PressRelease

city of wolverhampton college

Celebrating 20 Years of Successful Partnerships

A unique programme that has helped hundreds of firefighters realise their dream of getting into the service marked its 20th year on Friday 4th June 2010.

Firefighters and police officers from across the region descended on City of Wolverhampton College to celebrate 20 years of the Pre-recruitment Access course, the only one of its kind in the country.

They were joined by MP Pat McFadden and Mayor of Wolverhampton Councillor Malcolm Gwinnett to celebrate the course, which has been helping budding firefighters and police officers get through the challenging application process since 1990, reaching its landmark year.

The course, which is run in partnership with West Midlands Police and West Midlands Fire Service, is so successful that around 17% of serving firefighters in the West Midlands have passed through the programme. The college prides itself on working closely with local communities, and proactively increasing people's opportunity of successfully completing the firefighter recruitment process.

Among those attending was firefighter and mother of three Marlenea Bhalla, who decided to quit her job as a teacher to embark on a career in the Fire Service. Marlenea said, "I used to watch the fire engines go by and wonder what would it be like to ride in that truck and do that job? I saw the Pre-recruitment Course and wanting to maximise my chances of success I contacted the college. The course was brilliant, even though I had to travel right across the West Midlands to do it I never missed a session."

Programme Manager Sila Patel said: "Our Pre-recruitment Access Courses were first conceived when unemployment was high and employers were identifying skill shortages, and over the years have become more and more popular.

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“We are particularly proud of the number of black and minority ethnic groups we have helped enter the services, and this is largely due to the hard work of the team in working with local communities and attending community events. Former students attend the events and act as excellent role models raising awareness of careers in the Services.

For more information check the college website at:
www.wolvcoll.ac.uk/firefighter or contact Sila Patel on 01902 821506.
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