

Tower Hamlets College **Press Release**

Exam students let off steam with creative learning **30th June 2009**

Stand-up comedy, guerrilla gardening and rocket science were some of the activities that students at Tower Hamlets College organised to let off steam after their exams.

Over 200 AS level students joined in the Alternative Futures project, designed to provide a fun and active way of continuing learning to the end of term. For many young people, it was an opportunity to get creative and explore subjects like science and history that they are no longer studying.

Students celebrated and showcased their work with eye-catching displays of graffiti and art, poetry and photographs at an event held in Tower Hamlets College on Thursday 25 June. Groups gave short presentations to describe their projects, followed up with live performances of comedy, music, film and drama.

Homelessness was the chosen project of one team of students, who designed and produced t-shirts to raise money for the charity Shelter. Another team planted hundreds of flowers and shrubs in churchyards and green spaces in Tower Hamlets.

The relationship between India and east London, and the role of the East India Company in Britain's domination of India was the subject chosen by Jaber Baksh, 18. Jaber, who has just completed AS levels in business, economics and computing, said: "I did this because I am interested in business, and how one company was able to control India for 200 years. Also my ancestors are from India and I wanted to learn more about my background."

He added: "After exams, doing the project was an enjoyable way to relax, but at the same time we were still learning."

Two female students, Adila Ali, 16, and Alia Kassam (17), decided to explore the humorous side of life in east London, with a comedy project entitled 'Calling all jokers.' Adila, who is studying media, economics, English literature and maths, said: 'Our aim was to show the funny side of the area, because so many people say negative things about the east end of London. We also wanted to improve our own confidence and self-esteem.'

The pair received tips on stand-up technique from popular comedian Jeff Innocent, which helped them create a comedy film featuring fellow students.

Alia said: 'This was a great way to cool off and relax after working for our exams.'

The Alternative Futures project was the first of its kind at Tower Hamlets College. Sybil Cock, head of Maths and Science, said: 'Staff put in a lot of extra work to make this happen, but it has proved well worth it. We have been amazed at the imagination and effort that students

have put into their projects. As well as having a great time, they have learnt about different subjects and also gained extra skills in presentation and communication.'

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