



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S WELCOME...

Community is a cornerstone of our Group and a key part of what makes us who we are. That's why this year, when we won a prestigious Beacon Award for our social action activities, despite being in lockdown I was jumping for joy. Our social action programme has seen us deliver tens of thousands of hours worth of positive changes within the communities we serve, delivering projects that have impacted them in a positive way. And what's better, is that these have been led by our students, giving them a real stake in our society and encouraging them to really care about their community and what happens within it. Young people are often perceived poorly

within their community and I'm really proud that our students are doing something about that by making their areas better places to live, work and play. This newsletter outlines what the Beacon Award means to our Group and also updates you on a whole host of our other initiatives whilst we've all been in lockdown – we've had some amazing successes and some really inspirational work has been carried out by our students, despite the global pandemic! So read on to find out a bit more about what our 13,000 students and 1,400 staff were getting up to between May and July.

Graham Razey

EKC GROUP SCOOPS PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL BEACON AWARD

Staff and students celebrated across East Kent after EKC Group was announced as the winner of the coveted 'Pears #iwill Award for Social Action and Student Engagement' during the 25th annual Association of Colleges (AoC) Beacon Awards 2019-20 on Thursday 4 June.

The AoC Beacon Awards celebrates innovation and outstanding practice in Further Education. The 'Pears #iwill Award for Social Action and Student Engagement' was presented to EKC Group in recognition of its pioneering social action initiatives in the communities it serves.



**BEACON AWARD
WINNER 2019/20**

Chief Executive Officer Graham Razey said: "It's absolutely wonderful to win such a prestigious award in such a hugely relevant category right now. The current context has shown just how important social action is, and the activities that our students do within our communities has

real importance attached to it. This win really celebrates those projects that our students have led, and recognises the passion shown to enhance our communities and make the whole of East Kent that little bit better. Well done to all of the staff and students who've been involved!"

During its biannual 'Community Weeks', students and staff members from across the Group's family of six Colleges and three Business Units engage in a wide range of projects, from providing workshops and activity classes, through to rejuvenating community spaces and supporting local businesses.

In the previous academic year alone, students clocked more than 40,000 hours of volunteering to deliver over 400 individual social action projects.

Chair of EKC Group, Charles Buchanan, said: "Many congratulations to all of the staff and students across EKC Group's family of Colleges and Business Unit for winning this award. It is testament to the huge amount of transformative social action projects which they deliver within the communities we serve and is a real endorsement of the Group's ethos as a socially conscious organisation which wants to make a difference."

THE YARROW REOPENS WITH STUNNING GARDEN TRANSFORMATION



EKC Group's leading four-star hotel in Broadstairs, The Yarrow, unveiled its spectacular garden transformation following the reopening of its restaurant, salon and accommodation on Saturday 4 July.

The redesigned private garden brings The Yarrow's trademark manicured lawn and stunning gazebo, to life with scented flowerbeds, potted plants and luscious green trees and shrubs.

The garden has been adorned with a variety of socially distanced seating areas, with guests able to relax in the privacy of the grounds and enjoy an alfresco dining experience.

The Yarrow's Hotel Manager, Lee Osborn, commented: "We have been working hard to create a setting perfect for dining outdoors, whether it's lunch, dinner, afternoon tea, drinks and nibbles, or our new barbeque menu.

"We have invested in some fantastic new outdoor furniture, as well as a beautiful array of flowers from the Meadow Grange Nursery and Farm Shop."

In addition to transforming the private garden, The Yarrow has updated its interior spaces to ensure the safety of all staff and guests.

New hand sanitisation stations, distance markers, and reconfigured seating in the restaurant, bar and lounge,

are among some of the measures The Yarrow has put in place.

A comprehensive cleaning regime of all rooms, surfaces and areas throughout the day has also been implemented, and extra precautions are being taken in the Salon, with staff wearing additional personal protective equipment to carry out a limited number of treatments.

Lee continued: "We understand that these changes are somewhat daunting for our guests. We have taken time to review our communications to ensure that our guests are aware of our new procedures and what to expect before, and on, arrival.

"Safeguarding our staff and guests is our top priority and we want to ensure everyone has the best possible experience as we enter a 'new normal'.

"We are delighted to welcome guests back to The Yarrow, and we are looking forward to serving our delicious summer menu in the haven of our beautiful garden."



The Yarrow is the only hotel of its kind in the UK to offer students high-quality training experiences in a luxury establishment.

For more information about The Yarrow, visit yarrowhotel.co.uk

STUDENT ENTREPRENEUR PREPARES TO FACE TV DRAGON

A talented young entrepreneur from EKC Group's Folkestone College, has earned the chance to pitch their business to BBC Dragon's Den star, Peter Jones CBE, to secure a £5,000 investment.



Megan Parfitt

Level 3 Enterprise and Entrepreneurship student, Megan Parfitt, is one of only five students nationally to make it through to the final of the 'Peter Jones Foundation National Entrepreneur of the Year' competition.

Inspired by her nine-year-old sister, Megan's business, 'Eat Your Dinner Trivia', aims to encourage young children to eat their

fruit and vegetables by playing a fun trivia game. The children are challenged to answer school curriculum and general knowledge questions. If they answer a question correctly, they earn a 'treat' that is decided by the reward cards. If they answer a question incorrectly, they must eat a portion of fruit or vegetables.

"I have three main aims for my business," explained Megan. "One, to encourage kids to eat their fruit and vegetables in their lunch and dinner. Two, to build kids' knowledge in school subjects such as the core subjects, maths and English. And three, to build kids' general knowledge.

"I think that playing this game with children will become a fun way of getting kids to eat their fruit and vegetables."

During the final, Megan will pitch her business in a bid to impress Peter Jones CBE and a panel of esteemed businesspeople.

Talking about the final, Peter Jones CBE commented: "I'm really looking forward to meeting our five finalists in person. I strongly believe that this country needs entrepreneurial young people more than ever, it is this generation that will incite positive social change and push forward the economy for years to come."

He added: "The quality of submissions we've received for this year's award has been absolutely outstanding and picking just five to go through was a real challenge.

"The high standard is testament to the depth of entrepreneurial talent that we have across the Peter Jones Enterprise Academy network."

Megan was one of two Folkestone College students to make it through to the semi-finals of the Competition. She wowed the judges with her virtual pitch on Thursday 11 June, with the judges noting: "Megan exudes entrepreneurial flair and her business has a real social purpose to it. It is certainly scalable and has excellent eye-catching branding."

Details about the final will be released in due course.

Folkestone College is one of only 21 Peter Jones Enterprise Academies (PJEAs) in the UK. The Peter Jones Enterprise Academy is a flagship programme by the Peter Jones Foundation which aims to 'bring the boardroom into the classroom' and equip students with the skills, knowledge and experiences needed to succeed in their chosen careers.

For more information about the Peter Jones Enterprise Academy at Folkestone College, visit

folkestonecollege.ac.uk

INSPIRATIONAL FOLKESTONE STUDENT NOMINATED FOR NATIONAL ROLE MODEL AWARD



Health and Social Care student, Jess Griffiths, from EKC Group's Folkestone College, was nominated for the 'Positive Role Model Award' in the National Diversity Awards 2020 in association with ITV News.

Jess received the nomination for her exceptional work as a Young Leader, Volunteer Youth Worker, and Early Help Support Worker, supporting young and disadvantaged people in her local community and nationally.

USING A 'DIFFERENT SPACE' TO SHOWCASE SKILLS



Artists from the Creative Industries department at EKC Group's Broadstairs College confronted the challenges of Coronavirus head-on, taking to a 'different space' to hold their end of year exhibition.

The plucky young visual artists formed a partnership with Margate Festival to create an online exhibition that leveraged the power of social media to challenge conventional barriers to viewing art, and deliver their creations to a wider audience.

The Exhibition, titled 'Different Space,' featured work created by the College's Level 2 and Level 3 Art and Design and Creative Media students at home, including artwork specifically made to celebrate Dreamland's centenary.

To view the Exhibition, visit [instagram.com/margatefestival](https://www.instagram.com/margatefestival)



NEW JUNIOR COLLEGE OFFERS FOLKESTONE TEENS AN ALTERNATIVE TO SECONDARY EDUCATION

EKC Group's Folkestone College recently launched an innovative new Junior College, providing young locals aged between 14 and 16 with an exciting alternative to secondary school education.

Folkestone Junior College combines industry-recognised qualifications with core GCSEs. The unique curriculum includes Art and Design, Business Enterprise, Sport, English, Mathematics and a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Project. Alongside these, students also study personal development and awareness subjects, gaining qualifications in areas such as Mental Health Awareness, Wellbeing and Social Development.

Subjects are taught by experienced industry professionals in the College's purpose-designed facilities, with students

gaining the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in their future careers.

Head of Folkestone Junior College, Nick Hughes, commented: "We're excited to be able to offer the opportunity to study with us at our innovative Folkestone Junior College, designed for 14 to 16 year-olds who are passionate about getting a head start in the creative industries.

"Successful learners will achieve the equivalent of 8 GCSEs including Art and Design, Mathematics and English, as well as a Level 2 Diploma in Business and Enterprise."

Applications for September 2020 are open. For more information about Folkestone Junior College and to request an application pack, visit [folkestonecollege.ac.uk](https://www.folkestonecollege.ac.uk)

STUDENT'S KNOCKOUT DESIGN SECURES LOCAL REBRAND DEAL



A talented student from EKC Group's Broadstairs College scored the winning bid to rebrand local organisation, 'Health and Business in Thanet' (HABIT), having impressed company bosses with his striking design.

Level 3 Art and Design student, Joseph Yong, was announced as the winner during a virtual meeting with the 'Think Me Healthy' Board of Directors on Wednesday 10 June. Chairman of HABIT, Brian Urwin, commented: "It was a difficult decision, but the design by Joseph really conveys the ethos of HABIT, which is to promote health and wellbeing to local employers and the wider Thanet community."

Joseph was awarded £100 for his winning design and the opportunity to receive coaching and mentorship from Think Healthy Me's professionally qualified Associates.

EKC GROUP JOINS PIONEERING ORGANISATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

EKC Group has bolstered its ambitions for creating a sustainable future by joining The Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC).

The not-for-profit organisation champions sustainability and environmental awareness within the Further and Higher Education sectors, providing support, guidance and resources to UK educational institutions to help them improve their environmental performance.

The EKC Group, which includes six community-based Colleges, three Business Units and a Multi-Academy Trust, is committed to becoming a sustainable and environmentally aware organisation and has taken significant steps in recent years to improve its environmental credentials.

The Group's Chief Operating Officer, Andrew Stevens, explained: "We are committed to minimising our environmental impact and helping to limit the damaging effects of climate change. We are working closely with our students to make sure our work in this area reflects their priorities and ideas."



He continued: "Addressing the impact of climate change is clearly something that we cannot, and should not, tackle on our own. Working in partnership with other like-minded organisations is key to maximising our impact in this area."

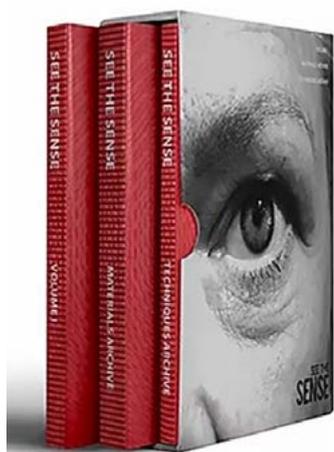
"Joining the EAUC gives us the opportunity to work with other leaders in further and higher education across the country. Sharing best practice and ideas will help us focus our efforts on areas that will give us the best possible outcomes."

"We are committed to making a difference and our partnership with the EAUC is an important part of that."

CANTERBURY CREATIVES TAKE EXHIBITIONS ONLINE

The Canterbury School of Visual Arts (CSVA) at EKC Group's Canterbury College brought their students' work to a global audience with two bespoke virtual exhibitions.

The College's BA (Hons) Visual Arts students were the first to see their artwork go on display via a bespoke website. The Exhibition titled, 'Rewind', showcased the students' skills in mediums such as screen printing, illustration, photography, graphic design and digital art.



One of the projects on display was CSVA student, Christian Moore's 'See The Sense' which explores sensory branding and the impact it has on the audience experience. Talking about their body of work, Christian commented: "Connecting to people through sensory stimulants establishes a true relationship between the brand and its consumers."

They continued: "Undertaking the BA in Visual Arts has allowed me to combine a range of specialisms and practices that I am passionate about, including branding, sensory stimulation and product design. Producing a physical product gave me hands-on experience and the opportunity to explore a range of materials."



Following the success of 'Rewind', the CSVA launched an innovative and immersive virtual exhibition titled, 'BEDSIT', in collaboration with the Flat38 Gallery in

Margate. This second exhibition featured artwork made at home during the lockdown period by students who have applied to study, or are currently studying, at the CSVA.

WAITING ROOM - Soon to be joining CSVA - ROOM 2



Head of Visual Arts at Canterbury College, Ben Kidger, commented: "Bedsit takes its name from the places students are making work from, their bedrooms in most cases, and it also has a resonance based around Flat 38 Gallery as a curatorial concept."

Photography and Graphic Design Technician at the College, Danny Whitcher, worked with Flat38 Gallery's Founder and Curator, Claire Orme, to design the exhibition platform, digitally recreating her domestic gallery.

Virtual visitors to the exhibition can navigate between the six different 'Bedsits' and the four rooms of the Gallery to enjoy the students' work.

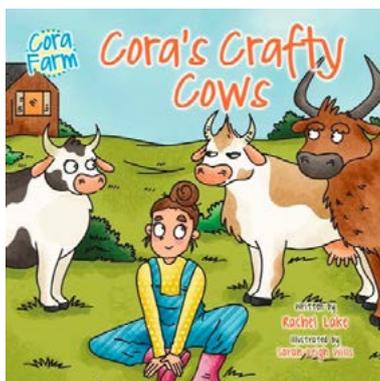
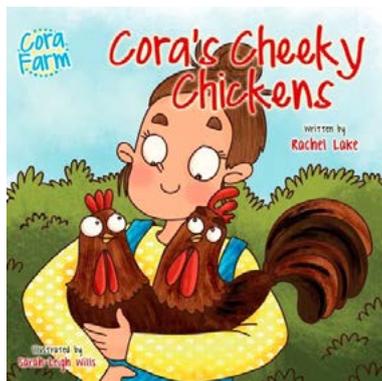
Talking about both of the exhibitions, Ben added: "I'm incredibly proud of all of our students and our fantastic staff who have been busy behind the scenes supporting students remotely.

"Whilst we aren't able to host our usual end of year show, these digital exhibitions have presented us with a unique opportunity to utilise our staff expertise and experience to create innovative new platforms to showcase our students' artwork to a global audience.

"We're excited for visitors to experience these exhibitions for themselves and to view the body of work created by our talented visual artists."

To view Rewind, visit csvahe.com and to view BEDSIT, visit bedsit.org

CANTERBURY COLLEGE ALUMNA PUBLISHES CHILDREN'S BOOK SERIES



Media Production alumna, Rachel Lake, from EKC Group's Canterbury College, has released a new series of children's books set in Kent titled, 'Cora Farm'.

The former student drew inspiration from her mother, Cora's farm cottage on the Isle of Sheppey where she was introduced to the sheep, chickens, ducks, goats and other animals that feature in her children's books.

Two books in the Cora Farm series were recently published by Kids Active (KA) Books. 'Cora's Cheeky Chickens' and 'Cora's Crafty Cows' are both available to buy online.

CANTERBURY INNOVATORS ENCOURAGE YOUNG LOCALS TO 'TALK2AM8'



Students from Canterbury College have launched an innovative online support enterprise to help young locals called, 'Talk2aM8'.

Founded by Level 3 Animal Management student, Jack Feury, and his friends, 'Talk2aM8' aims to raise awareness of the importance of mental wellbeing by providing peer-to-peer support and safe virtual spaces for young people to talk about their feelings and experiences.

For more information, search 'Talk2aM8' on Facebook or Instagram.

EAST KENT STUDENTS WIN TOP GALLERY PRIZES

Two students from EKC Group's Colleges in Broadstairs and Canterbury scooped the top two prizes for the Further Education category in the Turner Contemporary and Canterbury Christ Church University's Portfolio Competition 2020.

Level 3 Art and Design student, Zara Shah, from the Group's Broadstairs College, was awarded the top prize for their compelling audio-based work telling the fictional story of a young Afghan refugee who evades their war-torn country to find safety in the UK.

Level 3 Graphic Design student, Dominic Astell, from the Canterbury School of Visual Arts at the Group's Canterbury College, received the runner-up award for their 'Place Book', which includes a selection of posters representing Margate's independent businesses.



Both artworks are featured in the Turner Contemporary's online exhibition, 'Portfolio 2020: Places and Spaces'. To view the Exhibition, visit turnercontemporary.org/portfolio-2020-places-and-spaces