marketing and External Relations Office. The views and comments expressed in the magazine are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent those of The University of Northampton.

We welcome comments, suggestions, photos and articles for Park Avenue magazine whilst reserving the right to edit contributions for style and length.

Community spirit at volunteering awards

University staff members were recognised for their voluntary work during an annual awards ceremony as part of National Volunteers Week in June.

Community volunteering contributions were recognised in front of the High Sherriff, Deputy Mayor and partner organisations during the ceremony at Park Campus. Special awards were also presented to individual staff and teams for outstanding achievements and commitment:

- East and West Halls Housekeeping won the Staff Volunteering Team Award for their fundraising work
- Katie Jackson and Kate Swinton, Office of Learning and Teaching, were honoured with the Staff Volunteering Project Award for their Speakeasy project
- Staff Volunteering Individual Achievement Awards were given to Dr Anne Woolridge for her wide variety of volunteering on and off campus, and to Nicol Aphale for her work at St Andrews Hospital.

Linda Davis, Manager of the University's Centre for Community Volunteering, said: "Many charities and local organisations benefit from their time, expertise and enthusiasm; it is not always possible to measure impact but we know our volunteers make a difference."

Teams across the University chose volunteering as their team-building days this academic year, including Admissions staff who made raised beds for crop planting at Northampton Urban Farm,

Vice Chancellor Ann Tate with Dr Anne Woolridge

along with IPU staff who painted rooms for local charity Kidsaid. Many staff across campus enjoyed the Blooming Great Tea Party in aid of Marie Curie Cancer Care.

This academic year students and staff at the University have carried out over 23,000 hours of voluntary work, which equates to a contribution to the economy of nearly £320,000 *(Median hourly earnings for full time employment, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings – Office of National Statistics 2008).*

Contact ***volunteers@northampton.ac.uk*** for more information about volunteering.

Summer Show 2009

End of year high profile shows for University... (continued from front cover)

The end of the academic year is a time for celebration.

Over 2300 students will be graduating from the University in July and the recent Fashion Show and Summer Show from the School of The Arts have been a fantastic showcase for the talents of our students.

The Summer Show ran at Avenue Campus and welcomed visitors from the staff/student population, interested members of public, business and the arts industry. The Show was opened by Vice Chancellor Ann Tate and Paul Southworth, Chairman of Northamptonshire Enterprise Ltd (NEL) who hosted a group of NEL County Ambassadors from business and industry.

The opening also gave us time to reflect on a friend who is greatly missed. Two students from the School of The Arts were presented with prizes in memorial of Dave Keskeys by the Vice Chancellor and Dave's wife, Vicky. Simon Stanford, Year 3 BA (Hons) Photographic Practice, received the £500 Dave Keskeys Memorial Award and Sarah Parsons, Year 2 BA (Hons) Fine Art, received the £500 Council for Higher Education in Art and Design (CHEAD) Travel Bursary Photography Award.

Amanda Wilkinson and David Chang, both Year 2 BA (Hons) Fine Art students, additionally received Alumni Scholarship Awards of £400 each.

For the first time this year, the Summer Show featured film, video and performance work as well as fashion, fine art and design work. Christine Midgley, Fine Art Divisional Leader, School of The Arts, commented:

"It's been a very successful Show. Fine Art has had visits from J Gallery in Moulton, the Fishmarket in Northampton and the Bedford Street Gallery in Woburn to select work for exhibitions of our Fine Art graduates' work over the summer.

"The academic achievement has been high across all of the courses in the School of The Arts and in the Division of Fine Art, we are particularly pleased that the Show so successfully balances the work of painters, broad based fine artists and photographers."

You can read about the University's Graduate Fashion Show in our exclusive behind-the-scenes on Page 8.

Staff Forums

The University held four Staff Forums to allow members of staff to informally raise issues and give feedback on their working life at UN.

Topics which have been brought up in the Staff Forums so far include:

- Accommodation
- Parking and car park barrier
- Student career guidance
- Employability
- IT and timetabling
- Future strategy for the University
- Value of all staff understanding the University's mission
- Administrative support

The Forums are chaired by Sue Allen, Dean of the School of Health, John Hoskinson, Pro Vice Chancellor and Jo Brake, Director of Human Resources. When topics are raised, the Chairs seek to answer the issues at the Forums or gather information to feed back to the person making the enquiry. The areas discussed are also reported at a monthly Senior Management Team (SMT) meeting.

Sue Allen commented:

"The Forums are your opportunity to raise issues that are affecting you at the University and changes have already been made because of subjects raised.

"We also operate the 'suggest@' Staff Suggestion Scheme – simply send an email to ***suggest@northampton.ac.uk*** with any ideas, queries or concerns and we will promptly answer your enquiry, take ideas forward or find a solution."

The next series of Staff Forums will take place in the new academic year 2009/10 on:

- 6 October 2009, 2pm – Park
- 8 December 2009, 2pm – Avenue
- 9 February 2010, 10am – Park
- 11 May 2010, 1pm – Avenue

For further information, please contact Sue Allen on ***sue.allen@northampton.ac.uk*** or ***suggest@northampton.ac.uk***

Research Matters

A round-up on research at The University of Northampton...

Global success for CeSNER

The Centre for Special Needs Education and Research (CeSNER) within the School of Education is receiving international acclaim for innovative research into inclusion and managing behaviour in the classroom. Professor Richard Rose, Head of CeSNER, recounts some of this year's successes...

UK

CeSNER has been in the national media spotlight providing expert commentary on educational issues. The global impact of the Behaviour4Learning website (www.behaviour4learning.ac.uk), led by the University, has been widely recognised, with world-wide training events provided.

Australia

Philip Garner and I presented the keynote address at the West Australia Special School Principals' Conference. While we were there we held discussions at four university teacher education departments.

Annie Fergusson continues to provide advice to the Western Australia Ministry of Education and to Federal Government officials on the introduction of P Scales – performance descriptions for measuring the progress of pupils for whom the early levels of the National Curriculum are not appropriate.

Republic of Ireland

CeSNER successfully achieved two research bids in Ireland. One is funded by the Irish Department of Education and Science to examine the role of assistants in schools, and the second is a three year longitudinal study into Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision in schools across the country.

Dyslexia research is being conducted by Sheena Bell and Mary Doveston with St Patrick's College in Dublin.

Estonia

Research into children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties is being carried out by Barry Groom with colleagues from the University of Tartu.

Croatia

Philip Garner is in liaison with colleagues at the Croatian Ministry of Education regarding a potential project on disability, teacher training and inclusion.

The Head teacher from Marion Play Home in India visited the University and partner Fairfields School

Germany

Philip also recently addressed policy-makers and teachers from the state government of Schleswig-Hostein at the request of the European Agency for Special Needs.

Belgium

We are carrying out assessment work on a European joint doctorate project to make sure we are connected with the international agenda.

India

A team of teachers from Kerala requested a visit to the University in July based on CeSNER's reputation for research and practice. They visited our partners at Fairfields School, guided by our Masters and PhD students, to plan for future SEN teaching in India.

Hong Kong

Steve Cullingford Agnew and Sue Griffiths delivered training to education assistants in English Schools Foundation schools as the last stage of a course provided by CeSNER colleagues including Andy Smith and Mary Doveston.

As Visiting Professor at the Hong Kong Institute of Education, I am working on a project funded through the Research Council to look at models of support for inclusion in Hong Kong schools.

Singapore

I will be the keynote speaker at a major international conference on SEN and inclusion in the autumn.

US

Maria Howley has recently returned from North Carolina where she was training colleagues in the education of children with autistic spectrum disorders.

CeSNER's work is moving at such a fast pace that we are already booking our flights to start on our new projects!

For further information about the work of CeSNER contact *richard.rose@northampton.ac.uk*

A higher level

Terri Attwood, Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) Advocate in the School of Education, tells us how the University is helping support staff in regional schools to achieve top marks...

Lurking in corners throughout the Sulgrave building at Park Campus, with an isolated colony or two in mobiles, there exists an entity known as the Professional Development and Training (PDT) Division.

PDT is dedicated to training support staff working in schools throughout the East Midlands by providing a network of professional development and training opportunities to meet the needs of one of the fastest growing and constantly developing sectors in the country – teaching assistants.

Celebrating the work of this year's HLTA students event

Between 1997 and 2007 the number of teaching assistants working in schools rose from 61,000 to 177,000 which led to the creation of Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) status, giving support staff a career pathway for the first time.

Northamptonshire currently has 436 HLTAs with a wide range of roles and responsibilities working in schools across the county.

Our most recent HLTA graduates and their school head teachers gathered to celebrate their achievements and new status at an event on Park Campus in June.

Chaplaincy

University Chaplains and community faith representatives met for a special lunch to celebrate the opening of the University's refurbished Multi-Faith Chaplaincy in June.

The event was an opportunity for discussion among the Chaplains and guests, which included representatives from Muslim, Buddhist and Bahá'í faiths, on how the University can make sure the diverse needs of students from all faith backgrounds are met.

Professor Peter Bush, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic), officially reopened the building, signifying a new era for the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy.

Guests enjoying the Chaplaincy opening

Going on a leaner journey

Student practice placements are an essential element of vocational courses within the School of Health and the administrative processes undertaken to facilitate these placements is now under scrutiny.

Lisa McKenzie, School Manager, School of Health

Lisa McKenzie, School Manager, is carrying out a year-long project, funded by the Northamptonshire Local Health Community Workforce, mapping the placement journey for students studying within the divisions of Nursing, Midwifery, Paramedic Science, Occupational Therapy and Podiatry.

Using lean methodology, Lisa is looking at current processes to better understand the experience of all stakeholders which will include students, University staff and trust/organisation representatives. The mapping and review of these processes will highlight both models of good practice along with duplication of effort, time delays and areas of 'waste'.

Tim Peacock, Senior Lecturer from Northampton Business School, has a wealth of experience in Lean Management initiatives and is acting as consultant on the research, the data from which will support Lisa's current dissertation studies for a Masters in Business Administration at the University. The course included an assignment on Lean Management which was a contributory factor in the evolution of the project.

"Lean Management should not be viewed as a cost-saving exercise; it's not always about money," explains Lisa.

"We are streamlining processes, eliminating waste and providing all stakeholders with the information they require in a timely and efficient manner. Hopefully we'll have lots of win-win situations.

"Most processes are historic; we can see what needs to be improved but don't always have the time, so a dedicated project like this will help the School and Trusts really understand what is going on and focus on planning for the future."

Sports Awards

The Students' Union held its first Sports Awards Dinner recently at the Park Inn Hotel in Northampton where the outstanding sporting achievements of students were recognised.

Pro Vice Chancellor John Hoskinson and Academic Registrar Jane Bunce presented the students with certificates.

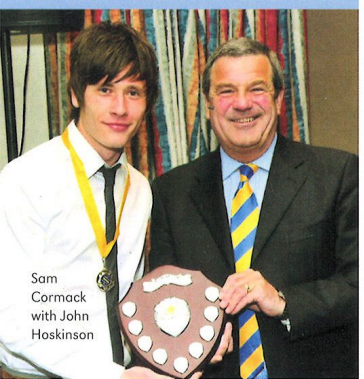
The Leadership Award was honoured to Adele Clarke, a founder of the University's Dance Club, who also received recognition from the University Volunteers for dedicated contribution to the Students' Union 2009.

The prestigious Full Colours Award, which is presented for outstanding achievement at national or international student level, went to Adam Cunnington from the Football team and Ant Peregrine from Lacrosse.

Our Lacrosse and Rugby League teams became Team and Club of the year respectively, by showing an outstanding commitment and fighting hard for the University.

Other winners included:

- Most Improved Player: Fiona Stohrer (Lacrosse)
- Sportsman of the Year: Sam Cormack (Football)
- Sportswoman of the Year: Kate Wright (Hockey)
- University Half Colours: Sam Cormack (Football), Tim Stevens (Rugby League) and Seb Ward (Rugby League).



Sam Cormack with John Hoskinson

John Jones meets Damon Hill, whom he nominated as an Honorand

Nominations open for Summer 2010 Honorands

Following the 2009 Summer Honorary Fellowship and Doctorate Awards, did you know that anyone can nominate a potential Honorand?

The process begins when a member of staff completes the Honorary Awards Nomination Form, which is available to download from the Honorary Awards Committee website on the intranet.

Completed nominations are presented to the Honorary Awards Committee, which is the joint meeting of Governing Council and Senate, and are subsequently approved by Senate and Governing Council in the late Autumn Term.

The deadline for this current round of nominations is Friday 18 September and a message will shortly be issued via TUNIS inviting nominations.

If you have not previously nominated anyone, it's a good time to start. Think about who would you like to see associated with the University or who you would like to engage with in your work.

Even if you have nominated before, we would like more of your suggestions.

Further information is available from Nick Allen, Deputy Clerk, on ext ***2320*** or ***nick.allen@northampton.ac.uk***

You've got mail

There will be a new look to all-staff emails coming soon with the launch of Park Ave-news.

This weekly e-newsletter will bring headline information about important issues for staff straight to your PC, as part of ongoing plans to improve internal communications and keep you up-to-date on key developments in and around the University.

Park Ave-news will be made up of news about the University, Schools and Departments and will feature a selection of items and updates submitted by staff to the intranet homepage.

To make it easier to find information which matters to you, our staff intranet homepage has also been redesigned. It will feature key news in a top-of-page 'Park Ave-news' section, a comprehensive events column and a new online notice board to view and post details such as staff social news and lost, found or for sale items.

Park Ave-news will replace the current TUNIS Digest emails, so please make sure you visit the staff intranet homepage regularly to be kept updated on events and social news. Better still, make it your homepage: open the intranet, click on the staff tab, go to Tools, then Internet Options, click Use Current and then Apply.

If you have any comments please email ***suggest@northampton.ac.uk***

Subject: best use of email

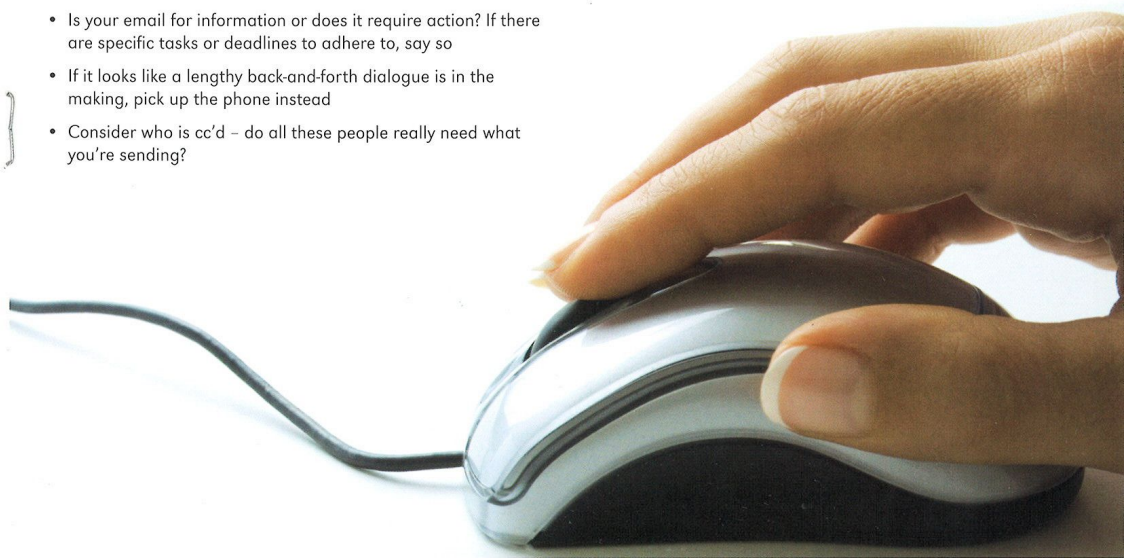
Around two million emails are sent every minute in the UK and a recent study found one-third of office workers suffer from email stress.

It's little wonder the likelihood of spending half a working day glued to your inbox can leave you feeling tired, frustrated and unproductive. And it is expensive, with one FTSE firm estimating that dealing with pointless emails costs it around £39m a year.

There is little doubt email can be both a blessing and a curse, so here follows an unofficial guide to best practise in using and managing email:

- First question – do you need to email? Don't forget the power of a quick face-to-face chat or catch up on the phone
- Subject heading – make sure this clearly communicates the purpose of your message
- Be brief, to the point and relevant. State clearly what you need or have to share
- Is your email for information or does it require action? If there are specific tasks or deadlines to adhere to, say so
- If it looks like a lengthy back-and-forth dialogue is in the making, pick up the phone instead
- Consider who is cc'd – do all these people really need what you're sending?
- Help manage expectations on how quickly you can respond. Develop a policy with colleagues, students and other contacts on reasonable expectations
- Resist the urge to check your inbox more than twice daily. The rest of the time, switch it off to avoid distraction every time a new message arrives
- Use your 'archive folders' facility to help manage email records and keep your inbox free
- Be polite in emails – "please, thank you and kind regards" cost nothing

Do you have comments on this article or ideas on how to improve email at work? If yes, send them to ***suggest@northampton.ac.uk***



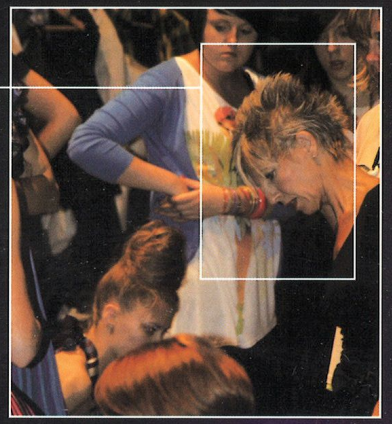
Backstage Pass

The University's annual Fashion Show attracted an audience of nearly 3,000 people to Royal & Derngate in June with two spectacular catwalk shows. All eyes were on the fantastic designs of the Year 2 and Year 3 BA Fashion pathway students but many people do not know about the hard work going on behind-the-scenes.

Jane Mills, Senior Lecturer in Fashion and Textiles, School of The Arts:

"The preparation for our two shows at London Graduate Fashion Week and Northampton is immense. On the actual day of the Northampton show, we start early in the morning at Avenue Campus by loading up the lorry with the clothes rails and collections in running order. At the Derngate, we make sure the model sets are in the right order; one outfit out of synch can throw the whole show, so we check and re-check throughout the day.

"The models arrive early so I make sure they are happy and oversee the fittings with the designers. We have 144 outfits in total to go through and each model has a walkthrough to practice with their props and shoes. I also liaise with the Show Producer who makes everything run smoothly on the catwalk, thank you to 'doll Productions'. I'm backstage until about 10pm so I don't get to see the shows front-of-house but I do catch up with our show DVDs after!"



Daniel Falls, Marketing Officer, Marketing and External Relations:

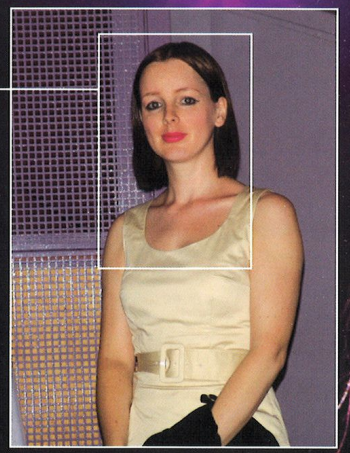
"Working with Meredith, I was involved in a lot of pre-event activity such as booking coaches for the models to come up from London and organising the awards for the schools competition winners. On the day, I started at 8am and was overseeing our student ambassadors to set up stands, look after our corporate table, stuff goody-bags etc... I was also the point of contact for our sponsors and supporters at the Show. We finished around 11.30pm after a fun and lively event."

Meredith White, School Manager, School of The Arts:

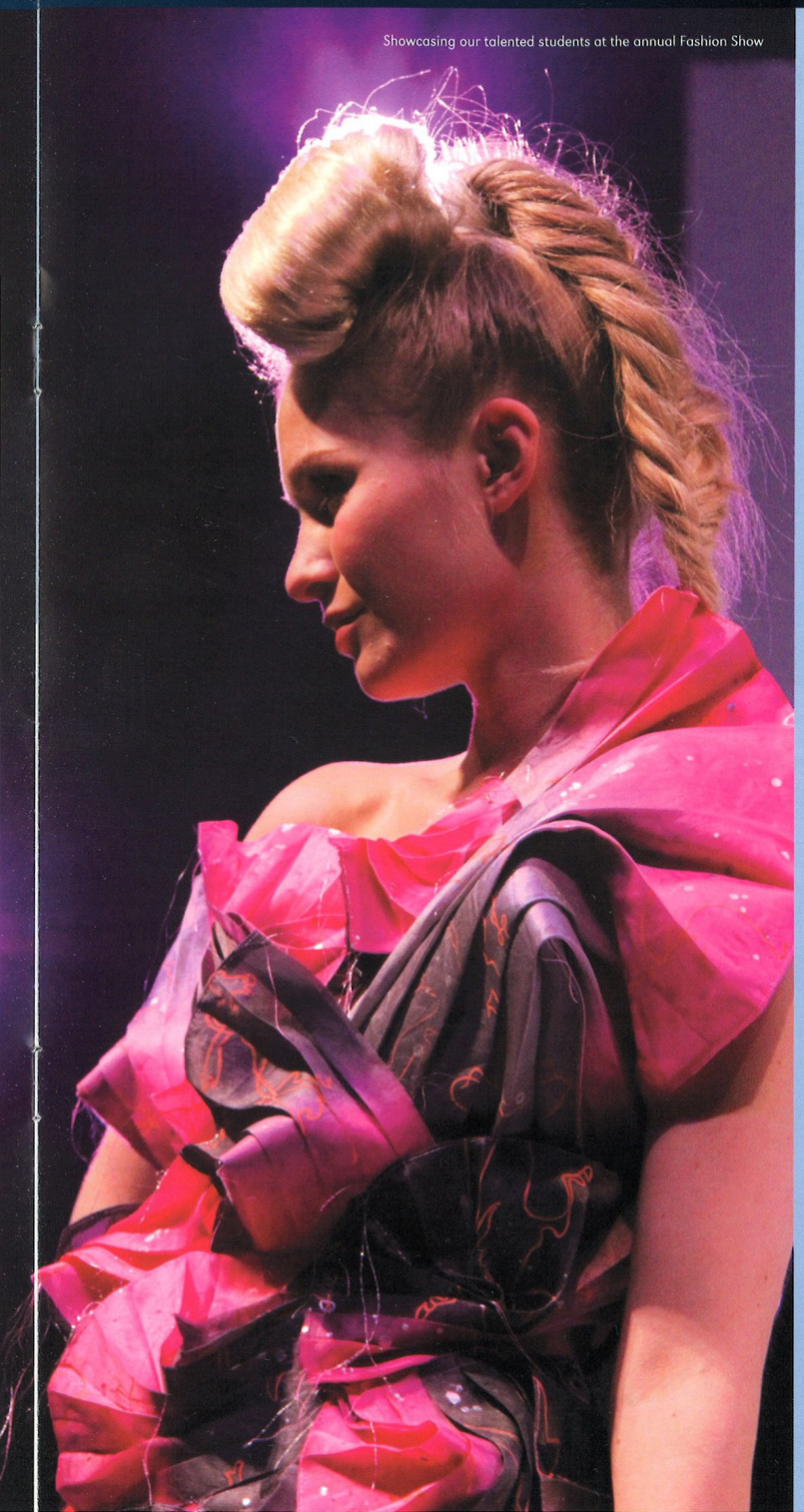
"The plan for the Show is a year-long project. I work across all aspects of the Show, from ticket bookings, seating plans and VIP lists, through to liaising with the Royal & Derngate on technical specifications. I also work with the Fashion team to ensure their requirements are met and with PR and Marketing in Marketing and External Relations. On the day I started at 8am at the Derngate making sure everything ran smoothly from a front-of-house perspective. Students from Year 2 Fashion were an enormous help with selling programmes and meeting and greeting guests."

Claire Bicknell, Press and PR Officer, Marketing and External Relations:

"Once one Show is over, we start planning the next and we get PR out quickly after to all relevant media with the date of next year's Show. In June, we rapidly increase our 'sell-in' to media with our events at London Graduate Fashion Week and Northampton. In London, we were lucky enough to have actress Emma Watson in our front row which attracted attention from Vogue amongst other media. Altogether, the Press Office has arranged around 62 pieces of national and regional press coverage for Fashion in 2008/09."



Showcasing our talented students at the annual Fashion Show



New technology on display in T-POD

Information Services (IS) and the Office of Learning and Teaching have opened a new T-POD facility.

The T-POD, based in the Rockingham Library building on Park Campus, offers members of staff the chance to try out new ways of engaging with students in a learning and teaching capacity.

Over 100 staff recently attended the T-POD Open Day where they took part in activities such as voting systems, exploring games units and trying out handwriting recognition software on Tablet PCs. Rob Howe, Head of Learning Technology and Media Development, Information Services, commented:

"The T-POD can accommodate around 18 people in staff development mode and it is a safe and supportive environment with the very latest in technology innovation in which colleagues across the University can try out new methods of working with students in their learning and teaching. We have purchased new equipment that people may not have necessarily tried out before, including hardware such as mobile devices, video conferencing, HD projectors, smartboards, games units and voting systems.

"The T-POD was orginally based in Grendon for two years, but we decided to move it to the library for accessibility and it is also closer to the Learning Technology team's office. This means we can come out and facilitate sessions easily for staff who are interested."

There are plans investigating the possibility of opening a T-POD at Avenue Campus in the next academic year and staff will be consulted over the technology which will be utilised in the new area.

Look out for further sessions over the next year which will take place in this innovative and flexible room. To enquire about use of the equipment please email ***nilesupport@northampton.ac.uk***

Spotlight on BSLT

(back l-r) Tanya Hayes, Paul Evans, Pat Potter, Dr Jeffry Guthrie-Strachan, Chris Barnard, Dr Clark Maxwell, Dr Paula Antunes, Rachel Garwood, Professor Tony Covington, (front l-r) Jeanette Casey, Dr Mark Wilkinson and Professor Geoff Attenburrow

Celebrations marking the centenary of the University's internationally acclaimed British School of Leather Technology (BSLT) are attracting funds to influence the next 100 years of leather education.

Thanks to support from the world-wide leather industry, whose attention has been drawn to the University through this year's global celebrations, BSLT can make plans to redevelop and expand research and knowledge transfer into new areas like fashion, footwear, wastes management and creative industries.

Dr Mark Wilkinson, Head of BSLT and Associate Dean (Development), said: "Our celebrations are more than just reflecting on past stories – it is sharing a vision that will see us build on our strengths and embrace new innovation, setting down a marker for excellence at the University for the next 100 years."

Established in Bermondsey in 1909, the original Leathersellers' Technical College has merged, relocated and changed its name several times since and is now the BSLT, housed in the Leathersellers' Centre at Park Campus.

As well as chemical and testing laboratories, the building houses a tannery and a hide store containing a variety of skins and hides, all preserved with salt.

Chris Barnard, Tannery Technician, who was born locally into the leather trade, is responsible for the day to day running of the tannery. He helps the students through the meticulous process from soaking to remove blood, dirt and salt, all the way through un-hairing, tanning, dyeing, drying and eventually to the finishing stages where the top protective coats and colours are applied.

"In the past all this would have been done by hand," explained Chris. "The bating part to soften the hide used to be carried out using dog and hen dung."

Luckily, today's students have the luxury of the latest technology. Dr Clark Maxwell hopes to bring X-ray Scattering to the leather community.

"We make a beam of X-rays, put a leather sample into the beam path which scatters the X-rays, and how it scatters tells us about the structure of the materials. Essentially we are doing the same thing as the human eye, just using X-rays, detectors and computers."

"The bating part to soften the hide used to be carried out using dog and hen dung."

Pat Potter and Tanya Hayes keep everyone on their toes with their laboratory expertise and Jeanette Casey looks after the mountains of admin.

BSLT's teaching staff - Dr Jeffry Guthrie-Strachan, Dr Paula Antunes, Dr Clark Maxwell, Rachel Garwood, Professor Tony Covington and Professor Geoff Attenburrow to name a few - are world-leading experts in their respective fields of leather chemistry, leather structure and properties.

Being the world centre of leather excellence is never an easy job as Paul Evans, Senior Lecturer in Leather Technology, said: "I've had 35 years in the industry and I'm still learning how to tan leather!"

Details of BSLT education celebrations are at ***www.northampton.ac.uk/leathercentenary***

NBS seek to expand contacts in food and drink

Adrian Pryce, a Senior Lecturer in Northampton Business School's Business and International Management Division, is looking at developing closer ties with the regional food and drink industry.

Adrian is interested in hearing from anyone working in or involved with food and drink or associated companies in the packaging and logistics areas, and also professional service firms with a strong industry focus.

A database is being built up gathering the following information:

- Academic colleagues interested in the food and drink sector
- Alumni working in the sector
- Other sector contacts
- Academic contacts in other universities with an interest in the sector, especially oversees
- Food and drink industry case studies (from anywhere in the world)
- Academic articles, books and other pedagogical material drawn from the food, drink and related industries.

Adrian commented:

"Any help from colleagues would be much appreciated. The objective is to deepen our knowledge of this key sector, one of the East Midlands four strategic priorities. This is because the East Midlands in general and Northamptonshire in particular display signs of an evolving industry 'cluster', being especially strong in ready meals and prepared foods, for example salads, as well as having high profile producers such as Weetabix close by."

If you can help, please contact ***adrian.pryce@northampton.ac.uk***

Open Day

On Sunday 14 June the University's first Open Day of 2009 attracted over 4,000 prospective students onto campus.

Further Open Days take place on:

- 21 August
- 16 September
- 17 October
- 7 November

A big thank you to everyone who helped out and made the event a success. The continued support of staff on these vital recruitment events is much appreciated.

For further information on Open Days, please contact Daniel Falls on ext ***3269*** or email ***daniel.falls@northampton.ac.uk***

Visitors at the June Open Day got a hands-on experience

Observations

Roxanne Dean is an LLB (Hons) Law graduate at The University of Northampton and is now studying the Legal Practice Course at the Oxford Institute of Legal Practice. Roxanne is drawing on her experience as a Law student at the University to help run a 'pro-bono' environmental law programme for 'under-advised' locals in Guyana, South America.

We very rarely hear of the destruction that is being caused to the natural environment in Guyana, but with it containing one of the four remaining frontier rainforests in the world, protecting Guyana's natural environment is crucial in mitigating global climate change.

Unfortunately, however, the indigenous communities in Guyana are finding that their natural environment, the savannah, the rainforest and rivers, are being damaged by unsustainable developments such as mining, oil drilling and logging.

After hearing about the struggles that the indigenous communities in Guyana are facing and realising the global impact of the situation, I was eager to get involved.

Guyana is a tropical country situated on the northern coast of South America. It is the only country in South America where English is the official language, due to being under British rule until 1966.

Sadly, the majority of indigenous people in Guyana have not had the opportunity for a good education and many cannot read and write. Therefore, although there are some laws in place that should help to protect their interests, the local people are unaware of their rights and how to use their voice.

In July of this year, I will be travelling to Guyana with a group of students to train fifty local leaders and community members on how to use their laws and to engage in consultations and decision making for the future of the rainforest. The NGO, Pro-Natura International, is also hoping that this training course will be used as a model to help other indigenous people struggling to survive in other regions of the world.

"Both my LLB degree and the lecturers in the University's Law Department inspired my interest in human rights"

I am so proud to be involved in such a worthy cause. Both my LLB degree and the lecturers in the University's Law Department inspired my interest in human rights, and I will be bringing a variety of skills to this voluntary project that I learned during my time at Northampton. I hope that future students will be inspired to get involved in other voluntary projects with causes as worthy as Guyana's.

Hitting the headlines

The Press Office team are working hard with colleagues across the University to enhance our profile and reputation. Recent headlines include:

Professor Tony Covington receives prestigious IULTCS Merit Award for Excellence in the Leather Industry on **BBC Radio Northampton** (15/06/09), **Leather International** (16/06/09) and **World Leather online** (23/06/09)

Speaking with Forked Tongues conference focus of media attention across the UK and on two **BBC Radio Northampton broadcasts** (08/06 and 26/06/09)

London Graduate Fashion Week BA Fashion pathway Year 3 collections praised by **national and international media/blogs**

Forthcoming events

'New Directions in African Theatre and Performance' African Theatre Association Conference

Thursday 30 July – Sunday 2 August
9am-7pm daily, Avenue Campus

Email victor.ukaegbu@northampton.ac.uk
Telephone 01604 893171

Open Day

Friday 21 August, 10am-3pm
Avenue and Park campuses

Email daniel.falls@northampton.ac.uk
Telephone 01604 893269

Part-time/professional Open Evening

Wednesday 2 September, 5.30-7.30pm
Cottesbrooke Building, Park Campus

Email business@northampton.ac.uk
Telephone 01604 892036

Inspiring Transformations: Applied Arts and Health Conference 2009

Tuesday 8 – Thursday 10 September
Park Campus

Email karen.haines@northampton.ac.uk
Telephone 01604 892373

Open Day

Wednesday 16 September, 10am-3pm
Avenue and Park campuses

Email daniel.falls@northampton.ac.uk
Telephone 01604 893269

We welcome comments, suggestions, photos, event listings and articles for Park Avenue magazine

Please email staffmagazine@northampton.ac.uk or telephone 01604 893264

Deadline for contribution suggestions for the next issue of Park Avenue is 28 August.

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