



community update

MITIE's Real Apprentice scheme is now in its third year and just keeps getting bigger and better. The scheme is a ten-week training programme, targeted at areas of East London which has some of the highest unemployment figures in the country, despite being neighbours to Canary Wharf, one of London's richest areas.

Open to everyone between the ages of 17 – 25, the scheme takes away the barriers to employment faced by young people from disadvantaged areas. The apprentices are each given ten weeks of training and work experience on one of MITIE's contracts. So this could be learning about reprographics at PricewaterhouseCoopers, or getting to grips with the latest bird control techniques with our pest control business.

The training helps the apprentices' confidence grow, and lets them develop their skills. At the end of the ten-week

period, the apprentices have the opportunity to get a full-time job after completing the full course.

This year's been our biggest yet, with 29 bright young sparks successfully completing the scheme. On 24 January, at an award ceremony in London, our very own Chief Executive, Ruby McGregor-Smith, handed out certificates to the young apprentices. Ruby also presented Nassir Uddin with a trophy, crowning him winner of The Real Apprentice 2007. Nassir's now working for MITIE at Merrill Lynch. He also won an all expenses paid holiday for two to Barcelona for all his hard work.

In the last three years, The Real Apprentice Scheme has helped over 60 motivated young people from East London find jobs with us. So if you're interested in getting your business involved in next year's scheme, get in touch with us at buzz@mitie.co.uk



“We volunteered for this trip to try to benefit people less fortunate than ourselves who don’t have the opportunities open to them that we have in this country. The Gambia is a developing country with people who, especially in rural areas, struggle to earn enough to feed their families, but you would never believe that from their demeanour; they are always happy, friendly and welcoming.” MITIE volunteer.



Bansang Hospital, Gambia

Since the Appeal began in 2006, we’ve taken on two large and vital projects at the hospital. The first project, completed that same year, saw us design and install a solar panel to bring cheap, renewable and reliable electricity to the hospital’s children’s unit.

Our second project, the ‘MITIE House’, is very near to completion thanks to the hard work, grit and determination of everyone involved...

For those of you who do not know, Bansang Hospital stands deep in the African bush, 200 miles east by road from the coast. The hospital is responsible for the healthcare needs of some 600,000 Gambians as well as patients from Senegal, Mali, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry and refugees from Sierra Leone.

In recent years, it had become increasingly difficult for the hospital to retain fully trained and qualified staff. Poor accommodation and living conditions for the doctors and nurses has been a major factor in the hospital not being able to retain its staff, all to the detriment of its patients.

To cure this, we joined together with our supply chain partners to fund the refurbishment of a disused and abandoned 1930s colonial building near the hospital that will be used as much needed accommodation for 14 key medical staff. We also sent out teams of mechanical and electrical engineers, including Steve Dart, Chris Eaton, Phil Parsons, Mark Wroebel, Gareth Ballard and Albert Southwell, to work alongside local builders and to pass on their

knowledge, expertise and specialist skills so the building can be maintained in years to come.

The restoration involves a radical rebuild of the interior of the old colonial building to create 12 single bedrooms and two self-contained units for married medical staff. The ground floor will consist of a kitchen, music room and a community hall. This project will be a large step in the overall upgrade of the staff accommodation that was taken on by the Bansang Hospital Appeal in 2006.

Working closely with building contractor Jim Wadda and his team on the project, we’ve used local materials wherever possible, with other items being kindly donated by suppliers.

Our involvement with the Bansang Appeal has given us the opportunity to help the global community as we try and make the world a better place for people to live.

We now have a total of 487 pupils using our eight skills centres.

skills for life

“Out of all my classes, I’m glad I picked this class – you get a different variety of things to do such as painting and decorating, joinery, plumbing and bricklaying.”
Robert Stevenson, Caldervale High pupil.

MITIE’s first Skills Centre was opened in Portsmouth in 2001 and hailed as a revolutionary new way to tackle the vocational skills shortage facing the UK, by bridging the gap between education and employment.

Fast forward six years and we’re proud to announce the opening of our eighth Skills Centre at Caldervale High School in Airdrie – the first of its kind in Scotland!

The opening of the Skills Centre in November could not come at a more significant time in Scotland, following a year of debate in the Scottish Parliament surrounding the country’s rising vocational skills shortage. With Scottish Enterprise, the main economic development agency for Scotland, predicting a skills gap that would amount to a 100,000 job deficit each year over the next decade, we like to think we’re doing our bit to help, the MITIE way.

We’ve worked closely with Caldervale High School to convert a space into the dedicated construction Skills Centre and

provided tools, equipment and personal protective equipment too.

Our commitment doesn’t stop there though, as the passionate people at MITIE will continue to play an active role in assisting with the curriculum, as well as acting as mentors to the successful students who go on to be apprentices under the Construction Industry Training Board scheme. In addition, lecturers from Motherwell College have already got the SQA Construction Crafts Skills for Work course at Intermediate level 1 up and running.

The project marks the first time a business partner has funded the development of a vocational area within a Scottish school, and the benefits of the project will extend well beyond the development of the area in which the courses will be taught.

With our eight Skills Centres helping youngsters across the UK, a brighter future is on the horizon.

“I am delighted that Caldervale High is home to this terrific new Skills Centre and that our pupils are among the first to benefit from such a high-quality facility... It has given our students a real feel for a professional building environment and a taste of life in the construction industry.”
Caldervale High’s Head Teacher, Colin Bulloch.

feeling good

We've all heard the old adage that a healthy body equals a healthy mind. But with a quarter of us in the UK working more than 48 hours a week, gorging on fatty treats to keep us going, it's becoming harder to keep that body a temple.

The UK recently topped a poll compiled by the International Labour Organisation for the longest working hours in the developed world. Wireless technology has ushered in a new era where you can check your emails on the train, in your car, and even in your local Starbucks.

As we continue to work longer and harder, be it for that much desired promotion or much needed bonus, the often talked about work-life balance is on a tightrope. More and more doctor's and dentist's appointments are being missed by people, just so they can stay in the office and get that final report done.

At MITIE we like to think that our people have struck a good work-life balance. You only need pick up a copy of MITIE Life to see the wonderful things people are getting up to away from the office. However, to help our people out we've introduced Health Awareness Days so they can gain informative health advice at work.

Last year we held two Health Awareness Days, one in Bristol and another at our offices in Frimley Green. Run in conjunction with occupational health specialists, Managed Medical Care, the days give people the chance to have a full check up and discuss any health issues or concerns they may have.

On the day, a doctor is on site to discuss any health concerns as well as an occupational health nurse to perform standard tests on height, weight, body mass index, and lung capacity as well as blood testing. In addition to this, a practice nurse is on hand to answer any questions surrounding general health.

We're pleased to say the days have been a success, with feedback on the initiative extremely positive. Over 80% of people have acted on the advice given by the health professionals, with one person commenting: "I thought the day was really worthwhile and it was so nice to be able to sit down with a doctor and discuss health

issues, as normally one would only see a GP during an illness and not be given the time to discuss other problems."

Further Health Awareness Days are planned throughout the year. Look out for one coming to an office near you. But remember, the best way to cure BlackBerry thumb is to turn it off when you get home at night.