

ANNUAL REVIEW 2018



CHAIR'S REMARKS

2018 has been a year of significant change for West College Scotland.

Audrey Cumberford, our Principal and Chief Executive since 2013, left us in August to take up a similar role at Edinburgh College. Audrey provided us with five years of outstanding leadership, helping to establish the College as one of Scotland's most dynamic and highly regarded educational institutions. She takes with her our thanks and good wishes.

I was delighted to announce the appointment of Liz Connolly to succeed Audrey.

Liz has been the College's Vice-Principal Corporate Development since merger and has extensive business experience, having spent many years in executive positions in Scottish Enterprise before moving into the education sector.

I am confident that supported by our professional and motivated staff, she will build on the positive culture that has developed at the College: our "can-do" attitude, our values of mutual respect, and our determination to put our students at the heart of everything we do.

There are, however, many challenges ahead, not least the financial pressures that confront so many public bodies. The Board of Management has engaged with the Senior Management Team to significantly revise and update our Corporate Plan, which we hope will help future-proof the College.

Elsewhere, the Board has been pleased to develop its own awareness of the complex issues that many students face daily. We have participated in sessions about corporate parenting and have overseen investment to support care-experienced students. We have also been impressed by the Students' Association commitment to mental health issues.

Finally, I was pleased by the report from Education Scotland following its review of education provision at the College.



The Evaluation Report and Enhancement Plan was received positively and I am encouraged by the actions and enhancements that are taking place. They underline the vibrancy and dynamism that have become the mark of West College Scotland.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith McKellar'.

Keith McKellar
Chair, Board of Management

PRINCIPAL'S REMARKS

To be appointed Principal and Chief Executive of West College Scotland is a huge honour and a wonderful privilege for me.

In recent years, the College has achieved a national profile through the efforts of our staff, who have worked through a period of unprecedented change in the sector. The winners have been our students and the many others who use our services and facilities.

My challenge to myself is to turn 'good' into 'even better'.

Part of this will be to innovate in everything we do, internally as an organisation and externally as a business partner to hundreds of local employers. Rapidly evolving technologies are changing how we teach, how we learn, how we make things, even how we spend our leisure time. My job is to ensure West College Scotland harnesses change for the benefit of all our students and stakeholders.



I intend to prioritise the raising of attainment levels across the range of study levels. We serve some of Scotland's most deprived communities and I also want to explore more deeply how we can remove some of the obstacles that still prevent many people from taking the first steps on the path to further education and training.

The condition of the buildings in which our staff work and our students learn is another priority. In June 2018, the Auditor General for Scotland confirmed the needs of our estate are the most acute in the sector, with an estimated repairs and maintenance backlog of £49 million over the next five years. In the meantime, we continue to engage with the Funding Council, and our Estates team has now developed Outline Business Cases for the wholesale redevelopment of our Greenock and Paisley campuses.

The backdrop to everything we do, of course, is the financial environment in which we operate. We continue to explore ways to ensure that we are delivering as efficiently and effectively as possible as we continue to reshape our curriculum and plan our future workforce.

I hope this publication gives you some sense of the scale of our College, the amazing achievements of our outstanding staff and students and the work we are doing to contribute to the development of our region and beyond.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Liz Connolly'.

Liz Connolly
Principal and Chief Executive

TEACHING AND LEARNING AT WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND

West College Scotland is one of the largest educational organisations in the country. We teach more than 22,000 students full-time, part-time and online.

We are an important part of the educational landscape of the West of Scotland, with campuses in Clydebank, Greenock and Paisley. Ours is an award-winning institution, committed to putting students at the centre of everything we do. This means we are always updating and refreshing our curriculum to make sure that what we are teaching fits the needs of students and the demands of local employers.

West College Scotland is an excellent choice for school-leavers and other people looking to return to work or wanting to change career. Our superb connections with employers and with universities means we can offer a real choice of destinations, whether into work or onto the next level of education.



22,100 students



Mode of study:

84%
Further Education

16%
Higher Education



ELAINE PENMAN – STUDENT OF THE YEAR



Our range of courses and the quality of student support means West College Scotland is ideal for people looking to change their careers or who want to return to work after a few years away.

Elaine Penman is a mature student and mother of two. She gave up a full-time job to come to West College Scotland – the first step in fulfilling her dream of a career in Science. She lacked formal science exam grades but the College recognised her talent and passion, and she was offered a place on the HNC Applied Science programme.

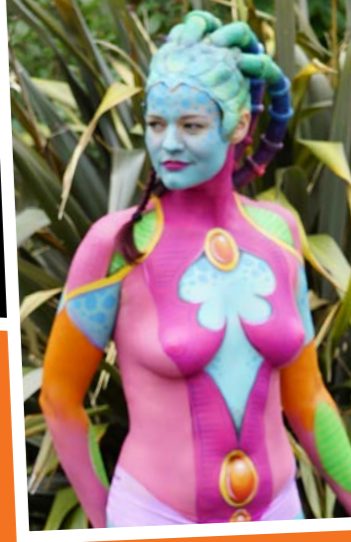
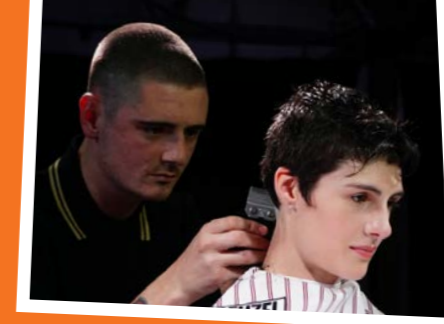
“ I was looking to change career and saw an opportunity to pursue something I’d always wanted to do. West College Scotland was a superb choice for me. I haven’t looked back. ”

Elaine Penman

Elaine has had an outstanding College career. She achieved her HNC with flying colours and became WCS Student of the Year. Elaine volunteered as an official STEM Ambassador, encouraging young people, especially girls, to think about careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.

The College was able to accommodate her studies when she got a job with the NHS, working on a 12-month nutrition project at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital in Glasgow.

Elaine is now continuing her studies at university. We are proud that we were able to help her and we have no doubt that she will achieve her long-held ambition of a career in dietetics.



YOU BEAUTY! COLLEGE STUDENTS LEARN FROM INDUSTRY LEADERS

Meeting, working with and learning from successful entrepreneurs and business leaders is a vital part of how West College Scotland teaches.

In August, our Hairdressing, Beauty and Makeup Artistry team organised a truly innovative all-day event at one of Glasgow’s leading entertainment venues. Creative Exposure was an exciting mix of masterclasses, demos, pop up shops and treatment bars presented by a wide range of industry professionals, as well as WCS staff and students.

In a first for the sector, hundreds of students, school-children, members of the public and representatives of industry saw first-hand the work of experts from some of the country’s best-known brands, including Crownbrush UK Ltd, LabelM, Wella, House Martin Barbers, Aaron Michaels, Fakebake, Nars, Dermalogica, Urban Decay, Kat von D and Portavadie Spa.

It was an outstanding success and a great example of the College engaging with business and the public to understand changing demand and modern expectations.

“ We are redesigning our curriculum through a process we call Rip it Up and Start Again. In that context, this amazing event has helped inform what we teach and how we teach it. We’re already looking forward to next year. ”

Karen Stevenson, Head of Hairdressing, Beauty and Make-up



NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

West College Scotland students successfully take part in many local, national and international skills competitions.

In June 2018, WCS students Sagar Massey and Jamie Cracknell won UK Young Seafood Chef of the Year, beating some of Britain's most talented hospitality students to this prestigious award. Among the judges were Michelin-rated chef Galton Blackiston.

The judges were impressed with the boys preparing dishes such as cooked pickled herring and roast monkfish. Jamie and Sagar took home prizes worth £6,000, including a culinary trip sponsored by Koppert Cress, a £1,000 Russums voucher for the College, as well as £500 each.

“ We’ve had a really good insight from our lecturers over the year. They have really helped us onto the right path. ”

Sagar Massey and Jamie Cracknell, Hospitality students

GOING APE – TRAINING SCIENCE TEACHERS FOR THE FUTURE

Access to Primary Education (APE) is an award-winning course that highlights West College Scotland’s unique approach to meeting the particular needs of individuals and communities, whilst using innovative ways to develop teachers of the future.

What makes us unique and sector leading is the way in which the College provides APE students with a bespoke programme to help them develop the skills they will need to achieve a career in teaching.

Our Access to Primary Education students are trained as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) Ambassadors, before learning the latest digital technology and how to engage young people in science through fun experiments. This training is provided on a voluntary basis by College staff.

When students are ready, local primary school children are invited into the College for student-run Maths for Fun sessions.

We are proud that the APE programme won the 2017 Innovative College Award. We are even prouder of the number of APE students who have now gone on to university to continue their journey to a career in teaching.



SHOWCASING THE TALENTS OF OUR STUDENTS

We love to celebrate the talents and achievements of our students.

In autumn 2017, hundreds of students and their families attended our six graduation ceremonies at Paisley Abbey, Greenock Town Hall and Clydebank Town Hall.

At the end of the academic year, many of our Creative Industries students organise end-of-term music concerts, dance shows and make-up artistry exhibitions to let the public see the outstanding quality of their work.

In the course of the year, West College Scotland hosted a number of visits that also gave our students opportunities to show off their many achievements. In February, Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP, Minister for Further and Higher Education visited our Greenock campus to announce the 2018-19 funding package of £1.7 billion for colleges and universities. While there, she saw the work of our pharmacy, computer games and professional cookery students.

In April, the Queen’s cousin The Duke of Gloucester visited our Paisley campus. A trained architect and keen building conservationist, HRH saw students training in traditional crafts such as stone-working which they will be able to use to conserve our local built heritage.



THE BUSINESS OF EDUCATION

West College Scotland plays a vital role in supporting the regional economy. We work closely with hundreds of businesses, large and small, to improve performance and opportunities for growth. We assist many of these companies with staff skills training, workforce planning and product development.

In return, we look for employers to give "real-life" work experience to our students and to drive and shape what we offer as a College, ensuring our curriculum is fit to meet the demands of a modern regional economy.



130,000
people employed in West Region



OUR WORKFORCE, OUR FUTURE – 2018 SKILLS SURVEY

The College has a unique reach into the business base of the west of Scotland. But we want to know what more we can do to support growth. We want to know what employers see as barriers to growth - and what we can do to help them overcome them, especially concentrating on the regional skills set and identifiable skills gaps.

Our Regional Skills Survey 2018 is the first survey of its type undertaken by any Scottish college or university.

231 organisations, employing 65,000 people, responded to Our Workforce, Our Future. It provided the College with invaluable intelligence, helping us better understand the needs of businesses, and how we can meet those needs through curriculum development and commercial offerings.

Here's what employers are reporting:



9 in 10

employers stated that they have a **positive relationship** with the College



92%

of employers who had not previously worked with the College indicated that they would like to work together in the future



88%

of employers are satisfied with the **work readiness** of college leavers



Biggest challenges in the next year:

- 1 Workforce Planning
- 2 Financial Sustainability
- 3 Business Growth



Barriers to growth:

- 1 Skills Gap
- 2 Finance
- 3 Infrastructure and Tech
- 4 Expertise in Innovation



Here are some of the things West College Scotland has promised to do:

- Create a free portal to allow employers to advertise job and work experience opportunities to our students
- Offer 1-2-1 annual training needs analysis to employers
- Develop Innovation Workshops to support employers to realise innovative potential



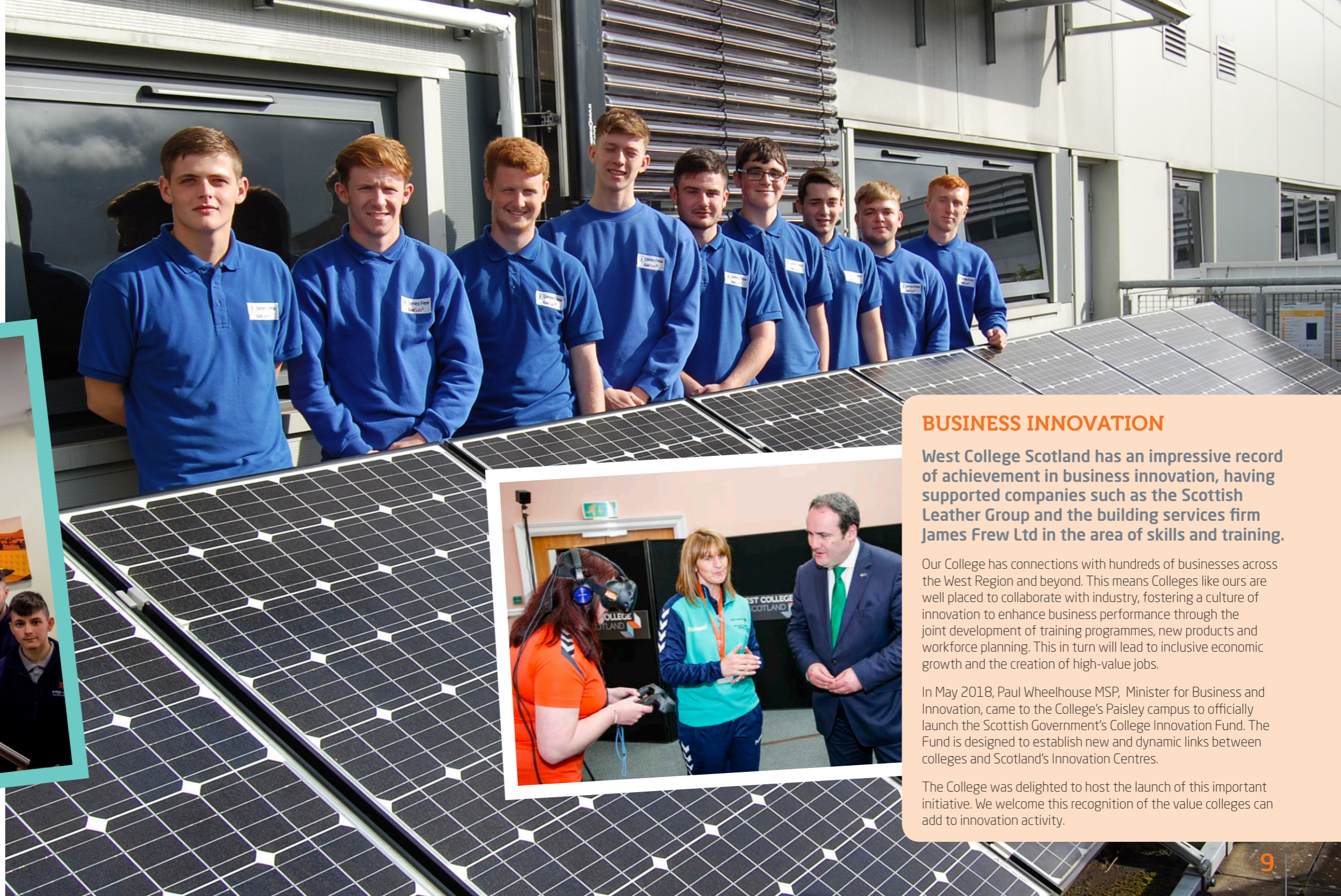
READ MORE...

For more, read, Our Workforce, Our Future at www.westcollegescotland.ac.uk/OWOF or contact marketing@wcs.ac.uk to be sent a copy of the report.

FLEXIBLE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FUND

West College Scotland is one of the country's biggest providers of training through the Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF). FWDF is funded through the Apprenticeship Levy that all larger employers pay. We offer training up to the value of £15,000 per company.

Away from the FWDF, we have a range of commercial courses designed to deliver training and upskilling for employers and individuals. Go to www.westcollegescotland.ac.uk to see the full range of Training for Business Courses or contact corporate@wcs.ac.uk for more information.



BUSINESS INNOVATION

West College Scotland has an impressive record of achievement in business innovation, having supported companies such as the Scottish Leather Group and the building services firm James Frew Ltd in the area of skills and training.

Our College has connections with hundreds of businesses across the West Region and beyond. This means Colleges like ours are well placed to collaborate with industry, fostering a culture of innovation to enhance business performance through the joint development of training programmes, new products and workforce planning. This in turn will lead to inclusive economic growth and the creation of high-value jobs.

In May 2018, Paul Wheelhouse MSP, Minister for Business and Innovation, came to the College's Paisley campus to officially launch the Scottish Government's College Innovation Fund. The Fund is designed to establish new and dynamic links between colleges and Scotland's Innovation Centres.

The College was delighted to host the launch of this important initiative. We welcome this recognition of the value colleges can add to innovation activity.

A RESPONSIBLE COLLEGE

West College Scotland employs 1,200 people at our campuses in Clydebank, Greenock and Paisley, making us one of the biggest employers in the West Region and an important driver of the local economy. Most of our staff live in the communities they serve.

We know how important it is that all our staff feel part of West College Scotland, that they feel valued and respected, and understand how they are contributing to our strategic aims and objectives.

As a College, we accept our responsibility to care for their wellbeing and to recognise the great work they do. We also know the importance of continuous professional development, and of discovering the talents, as well as the training needs of all our people.

We also celebrate the work they do for many charities at home and overseas.

 One of the largest employers in the West region:
1,209 staff
1% of total regional employment

 Total income:
£66 million

 **96%** of our students go on to positive destinations

BUILDING OUR COLLECTIVE FUTURE

In August 2018, the College launched **Building our Collective Future: Being Part of West College Scotland**.

It asks how do we build a strong collective culture. How do we make that culture even better and what kind of behaviours might weaken our culture?

It is an important document, developed with the input and support of all College unions. It focuses on six priority areas that were identified by our staff. Through them, it describes how we should work together to achieve our objectives and how we should behave towards each other, our students and other customers.

Building our Collective Future is designed to help our staff continue to provide excellent student and customer care.

“ This will help inform all aspects of College life, from recruitment, to personal development training, from staff induction, to wellbeing initiatives. ”



HEALTHY WORKING LIVES

In November 2017, the College won the prestigious Health Promoting College Award at the annual College Development Network annual awards.

The award recognises the work done by our Human Resources team to connect our health promotion activities with the needs of our College community. Activities involved different aspects of health and wellbeing, not just fitness and periodic health campaigns. We ran a resilience-based programme that included training in stress awareness, mindfulness and mental health awareness. We also provided flu vaccinations on campus.

One of our boldest moves has been to make the College an entirely no-smoking institution. We did this while providing support and advice to encourage students and staff to quit.



HELPING OTHERS

West College Scotland staff and students have an outstanding record in raising funds for good causes. In recent years they have raised more than £11,000 for charities, although this does not include initiatives such as the annual Easter egg drive for children living with their mums in women's refuges.

Earlier this year, our Greenock staff teamed up with the local Rotary Club, to collect between 50-100 backpacks for Mary's Meals to send to schoolchildren in Malawi. Our amazing staff recruited local schools and businesses to the cause and ended up collecting more than 200 backpacks, each one filled with essentials such as pencils, jotters and toiletries.

The backpacks were handed over to Mary's Meals at a community event at our Finnart St campus in Greenock. Bernadette Barr of Mary's Meals said, "For many of the children a backpack will be the first gift they have ever received. The joy on their faces is priceless and 212 children will feel this joy, thanks to you."

WORKING FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

West College Scotland is part of the identity of the West Region. We work with our main local authorities – Inverclyde, West Dunbartonshire, Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire – to help them achieve their educational, social and economic objectives. We support local organisations. We showcase our students' work and successes. Whenever possible, we encourage them to work in the community while at the same time learning, achieving and gaining qualifications.

We work with 32 secondary schools across the West of Scotland, delivering courses to senior-phase pupils at College and in school. We also engage with hundreds of primary school pupils and we are active in our business communities, with fruitful relationships with Chambers of Commerce across the region.

But we are also aware of the complex social and economic challenges facing many people in our College community. We understand how these might cause some to hesitate before embarking on a College education. We know how such challenges can prevent some who do enrol from fulfilling their true potential. Working with our Students' Association, our Student Support teams offer a range of services, such as Time 4 U, a free counselling service to students. We also offer support on careers, student funding and attendance issues.



Teaching **4,000** pupils
from **32** schools



Delivering more than **1,000** places
within the Apprenticeship Family by 2020



SCOTLAND'S BOAT SHOW

West College Scotland continues to be a main sponsor of Scotland's Boat Show. Every year thousands of people make their way to Inverkip's Kip Marina, not far from our main Greenock campus. This vibrant event is a great advert for Inverclyde and the College

West College Scotland is part of the Inverclyde community and our involvement in this event is a great way to give students across the region hands-on experience of events management and professional cookery. It also allows our students to provide "pop-up" services for the thousands of visitors who attend the show, services such as blood pressure monitoring stops and hair and beauty treats.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE CIVIC AWARDS

West College Scotland supports the Provost's Civic Awards which every year recognises the outstanding achievements of individuals and communities across West Dunbartonshire.

This year, the College sponsored the Youth Champion category. It was won by seven-year-old Harry Crossan, who - remembering a first aid lesson from school - saved the life of his two-year-old sister who was choking on a chocolate button. Well done, Harry!



STAND ALONE PLEDGE

We are proud that in March 2018 we became the first college in the entire UK to take the Stand Alone Pledge.

Stand Alone is a charity that exists to support the 1 in 5 people who become estranged from or disowned by their family. Research by the charity has found that estranged students are three times more likely to drop out of education than the average student due to pressure, stress and isolation. The initiative promotes greater awareness and support for estranged students and our College joins nearly 40 UK universities in becoming a "champion institution".

HND STUDENTS AND WAR BLINDED VETERANS

The Scottish War Blinded Centre in Paisley is a new facility for ex-servicemen and women. Through word of mouth, West College Scotland discovered that although the Centre had a state-of-the-art gym, it did not have access to qualified people to teach veterans how to use the equipment.

The College's 2nd year HND Health and Fitness students stepped in. They devised and delivered 12-week training programmes for individual users, starting in January 2018. At the same time, this provided live assessment opportunities for the Graded Unit element of their course. The Centre was delighted to obtain specialist input and our students were thrilled that a live teaching project delivered such positive community outcomes.



Working with the Scottish War Blinded has made me into a better and more experienced trainer. It was great to see all the participants enjoy themselves as they worked towards their goals. The results they have achieved have been outstanding.

Michael O'Farrell, HND Health and Fitness

One veteran's goal was to walk from the railway station to the Centre rather than be transported by taxi. The student developed a walking programme, gradually helping build up his client's confidence and fitness. By week 11, he could walk the distance comfortably and was delighted with his rediscovered levels of independence and confidence.

It was an absolute pleasure to be involved in the project. The students were a credit to West College Scotland and our members benefited so much from taking part.

Gillian McDonald, Deputy Manager, Scottish War Blinded Centre, Paisley

...AND FINALLY



GOING FOR IT!

The College's Marketing team continued their good run of form, winning a Gold at the annual College Development Network Marketing Awards.

This was in the Digital Marketing category for GO FOR IT!, our 2017 student recruitment campaign. The team picked up a Silver in the Promotional Literature category and a Bronze in the Integrated Marketing campaign category. GO FOR IT! was also shortlisted for the UK-wide Chartered Institute of Marketing's 2017 Marketing Excellence Awards in Innovation in the Public Sector.



FLUSHED WITH SUCCESS

The College is proud of its longstanding partnership with SNIPEF, the trade association for plumbing and heating businesses in Scotland and Northern Ireland. In June this year we hosted SNIPEF's annual SkillPLUMB competition.

30 apprentices gathered at our Paisley campus for the competition, along with 200 professionals who came to network and learn about latest trade developments. Throughout the day, candidates undertook practical exercises in copper pipework and lead-work. The winners accepted their awards from Jamie Hepburn MSP, Minister for Employability and Training. They will now go on to compete at the UK finals in Birmingham.

You can see for yourself what a tremendous day it was by clicking on this link.

<http://www.westcollegescotland.ac.uk/news/2018/june/west-college-scotland-hosts-nation-wide-plumbing-skills-competition/>





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