



IT'S EXCELLENT

SIMPLY THE BEST: Gareth Jones, director at Battens and solicitor Maria Brindley handing over sponsorship for the Centre of Excellence to Budmouth principal David Akers

Business centre will give pupils a boost

UNLOCKING students talent and developing students' personal culture are the ideas underpinning a new ground-breaking centre of excellence at a Weymouth college.

Budmouth College will soon be launching its Centre of Excellence, the first of its kind in the UK.

Students will be able to work directly with businesses and apprenticeship providers, as well as fellow students, to create a unique step-by-step process where students can take an idea from its inception through the development stages to the sale pitch all in one room.

Battens Solicitors Ltd is the lead sponsor of the project and is supporting the college through their charitable trust.

Business and industry will be getting on board and using space in the centre so that students get the benefit of working alongside them and there are opportunities for work experience, apprenticeships and training programmes.

Students also have the chance to do an internship for two years in the sixth form college before progressing on to a scholarship.

BY CATHERINE BOLADO

This is supported by the Sir Samuel Mico Trust which provides educational grants to young people aged between 16 and 24 and supports those undertaking apprenticeships.

The project is the brain child of Budmouth's director of enterprise Marcel Ciantar, who was driven by his own experiences of the education system to develop the new centre.

Born in Malta, Mr Ciantar had been due to study medicine but did not want to and applied for a scholarship at 17-years-old to study arts conservation and spent the next two years in London.

Through three full scholarships he was able to continue his education and spent time studying in the USA.

As a result of being given the chance to do something he loved Mr Ciantar has worked all over the world and now is keen to pass on that opportunity that he experienced to others.

He said: "I still remember at 47-years-old, how it felt at 17-years-old when somebody gave me a chance.

"Any student who wants to unlock their talent can be a member. Children have minds like parachutes, they are still open."

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OPENING IN SEPTEMBER

THE centre will be open in September and will overlook Chesil Beach. Any student from the school will be able to use the facility to develop their ideas.

Marcel Ciantar, right, will be

travelling to Westminster to address an employment and skills summit about the innovative new idea.

He said he hoped that other schools would sign up to membership of the centre and that the innovation would spread around the UK.

He added: "It's about taking an idea from a concept to become a tangible result."

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