



StarNews

National Star Foundation | National Star College

Our appeal to provide a new residence for young disabled people who would not otherwise benefit from life-changing opportunities at National Star.

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National Star Foundation

The new name for a charity with a long history that you all know well

For almost 50 years, National Star College has been the main focus of the charity's work. Today we are coming to the fore as a vehicle by which we can share the College's achievements with a wider audience - and help ensure that all people with disabilities can participate as equal and active citizens.

National Star College successfully supports students with complex physical and learning disabilities and equips them to face the world with confidence and aspiration. Frustratingly, many move on into a society where brick walls and dead

ends threaten to halt their progress. The promise young people show as students can quickly fade when they find themselves living in inappropriate housing with no work or meaningful occupation to sustain them. And this is the experience of many adults with disabilities despite the ambition of a fair and equal society that most of us share.

Yet where there is promise, there is great potential. The breakthroughs that happen at National Star College can equally apply to the wider world and this realisation is the driving force behind the emergence of National Star Foundation, which has always existed to support the work of the National Star College.

National Star Foundation will build

on the experience and expertise developed at National Star College to pursue an ambitious new agenda; to influence and help shape a society where all people with disabilities can participate as equal and active citizens.

The new brand and identities of the Foundation and the College reflect the future direction of the charity.

We hope that you will be as excited by these changes and developments as we are and continue to support the charity and the life changing work that goes on here.

If you would like to know more, to share your perspective or to support our progress, we would love to hear from you so please do get in touch.

NSC

National Star College



National Star Foundation



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Visit our website www.natstar.ac.uk >>

Welcome to the all new Star News



Welcome from
the Student
Union

Hello everyone, my name is Cally-Ann and if you don't already know, I am in my third year and am studying a Performing Arts BTEC Level 2 Certificate.

I am the Student Union President for 2011–2012 and I am only the second female who has become President!

It is amazing how the Student Union is developing and has developed through the years. It gets stronger every year.

We are always re-assessing student values at College by looking at the past, listening to student voices and going beyond that by looking to the future direction of the SU. The student voice needs to be heard to take us to the next level and to teach young people how to bind

together and empower themselves for the future.

Since I have been at the National Star College, I've had the opportunity to use my talent and it has inspired me to come out and show people in the wider world that it's not all about your disability.

What it is about is the ability you have and what you can achieve.

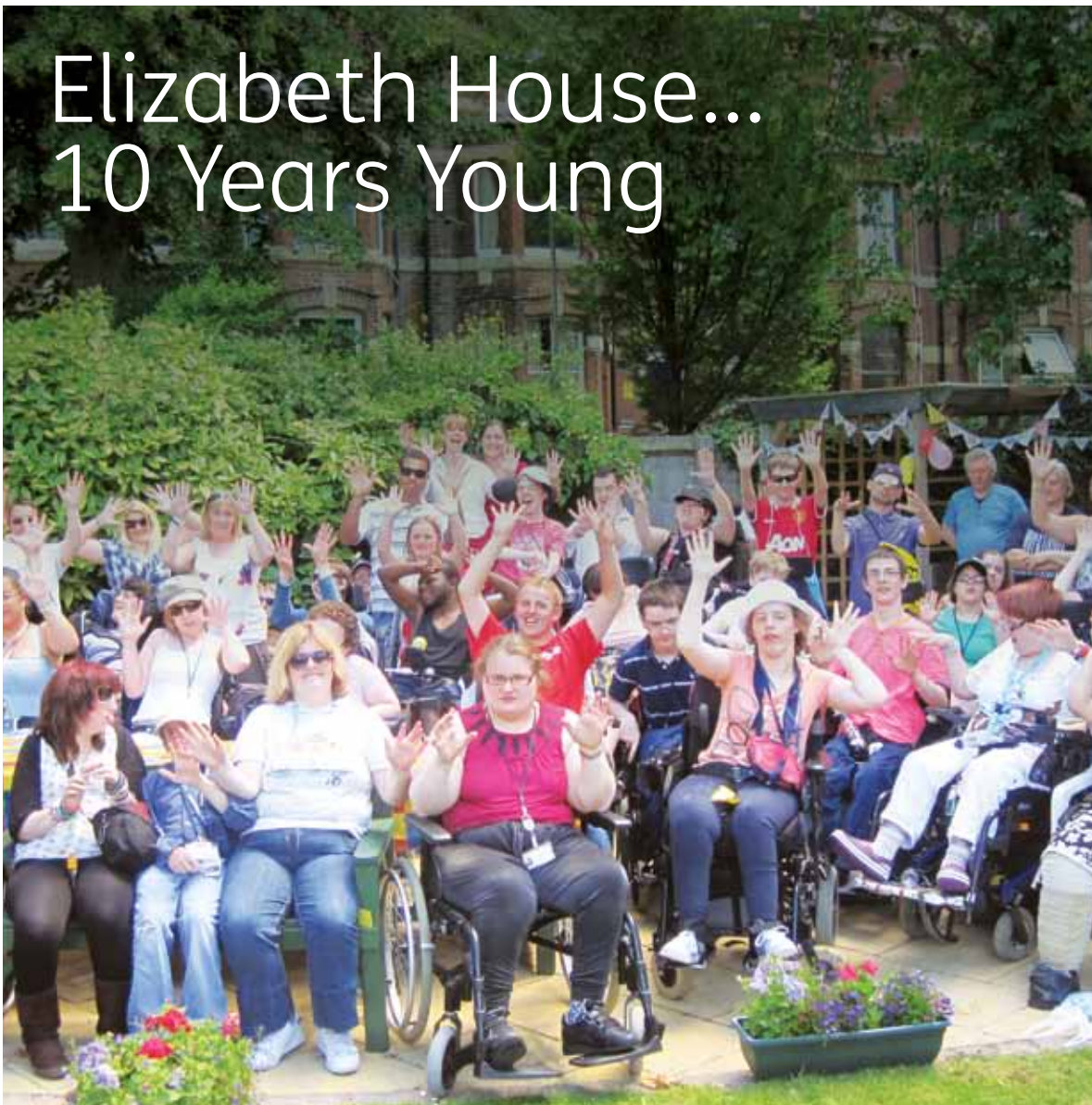
You will have now seen our new College logo... it looks great now. I would really encourage you all to share it with the connections that you have and the family around you as well. I think it shows what the College means to students because it reflects how they keep developing as well.

When you come to the College to visit you will always see students growing with the experience. What they gain here at College is the confidence to develop and they are able to show visitors they have very good understanding and respect of others around them.

Thank you for taking the time to read Star News, I hope you enjoy it. There is loads and loads more information about what we get up to at College.

Cally-Ann McEvoy
Student Union President 2011 - 2012
National Star College

Elizabeth House... 10 Years Young



Our student residence 'Elizabeth House' which is located in the heart of Gloucester is celebrating after turning 10 years old this year.

At an event to mark the occasion past and future students, staff, parents, and carers all came together with current students to celebrate. There was a time-line display showing photographs of 'life at Lizzie' since its opening in 2001 and a barbecue in the lovely enclosed garden, which is one of the many developments to be added in recent years. Even the sun shone!

Current students made a mosaic to mark the anniversary which is now displayed near the entrance hall.

Elizabeth House has seen many students come and go and many of them learn essential skills which



have enabled them to go on and lead more independent lives. From living on campus at the College's main site in Ullenwood, students are immersed into community life and living at Elizabeth House.

Twenty-four students live together and are able to practise skills ranging from cooking for themselves and others to taking trips in to town to go shopping on their own or with friends.

Sally-Anne, a student who lived in Elizabeth House last year said about Elizabeth House:

“*It's awesome, you get to find out your own capabilities. You realise who you are as a person.*”

Technology Changing Lives

Two members of staff from National Star College were recognised for their innovative work with the use of technology at the National Technology 4 Good Awards 2011.

Andrew Sparkes and Lois Thomson created an accessibility option for College student Jonathan who uses a wheelchair and has limited movement. They created a tiny switch that Jonathan could operate using his cheek muscle meaning he could use his digital camera without assistance. This accessibility solution, which Jonathan also helped develop alongside Andrew and Lois, allowed him the independence he needed to compose and create his own photographic portfolio and complete his photography course at College last year. Following the completion of his course in July Jonathan has now gone on to Plymouth University where he is studying for a degree in Media Studies.



“Plymouth has been great so far. It's lots of hard work and very tiring but I'm having loads of fun and meeting loads of people. I've had some really interesting lectures and have already learnt a lot.”
Jonathan

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The Anderson Centre

National Star College's new work-skills area

The Anderson Centre is the College's new work-skills area, and forms the new face of National Star College. Having been designed to give students a real working environment, a new Customer Services Course started in September utilising various areas within the Anderson Centre.

“

I am really looking forward to serving the customers after all the cleaning and putting the stock away.

”

The Course is divided into five areas: Reception, Training Office, Shop, Bistro Kitchen and Bistro Restaurant, with developing good customer service skills at the heart of the programme.

Students on the Course have the opportunity to develop their

knowledge in a real work based environment, learning a variety of skills, related to the area they are working in. Joe, who is a student on the course, said “*I wish I was here another year to work full-time in the Bistro*”.

Reception – Students are working alongside College Reception staff, developing their interpersonal skills by meeting and greeting visitors and answering the telephone. In this front-of-house role, students are learning transferrable skills they can use when they leave College such as personal presentation, timekeeping and communication. Colin, a student who works on reception said “*I really enjoy saying hello to everyone coming into the College*”.

Training Office – Students working in the training office are developing a whole range of skills including prioritising time and tasks, working to deadlines, quality control, IT and marketing. They sort the College post and undertake other routine and specialist jobs that are given by various departments around the College.

The Star Shop – Another exciting new

venture in the Anderson Centre is the opening of the Star Shop, which is run by students working on the Customer Services Course.

They are developing work based skills in a retail environment by ensuring that the shop is kept clean, tidy and well stocked. They are also developing interpersonal, communication and numeracy skills when serving members of the public, staff and students in the shop. Georgie, who has started working in the shop said:

Star Bistro - A fantastic new Bistro for the local community where students are able to work on preparing and serving food to customers, learning a wide range of skills. Star Bistro is a

partnership project with local charity Wiggly Worm which was set up and is run by the ‘Cotswold Chef’ Rob Rees.

Visit www.natstar.ac.uk to find out when the all new Star Bistro is open for business



Students prepare for the world of work

'Skills for Work' isn't your typical college course run in a typical college setting.

Each student on Skills for Work has one main aim, to prepare themselves for the world of work when they complete their studies, whether that is paid or voluntary.

Making the course both innovative and inspirational, tutors make a classroom out of a workplace, ensuring that students learn on the job in real life situations.

A typical week for a student on the Skills for Work course will see them undertake various work placements including a one day a week group placement at Slimbridge Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust. At Slimbridge students work on a huge variety of exciting tasks, some of which have already included painting, cleaning, building habitats and helping create a canoe safari.

Students will also undertake individual work placements during the week at a variety of local

organisations, allowing them to really find an area of work that they thrive in and enjoy.

At these placements they will be supported by their personal Job Mentor who will help them find the right placement and develop their independent working skills as it progresses.

Some of their week is spent in a classroom where students can work on their numeracy and literacy skills, enabling them to be competent and confident in all aspects of work life. These classroom sessions will usually be based around the skills they need in their actual placements so that they can quickly see how useful they are and the progress they are making.

Finally, students will also spend part of the week working on a specific enterprise project where they will produce and sell craft items, with this year's focus being on producing items around the current 'shabby chic' trend.



Sophie's experience

Sophie started the Skills for Work course a shy young woman who barely spoke to other students or her tutors. Just over a year on and the new Sophie is hardly recognisable. Sophie has completed the course and is now

employed as a housekeeper part time at Alstone Lane, the base for the Skills for Work course.

Sophie's tutors put her transformation down to her own hard work but also the important staff/student relationship that enables the students to gain placements and be confident within themselves and their work.





Student Profile

Jan is a 22 year old student at the College

Jan is 22 and has Cerebral Palsy. He has limited movement and uses a powered wheelchair.

Jan has just started his final year at the National Star College on the Entry Level Programme. Jan was successful in gaining funding for his final year to work specifically on further developing his communication skills. Throughout his life Jan has communicated by using eye movement to signal yes or no.

Building on the work Jan had done previously at College, Jan showed a real keenness to use the power he had in his feet as a way to communicate and enable him to

join in and participate in lessons. Jan used his experience to mature and grow and Jan decided his final year was the right time for him to start experimenting with confidence.

With the rest of the class working on painting pots for the horticultural area, staff encouraged Jan to give painting a go and he started experimenting, using his feet to paint an area of wall. After completing this and with a real sense of determination Jan then worked hard and got to a point where he was able to hold a paint brush between his toes and paint the pots alongside his classmates. The painting has developed into a way for Jan to not only communicate but also express himself.

Staff at the College, working closely with Jan, are now looking at developing a communicator that Jan can operate using his foot. This will mean for the first time ever that Jan is able to communicate more than a simple yes or no and also interact freely with his family, friends and staff at the College. The sense of achievement and independence for Jan cannot be underestimated... instead of a world that Jan watched go by, he is now a leader and an inspiration to other people with disabilities, showing what a sense of determination can really do.



Entry Level Programme at National Star College

At the National Star College students undertake a wide variety of courses and programmes, ranging from Entry Level Programmes to BTEC qualifications.

Each student on the Entry Level Programme is assessed individually and their time at College is focussed on not only getting the best they can from

their course but also preparing them for life after National Star College.

The Programme is focussed on personal and social skills with a strong emphasis on developing communication and working with others. It is a practical course with a multi-sensory approach which allows students of all abilities to take

part and get the most out of their time at College. A horticultural area within College is a focus of much of the student work and has allowed students to do real work with tasks ranging from growing herbs and vegetables to painting plant pots and organising bird feeders.



Athletics success at the National Athletics Championships



National Star College students Matthew Stokes and Oliver Porter celebrated in July after returning victorious from the National Disability Athletics Championships in Blackpool. Matthew returned with three gold medals from his events of Shot Putt, Javelin and Discus and Oliver claimed silver in the 4 x 100m Relay and finished 4th and 5th in his 100m and 200m races.

To top the weekend off, Matthew and Oliver were both part of the South West team who won the overall event for the first time ever.

Vocational Sports courses at the College are popular with students who can study a range of topics including the body in action, coaching in sport and fitness testing. Students also get the opportunity to coach in the local community and organise events such as the College Sports Day.

Julian Ralph, Senior Tutor in Sports at the National Star College said:

“*Over the weekend both students represented the National Star College and themselves in a mature manner and were great ambassadors for the College and South West.*”

Take the Gold Challenge... Are you up for it?

National Star is asking people to embrace all things Olympic and take on a sporting challenge as part of the national 'Gold Challenge' initiative.

The Gold Challenge is a chance for individuals or teams to get involved in the Olympics whilst also raising money for National Star. Together with the British Olympic Association, Sport England and Team GB the Gold Challenge provides an opportunity to not just watch the Olympics but take part.

The challenges are a great way to get together with friends and colleagues, have fun, try something different or

challenging, all whilst supporting a good cause. There are three ways that people can participate in the Gold Challenge:

Olympic Sport Challenge - learn Olympic or Paralympic sports by taking on between 5-30 challenges choosing from a list of 30 sports.

2012km Challenge - cover 2012km, 201.2km or 20.12km over your chosen period of time by your chosen method

which could be running, walking, cycling, swimming, horse riding

Gold Challenge in a day - you or your team must complete a walk, cycle, row, run and swim at your chosen level, back to back recording your total time (including transitions)

For more information about any aspect of the Gold Challenge please call or email the Fundraising Team on 01242 524478 or fundraisingteam@natstar.ac.uk



National Star Foundation

Christmas Appeal

Please help us to provide a new residence for young disabled people who would not otherwise benefit from life-changing opportunities at National Star.



all the specialist facilities at National Star College, but in the quiet setting which is essential for these young people to reach their potential.

But we urgently need your help – to fit out one of the rooms in the living unit we need to raise £15,000, which will fund specialist

equipment such as a hoist to lift wheelchair users from bed to bathroom.

Please help us – by sending whatever you can for our appeal. You'll be helping young people like Amy to transform their lives.

Young people come to National Star with a range of conditions – their disabilities may have been present since birth or for others a result of a car crash, accident or illness during their childhood.

For some of these young people, particularly those with conditions such as hearing difficulties or autism, busy and noisy environments can be very stressful and confusing. It's especially challenging for them to adapt and cope with activities in the

community, but learning to do 'everyday' things like use public transport, live independently or find employment make an incredible difference to their quality of life.

To meet the needs of young people with these conditions, it's vital that we provide a quiet living area where they can maximise their learning, develop new skills and regroup after a busy day facing new challenges.

We have the opportunity to adapt an existing building, with full access to



What Amy achieved with the help of National Star College

Hello my name is Amy, I'm 20 years old with learning difficulties and a visual impairment. Since leaving National Star College I have become an employee of Starbucks. For me, finding

paid employment has been a really positive experience and came about after completing a confidence boosting work experience placement whilst at National Star.

It all started after my support staff recognised that work experience would be a great opportunity for me. I was scared to begin with, but my placement certainly opened the door to learning new skills - I couldn't believe how quickly it went and how much I learnt!

From then on I knew that I wanted to stay in employment, so I was delighted when I was asked to stay on!

I am so happy with what I have achieved with the support and guidance of National Star, and now I am looking to gain more skills so that I can take control of my life further - I certainly haven't looked back!

You can help more young people like Amy realise their potential by making a donation to our appeal.

Thank you for your support – at the current time we are especially grateful to everyone who continues to support our charity's work. Any gift you can send will make a real difference to the lives of young disabled people.

TEAR OFF HERE

Yes, I want to help young disabled people to reach their potential

Name: Address:
..... Postcode: Phone: Email:

I would like to give a gift of: £12 £25 £50 Other £

To keep our costs down, if you provide your email we may use this to contact you occasionally about our work

I enclose a cheque/CAF voucher made payable to National Star Foundation

I would like to pay by Mastercard / Visa / Charity card / Maestro (Please delete as appropriate)

Card No:

Card Start Date: / Card Expiry Date: / Issue No:

Signature Date: DD | MM | YY

Please do not acknowledge my donation Please send me details of how to make a regular gift by Direct Debit

You can also donate online at www.natstar.ac.uk

Please return in the freepost envelope provided or to Fundraising, National Star Foundation, Ullenwood Manor, Cheltenham, GL53 9QU

If you are a UK taxpayer please tick below to increase your gift by 25%, at no extra cost to you. *giftaid it*

I would like National Star Foundation to treat this donation, and any donations I make in the future as Gift Aid donations until I notify you otherwise. I understand that I must pay an amount of United Kingdom income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on my donations in the appropriate tax year (6 April one year to 5 April the next).

Please notify us in the future if you no longer pay sufficient tax, or wish to cancel this declaration.

We would like to send you occasional news and information about National Star Foundation's vital work. We will never sell or pass on your details. Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive these