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Access to finance, Techmark - Technical Marketing.
turn to page 3

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University of Warwick
Science Park

News from The University of Warwick Science Park

Winter 2009

Car Manufacturer Speeds Up Production With Help From UWSP

A Warwick University undergraduate who helped a midlands car manufacturer speed up production of its latest vehicle was named the West Midlands' Most Enterprising Student at the local final of the 2008 Shell Step work placement programme.

Shell Step, which is supported by the European Regional Development Fund and UWSP, places undergraduates in small and medium sized companies to carry out and complete particular business projects.

Johnathan Milson, aged 21, spent eight weeks with 50-strong Westfield Sportscars in Kingswinford. The company manufacture high-performance kit cars, which it sells to racing enthusiasts across the globe.

Westfield wanted Johnathan to use a computer-aided design (CAD) program to replicate old car part drawings for its database – but after impressing them with his automotive engineering design skills, he was moved onto a team of six people developing a new vehicle.

And Johnathan's contribution has led to the firm bringing forward the vehicle's production date by several months.

"When I moved onto the

team developing a new car and started drawing new parts, it was very exciting and great fun," said Johnathan, who will complete a Masters degree in Mechanical Engineering next year.

"I had prior knowledge of CAD and the new model is now completely designed using this package, so having an extra person to draw has benefited them.

"I've drawn eight or nine different parts for the vehicles and a couple of parts will go in the new model, including the air

box and the pedal box, which I helped with."

Ross Dickson, design manager of Westfield Sportscars, said Johnathan's skills had greatly benefited the engineering team.

"We have a small engineering department and so having an extra head was very useful," he said.

"Johnathan's background and skills from his

degree have helped us move forward with various parts and the project. His input into the design has also been of great value."

"The parts he has designed have been impressive and to the necessary high standard and so it was a great

help to have him on the team."

Penny Robb, Project Manager of Shell Step programme for the West Midlands, said: "The benefits which the students have brought to businesses in the area this year has been fantastic.

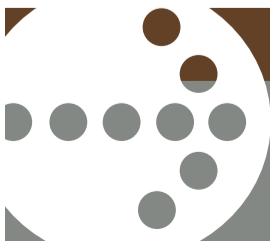
"Shell Step gives students the opportunity to develop their skills and gain practical experience, while giving companies the opportunity to work with bright, young minds to enhance their

business. There has been a tangible benefit to the firms and the feedback from them all has been very positive."

Businesses and students interested in learning more about the Shell Step programme should contact the University of Warwick Science Park project team on 024 76 32025 or by emailing student@uwsp.co.uk



Penny Robb, Project Manager of Shell Step Programme pictured with Johnathan Milson.



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FIND OUT MORE ON PAGE 2**