



NEWSLETTER **SPRING 2020**



AYRSHIRE PUPIL SPENDS A SUMMER WITH NASA

An 11-year-old pupil from Wellington School took one giant leap towards her dream career, with an out of this world work experience placement at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas.

Lillie McCluskie was invited to spend the summer in Texas with Sarah Murray, NASA's Deputy for Vehicle Systems Performance & Analysis.

The pair met at Ayrshire College's Mission Discovery programme last year, an event sponsored by Ayrshire College Foundation.

Sarah was so impressed with Lillie's attitude, knowledge and work ethic that they kept in touch once Sarah had returned to the United States.

Now Sarah has given Lillie an inside look at her dream job, with a summer placement at NASA's Johnson Space Center – where they

conduct human spaceflight training, research, and flight control.

Last year's Mission Discovery Ayrshire programme was the third week-long space school at Ayrshire College delivered to secondary school pupils from East, North and South Ayrshire by the International Space School Educational Trust (ISSET).

Sarah was part of a four-person strong ISSET team that also included NASA astronaut Stephen Bowen, ISSET's Chief Scientist Julie Keeble and ISSET founder Chris Barber. The pupils – who were working in mixed teams throughout the week – were all aged 15, 16 or 17. Except for one: then 10-year-old Lillie McCluskie.

Fi McClelland, manager of the Scottish Dark Sky Observatory, wrote to Ayrshire College asking for special dispensation for Lillie to join the programme. She said that Lillie, who volunteers at the Scottish Dark Sky Observatory, is obsessed with all things space and has dreams of becoming an astronaut. The College agreed on the basis that she was chaperoned at all times.

Lillie not only enjoyed the week-long space programme but she also contributed massively to her team's project.

“ I feel like the luckiest girl in the world! Spending time with all the astronauts was a dream come true. I kept having to pinch myself to make sure it was real.”



The teams designed space experiments, knowing that the winning idea would be launched into space and tested by astronauts at the International Space Station. Although Lillie's team did not win the grand prize, she impressed the ISSET team with her ideas and presentation skills alongside pupils up to 7 years older than her.

Since the Ayrshire College programme Lillie has had an amazing year: she's recorded a podcast for CBeebies radio about telescopes, she's working with an astronomer to develop resources to teach blind children about astronomy, and she has been asked to appear in a marketing programme about astronomy. Now she's enjoyed a perfect summer in Houston with Sarah Murray at NASA's Johnson Space Center.

Lillie said: "I feel like the luckiest girl in the world! Spending time with all the astronauts was a dream come true. I kept having to pinch myself to make sure it was real. I'm incredibly grateful to Sarah for all the amazing opportunities she gave me and can't wait to go back to Houston next year!"

TRUSTEE INTERVIEW:

Alan Walker



We are delighted to welcome two new trustees to the Ayrshire College Foundation Board; Alan Walker and Marion McLarty.

In a recent interview, Alan Walker told us a bit about himself...

I was born in Ayr and educated at Belmont Academy. After an engineering apprenticeship I worked for 40 years across two main business sectors - Electronics and Software. I spent 20 years on different assignments around the world including time with my family in Boston during the 1990s. I returned to work in Scotland in 2010 after working with the Black and Decker - DeWalt Corporation as Vice President and Chief Information Officer.

Over the last ten years I have been based locally in Glasgow working with two different business groups. I am currently the Executive Director and Chairman of the TWF Group.

I decided to get involved with the Ayrshire College Foundation because during my apprenticeship at Kilmarnock Technical College, I appreciated the benefits of great conditions and educational tools. The Ayrshire College Foundation has maintained these standards since set-up, providing much needed assistance.

During my tenure as part of Ayr and Ayrshire College Board of Management, the requirement for support for the College financial position requires continual external provision. The Ayrshire College Foundation has provided multiple opportunities for the College campuses, students and the local community to be part of something special within Ayrshire. I have been really impressed with the work the Foundation has achieved over the last five years and I am delighted to be part of the Board and look forward to continuing this incredible work.



Ambitious for Ayrshire

PROJECT UPDATES



Enterprising
Students

Soft Olive



Soft Olive

Greig Allan is the latest student to receive funding from the Ayrshire College Foundation Enterprising Students Fund. Here, he gives us an insight into his business, Soft Olive, and plans for the future.

Our Business Idea

I opened our natural cosmetics store, based in Troon, during September 2018, with my partner Magdalena, also an Ayrshire College student, after we visited her parents and their family-run store in Krakow. While on holiday, we decided we wanted to be self-employed and believed we could start our own family-run store back in Scotland.

Although I had no experience of the natural cosmetics industry, I loved the idea of it, and with Magdalena already having a wealth of experience in natural cosmetics and having studied Business at the University of Economics in Krakow, we were in a good position to launch our own business. Magdalena's passion for natural cosmetics comes from growing up working in her family's cosmetic business. She started selling products from a stall with her parents at a young age and over time helped build the company to become what it is today.

Gin Inspired Cosmetics

I also have business experience having been a self-employed driving instructor and a senior manager with Buzzworks Holdings. My background is in bartending, having managed various cocktail bars and competed in many competitions. I am passionate about the history of gin and how it is made, and realised the process for making gin is very similar to the process for making cosmetics. When we started researching and comparing the ingredients, we learned there are numerous health benefits to juniper berry, the key ingredient in gin, and the other botanicals often found in gin. Juniper berry is very effective in the treatment of hair and skin. By combining both our backgrounds we came up with the concept for our own line of natural and organic gin inspired cosmetics.



Greig with his partner,
Magdalena and their
baby daughter



Our Passion For The Environment

We share a passion for doing our part to help save the environment and strongly disagree with many of the practices used by most of the well-known cosmetic companies. These large companies have packed their products full of toxic chemicals, metals and plastic particles for many years. Moreover, they test on animals. We made a conscious decision that we would only sell the very best of naturally and ethically sourced products in our store. Our products would also be free from animal cruelty, vegan friendly, biodegradable and marine life friendly, free from non-recyclable plastic packaging and suitable for people with skin conditions. We also try to sell products that contain organic ingredients whenever possible.

Opportunities

The Ayrshire College Foundation Enterprising Students Fund has given us a wonderful opportunity to secure £5000 of funding for Soft Olive. This funding will allow us to develop our own brand of natural cosmetics called Bathtub Gincare, based on using gin inspired botanicals. Without this funding we would not be able to realise our project. It is also a huge boost to our confidence that a panel of independent business people believed in us and wanted to invest in our business.

Challenges

Magdalena and I are high achievers and always push ourselves to be the best. We put in the hard work and share a can do attitude. Having both worked

in the hospitality industry means we are used to long hours, so we are managing to study and run a business, and I continue to work part-time in a bar. Magdalena also gave birth to our daughter during our first year of business.

The most challenging aspect of launching our business has been getting people into the shop – especially in the winter months. Customers nowadays often shop out of town in places such as Silverburn or Braehead, and of course, there is competition online.

We have started developing some of our products and are delighted with how they perform. We are now working on how they look as we are up against competition from companies such as Lush.

Inspiring Achievement

I am driven to be successful and good old-fashioned pride and a desire to be the best spurs me on. To achieve excellence in anything you need to continuously know your weaknesses and improve. The knowledge and skills I am learning on my engineering course help me understand how things work and how to solve problems and so on. This will help me in our manufacturing side of the business. I am inspired by role models such as Magdalena's parents, people I have met through Buzzworks and people I read about online. I enjoy reading self-improvement books and autobiographies of successful people.



Future Aspirations

We are developing a luxurious range of products that will be sold to local hotels. We envision our Bathtub Gincare range being offered as complimentary gifts for guests when staying in the hotels. Our range will be displayed in the luxurious bathrooms, for guests to help themselves to as part of the hotel experience. This would be much more than just a nice touch offered by the hotels. In doing so, both the hotels and guests would be joining us in reducing the amount of plastic being thrown away and harmful cosmetics being washed down the drains. We will also offer the products with or without packaging in our store at 44 Church Street, Troon.

We can't thank the panel enough for investing in us and setting us up on our path to success. I would encourage any student with a business idea, however small, to apply. In addition to the grant, there are invaluable resources included such as workshops and networking events. Look out for us and our Bathtub Gincare brand there.

Our Social media handles are

@softolivenaturalcosmetics (Facebook)

#softolivenaturalcosmetics (Instagram)

www.softolive.com

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ENTERPRISING STUDENTS UPDATE



Sandra Laurenson,
Jolly Well Made

Jolly Well Made

I create handmade unique items using machine embroidery. I always put the customer first, and make it my priority to have great communication with them and find out what they want, and provide them with ideas and choices in order to include them in the design process. I then design products and services with my customer in mind. This has resulted in repeat and new customers, all with positive feedback. I am pleased to report an increase in sales on platforms such as ETSY, my website and EBay. I have continued to grow and have customers recommending their friends.

" The main benefit of the Enterprising Students funding was that I have been able to purchase equipment such as Janome MC15000 sewing machine which would have been unreachable financially for me. I have recently started to experiment with new designs. I am eager to learn more of what my machine can do and I am making this a priority for next year. "



Bryan Shaw,
1815 Media

1815 Media

Six months on, and I believe my business is doing very well – even better than I hoped as I've got many new clients with interesting projects to work on. I am making a profit, and these positive developments are good indicators of the very beginnings of a successful brand.

In August, I landed two global trading clients; Rum & Cane and The Lost Distillery. The briefs were to create images and videos to target European markets for their drinks. The rum products were aimed the French market and I worked with their Brand Ambassador to discuss ideas.

As for the whisky products, I had to create 13 Videos advertising each individual whisky in classic and vintage bottling. This turnaround was very short as we only had one day to record all the content, and this was a challenge to meet the deadline. After the videos were completed, I had to create a whisky advertising collection to highlight the use of dark smoked roots, and the elegance of the flavours, within each individual bottle.

A parent company of The Lost Distillery reached out to me again, to do more of their drinks/lifestyle promotional work. I was delighted to achieve this level of repeat business and to know that they had been pleased with my initial work.

" The Enterprising Students funding has given me the opportunity to upgrade my equipment and this has had a massive impact, as my work requires the best available equipment and shows the high standards I can achieve. Overall the funding has opened more doors for me to be more enterprising and I am pleased with how much progress I have been able to make in just six months. "

ENTERPRISING STUDENTS UPDATE



Handmade Sewing Boutique

I started this business because of my passion for sewing and creating things. I've always loved being creative, experimenting with different textures and fabrics and seeing things coming together. I'm passionate about sewing and my inspiration comes from my experience with my own clothes as a teenager. As we couldn't really afford new clothes, I had to improvise with them. So, my mum would give me a needle, thread and scissors to let me create something unique that no-one else would have. I loved that idea of having something a bit different. My business the Handmade Sewing Boutique, provides a service to help others get the best out of their clothes with a few new ideas and my sewing skills along the way. I also offer a dressmaking and alterations service.



The amount of money people spend on fast fashion is really shocking and it's sad to see these going to landfill so my business aims to make fashion more sustainable.



After a slow start, my business has grown steadily over the past few months which I'm extremely happy to see. I have had amazing feedback both online and face to face, and many recommendations bringing me new customers. I have at least 10 new customers each week as well as repeat custom. There has been so much support for my upcycling ideas. This has given me a real boost to my confidence.

**Sharlene Atkinson,
Handmade Sewing Boutique**

Memory cushions have been a big hit with my customers as they are an amazing keepsake. I have more sewing workshops planned and customers are very interested in signing up to these.

"The main impact of the funding has been getting premises and an industrial sewing machine. This has helped me massively in starting off in the right path."



ENTERPRISING STUDENTS UPDATE



**Lorna Hamilton,
Hushed Hair Salon**

The Hushed Salon

I am delighted to say that I have now opened for business. Six weeks ago I got the keys for the Hushed Salon at 29 John Finnie Street in Kilmarnock. It was very exciting to finally make this dream a reality. I have enjoyed getting the salon prepared for my clients.

What's unique about my salon is the salon space, services and atmosphere are designed to support and service clients who may be anxious, depressed or feel self-conscious about going into a salon. Given my own experience, having a son with autism, I wanted to create a salon space that felt safe and comfortable for clients or children who had additional support needs. I work one-to-one with clients, and hopefully I am helping them feel relaxed and at ease while in my salon. The salon is also sensory aware and uses low noise appliances and wherever possible, I try to keep aerosol use to a minimum.

I am happy with the level of business so far, especially this month as there is the Christmas rush on in the salon at the moment. So far I have good reviews and feedback from clients. I mostly work from recommendations and have a lot of new and returning clients from my previous business.

It was wonderful to receive this funding and it has enabled me to secure premises and cover solicitors and other business fees to get started. Without the funding I wouldn't have been able to meet these costs.

I plan to grow through marketing and word of mouth. I also have two other hairdressers who are renting chairs in my salon, and I plan on growing the team as demand develops. I will also be holding a launch party later in the year to celebrate the opening of Hushed Hair Salon.

" It was wonderful to receive this funding and it has enabled me to secure premises and cover solicitors and other business fees to get started. Without the funding I wouldn't have been able to meet these costs."

ENTERPRISING STUDENTS UPDATE



**Chris Saby,
FunnyGrump Clothing**

FunnyGrump Clothing

I make clothes for plus sized men that are custom fitted. This was born out of a frustration that I couldn't walk into a shop or order items online that didn't need altering or adjusting in some way. I identified a plus sized male market which although was quite niche, I felt that I could hopefully fulfil the needs of plus sized men that were fashion conscious and wanted to look and feel good in the clothes they left the house in.

I followed on from the initial interest on social media from such sites as Reddit and Instagram and I have built on this with creating a Facebook business page and I am steadily growing my Instagram page, with some work, having gained over 150 followers in a week. My Reddit posts in sewing, plus sized and streetwear groups regularly get over 500 likes and a lot of positive feedback. I've had substantial feedback in regards to my garments from plus sized people who are encouraging about the fact that I am making clothes for the plus sized market.

" The funding has enabled me to create my business. It has allowed me to buy all the equipment, material and resources I've needed to get my business off the ground. Without the funding it would have taking me a long time to save up the funds to actually start my own brand."

<https://www.funnygrumpclothing.com/>



**Aaron Gregory,
PathOgen Merchandising**

Pathogen Merchandising

Since I started this business six months ago, I have seen a good increase in orders due to the marketing campaign I have on social media. I've been able to open my own business premises and I use this for printing my t-shirts. I've achieved a larger following on my social media sites - Instagram and Facebook. I have also seen an increase in reach on my social media posts, which has been due to clients sharing my site with their community.

My key priority is to ensure orders go out on time, and that I respond quickly to my emails and messages on Facebook. My objectives set for 2020 include purchasing a DTG printer and embroidery machine.

To put it simply I've been able to establish myself at the bottom of the business world. I still have a long way to go, but the grant has given me a massive boost to get started. I've also been able to use the knowledge and advice gained from Bridge to Business. Creating my business plan was a struggle for me, but the Enterprising Students Fund helped my write the plan and successfully access the funding.

ENTERPRISING STUDENTS UPDATE



Scott Hadow,
11:11 Events

11:11 Events

I have gained valuable experience within the entertainment industry as well as networking with students, enterprises, local businesses and clients. All is really going well so far. Having sold out 6 of the 8 shows in the past 6 or 7 months, I am looking into the New Year with more ambition and focus to maintain a high standard, which will help me sell out more shows in 2020

The aim of 11:11 Events is to create some new and exciting entertainment across Ayrshire and Glasgow with the view of expanding into different areas of Scotland by 2021.

In recent times, I have worked with clients who have appeared in television shows that include, Glasgow singer/songwriter, Laura B, who appeared on BBC's All Together Now in March this year as well as Nicholas McDonald, who appeared in ITV's X-Factor and went on to become runner up in 2013. On top of that, I have been able to work with some of the best comedians in the country, which has opened an enormous amount of opportunity for me. I have also engaged with new performers such as Ayrshire College student, Emma Sarginson to perform in some of next year's shows.

" I couldn't be more grateful for the Ayrshire College Foundation in giving me the funding I needed to get the equipment that was required to start bringing my visions into a reality."





Enterprising Students

The Ayrshire College Foundation provides funding of grants up to £5000 for students of Ayrshire College who are interested in developing ideas to start up their own business.

To help us inspire more students to be enterprising, we work in partnership with **Bridge 2 Business** to support idea development.

You can find further information and details on how to apply for funding on our website.

<https://ayrshirecollegefoundation.weebly.com/>



For information on Bridge 2 Business follow @bridge2business and visit www.bridge2business.org.uk

For direct information please contact lynn.kelly@yes.org.uk



**BRIDGE 2
BUSINESS**

NEW FOR 2020: ENTERPRISING BUSINESS COURSE

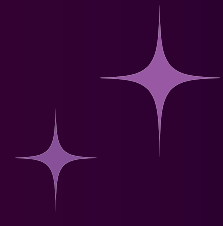
Ayrshire College has just launched a new course aimed at former Ayrshire College students who have left College in the last two years. The course will help people to start their own business or if they have already started, help them develop their ideas for future growth.

Sandra Ferguson, Curriculum Manager explains more about it to potential students: "This course is designed to help you find out what you need to know in preparing to start up your own business. A good business plan aims not just to help you attract the funding you might be looking for to start up your business, but is also designed to be a useful tool to help you clarify your business purpose and communicate your business to other interested parties including future partners and employees.

"The plan can also help you set targets and objectives and help predict future trends, as well as allowing you to monitor your business performance more effectively.

"This course has been designed to fit around your existing commitments with flexible learning using our Moodle site. This allows you to carry out coursework by distance learning as well as receiving one-to-one support when required and at key times throughout the year. The course also has 2 half-day Finance Workshops that you should attend to help you to navigate your way through profit and loss statements.

"You will gather all your evidence together in a portfolio that will be assessed and on successful completion will be awarded a



SCQF Level 7 SQA unit "Preparing to Start a Business.

As a student of this course you will be able to attend events, and external workshops and meet with business mentors through Bridge 2 Business Enterprise Executive, Lynn Kelly. You will also be able to apply for a £100 "Test the Market" grant offered by Bridge 2 Business.

You also have the option of applying to the Enterprising Students Fund sponsored by the Ayrshire College Foundation. The Ayrshire College Foundation will provide funding of grants up to £5000 for students of Ayrshire College who are interesting in developing ideas to start up their own business."

Thinking of applying?

" This course is designed to help you find out what you need to know in preparing to start up your own business and with flexible learning, has been designed to fit around your existing commitments."

Why don't you #GoForIt

For more information on the Bridge 2 Business programme available to Ayrshire college students please visit: <http://www1.ayrshire.ac.uk/enterprising-student/>

For information on Bridge 2 Business follow @bridge2business and visit www.bridge2business.org.uk





Collaborating Communities

There is a wide range of exciting projects that have just been approved by the Ayrshire College Foundation Trustees. Here is a summary of each of the projects:



ABC Home Education Group

(Ayrshire's Beyond the Classroom
home education group - ABC)



ABC is a home education group in Ayr. It was set up to offer a variety of benefits to home educated children and their families. This includes social benefits, space and time to establish friendships, activities to learn together and access to classes that some families might not be able to afford on their own. We have families attend from all over Ayrshire and we meet on a regular basis.

The funding from the Collaborating Communities Fund will be used to further support the aims of our group and to help develop more educational opportunities for the children who attend as well as providing support to the parents. Home educating families get no help to educate their children and must finance this themselves. Coming together as a group allows us to split costs and any funding we get is put into resources and workshops that families might not be able to access on their own.

We will set up a science club, digital art workshops, and purchase STEM Lego kits and tablets and arts and crafts supplies.



COLLABORATING COMMUNITIES UPDATE

Aces: Future Stars

ACES is a charity based in Kilwinning. We run awareness sessions for youth groups and schools in issues that children and young people face while growing up. Our town is in the highest 15% of multiple deprivation. (SIMD). In the past we have had issues of juvenile crime, anti-social behaviour and suicides involving young people. Our project is aimed at people 14yrs and upwards, and we will offer them the chance to realise their potential.

Future stars will give these young people coping measures and training in volunteering. Working alongside full-time youth workers, they will create a "tool box" that they can rely on to help them to volunteer, gain entry into further education, enrol as an apprentice, or seek employment.

Each section will be recorded in a personal portfolio, with photographic evidence, statements and reports. There will be qualifications for each section completed, and this will be invaluable in showing future employers the experience they have gained, while on the future stars programme.

This will increase confidence and social skills, and will show them that they can help others by volunteering, or moving on to further education or employment. The funding will assist ACES in booking courses, team builders and course materials as well as hall hire and transport costs.

Ayr Boat Building Project - Row to Succeed

The Scottish Fisheries Museum in Anstruther Fife, started an initiative in 2009 to reintroduce the inter community rowing competitions that for many years were a strong feature of life in the coastal communities of Scotland. This wood craft heritage project also had an additional purpose of resurrecting the building of traditional coastal rowing skiffs, which also was a feature of coastal communities over hundreds of years.

South Ayrshire Duke of Edinburgh's Award has been taking this project forward by promoting and developing this initiative throughout South Ayrshire coastal communities. So far we have done this with schools and communities in Troon, Maybole, Maidens, Girvan and Prestwick. We would now like to introduce this initiative in Ayr.

The aim of this particular Ayr initiative is to develop and utilise this successful national heritage project to increase community capacity and employability skills with targeted pupils in Ayr Academy and the local community. They will learn boat building skills, woodcraft and engineering skills, rowing and basic water safety and seamanship skills. This project will also link into the RNLI "Respect the Water" sea safety programme. This project has also the benefit of being an Intergenerational Project:

The funding will be used to purchase a St Ayles Skiff boat kit and the necessary material for completion. The project will be supported with expertise by local volunteer members of the Ayrshire rowing community with potentially Ayr College students if interested.

Associated British Ports (ABP) at Ayr Harbour has offered a shed to build it at Ayr Harbour. University of West of Scotland have offered to store boats as part of the River Ayr Water Sports projects.



COLLABORATING COMMUNITIES UPDATE



Elevat8: Step Up

Our project aims to support individuals recovering from addictions and mental health issues in self-management of their condition. We will work with Patchwork Recovery Group in Kilmarnock who will use their lived experience of recovery to develop self-management strategies and activities.

We will run a series of workshop type sessions focused on: self-confidence and personal resilience and engagement and healthy relationships. These will be facilitated by a trained psychologist with a keen interest in Clinical Health Psychology and experience in delivering psycho-education sessions as well as therapy sessions. There will be a strong focus on goal setting and action planning to achieve individuals' outcomes.



As the group is run by volunteers with lived experience of recovery, it was identified that volunteers would benefit from more training to increase their skills and confidence. They would like more structured activities and specific projects to focus on. It was very clear that social interaction and tackling loneliness are top priority. They would also like to run a peer project, recognising individuals' skills within the group and supporting and mentoring each other.

Our sessions promoting positive engagement, maintaining healthy relationships, and strengthening social networks will play a crucial part in the project. Many people in recovery struggle with this part of life and suffer from isolation and loneliness. The sessions will explore healthy and unhealthy types of interaction with others and kindness as the basis for positive engagement. We will look at setting healthy boundaries and developing individuals' skills.



Boosting Reading at Garnock Community Campus

This project involves senior pupils that have completed a two day intensive training course delivered by the Professional Learning Academy (funded by the Pupil Equity Fund), supporting S1 pupils who are in danger of falling behind in their reading. The pupils selected have a reading age significantly lower than average for their age, and have been identified as in need of intervention through the Star Reading tests and primary data.

For each session, the senior pupil needs to provide a selection of reading materials for the pupil: three texts they are familiar with, one recently introduced text and one new text (five in total for each session). These need to be a mix of fiction, poetry, non-fiction and instructional texts, and need to be levelled appropriately.

The funding will be used to provide ten tablets for pupils to be able to access the Accelerated Reader programme, online articles and e-texts. It will also be used to provide a high quality selection of high interest/ low ability texts that have been specifically selected to be of benefit to struggling and reluctant readers. Currently, we only have a very limited selection of reading materials and no tablets or e-readers.

The objectives of the Boosting Reading initiative are to improve the reading comprehension and fluency of identified pupils. It has been proven in case studies that the intervention can have an impact of over four times the expected rate of progress. In fact, on average pupils make reading age gains of twelve months over the ten week block.

Outdoor Learning at Garnock Community Campus

Garnock Community Campus understands outdoor education as a place for discovery, experimentation, learning about and connecting to the natural world, and engaging in adventure activities and outdoor activities. Studies have shown that young people who learn outdoors develop a sense of self, independence, confidence, creativity, decision-making and problem-solving skills, empathy towards others, motor skills, self-discipline and initiative.

A year ago, Rural Skills pupils took part in 'The Green Plan It' (RHS) project and designed and built a 3D model of the school garden. Their efforts were awarded and announced as the best model by all contestants. The pupils built a fantastic school garden/ allotment. However, this area requires further investment, especially a roofed structure that would allow work to continue despite unfavourable weather.

With this funding, we plan to create a space in a school garden where pupils, teachers, the local community can work together. Rural Skills pupils designed a wooden gazebo, and this will be used as an outdoor classroom. It has a capacity of around 35 students. The square design of the shelter will work well as a teaching area and helps teachers to keep the pupil's attention (for nursery, primary, secondary pupils) for longer.

Various accessories can be added, such as external seats, desks, decorative & educational panels. For topics and lessons related to the environment, this is the ideal shelter. But it's not all about that. We want to give opportunity to teach outdoor young people, giving them space and a different experience to learn from.

COLLABORATING COMMUNITIES UPDATE



For those that are already working in the creative field, it's a chance to inspire young people to help them know what they can do with their creative skills when they leave college. By sharing stories of their career journey, they can help students understand the amazing opportunities that are available in the creative industry and pass on hints and tips to achieve success.

Finally it's an opportunity for everyone to bring their voice to the network and share experiences and collaborate.

Hello Creatives

We need to bridge the gap between the Creative team at Ayrshire College and the community. Unlike many other sectors there are not a lot of employers in the creative industry in Ayrshire. However there is a plethora of artists and designers who are freelance/self-employed. It can be quite isolating operating in an environment that is so fragmented. Although there are pockets of creatives who form art or performing arts networks, there is nothing that encompasses all disciplines. This project is all about helping people to collaborate in their communities!

We want to start a new creative network in Ayrshire and connect with like-minded people to share best practice and help each other. The purpose of Hello Creative Network is to invite local employers and practitioners to engage with our students through a regular series of informal events and online platforms designed to engage, motivate and inspire.

The events will enable students to build a support network within the industry, and help increase their confidence and communication skills in a welcoming, supportive environment. The events also aim to highlight the scale of the creative industries, and the wealth of opportunities available across a range of disciplines. This will encourage students to seek the right creative path for them, while giving them the confidence to pursue it, knowing it can be a viable career goal.

For employers it's about having access to a creative talent pipeline to help them fill employment gaps and build a more diverse team. It will be an opportunity to better connect with Ayrshire College to work on potential projects such as competitions, internship opportunities, guest speakers, mentoring, and to provide feedback on the skills and attributes employers are looking for.



“ The events will enable students to build a support network within the industry, and help increase their confidence and communication skills in a welcoming, supportive environment. For employers it's about having access to a creative talent pipeline to help them fill employment gaps and build a more diverse team. ”

COLLABORATING COMMUNITIES UPDATE

Kidz4kidz

This project is about young people having the opportunity to use digital media as a platform to get their voices heard by a global audience and at the same time learning vital skills that will help them in their journeys through life.

Caledonia Digital Communications CIC (CDC) is a social enterprise company, set up by existing and post-graduate students in Business, Marketing and Media subjects. Based in Ayrshire, the objectives of CDC are to provide work experience and paid internships to students, support post-graduates who are starting a creative business and work with schools to find and develop creative skills in pupils who are disengaged and or struggling with the existing education system and unlikely to find a positive destination on leaving school.

The young people who come to work alongside us will have the opportunity to learn the basics of -making an IPTV program from scriptwriting, location scouting, directing, producing, camera, lighting, sound, presenting and editing; photography in a studio or outdoors; graphic design, designing a website, creating branding, logo's, print material and online; and marketing and advertising.

In undertaking these projects the young people will learn how to work on their own and as part of a multi-disciplined team; social and soft skills they can transfer to other work environments; the importance of networking and developing contacts among businesses and in the communities; health and safety regulations relating to the work they will be doing; copyright, GDPR and other aspects of the laws relating to media. And learn about budgeting and finance; what the project costs are and how to finance it.

The majority of the projects will come from the young people themselves after all that's the whole purpose of this project, but the CDC team also have some projects with community groups that we want to engage the young people with and this will give the young people some experience of working with a client on a commercial project.



COLLABORATING COMMUNITIES UPDATE



Community Garden (Ayr)

This Ayrshire College Ayr Campus project provides educational opportunities in an outdoor setting for students to extend their collaborative activities with the local community. Early Years and Supported Learning departments will create an outdoor learning space and sensory garden within the Dam Park building for students, staff, external partners, and our community.

Ayrshire College invested in Outdoor Forest Kindergarten CPD for Early Years' staff. This learning space enriches the opportunities for staff to cascade outdoor learning skills to Early Years' students and local families, further promoting outdoor learning to Early Year's community partners.

We do not want a playground; static, unchanging play spaces do little for visiting children and the workforce skills we develop. However, environments which can be manipulated, where things move and can be moved, open worlds of possibility. Our Early Years students need to see first-hand that a green space that can mature, helps children invent, construct, evaluate and modify their constructions and ideas through play.



Many students and pupils of partner schools within our Supportive Education department are on the autistic spectrum and have a wide variety of sensory needs. This sensory space will help students manage their behaviours by creating an engaging "low arousal" environment. Visiting pupils from local schools will be positively associating the college with a space that is welcoming, unstructured, and engaging to their senses.

The funding will provide educational Early Years equipment and garden maintenance tools to maintain the outdoor space, while letting it mature sustainably, reclaiming, reusing, and recycling where possible.

The Early Years' equipment helps students promote a range of rich play opportunities that expand their knowledge of outdoor learning.

COLLABORATING COMMUNITIES UPDATE

Community Garden (Kilmarnock)

The Community Garden project began with our supported learning students exploring ways to improve their health and wellbeing and often taking walks to the wellbeing area of the college. Many students commented that the area was very dull and they would enjoy it better if there were plants, trees and areas to explore. They asked if we could start a project where they could improve the area by designing a layout then plant flowers and trees. Students in another class (within the department) had a similar idea as they were studying environment and wondered if there was an area of the college that they could plant trees to help the environment.

This project provides many different opportunities such as accreditation, partnership working and skills development for employability, as well as health and wellbeing. It is a project that could be opened up to the wider college community and would give supported learning students the experience of working with students from the mainstream. This kind of partnership is invaluable as it would help to break down the barriers of supported learning students accessing provision in mainstream and hopefully would aid the reduction in stigma and improve the

understanding of what it is to have an additional support need. Supported learning students would be included in the wider college community and experience.

The project will include external partners such as schools (special and supported learning centres) and other local disability partners with whom we engage. The garden would provide opportunities for our organisations to come together in one project which would make transitions between our organisations less daunting. Young people at schools, day centres and attending other provision in the community often transition to college and this can be an overwhelming prospect. Through the community garden, the young person's first engagement with the College and college staff would be a relaxed and hopefully positive one.

The funding will be used for a shed, tools and plants and trees.



Our Future Now

Yipworld currently has funding to work with young people aged 16-25 who aren't in education, training or employment. Our project, which is called 'Our Future. Now' (OFN) takes a holistic approach to providing participants with the platform to eventually progress into a positive destination.

We work with a host of partner agencies to identify and refer young people. Project staff work with young people to identify their goals and areas for development, building a programme to individual participants' needs i.e. helping to build confidence through participation in groups, visits to the gym or taking part in exercise and social interaction, group activities, cooking and basic life skills, taking care of their home and managing money, planning their time etc. This leads towards skills such as building CVs, volunteering, (re-)applying to Further Education, work experience, engagement in the community and so on. Participants can engage on a one-to-one or group basis, depending on how comfortable they are and what they are aiming towards.

We have had an encouraging amount of success over the six months that 'Our Future. Now' has been running, with over 45 young people engaged so far and young people progressing substantially. Our current funding is limited to staff costs and means that our staff have minimal budgets for events, activities and resources. The funding will be used for activity costs - from allowing us to pay gym entry fees, to taking participants for group meals and trips (to contribute towards

soft outcomes), buying in specialist services when necessary, paying for participants' travel expenses and more. This will make a significant impact. As the cohort of young people that we are working with, are those who may not have money for the bus or who wouldn't otherwise attend the gym or have access to a cookery class.

Our staff are currently working throughout East Ayrshire; in Cumnock, Dalmellington, Kilmarnock and other small rural towns where under-employment, low income and other SIMD factors are of particular concern. Other issues that young people in these areas face include a lack of transport to other towns, limited employment opportunities, lack of confidence in travelling outwith their known area. These are the young people for whom some tailored support – and someone who is consistently there to help them out – could make a world of difference.



Mock Shop Fronts

Prince's Trust students will be creating a memory lane with mock shop fronts and a village square at Overmills Daycare Centre. The centre provides a day care service for people with substantial and critical needs such as dementia.

The idea is to stimulate happy memories and maximise the potential of their service users to live fulfilling lifestyles in a safe, friendly and caring environment. They will feel part of their community again and enjoy the outdoors in a safe and controlled environment.



The funding will be used to buy all the building materials required to create the mock shop fronts.



Innovating for Learning



These are the latest projects to receive funding:

Regeneration of the Nursery Garden at Kilwinning Campus

This project is to regenerate the outdoor simulated nursery garden space at Kilwinning campus, improve the environment, and embed outdoor play and learning into the Early Years curriculum to address the gap in skill sets.

Ayrshire College staff and students have proposed the following ideas for their new garden:

- Creating a wildlife garden and bug hotel
- Planting flowers and trees
- Hanging bird feeders
- Creating a sheltered area to support imaginative play and story corner
- Creating open-ended resources/loose part play for den building and role play
- Building a mud kitchen, water play, and a range of heuristic play resources
- Installing outdoor tables & cushions

Improving STEM Opportunities in Early Years

In the early years profession, it is widely recognised that children are 'little scientists', exploring and learning about the world around them. The Scottish Government identified that often staff implementing the early level experiences and outcomes in the sciences, are unclear how best to plan for the development and application of these into real-life contexts. We need to ensure early years practitioners have the appropriate STEM capability; equipping people with the skills that employers need.

This project will create a unique hands on STEM learning experience for staff, students' early learning and childcare colleagues, children and young people.

In a previous Innovating for Students project, Ayrshire College staff created STEM Primary school teaching resources and trained local teachers how to use them. This new project will empower our Early Years and STEM students to work under staff guidance to develop further materials for science boxes for the local community early learning provision.

Bringing both Early Years and STEM students together, will enable shared practices and improve employability skills for both student groups. Early years students will develop science related knowledge to adapt to early learning and implement into their workplace curriculum planning activities. This will provide them with a unique advantage when applying to the profession.

STEM students will gain an understanding of how to develop resources for a younger age range, and may support their progression into early years or teaching profession.

Ayrshire College Foundation Launch New Community Funding

Ayrshire College Foundation is delighted to announce new funding of up to £5000 for educational community projects in Ayrshire.

The Collaborating Communities Fund has been set up to provide grants for community projects. This means that schools, voluntary organisations, charities, churches, community centres, sports clubs and so on, can apply for up to £5000 for small projects which will benefit the community.

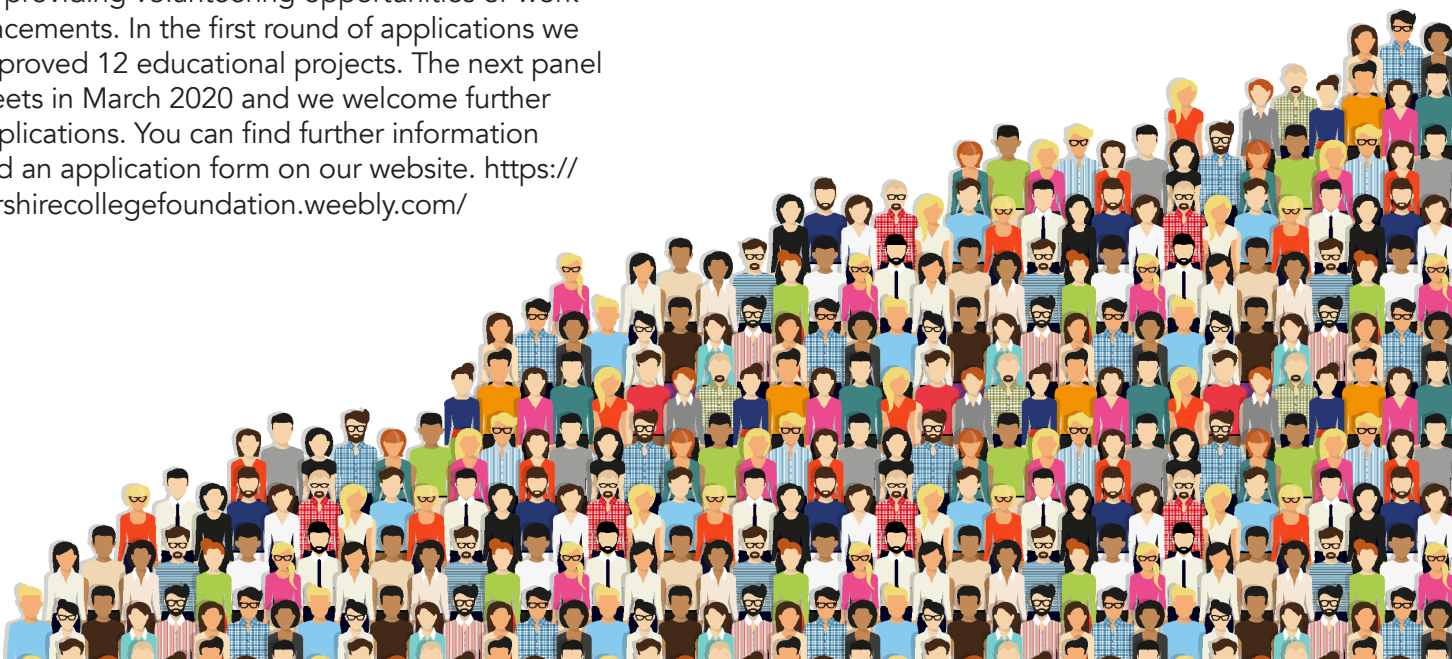
Ayrshire College staff and students may also apply, as long as they can demonstrate how the community would benefit from their project.

Tracey Stark, Chair of the Foundation said, "This fund supports Ayrshire-based projects that provide educational experiences for all age groups. It's an incredible opportunity to apply for funding to support a wide range of groups in the community that need extra funds to be able to deliver projects and services.

"We are especially interested in projects that could benefit Ayrshire College students perhaps by providing volunteering opportunities or work placements. In the first round of applications we approved 12 educational projects. The next panel meets in March 2020 and we welcome further applications. You can find further information and an application form on our website. <https://ayrshirecollegefoundation.weebly.com/>



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