

Automotive North West leads training providers for new Skills Academy

Automotive North West has been selected as the lead Further Education and work based learning provider in the region for the new National Skills Academy for Manufacturing (NSAM).

Ed O'Brien, Chief Executive of Pfl said, 'All the partners are looking forward to working with the new academy and welcoming more providers into the regional NSAM network'

Pat Bacon, Principal of St Helens College, will represent providers on the Regional Advisory Group.

Partners join forces with Pfl to launch new Business Improvement Centre



Left: Delegates developing practical lean manufacturing skills in Pfl's Business Improvement Centre workshop

Pfl launched its new Business Improvement Centre in January with a week of free workshops. Each workshop focussed on lean processes or leadership, areas which have been identified for skills development in the manufacturing sector.

Delegates from 11 companies and 6 training providers attended over the five days

Riverside College Halton and St Helens College delivered a joint workshop on Introduction to Business Improvement Techniques.

The North West Automotive Alliance sponsored a two day Lean Overview workshop delivered by the Industry Forum. Jaguar Land Rover delivered a workshop on Culture Change which included a tour of its Halewood Operations plant and West Cheshire College delivered a workshop on Introduction to the ILM's Team Leader qualification.

Right: Delegates with David Oakes of Riverside College in Pfl's Business Improvement Centre classroom.



26th June 2007 — Date for Your Diary

Automotive North West is hosting a free one day conference sponsored by NFEC on Tuesday 26th June 2007 at Partnership for Learning. The theme of the day is 'Skills: making the difference in manufacturing'.

Delegates from industry and skills providers will be able to hear and question key speakers driving forward the Skills Agenda and from companies where skills are making a difference.

Speakers already confirmed are representing Jaguar Land Rover, Leyland Trucks, Bentley Motors, Novartis, SEMTA Sector Skills Council, LSC and NSAM.

For further information and to book a place please e-mail cwm@automotiveNW.co.uk



Bosal (UK) Ltd sees business benefits from working with Preston College

Preston College's experience in delivering lean manufacturing programmes has been a key factor in it joining Automotive North West as an Associate Partner. A prime example of how these training programmes can impact positively on a company's Key Performance Indicators is found in its work with Preston based Bosal (UK) Ltd.

Established in 1977, Bosal (UK) Ltd is the second largest plant in the Bosal Group and one of the

UK's leading exhaust system manufacturers.

In a highly competitive market, Bosal recognised that the way forward for their business was to develop and harness the skills of their workforce in identifying and implementing the changes. Over 60 of their staff have now gained a NVQ level 2 or 3 in Business Improvement Techniques, many of which were funded through the Employer Training Pilot (now Train to Gain).

Significant Achievements in Individual Areas for Bosal following the programme were:

- OEE (Overall Equipment Effectiveness) improved by over 50%
- Set-up times were reduced by 40%
- Unit cost of selected product was reduced by 30%
- Cycle time reduction 23%

Plant Director, Andrew McCrae said "I am delighted with the outcomes and the achievements of our staff. The approach taken by Preston College has been first class and enabled us to focus on identified targets and this has paid dividends. It is excellent to see our staff taking ownership of the project, from identifying the problems to offering solutions and implementing the changes".

Automotive North West is a partnership of Further Education Colleges and training providers. With support from the Learning and Skills Council we have formed a Centre of Vocational Excellence for automotive manufacturing. The partners are:

- Blackpool and The Fylde College
- Partnership for Learning (PFL)
- Riverside College Halton
- St Helens College
- Total People Ltd
- West Cheshire College
- Preston College (Associate Member)

Engineers at West Cheshire College become Unilever's flexible friends

Unilever at Port Sunlight is reaping the benefits of a new training course designed by engineers at West Cheshire College.

The five-day course in Welding is the latest in a series of bespoke engineering courses already designed by the College to help upskill employees of a number of major companies throughout the area.

The Welding course was designed by industry specialist and West Cheshire College Business Development Manager, Alan Tate, to help train Unilever employees in a variety of specialist welding techniques, specific to their work environment.

Alan liaised with Mark Nuttall, Unilever No3 Solids Training

Leader to identify Unilever's primary business aims and requirements, ensuring the course met their operational needs.

A flexible approach by the College training team enabled two additional Unilever employees to also join the course and significantly improve their welding techniques and knowledge.

"Having a course specifically designed to meet our needs has proved ideal. The feedback from the candidates on the course has been great," says Mark

"I was really pleased with the contact the College maintained with us, and the agenda we received was very detailed. Unilever appreciates the im-

portance of working closely with the College so we can both achieve a positive outcome."

Alan Tate added: "The feedback from Unilever has been extremely positive. Since completing the course, Unilever has benefited from increased staff knowledge and skills helping to improve productivity on the site.

"Our flexible approach to employers training needs also helped us to add value to the service we offered Unilever, making it a great success all round."

BAE Systems chooses Blackpool and The Fylde College to deliver its Project Management higher programmes

Blackpool and The Fylde College, in association with Lancaster University, is starting a 5 year partnership with BAE Systems to deliver a suit of Project Control and Project Management Higher Education programmes.

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BAE Systems see Project Management as the key discipline to ensure they deliver their projects to time, budget and customers expectations. The Project Control Foundation Scheme will be launched in September 2007 with an initial group of between 15 and 20 employees.

Ian Smith head of School of Engineering and Computing at the College says "This is a fantastic opportunity to work with one of the North West's premier employers. Working in partnership with BAE Systems to develop these qualifications will enable us to create a truly bespoke scheme that will benefit all concerned"

Total People joins Astra Zeneca to celebrate 40 Years of Engineering Apprenticeships



Pictured left are: Mel Hopkins, (Total People) Nick Gregson (Apprentice of the Year Winner) Steve Bould (Total People) Joanna Higgingbottom (AstraZeneca) and Diane Poole (Astra Zeneca)

AstraZeneca and Total People Apprentice Nick Gregson has been named 'Apprentice of the Year' at the organisation's annual awards evening. Astra Zeneca was also celebrating 40 years of their successful Engineering Apprenticeship Programme. The 23-year old from Stockport, Cheshire recently completed his four year Advanced Apprenticeship programme in Engineering. In his time at Astra Zeneca, Nick achieved his NVQ Level 2 and 3 in Engineering Maintenance and also achieved his BTEC National in Engineering Manufacturing at Macclesfield College and a

HNC with 8 Distinctions and 1 Merit. Nick was subsequently selected as AstraZeneca's Apprentice of the Year having matched and exceeded the organisation's key criteria in the awarding of the accolade. "Being able to actively demonstrate the values and principles of AstraZeneca and having a permanent readiness to help, is part of the criteria for achieving the award, something which Nick showed in abundance." says Joanna Higgingbottom, Astra Zeneca's Apprentice Scheme Manager.