



STUDENTS LOOK SMART FOR CAREERS & INTERVIEW DAY

On Thursday 8th January, over 100 Havering Sixth Form College students took part in a day of special events designed to develop their interview skills and help them to focus on the choices they will need to make when their current courses end.

During the day the students, who are all on one year courses, took part in a variety of activities. In advance of the day all the students had undertaken research on appropriate careers and in the first activity groups made presentations on the main features of the jobs they had investigated.

Students were introduced to the range of services available from the College Careers Department and Jacqui Stewart from Connexions encouraged them to take advantage of the specialist help available through the College link with Connexions. Sharon Brown and Elaine Thomas from the Reed Employment Agency gave a presentation on 'Making the Best of Yourself'.

In another part of the programme students watched and judged videos of 'good' and 'bad' interviews featuring Charlotte Bannocks, posing as a job applicant and Assistant Principal David Andrews in the role of interviewer.

Students also had an opportunity to practise the skills they had observed on each other. This was in preparation for formal interviews later in the day which were conducted by a number of current and former staff, employers from a range of organisations including the French Bank BNP Paribas and other visitors to the College including many of the Governors.

The interview experience was made as authentic as possible and all students looked very smart and professional wearing formal clothes suitable for an employment interview.

Ex Law teacher and author of a number of law textbooks, Ian Yule, enthused about the mock interviews: "This experience is so valuable for the students. I would be happy to spend the whole day doing this; it is so worthwhile."

Students themselves agreed that the day was a valuable one. Ami-Jaye Matthews who is taking a GCSE package said: "I really appreciated the interview day; it really boosted my confidence. I now don't need to panic or worry about interviews and I am looking forward to my first one!"

Other students felt equally positive: "A really great experience, I learned a lot about my strengths and weaknesses. Thanks a lot!" *Nathan McEvoy (ex Emerson Park)*

"I really enjoyed myself, it was good practice for me and it boosted my confidence. Thank you for that." *Jasmine Jehu-Appiah (ex Bower Park)*

Event organiser, Peter Darwent, was delighted with the way the day had gone: "The feedback on the whole event was extremely positive with students, staff and visitors equally enthusiastic and convinced of the value of the day." One experienced interviewer commented that the students he had interviewed performed better than most of the people attending real interviews and another said that he was "really impressed by how thoroughly the students had prepared. "