

# National Apprenticeship Week

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## Pledges for over 20,000 places

**MORE** than 20,000 new apprenticeships have been pledged by employers as part of a special week to promote training.

Firms including Lloyds Bank, British Airways, BT, Network Rail and O2 as well as local authorities, have made announcements as part of National Apprenticeship Week.

Half of the employers creating new places this week are small and medium-sized enterprises.

Business Secretary Vince Cable said: "The Government is putting an end to the damaging divide between vocational and academic learning. We are committing the biggest ever investment in apprenticeships and are on track to create two million apprenticeships over the course of this Parliament."

"The resounding success of this year's National Apprenticeship Week demonstrates that apprenticeships are deservedly becoming more popular with business of all sizes."

"Apprentices already contribute £1.8 billion to the economy and with these further commitments, thousands more people will now be able to get the practical skills they need to build careers and help firms grow."

Greener Journeys, which promotes sustainable travel, said the Government should launch concessionary bus travel for young people in the first year of their apprenticeship to make it easier and cheaper for them to commute to work by bus.

Apprenticeships should last three years to ensure they provided a well-rounded education, said the University and College Union.

The UCU also called for apprentices to be paid at least the national minimum wage, saying some received less per hour than newspaper delivery rounds.

**LEARNING EXPERIENCE:** Marcel Ciantar (right) with Julie Cleaver and Anna-Maria Geare (centre). Inset, Alice Driver



# Chamber launches events scholarship

A CHAMBER of trade has launched a scholarship to help a youngster forge a career in events management.

Budmouth College student Alice Driver gained the apprenticeship with the Weymouth & Portland Chamber of Commerce.

The 17-year-old will gain practical work experience in her chosen career choice.

She will help the chamber organise its events, including its popular monthly breakfast meetings.

Year 12 student Alice will also spend four weeks of her summer holidays at Dorset charity Autism Wessex, which is based in Christchurch.

**Joanna Davis**

She said: "I'm really looking forward to gaining experience in event management."

"I was so pleased to hear that I'd got the scholarship and I can't wait to get started."

The scholarship was highly contested with 28 candidates being interviewed over two days before Alice was selected.

It comes after the success of the Samuel Mico scholarship programme at Budmouth.

Chamber president Julie Cleaver said: "The Weymouth & Portland Chamber of Commerce, with its commitment to education as a way to grow

entrepreneurship locally, is pleased to offer a scholarship to a CEIL student to help them get practical work experience in their chosen career choice."

"The chamber has decided to follow in the footsteps of 17th century local entrepreneur Sir Samuel Mico who left a legacy to help young apprentices in the borough."

"We feel that by adding a further scholarship to those offered by the trust administered by CEIL at Budmouth College, WPCC can add practical help to a young person to expand their entrepreneurial skills."

The scholarship will be of practical benefit to the chamber and its members as it continues to grow.

Marcel Ciantar, director of the Centre of Excellence for Industrial Liaison (CEIL) at Budmouth, said the chamber training was about

'nurturing local talent'.

He said: "As far as I'm aware Weymouth and Portland is the first chamber to align itself with an educational programme."

"This is a serious commitment for the chamber to do this."

"It won't just be ticking boxes, Alice will be learning about what the world of work is all about."

Anna-Maria Geare, of the chamber, said the calibre of candidates for the post was 'extremely high'.

She said: "It's about trying to find the right outlet to enhance a young person and also enhance the businesses in this area."

"Alice will be gaining a lot of experience on her CV and the chamber will be paying a small amount for her living expenses when she is working in Christchurch and won't be able to have a summer job."

## Agency calls for national internship week

YOUNG people are being asked to consider internships as National Apprentice Week draws to a close. Inspiring Interns, an intern recruitment agency, is calling for a National Internship Week.

National Apprenticeship Week has been a success with registered companies pledging to recruit more

than 13,600 new apprentices.

The dedicated week celebrated the impact apprentices can have on businesses across the UK.

At Inspiring Interns workplace learning is being promoted.

This is reflected in its record of placing over 3,300 interns into good internships: structured learning

experiences incorporating work shadowing with an assigned mentor. Of these internships 66% have led to permanent, full-time employment.

CEO Ben Rosen said: "We believe that interns lack the support offered to apprentices by the Government. Businesses are paid a nominal sum

by the Government to hire apprentices but receive no benefit for hiring an intern."

"Yet a graduate intern normally has a greater positive impact on a company than an apprentice and statistics show that internships are, in fact, more likely to create a permanent job."

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with an Apprenticeship

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