

Demand soars for girls energy course

11 July 2017

North East Scotland College recently welcomed its largest intake yet onto the Shell sponsored Girls in Energy programme at Fraserburgh Campus. Over 110 pupils from 9 secondary schools attended the 2017/18 course induction day held on International Women in Engineering Day.

This Skills for Work course is designed to encourage girls to consider career opportunities within energy and engineering. It is delivered at schools as a time-tabled option and is open to pupils aged 14 to 17. Successful completion leads to a National 5 qualification in Energy.

Duncan Abernethy Head of Business and Community Development welcomed the pupils and teaching staff from Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire schools.

He said, "This course is designed to open the door for you to take a look to see if this is a sector that you would be interested in exploring further. You get to meet and work with pupils from other schools and attend educational and industry visits so you can see for yourself the types of jobs that are available within the energy and engineering sector. There is still a recognised skills shortage in engineering and women remain under-represented in this field.

"You'll develop valuable skills particularly teamwork and communication skills and be able to take advantage of some of the unique opportunities offered by the sponsor of this course - Shell. Shell has played a pivotal role in the development of this course and it is through their continued and unwavering support that the College is able to offer Girls in Energy to a record number of schools and pupils."

Former Energy girl Lisa Mowat was a guest speaker at the event and she related her own experiences to the audience sharing how she found out about her current role as an Inspection Preparator at Shell St Fergus Gas terminal.

Lisa, now aged 20, explained, "When I first enrolled onto the Girls in Energy course at Mintlaw Academy I had no interest in the industry. It was only when I went on the company visits, visited Offshore Europe and attended the work experience at Shell that I realised the variety of job roles on offer, onshore as well as offshore. That's where I



Lisa Mowat.

found out about the inspection department and the role of reading, testing and reporting on corrosion.

“I’m also studying for my HNC in Mechanical Engineering at College through Distance Learning which will help me progress in my career and is also helpful in my day-to-day role.”

Over the next academic year the pupils will cover energy topics including wind turbines, solar hot water systems, oil/gas extraction plus gain an understanding of employability skills and the different career options. The schools participating this year are: Banff; Fraserburgh; Hazelhead; Kincorth; Aberdeen Grammar; Mintlaw; Peterhead; The Gordon Schools, Huntly and Turriff.

John Raine, Social Investment for Shell comments, “Shell has a vital role to play in inspiring the next generation of engineers and scientists,” says John Raine, Social Investment for Shell. “We need to develop and recruit the right people to meet one of the biggest challenges facing the world right now: Delivering affordable and sustainable energy, while reducing carbon emissions.

“We are delighted to be able to expand the Girls in Energy programme to offer more girls the opportunity to explore STEM related careers. We hope to open the students’ eyes to the wealth of careers available to them in the energy industry.”

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