

Leamington business pays Coventry school student to learn



At a time when one in five young Britons is out of work*, a local school and nearby business are taking steps to make a difference, a paid, six-week internship awaits one lucky student from Coventry's Cardinal Wiseman School with Leamington Spa-based Geotech. Through the national Career Academy programme the school has setup a Career Academy in Law and Business. On Friday 4th March a group of ten, 16-year old students from the school visited Geotech to see what the company does, tour its high-tech manufacturing areas and hear 'Guru Lectures' from senior directors.

The students came to Leamington Spa because Geotech's Programme Director, Dean Kavanagh, who lives in Coventry, was a pupil at Cardinal Wiseman and is now chairing its Career Academy LAB (Local Advisory Board), linking the school to the business community. He also participates on the Midlands and national boards. "Career Academies UK is helping student in schools and colleges see that real opportunities do exist and how they can become highly employable, through partnership with a business mentor," he said.

Geotech has been an employer in Leamington Spa since 1972 with 53 employees mainly from Warwickshire and the West Midlands. The company designs, manufactures and services precision gas analysers which it sells globally. Its methane gas analysers measure landfill gas and biogas especially for energy from waste (EfW). Its medical gas analysers are used in hospitals for patient and staff safety while marine gas analysers help ensure submarine breathing air is clean and safe. More: www.geotech.co.uk

Career Academies UK leads and supports a movement of over 900 employers with 3,000 employee volunteers and over 120 schools and colleges, working together to raise the aspirations of 16 to 19-year-olds. Career Academy students follow a rigorous two-year programme alongside a curriculum equivalent to at least three A-levels, enabling students to progress to higher education or the world of work. More than 90 percent of Career Academy student progress to higher education (often the first in their family) or into employment with further training.

Independently recognised for brilliant business and education brokerage, it is the first national organisation to receive the Award for Education Business Excellence. Award assessors, the Institute for Education Business Excellence, say: "Career Academies UK is clearly a strong organisation: well lead and managed, effective, efficient and offering very good value for money to those who invest in it. It is valued by stakeholders both for the quality of its delivery, the professionalism of its staff and the creativity of its approach, clearly making a positive difference to the education and employment agendas." Source: www.careeracademies.org.uk

* There are almost a million young people unemployed in Britain, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) revealed on 16 Feb 2011 – about one in five people and the highest number since 1992. The ONS said that the claimant count also rose in December, by 2,400 to about 1.6 million. The headline figure for unemployment – including those ineligible for benefits – rose by 44,000 over the three months to the end of 2010, to just under 2.5 million. Source: www.independent.co.uk