

MARCH '18

The Micron



The staff newsletter of AJ Engineering and NEWCo



SHINES ON APPRENTICES

AJ Engineering is again embracing Scottish Apprenticeship Week which celebrates the benefits hands-on learning brings to businesses, individuals and the economy.

The week takes place from March 5 to 9 when a series of videos focusing on different aspects of the company's apprenticeship schemes and managing director Alan James' views on the subject will be released on the website and social media channels.

AJ Engineering and its sister company NEWCo currently employ 14 apprentices in total which include modern apprentices and the newly-appointed graduate apprentice Laura Mair.

Eight of the current workforce served their apprenticeships with the company.

AJ Engineering will also feature in The Sun with the focus on 26-year-old Bethany Bass and her role with the company as a fabricator welder.

Alan James said he was delighted that the company were involved in such an important campaign: "Apprenticeships are not new to AJ Engineering – it is something that we have always done here, but their popularity did die out for a while and that is why we as a firm enjoy getting on board with these types of campaigns.

"Since I started the company in 1998 we have always successfully employed apprentices with an exceptionally high retention rate once they qualify. It's important for us to show our support for Scottish Apprenticeship Week so we can illustrate to others why these schemes are so beneficial not just to the company but to the individual themselves who become the apprentices."

Alan James, started the company from

AJ Engineering in national press during focus week



Bethany Bass was interviewed by The Sun for Scottish Apprenticeship Week.

scratch in 1998 after serving his time as an apprentice with William Reid Engineering Ltd of Forres – one of the reasons he is so keen to invest in apprentices.

Last September, AJ Engineering became one of the first in the north to take on an engineering Graduate Apprentice.

Laura Mair (20) joined the company working with its education partner, Heriot-Watt University.

Laura, whose apprenticeship is in Engineering, Design and Manufacturing, will appear in a short film explaining what

her apprenticeship has meant to her.

She will also take part in a Business Breakfast with DYW Moray. The event is being held to "Celebrate the Success of the Apprenticeship Family in Moray."

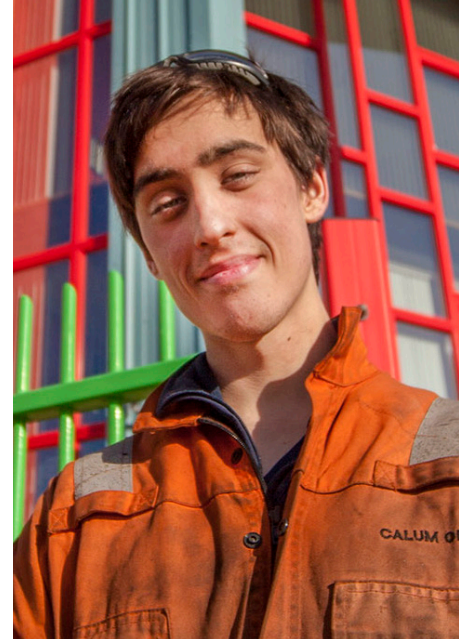
The aim of the event is to showcase how the Apprenticeship Family is delivered in Moray, to celebrate the successes of apprentices, recognise the commitment for employers and to encourage other employers to take on an apprentice.

Laura, joined by mentor and project

See over

facebook.com/AJEngScotland • twitter.com/AJEngScotland

AJ CELEBRATES SCOTTISH APPRENTICESHIP WEEK



Continued

manager Andrew Morrison will take part in a panel interview.

Also being featured on the small screen is Calum Openshaw who joined the company last year as an apprentice fabricator welder and explains how a stint of work experience at AJ Engineering led him to starting his apprenticeship.

And answering a Q&A on the company's website will be Adam Kirkwood, the second apprentice to be employed at AJ Engineering some 15 years ago.

NEWCo partners with chamber

NEWCo, AJ Engineering's sister company in Fort William has become a Premier Partner with the Lochaber Chamber of Commerce.

Members of the Lochaber Chamber are drawn from a range of business sectors and include many of the larger businesses in the area as well as medium, small and sole trader businesses.

Neil Worsdall general manager with NEWCo said: "Our goal is to enhance and encourage the economic growth of NEWCo and the creation of local jobs. Lochaber Chamber of Commerce offers a number of networking opportunities, as well as educational programmes, to help NEWCo develop our business."

Lisa Wharton from Lochaber chamber said: "We welcome NEWCo as Premium Members of Lochaber Chamber of Commerce and look forward to working with them to help meet their goals."

AJ Engineering is a member of Moray Chamber of Commerce.

Pictured left to right are Graduate Apprentice Laura Mair, former apprentice Adam Kirkwood and new apprentice Calum Openshaw

Lee joins team to develop new and existing business

Expanding business opportunities with existing clients and new leads will be handled by a new role which has been created by AJ Engineering.

Stepping into the new post is 22-year-old Lee Binks. Lee joined the company as its first Business Development Representative at the end of February from MacKellar Sub-sea which closed its doors at the end of October.

Lee, who lives in Forres, said: "When we heard that MacKellar was closing I took it upon myself to look for other work and my then boss put me in touch with Graham Alexander the general manager at AJ. I am here to liaise with new and existing clients and to find out what projects are in the pipeline that AJ Engineering could get involved with."

He added: "I will be looking at ways that we can diversify and expand into other sectors as well as progressing the sectors we are already strong at."

Graham Alexander, general manager with AJ Engineering said: "In the company's 19-year history the majority of our work has come from existing clients as they have been impressed with the service we provide, and wish continue to



Business Development Representative Lee Binks

use us. Although this approach has stood us in good stead we were conscious there were potential clients who had not heard of AJE, and therefore we were missing out on opportunities."

He added: "Similarly, AJE are capable of a wide variety of services and we need to ensure our existing clients don't only associate us with one service. It was for these reasons that we decided that AJ Engineering required someone in a business development role."