

Loreto College participates in 2012 Dragons' Apprentice Challenge to benefit SABN

22 September 2011: The Connect St Albans Dragons' Apprentice Challenge 2012 is underway. Following last year's successful challenge, the Centre for Voluntary Service (CVS) has been overwhelmed by local schools wanting to enter teams and has once again received tremendous support from local charities and businesses. This year, 26 teams from 12 schools and colleges across St Albans, Harpenden, Welwyn and Hatfield are competing to become the 2012 Dragons' Apprentice, compared with just three teams when it was launched three years ago.

The challenge was launched officially yesterday at St Columba's, College in St Albans where each team of 'Apprentices' was paired with a 'Dragon' from a local company and a CVS member charity. With guidance from their Dragons, the teams will use their entrepreneurial skills, creativity and enthusiasm to develop business ideas to turn £100 into £1000 or more for their charities.

Over the next six months, the students and business mentors will be working hard to beat last year's record total of £16,000 presented to 12 local charities. All the profit earned by the teams is given directly to their charities.

This year the line up of teams from St Albans and Harpenden will be joined by four teams from Hatfield. In addition, a pilot will be running with four teams from St Francis School in Letchworth. As well as the much sought-after Dragons' Apprentice trophy, the winning teams will get prizes, work experience and training opportunities donated by local companies.

"We always knew we had a winning formula with this challenge and this year has proved it. Everyone wins; the young participating teams gain valuable experience from planning and budgeting to marketing and public speaking; the charities benefit from much needed income; and local businesses get a real chance to become closely involved with their local schools and communities," said Penny Mortimer, Project Manager Connect St Albans Dragons' Apprentice. "It's no wonder we've already been approached to roll out the challenge to other areas."

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Notes for Editors

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Schools and colleges participating in the 2012 St Albans challenge include: St Columba's, Oaklands, St George's, STAGS, Beaumont, Loreto College, Nicholas Breakspear, Roundwood Park and Sandringham. Plus Onslow St Audrey, Bishops Hatfield and Sir Frederick Osborn in Hatfield.

The teams are supported by Dragons from local businesses including: Archimedes, BAM, Barclay Meade, Debenhams Ottaway, Deloitte, Harpenden Building Society, Kids2work, Kingston Smith, Let Me Properties, My Mustard, One Life Wealth Planning, Photographic Synergy, Premier Foods, Procom Telemarketing, Rayner Essex, Red Door Recruitment, Reachout Plus, Research Works, S A Law, Scott & Hewitt, St Albans City and District Council, Serena, The Princes Trust, Welwyn & Hatfield Council, Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Charities to benefit will include: Abbeyfield, Act One, Alex Curtis Memorial Trust, Chrohn's & Colitis UK, CVS St Albans, CVS Welwyn & Hatfield, Grove House, Harpenden Child Contact Centre, Centre 33, Harpenden Spotlight on Africa, Hertfordshire Chorus, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Hertfordshire Society for the Blind, Kaleidoscope, Mediation Hertfordshire, Radio Verulam, Reachout Plus, Resolve, Home-Start St Albans, Radio Verulam, St Albans Bereavement Network, St Albans City Youth, St Albans Macular Group, Special Olympics, The Princes Trust, and Youth Talk