

# INTEFORM

“I made my time at college count, now I am reaping the rewards.”

Discover Nadine's Story Inside

# WELCOME TO THE FIRST EDITION OF **INFORM** OUR NEW MAGAZINE FOR OUR ALUMNI



This annual magazine will offer an insight into life beyond college for our former students and the ways in which you can stay involved in our learning community.

In each issue, we'll speak to former students and find out where their paths have taken them. We'll also share some of our recent news highlights keeping you up to date with all the latest developments at the College.

Of course learning is for life, so we'll provide you with information on courses and training which will help take you further in your chosen career. You can also find out about events and the many other ways in which to stay connected to the College.

There might even be the occasional discount voucher offered exclusively to our alumni.

I hope you enjoy the issue and it inspires you to get in touch to share your own stories, knowledge and expertise.

**Dr Ken Thomson**  
Principal, Forth Valley College

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## ALUMNI MEMBERSHIP CAN HELP YOU TO...

- Stay in touch or reconnect with former friends and classmates
- Share your success to inspire others
- Seek opportunities for personal development
- Get information on training to further your career
- Find out about dedicated alumni events
- Receive exclusive alumni discounts

**For more information on our alumni network or to register, please visit [www.forthvalley.ac.uk/alumni/](http://www.forthvalley.ac.uk/alumni/)**

# GO AHEAD FOR **NEW** **FALKIRK** **CAMPUS**

New **£83million**  
Falkirk Campus  
is one step closer

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Forth Valley College's new £83million Falkirk Campus is one step closer after the Scottish Government and the Scottish Funding Council approved the full business case in November 2016.

The procurement process is now underway with the build anticipated to commence in September 2017. The new campus is expected to open in 2019.

The state-of-the-art facility will be located on the College's former Middlefield site on Grangemouth Road, Falkirk.

It will serve as Forth Valley College's headquarters and will complete Forth Valley College's estates development strategy, following on from a new Alloa Campus which opened in 2011 and a new Stirling Campus which opened in 2012.

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# Edgaras Wins Top Student Award

A Forth Valley College Photography student has snapped up a national award for his stunning pictures.



Edgaras Borotinskas (32) from Bo'ness, a second year HND Photography student at Forth Valley College's Stirling Campus, has won Student Scottish Nature Photographer of the Year 2016 as part of the Scottish Nature Photography Awards.

Students were asked to submit three images on the theme of Water. Edgaras's Portfolio is a depiction of water drops which he describes as Nature's Tears. The judges - Andy Hall, Richard Shucksmith and Niall Irvine – liked that his images were beautifully composed and simplified down to the essence of the theme.

## Traditional Kelpie is a metalwork of art



**A collective creative effort from around 80 Forth Valley College mechanical, welding and fabrication students over two years has produced a spark of kelpie genius.**

The original Pictish kelpie sculpture design – half horse half fish – was the brainchild of FVC Welding and Fabrication lecturer James Constable during one of the College's innovative

cross departmental Creative Learning Action Community (CLAC) workshop in 2015.

He returned to the College's Engineering workshops at the Falkirk Campus, and enlisted the help of Department Technician colleague Alex Fagan to help with the project. And, over the last two years they have inspired more than 80 City and Guilds Level 2 students and Modern Apprentices to work on the aluminium sculpture incorporating many

techniques – such as metal shaping, welding, pop riveting and pipe shaping – that they would learn as part of their college work.

The result is a superb piece of art which will take up a prominent position on display in the new Falkirk Campus which is due for completion in 2019. Till then it will be displayed in the front entrance window of the Falkirk Campus.



# World class career ahead

A future pastry chef who studies at Forth Valley College has risen to the top of the recruitment list of one of the world's most exclusive hotel chains.

Emma Hair (19) from Bannockburn – who is studying for an HNC Professional Cookery at the college's Stirling Campus - has just secured a six month internship with the Jumeriah Group in Dubai, which will start in July this year.

With more than 500 kitchen staff – around 68 of them pastry chefs – and at least 60 restaurants in Jumeriah group in Dubai alone, the former Bannockburn High School pupil will definitely be having her cake and eating it during the half year experience, which could lead to a full-time job in the future.

## FVC top in country for STEM training

Forth Valley College has been confirmed as Scotland's top performing college for STEM related courses.

Figures within the Scottish Funding Council's report on College Performance Indicators for 2015/16

demonstrated that the College had an 86.9% success rate for FE and HE courses across the combined subject areas of engineering, science, computing and ICT – 16% above the sector average.

The report has further endorsed the quality of the College's STEM provision.

The College was re-accredited for STEM Assured Status in 2016, an industry-led quality marked awarded by the STEM Foundation. In addition, their new £83million Falkirk Campus, which is due to open in 2019, will have a strong focus on STEM provision and will offer industry standard, state-of-the-art learning environments.

Overall, the Scottish Funding Council's report also confirmed that FVC students are achieving well above the sector average across all full-time and part-time FE and HE provision. In particular, success rates for part-time HE courses remain the highest in Scotland at 88% while success rates for part-time FE courses (including Modern Apprenticeships) are a close second – and at 91% are 17% above the sector average.

## YOUR STORIES – Bill Kidd

Former HNC Mechanical and Production Engineering Student

# “I’M AT THE STAGE OF MY CAREER WHERE I CAN START TO GIVE BACK.”

Former student Bill Kidd was made a GlobalScot by the Scottish Government in 2016, a role which aims to help Scottish organisations compete in the global marketplace. He is currently working with Forth Valley College as they explore new partnerships in China. Bill shares his experience of studying at the Falkirk Campus and how it made such an impact on his career.

A ‘platform for growth’ is how former HNC Mechanical and Production Engineering student and apprentice Bill Kidd has described his time at the Falkirk Campus.

Bill (46) spent a year studying at – what was then Falkirk College of Technology from 1987-91 – before embarking on a successful career, which has seen him rise to become the Director of Procurement & Contracts (Asia Pacific) for Canadian oil and gas company Husky Energy and recently being bestowed with the GlobalScot honour by the Scottish Government.

**“Whether it is practising a trade, starting your own business or accessing further academic study, the College gives you a base from which to make your next round of life defining choices.”**

# Husky Energy

哈斯基石油中国有限公司

Hailing from Grangemouth, Bill is now based in Shenzhen, China with Husky, but also has a home in Calgary, Canada and now has dual nationality. After leaving college he worked around the world in various technical and management roles, before landing his current position.

He said: "In this role, I head up a team responsible for the competitive selection and negotiation of all goods and services for the company's activities in the Asia Pacific region and the contractual management of their delivery.

"In 2014, we delivered the first gas from the Liwan project. This is a \$6 billion (US) development in the South China Sea, and the first deep water offshore project for China. My team continues to support the ongoing operation as well as our next exploration and development interests in China, Taiwan and Indonesia.

"I began my career by winning a mechanical engineering apprenticeship in 1987 with ICI, which was a major industrial player in my home town of Grangemouth at that time. As part of their four year programme, the first

year was spent at the Falkirk campus learning hands-on trade skills with one day a week of academic study. The next three years required attendance on a day release basis from the company to complete the National and Higher National Certificate programs at the college.

"It was a long time ago that I attended the Falkirk campus and the facilities have changed significantly. At that time the Middlefield block existed and that was where many of the hands on trade skills were taught. The academics were taught in the main building that is still there.

"The lecturers were first class and their professional and personal teachings continue to have a significant effect on how I approach problems today. Especially in the more academic areas of study, I felt that their teaching approach, applied to real life examples and really helped me connect with the subject matter, much more so than at high school. The college experience helped me understand the potential that I had and that I didn't feel I got from the high school system.

"On completion of the HNC I could have gone on to university, but decided that I was already on an income generating career path and had a credential that proved I had the ability to learn. This, along with my youth, desire to travel, and the flexibility to take a few chances, was the springboard that would take me around the world.

"Now I'm considering university level education, but in areas of interest for personal development and research as opposed to finding a job. My HNC continues to be valuable proof of post-secondary education.

"I'm at the stage of my career where I can start to give back. In 2016, I was made a GlobalScot by the Scottish Government and help local companies understand how to navigate the trade and cultural barriers to doing business either in, or with China. Forth Valley College is one of these businesses. Working more closely with FVC in this capacity also helps me move forward with my own goals.

"There is no substitute for real life experience, however, for many it can be hard to see or access the opportunities available in order to 'get your foot in the door'. In my view, Forth Valley College provides a level of practical skills development and academic study that allows access to a variety of opportunities depending on how you want to live. Whether it is practising a trade, starting your own business or accessing further academic study, the College gives you a base from which to make your next round of life defining choices.

"I think the best bit for me has to be completely failing in Higher Maths at high school and then achieving top marks in the HNC final Maths exam at college! It corrected a negative view I held about my own abilities from high school and showed me that sometimes, with a different teaching style, you can change how you approach a subject and obtain a very different outcome."

## YOUR STORIES – Gaisma Bryder

Former HND Accounting student

# A FIRST CLASS FUTURE AHEAD

A former Forth Valley College HND Accounting student is counting on success after achieving a first class Bachelor of Arts with Honours Degree in Accounting from the University of Stirling.

After graduating in 2014 Gaisma Bryder (34, Bridge of Allan) began her career in accounting working as a trainee accountant for a local business. She has since progressed her career and now works as an assistant accountant for a large company locally. She is also studying and working towards chartered accountant status with the ACCA. Gaisma is now keen to share her experiences with others to encourage them to follow their dreams.

Gaisma said: "Studying accountancy has been something I've always wanted to do however I'd never had the opportunity before. After working in retail for ten years, I decided to apply for the HND in Accounting at Forth Valley College in 2010 and I've never looked back.

"My time at Forth Valley College and Stirling University was an amazing experience. It was fantastic to learn so many new things and lay the foundation for my future.

"Initially the HND in Accounting was really

quite intense and very technical. However going back to basics gave me a real grounding in accountancy and proved very beneficial. I received lots of support from my lecturers and managed to overcome any difficulties. They really helped me to see what I was capable of and I learnt lots of new things about myself. I've always been terrified of public speaking, however I discovered that I was actually very good at presentations. I also learnt how to be a team player through working in teams for group activities.

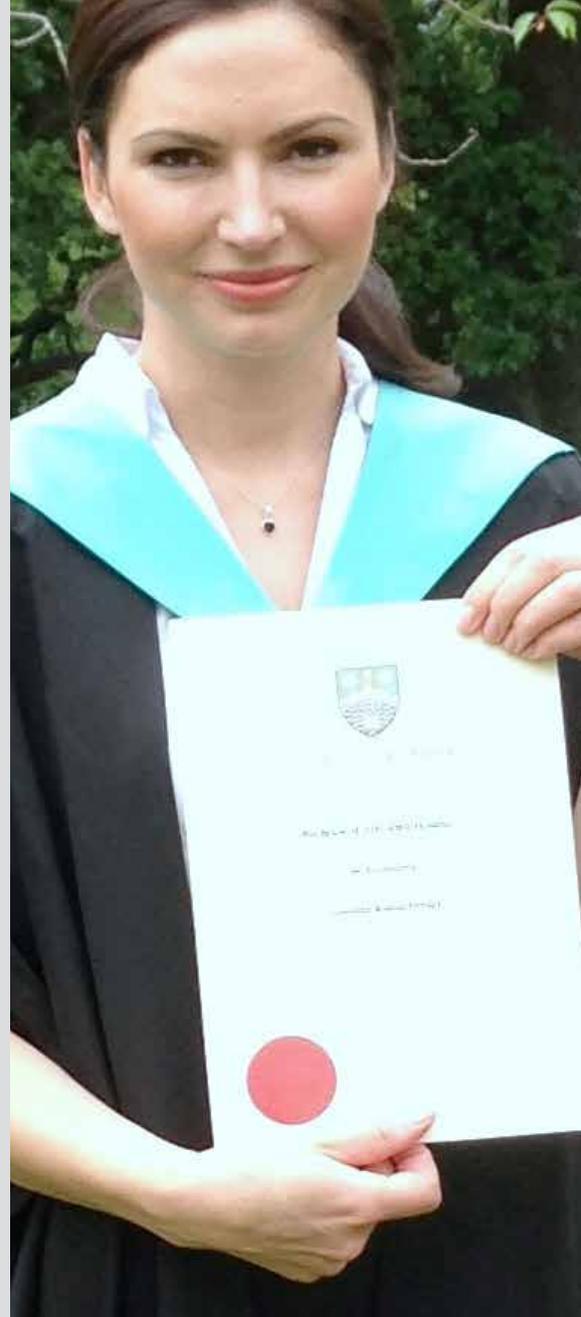
"The lecturing team at the College played an important role in progressing my application to a third year entry at Stirling University. Although the University was a very steep learning curve, it was also an amazing experience and it has transformed my life.

"I definitely think that going to college then university is the best route for someone who has been out of education for years. I had lost my confidence and Forth Valley College helped me re-build this.

"My tips for anyone considering returning to education like me, is to take things into your own hands and go for it! It will help your job prospects and you'll know you're finally doing something for your future. It's also great for your social life; I've made lots of new, like-minded friends."

**"I'm now hoping to become a chartered accountant and gain my ACCA qualifications and I'm enjoying my new role. However, none of it would have been possible without the help and support from Forth Valley College and the University of Stirling and I'll always be grateful for this."**

**"I'VE NEVER LOOKED BACK... IT WAS AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE."**



## JUMP INTO A CMI QUALIFICATION

**Certificate in Management & Leadership  
Diploma in Management & Leadership**



## YOUR STORIES – Nathan Brown

Former BA in Art and Design student

# FVC ART AND DESIGN GRADUATE CREATES OWN STUDIO

A Forth Valley College Art and Design graduate has taken a novel approach to finding studio space, by creating one in his own back garden.

With help from his dad Jim and grandad Andrew, Nathan Brown (26) from Alloa who graduated last year with a BA in Art and Design and was also presented with the Most Promising Student in Creative Industries at FVC's 2016 Graduation ceremony at Stirling Castle last October, has built an artistic home from home for him and two former FVC classmates to develop their talents.

“I realised that when you leave college you need to keep up the atmosphere that is created in that environment”

(L-R): Emma, Ashleigh & Nathan

Along with Emma Rock (26) from Dunblane and Ashley (23) from Sauchie, Nathan has created NAEART – taking the first letters of each of their names and adding art to make NAEART – and they are taking control of their own art careers.

All three artists also exhibited work at the inaugural Future Artists Scotland exhibition a Scotland-wide event for talented new artists - created by Forth Valley College lecturer Ewan John.

The event featured the work of 40 students hand selected by lecturers from 10 further education colleges and represented the diverse and vibrant work currently being

created across Scotland. Nathan's work won a prize to allow him to exhibit his art at the University of Stirling Pathfoot building.

Nathan, said: “We have this joint studio and it is a place for Emma, Ashley and myself to work and grow as artists. I was relying on my dad, who is a joiner to build it and he had all the skills to do it and my grand-dad was a great labourer for him – and they have both been brilliant.

“I originally thought I would be in here myself, but I realised that when you leave college you need to keep up the atmosphere that is created in that environment and you really need to be sharing it with some people.

Emma and Ashley and I were talking at the end of the year about having a place to keep this going and I am delighted that they have joined me here in the studio.”

FVC Creative Industries Lecturer Ewan John, said: “I think art students would all love this kind of studio and very few actually see it through. To have this space in your back garden and working with your former course mates and now colleagues, is a great way to take the bull by the horns. They are doing it for themselves and going for it and I am very impressed. I am looking forward to seeing the results.”

# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



INDIVIDUAL. INSPIRATIONAL. INFLUENTIAL.

## 2013



### BARRY FRAME

HND Sound Production

Barry Frame (32) from Denny created his own firm called The Audio Clinic Limited and works in a Managing Director role running BAR 209, a popular night spot near where he lives.

## 2016



### SARAH NUGENT

HNC Early Education and Childcare

Sarah Nugent (21) from Stirling is enjoying her role as a Supply Early Childhood Educator at Arnprior and Croftamie Nursery.



### DAVID CROSSLEY

Social Enterprise/Employability

David J Crossley (49) from Stirling is a self-employed airbrush artist and clothes designer, running his own business called @ Crossley Custom Inc.



### MALINDA GARIBOTTI

City & Guilds Level 2 in Hairdressing

Malinda Garibotti-Cassidy (33) from Stirling runs her own business called HairbyMali, in Baker Street, Stirling.



### VALERIE HORNALL

HND Computer Aided Architectural Design & Technology

Valerie Hornall (41) from Bonnybridge has secured a job as an Architectural Technician at AGL Architects Ltd in Bridge of Allan.



### IVAYLO TODOROV

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Ivaylo Todorov (33) from Stirling currently has a number of roles including Day Club Assistant Co-ordinator for Town Break SCIOS; Support Worker with Living Ambitions; Support Worker with Pulse Community Health Care; and Befriending Volunteer for Falkirk & District Association for Mental Health (FDAMH).

## 2015



### STEPHEN FITZPATRICK

BA Art & Design

Stephen Fitzpatrick (29) from Denny currently works at Art is an Option and is a web designer.



### NADINE GRANT

HND Make-up Artistry

Nadine Grant (40) from Stirling works as a freelance make-up artist. She travels all over Scotland and over the last two years has built her business up working at weddings and at her studio in Stirling. She has an ongoing contract with the BBC and is a special effects trainer for Glamcandy Make-up School UK. Nadine is also a freelance make-up artist for the Model Academy Scotland and is signed to Haggis Western films as their lead make-up artist on their new film production in 2017.

**We would love to hear what you've been up to since moving on from Forth Valley College – drop us an email at [alumni@forthvalley.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@forthvalley.ac.uk) and you could feature in our next issue.**



# FORMER STUDENTS INSPIRE BRIGHT FUTURES

Two former students returned to Forth Valley College over the summer to inspire young people to consider a career in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths).

Laura McEwan and Colin MacKenzie were invited to lead workshops and activities at the College's STEM Summer School in August last year. The event was targeted at young people aged 11-14 years old and aimed to showcase the many different pathways to a career in STEM through hands-on activities such as augmented reality board games, turbines, blood sampling and DNA experiments.

Both Laura and Colin now work with DOGFI.SH Mobile, a cutting edge enterprise mobility specialist based in Stirling. Laura is the HR Manager and Colin is a Developer. Laura is also currently continuing her studies at Forth Valley College.

Laura said:

"Both Colin and I jumped at the chance to assist with the workshops when Forth Valley College approached us. Both schools and industry need to raise awareness of the career opportunities in the industry and position technology as a career of choice. We also need to address the gender imbalance facing the industry and encourage greater female participation and other under-represented groups to consider computing science in higher education.

"We were blown away by both the enthusiasm and talent shown during the week. Their knowledge of technology was unsurprising given the way of the world today however, their ideas, creations and presentation skills were astounding.

"As formers students, we see the development of the FVC alumni network as a real benefit to those who have left the College and found successful roles within the local area. The sharing of knowledge through mentoring or volunteering allows those currently studying to see what opportunities are available to them once they graduate. It also feels good giving back to the college having spent so long studying there."

Pauline Barnaby, Development and Fundraising Manager for Forth Valley College, said:

"It was fantastic to have Laura and Colin involved in this event and this demonstrates one of the many ways in which our alumni can continue to support the College upon graduating.

"Developing these links with former students will play a role in the College's new fundraising strategy. We will be exploring the additional benefits that fundraising activity can bring to the organisation through the development of new partnerships and profile raising. Securing additional resource will also be an important focus in order to contribute to exciting initiatives and learning experiences for our students. Projects such as the STEM Summer School wouldn't be possible without the support of organisations such as the Community Schools 2008 Charity which provided us with an external grant for this event."

"This is hopefully one of many successful initiatives to come and I'm looking forward to growing the College's supporter base through a planned programme of fundraising."

# FVC ALUMNI

Interested in giving back?

**You could:**

Share your story to inspire future students

Volunteer as a college ambassador at events

Offer work experience opportunities

Become a mentor to our current students

Deliver guest lectures

Support fundraising

**PLEASE EMAIL [ALUMNI@FORTHVALLEY.AC.UK](mailto:ALUMNI@FORTHVALLEY.AC.UK)  
IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION.**

## GALLERY RESTAURANT OFFER

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email: [alumni@forthvalley.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@forthvalley.ac.uk)

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## ALUMNI GATHERING

Would you like to catch up with friends, old and new, at an exclusive alumni event?

**We are considering holding a social event in the Gallery Restaurant at our Stirling Campus in 2017.**

If you would like to attend, please register your interest by emailing [alumni@forthvalley.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@forthvalley.ac.uk)

# Gallery

RESTAURANT

