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MOMENTUM NEWS

ISSUE 3 – JULY 2009

Welcome to our third newsletter

Our network is growing! Hundreds of young people and professionals have now registered with us, from as far afield as Togo, Vietnam and the USA as well as England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. We're encouraged by the enthusiastic response that the Momentum concept is continuing to receive from everyone who hears about it.

This newsletter gives a snapshot of our current progress and immediate plans. Once again we publish a story from a young person whose life has been changed by international experiences. It's only one of a huge number of similar stories that people have shared with us.

Launch team launched

PARTNERS & LINKS

We are building relationships with all kinds of organisations in the UK and overseas. Here are some which we found interesting this month.

Common Purpose

www.commonpurpose.org.uk runs a range of leadership programmes for adults and young people, in the UK and several other countries. They have an international network of over 25,000 graduates. We have attended some of their youth events and we commend their approach. Our CEO Andrew Hadley is currently participating in their "Meridian" programme (see news).

Lifeline Projects

www.lifelineprojects.co.uk is one of the largest voluntary and community sector training

We want young people to be at the centre of all our activities, right from the start. So we have invited 20 young people to work with us over the next 12 months as our “launch team”. They will act as our ambassadors and support us in a number of ways during this crucial phase of development.

These are just a small number of the many young people who have inspired us in recent years. As well as the UK, the team also includes representatives in Albania, Bulgaria, Germany and Macedonia (these countries are chosen because they will be the first locations for our overseas activities and partnerships).

When Andrew Hadley launched the *Blue Sky* youth network in 2002, one of the most significant steps forward was to start working with a great team of young people who helped develop, promote and implement the programme. They were instrumental in making it a success: *Blue Sky* would have been nothing without their effort and enthusiasm.

Now we’re doing the same with Momentum.

Programme enrolment begins

The first groups of young people will start their life-changing journeys on our programmes in 2010. The process of identifying and funding them has already begun, and we are in discussions with numerous prospective partners and clients.

Participants for our Starter and Standard Programmes will be selected in groups by their schools or youth organisations.

Young people interested in enrolling on our Advanced Programme should contact us individually at info@youthmomentum.org.

providers in east London. They work in some of the most disadvantaged areas and are committed to youth empowerment and promoting a positive image of young people. Their “Switch ID” project is an excellent example of good practice which recently won an award from the RSA.

Jamie’s Farm

www.jamiesfarm.org.uk gives groups of young people from inner cities the opportunity to live and work on a farm, so developing team work, motivation and a sense of achievement. This is a fairly new organisation with plans for future expansion: one to watch.

Our unusual website of the month is <http://thesurrealist.co.uk/> - exactly what it says on the tin. Anyone familiar with psychometric tests may enjoy “The Ultimate Personality Test”.

The next newsletter

We’re delighted to welcome Nick Rogers and Katy Weston to our team. Nick will be our newsletter editor, while Katy takes charge of design. So we expect the next edition, which will be out in September, to be a lot more dynamic. Watch this space!

The 2010 intakes will be open to restricted numbers only, so we encourage early expressions of interest.

One network, three programmes

As outlined in our last newsletter, our international network is structured into seven progressively challenging levels.

Following a strategic review, we have decided to offer three linked programmes within this network, instead of the one originally proposed. These are:

- A **Standard Programme** for potential peer leaders within schools or youth groups, aged 16 – 18. This covers our levels 1 (friend) to 4 (executive).
- An **Advanced Programme** for individual young people aged 19 to 22, who have already completed secondary education. Our levels 5 (mentor) to 7 (leader).
- A specialised **Starter Programme** for young people aged 16 – 19 who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) or at risk of being in this situation. This is a short-term programme covering our levels 1 (friend) and 2 (citizen) only.

The aims of all our programmes are the same for every participant: to change their lives for the better, and to help them build a CV to be proud of.

Why choose Momentum?

Our programmes are different because they:

- put young people at the centre of everything

INFO SPACE

About us

Momentum is a not-for-profit organisation which provides personal development programmes for young people. We are registered in England as a Community Interest Company.

Our mission is to create sustainable change in the lives of young people and their communities.

More (colourful) information...

Download a brochure about the [Momentum Programmes](#).

Download information about our [Consultancy Services](#).

Our website:

www.youthmomentum.org

Contact us:

info@youthmomentum.org

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- focus on long term (up to 5 years) engagement, not one-off activities
- combine intensive international experiences with sustained local school or community projects
- require participants to work with other young people, thus creating wider impact within communities
- allow continual, cumulative progress within a structured international network
- provide a flexible framework for a wide range of other positive activities
- create partnerships between all sorts of different individuals and organisations working with young people
- inject more substance into existing international links, or help to create new ones
- are multi-disciplinary; they are not just “about” one particular theme or skill area
- mix challenge with fun, and reward effort with further opportunity

Consultancy services

Alongside our own youth programmes, we provide a range of services to other organisations across the youth and education sectors. We specialise in:

- Design and management of international youth events and projects
- Setting up youth exchange activities, and capacity building for schools or groups with limited previous experience of international projects.
- Youth film and digital media
- Project evaluation

Developing our own

leadership

We talk a lot about the importance of taking young people beyond their normal “comfort zones”. That’s what programmes like ours are about. But setting up an organisation from scratch is also a life-changing challenge that takes those involved far beyond their own comfort zones.

With that in mind, our Chief Executive Andrew Hadley is currently participating in the “Meridian” senior leadership programme run by Common Purpose (www.commonpurpose.org.uk). This has been made possible by a grant from the government’s “Train to Gain” fund (www.traintogain.gov.uk). We are grateful to Common Purpose for their support.

MY INTERNATIONAL JOURNEY

In each issue, a participant from one of our previous projects tells the story of how international experience has changed their life, and why they recommend other young people to get into programmes like ours. More stories are on our website.

Elena’s story

I come from a small village where everyone knows everyone; with traditional values and conservative views; where the vast majority of people look more for a sense of security than anything else. So it is a certain reality for young people to adopt the local way of viewing the world and look only for a decent, normal living in their own comfort zone.

I was very confused about life, not truly clear about what I wanted, and I had no idea how to

achieve my goals or dreams. There are few opportunities when you live in a small place. Of course formal education taught me many things, but I was never shown how to apply that knowledge in the real world, how to use it so I can create a better life for myself. All that changed when I decided to take part in a Blue Sky Summer School. It was the best summer in my life and it turned my whole life around.

The experience made me change my perceptions about who I was, who I wanted to become and what I wanted to achieve in my life. My world view was challenged and I got a different perspective and way of comprehending things. It taught me that it didn't matter where I was coming from, but where I was going, and it set me free from all the stereotypes I had until then. I developed a belief in my ability to live with and manage change in my life, no matter what the circumstances. And the story doesn't end there...

After spending those amazing 10 days in the summer school my life took a new direction. I was inspired and determined to pursue my dreams. After graduating from high school I accepted an amazing opportunity to live and work as an au pair in England for a year. The next summer I was part of the Work and Travel Program in the USA. Now I am back in my home country finishing up my studies. And I know that my journey won't end here.

I can't even describe how much I learned and how much all those experiences changed me on so many levels: I became more open-minded; more independent and responsible; I learned how to be proactive and act instead of being acted upon; I developed effective interpersonal skills and learned how to embrace

the cultural diversity between individuals. I learned not to judge but to understand. Through my personal growth on that journey I am now able to transform my change into a force of positive influence for my family, close friends and wider community.

Look at my journey: I started from a small place with no real direction in life. I had ambitions, but at that time I didn't know how to make them happen. My international journey showed me the clarity of my goals; increased my confidence to overcome any difficulties, respond to challenges and focus on what I want to achieve in the years ahead. I gained skills and experience that will be invaluable to my future career throughout my entire life.

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