

BUSINESS

Tis the season to sign up for start-up scholarship

ENTREPRENEURS who need help putting their business ideas into action can apply for a tailor-made training course starting this autumn. The New Entrepreneur Scholarship course offers a comprehensive package of support and the possibility of finance to scholars wanting to start up their own businesses.

The six-month course includes enterprise training, business school workshops, networking and one-to-one advice

with start-up finance of up to £1,500 available for viable business plans. Funded by the Learning and Skills Council, the scholarship course runs twice a year and is open to over 18s who are not in full time education and living in eligible areas.

Around 80 scholars across London will be selected for the next intake which starts in October, and Greenwich Enterprise Board is looking for recruits in the borough.

GEB manager Graham Hart explained that past scholars have launched businesses in craft retail, home baking, contract cleaning and bouncy castle hire among many others. He said: "We've had a few scholars over the years who have gone on to launch successful businesses. Essentially scholars embark upon six months of intensive help in starting their business. They receive training, advice, networking and access to start-up funds."

Former scholar Adebisola Okerayi opened the Rhema Information and Business Centre on Well Hall Road, Eltham, six months ago and said: "I was going the wrong way with my business plan and the course helped me to develop a plan in the right way, while the business support meant there was always someone to deal with my questions."

For information on the scholarship and to check eligibility, contact Greenwich Enterprise Board on 020-8305 2222.

Positive moves

Fast-track training boost for consultancy start-up

THINK positive is at the heart of Danny West's philosophy when it comes to starting a business.

The qualified social worker was given 18 months to live when diagnosed as HIV positive in 1985.

The news turned his life upside down but the encouragement of friends and a yearning to help others eventually spurred him into working with people affected by HIV and eventually into starting his own business.

Danny was the first appointed local government training officer for HIV in the UK providing training to staff at a London borough.

After many years out of the field through illness, he returned as a freelance and has now established a new training consultancy with fellow social worker and close friend Beverley James.

Their company RYL (Realising Your Life) Training Consultancy supports people with HIV through personal life-coaching, training, advice and they are developing a complemen-

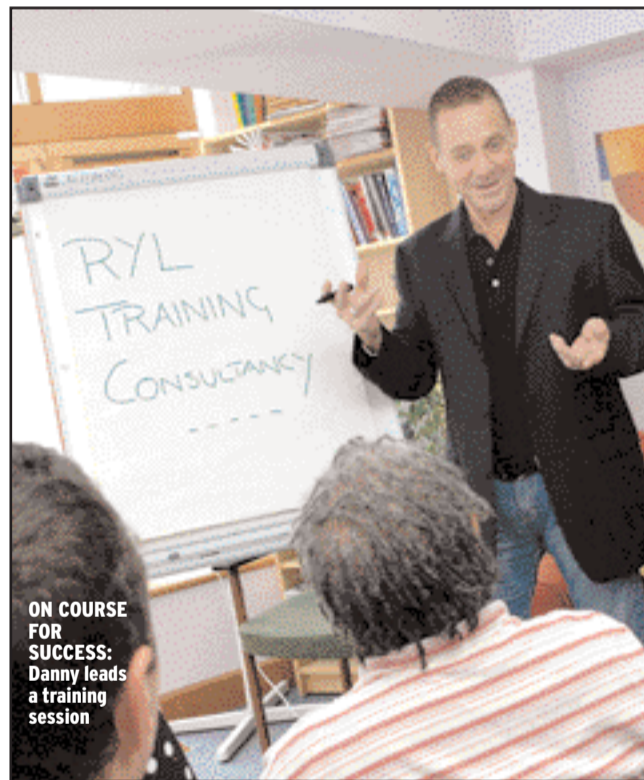
tary therapist register. It also provides training and advice around the legislative issues relating to people with HIV to organisations within the public, private and voluntary sectors.

"Businesses and organisations have responsibilities under the Disability and Discrimination Act and are legally bound to address a range of issues and to add HIV employment policies and conditions to their procedures," Danny explained.

He has designed his own interactive training programme and is developing his client base within the public, voluntary and corporate sectors.

Advisors from Business Works have been working with Danny to develop his business concept. The specialist business advice service offers free training, flexible advice and help with marketing, promotion and accessing finance support to black and minority entrepreneurs.

In the last three months Danny has been fast-tracked through the Business Works



ON COURSE FOR SUCCESS: Danny leads a training session

training programme which included workshops in finance, marketing and setting up a business.

"My business plan was fairly well established so I didn't need to go through the whole programme," Danny

explained. "They sat me down and designed an individual support plan based on my needs. I've been to workshops and had one-to-one meetings with an advisor who I can talk to over the phone anytime I need to."

And he added: "Their support and training has been invaluable - they helped me decide whether to be a sole trader or a charity," said Danny, who's ploughed £3,000 into the firm.

And he added: "If I have a problem I just ring them up."

And his advice for other aspiring entrepreneurs?

"Get in touch with organisations like Business Works. Be clear on what it is you are selling and who you are selling it to," he stressed.

"When you do your business plan it will focus your vision and help you recognise the skills you need to formulate your concept."

Contact RYL Training Consultancy on 020-8691 8956. Find out more about Business Works on 020-8858 8850 or visit www.greenwich.gov.uk/business

Bid for work on 2012 Games

GREENWICH'S bid to win business for local firms by supporting London's Olympic bid is beginning to pay off.

The Olympic Delivery Authority is now seeking views on a Draft Procurement Policy, which sets out terms of procurement for the 2012 Games. Greenwich Business Support Service is collating the views of local businesses to submit by October 2.

Companies can also register their interest to tender for work at www.london2012.com/business where they will receive updates, tender opportunities and links to business support services.

Business advice bus stops in Woolwich

ASPIRING entrepreneurs can get help with launching a business by climbing aboard the Business Link for London Start It Up Truck next month. The trailer will be parked up in Greens End, Woolwich, from 10am to 4pm on Thursday, September 21. On board will be a team of business advisors including representatives from Greenwich Enterprise Board and Business Works - the specialist service which supports black and ethnic minority entrepreneurs.

September network lunch date

THE historic Horniman Museum is the venue for a business networking lunch next month. The September networking lunch hosted by the Greenwich, Lewisham and Bexley Chamber of Commerce takes place at the museum at 100 London Road, Forest Hill, on September 13, from 12.30pm. Details and tickets on 020-8293 3456.

Construction network builds a link to future workers

LEADING local construction companies got together with education and training providers to forge new ways of helping young people into the industry.

They attended a Construction Trailblazer at Shooters Hill post 16 campus last month. The event was jointly organised by the campus and Greenwich Education Business Partnership with funding from the Learning and Skills Council London East.

The event also saw the launch of a new Construction Network of employers and

training and education providers who work with young people aged 14-19.

It's hoped the network will create new opportunities for young people to get into the industry through work experience and apprenticeships.

Last month's event also included an awards presentation to students completing GCSE and other construction courses, and employers who had taken part in a careers week in May. The trailblazer, part of a national pilot, is designed to encourage opportunities in the

building trades and professions. Under the scheme six Greenwich schools linked up with the Shooters Hill campus to devise alternative education and training pathways into the construction industry including GCSE and post-16 courses.

Sean McMahon, young people's learning director at the Learning and Skills Council said: "The construction employers' business breakfast and award ceremony shows how far we have all progressed as a result of Greenwich's Construction Trailblazer. Employers,

teachers, trainers, the LSC and other partners worked together to discover how an effective 14-19 curriculum could be developed. Our common aim was to provide quality work experience placements - clearly linked to the real world of construction. This is certainly the type of activity the LSC is keen to support."

Construction companies interested in joining the network can contact Kathy Ross on 020 8319 0610 or email rossk.gebp.greenwich@lgfl.net