



Message from the Principal ...

The start of the autumn term is always a busy and exciting time. I am delighted to welcome 750 new students to college and to see over 630 students return for a second year. I am also looking forward to meeting new parents and keen to find out your views on how effectively we support your sons and daughters.

We aim to be an outstanding sixth form college and this means combining excellent examination results with a rich learning experience.

We were delighted with the examination results in the summer. The pass rates for A level and AS levels were 98.7% and 94.6% respectively and the percentage of higher grades (A+B) 57%/45% was the best in the college's history. 6 students were accepted at Oxford or Cambridge University and 74 students gained all grade As in their A levels. Results were consistently good across all 43 subjects and the value added information, which takes account of students' performance at GCSE, is excellent.

I am delighted to welcome students from 25 different schools and we will try hard to make everyone feel "at home" within a very short period. A good way to integrate into college life is to get involved in one of the many clubs, teams and societies.

From October 1 we will be opening the new student social space at 5/6 St Austin's Street, which is next to the Learning Centre. Not only will this provide a centre for students to go to when they are not in lessons – but it will house the offices of the new College Council Presidents and Wendy Challinor – the new Youth Support Worker.

Over the course of the year there will be formal and informal opportunities to come into college to talk to staff about the progress of your son/daughter, and there will be other opportunities to see college events such as drama productions, musical concerts and the new celebrating achievement event which is planned for April 2010.

We want to maintain effective communication with parents and therefore we aim to communicate in a variety of ways. We are keen this year to place any key information for parents on the relevant section on our website. If you would like to join the parents' forum then please contact Michael Jaffrain – Assistant Principal at mjn@ssfc.ac.uk

If you have a concern about the college or the progress of your son/daughter please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to sharing a very successful year with you and your son/daughter.

Martin Ward



Girls' pitch success continues

The SSFC Girls' Football team have got off to a flyer in their first season in the British College Sports league, winning 4-1 at home to Stourbridge and 8-1 away against Hales & Dudley. In the game against Hales & Dudley we went a goal down before going into half-time with a 2-1 lead. In the second half we were the stronger team, scoring another 6. Sarah Burke scored 4, Abby Francis scored 2 and Amy Tomei and Chloe Mapp netted once each. 4 of the players have been selected for trials on the 7th October for the West Midlands Colleges' team, potentially leading to trials for the national team.

Website Developments

We are constantly updating and developing our web presence. Parents are now able to obtain copies of information sent home with regard to college events and meetings. Please contact us if you feel there is anything else you would like to see.

www.ssfc.ac.uk

Villiers Park Residential Course: Contemporary British Film

Driving up to Cambridge, The Who blaring obnoxiously from my car speakers, I had no idea what to expect. I had an itinerary, sure, but not a clue as to the type of people who would inhabit this course. Being a so-called 'gifted and talented' course, feelings of inadequacy were steadily building: would I be spending the next week in the company of post-human intellectuals, trying desperately to keep pace with their talk of Italian Neo-Realism, Fassbinder and Swedish Art-house cinema? Frankly, I was worried. However upon arriving I was pleasantly surprised to discover that my fellow students did not adhere to my hasty stereotyping, but were, in fact, REAL PEOPLE. If this were one of those manipulative 'Human Interest' stories, I'd say that over the course of that week we became like a family; talking, eating and living with one another twenty four hours a day. Triteness aside, a (necessary) bond was formed.



After a briefing on the first day as to what the outcome of the course would be – a trailer and a researched presentation or 'pitch' for our film – we were trusted to persevere independently with research into regional funding schemes, viral marketing and the UK film council's definition and criteria for a British production. This autonomous group work was interspersed with lectures on key aspects of contemporary filmmaking, tutorials on industry-standard editing software such as Final Cut Pro, trips (including a screening and tour of the inner-workings of a local Art-Cinema) and talks and Q&A's with journalists and many people from the British Film Industry. These included Marn Davies, a director and editor currently working on Guy Ritchie's 'Sherlock Holmes' with Robert Downey Jr. and Ian Prior, a producer at Poisson Rouge Pictures, an independent film production company, whose latest film, psychological horror film 'The Hide', which has recently premiered on Film 4. We were encouraged to ask questions after the talks and I took full advantage of this, questioning every aspect of the filmmaking process that I was then unsure or apprehensive of, even to the point where his annoyance hung heavy over the room. It was immeasurably worth it.

The course charged me with inspiration and an enhanced understanding of the industry, leading to the shooting of a series of short films, the arranging of an imminent work placement at Poisson Rouge Pictures and a flotilla of amazing, like-minded friends. Not bad for a week's work.

Student - Rob Savage



Botswana or Bust

In July this year, a group of seven sixth formers spent just over three weeks in Zambia and Botswana travelling through both countries taking part in a variety of activities.

A group of us together with a member of staff, took part in the college's 'World Expedition', raising funds ourselves through such events as cake sales, a sponsored walk and a sponsored abseil. Trip preparation included a practice expedition in Snowdonia, where we changed overnight from a group of strangers who had barely camped before to team-mates preparing to

work and live together for a month in Africa, being able to manage budgets, arrange transport and buy supplies.

The primary aim of the expedition was to experience the local culture and traditions of rural Africa while giving back to the community by assisting in a local development project. Along the way we saw amazing wildlife that included wild hippos, crocodiles, and fish eagles, and we had the opportunity to do as the locals do - buy a live chicken from a local farmer, kill it and prepare it ourselves for an evening meal!

We helped in the building and completion of a traditional 'ndu', a small hut, for a local grandmother, her daughter, and grandchildren who were otherwise homeless. Traditional building techniques were used, building from the ground up with sticks and mud sourced from termite mounds and the local river, the team working with each other and the community to build as quickly and securely as possible. The impact on the community of projects such as these has been keenly felt by all.

On returning to Shrewsbury, we are now either preparing for university or have begun work, each of us carrying our own memories, experiences and lessons learned from this trip of a lifetime.

Student - Hannah Young

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- Staff Training day - 23 Oct
- Half term - 26 - 30 Oct
- Year 2 Consultation Evenings 19 or 24 Nov
- Summary Reports - 14 Dec
- Christmas Concert - 15 Dec
- End of Autumn Term - 21 Dec
- Beginning of Spring Term - 4 Jan 2010
- External AS/A examinations start - 11 Jan (teaching continues on normal timetable)
- Spring Half Term 15 - 19 Feb

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