

judges discretionary award for SRB think maths, cwmbbran



In January 2009, Capita Symonds' Cwmbbran office was asked to take part in the 'Think Maths!' initiative in South Wales.

This is the Welsh equivalent of 'More Maths Grads' which is a three year government funded project in England and Wales. Its two main aims are to encourage pupil participation in maths and to increase the number of students taking maths at A level and degree.

Chris Naylor, Cwmbbran's Business Manager, met with the Think Maths! Project Coordinator who explained how the project was to be rolled out:

- Ten secondary schools in SouthWales and ten employers to be selected and paired to work together in partnership
- Employers to show pupils how maths is used in the workplace.
- School pupils create case studies based on the employer they worked with.
- School presents their case study at a showcase finale in Cardiff in July where schools, employers and universities have promotional stands.
- A panel of judges select prize winners.

Following the initial meeting volunteers were sought from our Construction Ambassador group of graduates. The initiative required staff who were enthusiastic, willing to do much of the work in their own time and above all wanted to support and encourage local secondary school pupils to discover how maths is applied in the workplace.



Five keen graduates from across the Cwmbbran business put their names forward:

- Antonio Di Caprio, Graduate Bridge Engineer
- Katherine Agong, Senior Transportation Engineer
- Andrew Brunsdon, Assistant Geotechnical Engineer
- Mark Callister, Drainage Engineer
- Fadiya Ahmed, Graduate Structural Engineer

After an initial briefing meeting the team was basically given a 'blank canvas' to develop material and make arrangements for a visit by pupils of St Albans RC Comprehensive School. They discussed their ideas with teachers to ensure it was pitched at the right level.

The team structured the school visit on a workshop basis. Working together as a project team individual topic areas were developed. Each graduate produced their own material focusing on a particular aspect of their work, showing how maths was an important element in achieving a successful outcome for clients.

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On the school visit day around 30 pupils were split into groups and given work-related tasks to expand their knowledge and understanding of how maths is used by Capita Symonds. The groups looked at:

- Calculation of costs for a feasibility study for the site of a new bridge
- Coordination of traffic lights at a junction
- Calculation of quantities for regeneration works on site
- Gradients and water flows for a drainage scheme
- Measurements for Bills of Quantities on a construction site

The workshop gave the pupils of St Albans School the inspiration to win the 'Best Case Study' category at the 'Think Maths!' Awards in Cardiff. Antonio Di Caprio represented the team at the ceremony and received praise from the judges, the school and the Think Maths! Coordinator.

"Thank you so much for your support. Your initial workshops, which were superbly planned and executed, inspired the students to achieve what they did. The result of this collaboration has had a huge impact on each one of them. It has also inspired us to re-look at our STEM subjects and the way in which our curriculum is delivered"

Stuart Jones, Deputy Head Teacher at St Albans

The team delivered a successful outcome through their enthusiasm, commitment, creativity and desire to help young people living in the local community. Capita Symonds has now built strong links between St Albans School and the Think Maths! Initiative which will be further developed in the future.

NOMINATED BY:

Chris Naylor, Cwmbbran



keys to success

- Willingness to go the extra mile and help the local community
- Understanding project requirements and delivering
- Individual creativity
- Team working
- Ability to relate to the school pupils and inspire them to achieve
- Raising the profile of Capita Symonds within the local education sector
- Successful contribution to Capita Symonds SRB programme