The Autumn term seems to have flown by once again and certainly the Summer School season seems a distant memory. In October we welcomed new undergraduate students to the University from all over the UK and around the world, many of who will have applied to be one of our student ambassadors and mentors, who inspire and excite young people about the prospects higher education can offer. This issue highlights some really exciting work engaging students and teachers, from a new CPD project for teachers called Advancing Access to the launch of our new innovative publication, a Young Person’s Guide to University. 2017 will soon be upon us so please look out for Summer School applications, the new National Collaborative Outreach Programme, as well as many other excellent opportunities that support and engage students in their journey to university. I look forward to your continued engagement next year.

The wordle on the left is made up of some of the feedback we received from students and their parents that attended our events, in schools and on campus, as part of the various programmes we offer.

Over the 2015-16 academic year we have*

Engaged with 192 schools
Conducted over 600 hours of activity
Ran 6 residential activities

*Accurate at the time of print

In this issue:

Young Person’s Guide! Find out about our new publication
UniTracks and Pathways to Law programmes get off to a great start
Advancing Access A new scheme involving 24 leading universities
Outreach in Life Sciences See how you could get your students involved
Launch and Student Shadowing

We kicked off Year 2 of the Pathways to Law programme for the current Year 13 cohort on Saturday 1 October. 15 students engaged in a session concentrating on finalising their personal statement. There was also a session about interview preparation which debunked some myths about an apprenticeship-style interview for university entry. The student ambassadors Alex and Christiana shared their experiences of the UCAS process and said they wish they had done these sessions before making their applications. The next Year 13 event was Student Shadowing, where several of the participants came onto campus for a number of days to shadow a current law student, and really get a taste of what studying law at university is really like. A great start to the year!

For more information about the Pathways to Law programme please visit warwick.ac.uk/outreach/programmes/pathways

Biology Goes Bananas in Coventry Fablab

As part of the Think Higher programme of funded STEM outreach, a group of talented year ten scientists from three Warwickshire schools have worked with a team of experts from the University of Warwick Integrative Synthetic Biology group to take part in an “eau that smell” investigation.

Working with e-coli bacteria that have been genetically modified, students from Hartshill School, Nuneaton Academy and George Eliot School looked at how the bacteria grows and metabolises over a 24 hour period. Working with four post doctoral fellows of Warwick University, the students learned a great deal about the activity of this common bacteria. They found that the bacteria’s activity follows three distinct phases, a Lag phase where activity is low - followed by a Log phase when the bacteria is growing and dividing rapidly and finally a stationary phase when activity slows as the nutrients in the medium become exhausted.

Each group worked with a different genetically modified strain which produces more “banana smell” at different stages of the investigation. Some producing more “banana” in log phase others in the stationary phase. Students had to use their observations to try and determine which design technique was the best. One group was given the control culture without the added gene, they had to decide if there was a smell of bananas or whether they were “imagining it”. Quite a challenge for Year 10 students but all rose to the challenge and got immersed in their work.

As well as learning important laboratory skills the students also gained insight into the structure of DNA and how the DNA from other organisms could be introduced into the simple DNA of an organism like e-coli. They also learned how these techniques have revolutionised the production of life saving products such as Insulin.

The project took place at FabLab Coventry, and was funded by Think Higher, an initiative between Coventry and Warwickshire further and higher education providers. To find out how your school can get involved in future Think Higher opportunities contact Caroline Geraghty, Think Higher Co-ordinator c.geraghty@warwick.ac.uk

Please note, in the first instance we will send up to 50 copies, but will endeavour to fulfil larger requests where possible.

Young Person’s Guide to University

New for 2016-17!

The Outreach Team’s new publication ‘Young Person’s Guide to University’ has recently been launched. Designed as an accessible guide to making choices and thinking about options after GCSE and post-16, as well as answering any questions students might have about what it’s like to choose and progress to university.

The guide is aimed at Years 8-11 primarily, but older students may also benefit.

If you are interested in ordering more copies, to use in sessions at your school, hand out to students, or as reference copies in your school library, please feel free to get in touch; by email at outreach@warwick.ac.uk or via Twitter @OutreachWarwick

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UniTracks: Warwick Young Achievers Programme

In early October, we held the launch event for the 12th Cohort of Year 10 pupils recruited to the UniTracks Programme, the University’s 4-year programme for academically able pupils. We work with over 20 partner schools who are located as far away as Walney Island in South Cumbria, through to Burnham-on-Crouch in Essex. This year, we recruited over 100 participants from these schools and the vast majority were able to come to the launch on campus on 8th October.

Whilst on the programme, the participants will have opportunities to take part in various group projects that will help them to explore different subjects and develop skills such as team work, communication, research and so on. One of the challenges of this programme is fostering a sense of community between the participants as they are spread out around the UK. As a way to overcome this, the new cohort have been tasked with a project where they will showcase their hometowns / areas, and work towards producing a resource that celebrates where our UniTracks community comes from.

For their first task, each participant was asked to write a short essay (around 500 words) about their hometown. It has been interesting to read the participants’ essays and it has been particularly pleasing to read when an individual has come to realise that there is more to be proud of about their hometown than they had first thought. Here is an excerpt taken from one of the participants writing about their hometown of Burnham-on-Crouch in Essex:

Burnham has a huge amount of places to visit and things to see with the possibilities of things to do being endless, although it is sometimes necessary to use some creativity because we live so far away from the usual places people go – we don’t have a shopping centre for example with the closest place to shop being in Chelmsford. Despite this, there are things to entertain people of all ages and interests, for example there are three park areas with play equipment which can keep the children busy, and not to mention a skate park and a sports centre/gym where people can join different sporting clubs or get a gym membership.

Burnham prides itself on its sailing community (as we are located on the river Crouch we are able to make use of it). Boat building used to be Burnham’s main industry but since then those businesses have died away. Burnham does, however, have a few yacht clubs and boats builders/repairers left. On the sea front people can walk down the sea wall and eventually join into the marina where there are always lots of boats moored.

Compared to other places there are a lot of schools in Burnham … the secondary school is Ormiston Rivers Academy. Because we are a small town, there are a lot of people in the school that live in Burnham and the surrounding areas which creates a good sense of community.

It has been great to learn more about these very diverse parts of the UK and you can view all the submitted essays on the UniTracks blog at www.warwickunitracks.wordpress.com

Virtual Conference

We are involved in a national project called Advancing Access, aimed at providing CPD resources and online events for teachers and advisors to help them support students’ progression to leading universities. We were involved in the first Advancing Access Virtual Conference on Tuesday 1st November, allowing teachers and advisors to login and access a wide range of resources from their own computer. Teachers were able to access a series of online webinars, had the opportunity speak to representatives from 24 universities and share good practice with other colleagues across the country. It was great to see so many teachers and advisors log into the conference and we look forward to the next event!

For updates and resources please visit the Advancing Access website www.advancingaccess.ac.uk for more information.

Schools Warwick Visits

We held our first Schools Warwick Visit of the academic year on Wednesday 9 November in the Maths Building. Thank you to Aylesford School, Tudor Grange Samworth Academy and St Thomas Aquinas School for attending. We hope your students and teachers enjoyed the afternoon.

Our next Schools Warwick Visits will take place on Wednesday 25 January and Wednesday 15 March. Both of these events will be taking place in the Oculus Building, the brand new flagship teaching and learning building with a 500 seater lecture theatre. If you are interested in attending please email the Outreach Team for further details at outreach@warwick.ac.uk
Outreach in Life Sciences

Hello!

My name is Branagh Crealock-Ashurst and I am the new Outreach Assistant in the School of Life Sciences here at the University of Warwick. I am eager to get as many schools as possible involved in the exciting and engaging outreach activities we have on offer in the department and on your school grounds!

Recent events have included trips to local primary schools to perform KS1/KS2 pond dipping; to secondary school and sixth form colleges for talks and demonstrations of KSS Drosophila genetics and molecular biology. In summer this year we were proud to host the ‘Headstart’ summer school for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to experience studying biology at university. Not only did they attend a series of interesting talks but were exposed to the practical side of biological science in our teaching labs.

With many outreach events planned over the next academic year we would love to have as many schools involved as possible. If you are interested in us coming to your school or would like to come to our department, or are simply just looking to find out more please visit our website: warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/lifesci/outreach/

We are also currently running a series of Public Science evenings for the public to learn more about the research we perform in the department. These events give you the chance to talk to academics and current students about their fields. Our next public science evening shall be taking place on the 15th November, entitled ‘Getting to grips with antibiotic resistance’. It is free to attend and shall include a series of talks, demos and lab tours. Sign-ups are open now! warwick.ac.uk/giving/news/lifesciencesevents

I hope you all have a good restful Christmas break, hopefully see you in the department soon!

An Update from Funding Outreach…

The Funding Outreach team will see some staff changes this month, as Elaine sadly leaves us for pastures new. Rebecca Ayres has been appointed to Elaine’s post and will continue to support you and your students with student finance and money management at university. With finance applications due to open in the new year, this would be an ideal time to book in a workshop or presentation for your students and parents. For more information, give Rebecca a call on 024 7657 5595 or email fundingoutreach@warwick.ac.uk

CONNECT WITH US…

on twitter follow @OutreachWarwick for news and updates about upcoming events, as well as photos and tweets straight from the action!

Diary dates

25 January 2017 - Schools Warwick Visit (Years 11-13)
9 February 2017 - Science Campus Day (Primary)
15 February 2017 - Arts Campus Day (Primary)
15 March 2017 - Schools Warwick Visit (Years 11-13)
22 March 2017 - Uni Taster Day (Year 12)

If you aren’t receiving our Monthly Bulletin of upcoming events, please let us know, by emailing outreach@warwick.ac.uk or tweet us @OutreachWarwick and we can add you to our mailing list.

Contact Us

outreach@warwick.ac.uk
024 7657 3555
warwick.ac.uk/outreach
@OutreachWarwick

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