ROLE MODELS

With the examination season already underway, our students and staff are keenly focused on achieving great things. They do this with a firm belief that great achievements are accomplished through effort and dedication. Nothing is pre-ordained, so as our destiny is in our hands, we often look to role models for examples of what is possible.

A role model is defined as person who serves as an example to others, through academic, sporting, artistic, charitable or other rewarding endeavours. In this edition of Hertsbeat, we look to Sophie, Vion, Alen, Dylan, Oscar, Jo, Kai, Sam, Peter and Adam.

Sophie’s Continued Success by the Sixth Form Team

The Academy’s motto, ‘Aim High, Achieve Excellence’, continues to apply to former Head Girl, Sophie Pender. Sophie set the bar high being the first student to leave Hertswood with a straight run of A*s in her A-Levels. She is now in her final year studying English Literature at the University of Bristol, completing her dissertation: ‘The provisional constructions of truth: Storytelling in dystopian literature.’

While at Hertswood, Sophie undertook some impressive work placements through our partnership with Access Aspiration. She appreciated the opportunities afforded to her through Access and is now an ambassador for the charity. Our students have seen her in this role speaking both at Downing Street and the House of Commons.

Sophie recognised that whilst 93% of the population attend state schools, this was not reflected in the student body at her university (where only 60% of students are state educated) or at other highly selective universities. Sophie set up the 93% Club, whose aim is to make university more inclusive for state school students.

Sophie has always had ambitions to be a lawyer, and we are delighted that after a challenging selection process, she has secured a training contract with leading international law firm, Herbert Smith Freehills, who will sponsor her through two years of Law from September.

What’s more, Sophie was nominated for The Tab youth news site’s 2017 Future 100 women to watch at UK universities, and won the competition’s University of Bristol section with an outstanding 4,102 votes, the fifth highest of the one hundred universities’ winners. We are hugely proud of Sophie, and grateful for the support and advice she continues to offer to Hertswood students.
Rocketry Challenge by Mr Pawar (STEM & Physics Coordinator)

On Monday 24th April, three students from Year 11, Vion, Alen and Dylan (left to right in picture), participated in the UK Youth Rocketry Challenge, along with our mentor Liam from MBDA Systems. It was an interesting and exciting day, and felt like real rocket testing. We watched as many rockets nose-dived into the ground and others promptly burst into flames, but we are happy to report that of the twenty or so rockets launched on the day, despite half of them not surviving the process, ours came through intact. Furthermore, we came incredibly close to the target altitude of 700ft, reaching an impressive 620ft, but unfortunately it wasn’t quite close enough to progress to the national finals.

The students should be very proud of how well they did. They look forward to trying again next year, to have another chance at using the knowledge and skills they’ve gained in rocket-building, with ever more determination to succeed.

On the day of the competition we were the first to arrive, and quickly started making the many modifications to prepare for the launch. Ours was the largest rocket, and the only one with 3D printed components! We made two launches during the day, and both went straight up and down with the parachute working perfectly, while other rockets went off sideways or suffered from failing thrusters. I learned a lot about rocket engineering from the project, and can’t wait to try again.” - Vion (Year 11)

Athletics at Lea Valley by Oscar (Year 7)

In March, I and fourteen other Year 7 students were lucky enough to go on an amazing trip to the Lea Valley Athletics Centre in London for some coaching. There were lots of different athletics events on offer, ranging from discus throw to hurdles. I had a try at hurdles, pole vault and high jump, and they were all really fun! I found pole vault to be the hardest at first, as I kept falling off the mat, but with the help of the coaches there, I managed to clear a bar of nearly two metres!

During our lunch break we were also really lucky to meet team GB athlete Dwayne Chambers, who was happy to pose for selfies with us. We all had a great day, and can’t wait to use our new skills during the athletics season.

Senior Athletics Championships by Mr Marlow (Head of PE)

Wednesday 26th April was the senior students’ opportunity to run, jump or throw for glory in the District Championships before their exams begin. Hertswood once again achieved some magnificent results with Adam Martin leading the way as District Champion in the javelin, with a remarkable throw of 34.87m into a strong headwind, beating his nearest competitor by over 3m. We had notable silvers for Kai Bloxham (discus) & Jo Nunes (200m), and bronze medals for Sam Wilson (100m & high jump), Peter Oakley (1500m), Kai Bloxham (shot put) and the relay team. Well done to all involved.