

Aquaterra Energy partners with local school to promote careers in oil and gas

Offshore engineering solutions company, Aquaterra Energy <<http://www.aquaterraenergy.com/Home>> , with headquarters in Norwich has partnered with Norwich School to take part in the Engineering Education Scheme (EES) with four Year 13 pupils. The partnership aims to help attract a pool of young talent to the oil and gas industry by providing essential support and hands-on engineering experience for young people.

The EES is an Engineering Development Trust initiative, and links teams of four Sixth Form pupils and their teachers with local companies in order to help solve genuine scientific, engineering, and technological problems. Teams use their school workshops and facilities and meet with professional engineers, scientists and technicians over a six month period, to develop their creativity and problem solving skills, before presenting their solutions via formal written and verbal presentations to a panel of senior professional engineers. The scheme has proved highly beneficial for students in past years; with over 1,300 young people signing up annually, and 89 percent of participants going on to study engineering and other relevant subjects at university.

Two employees from Aquaterra Energy, Andrew Rettie and Michael Robinson, have been responsible for the project with Norwich School. Having completed summer placements with Aquaterra Energy and achieved their respective degrees, the pair joined Aquaterra Energy as Graduate Engineers in 2013, and have first-hand knowledge of getting onto the career ladder in this industry. They now work full time for the company, and were keen to be involved with the scheme, which also contributes to their Continuing Professional Development within the Institute of Civil Engineers.

The brief put forward to the team of pupils involved the connection of centralisers to a conductor pipe, which is an integral part of drilling operations. The students were tasked with finding a solution, which was presented to senior members of the company.

Michael Robinson said: "It was a challenging project but the team of pupils from Norwich School has risen to it and produced some good ideas to tackle the engineering problem we gave them. This programme has allowed Aquaterra Energy to showcase its business to the next generation of potential

employees. The scheme has helped us develop our own leadership and communication skills while providing support to the four students involved.”

Andrew Rettie added: “As well as providing them with a good grounding in the typical engineering process that goes into the design and manufacture of a product, the students have quickly learnt how to work together and manage their time efficiently in order to deliver a solution.”

The scheme has been highly successful for Norwich School and, as a result, student participation in engineering courses has risen year-on-year since it was introduced six years ago. Meg Ling, Physics Teacher at Norwich School, said: “Norwich School has been supported by Aquaterra Energy since October 2007. Each year the company has provided recent Graduate Engineers to oversee the school team’s EES project.

“The experience of not only tackling a real life problem faced by the company, but being able to work with professional engineers trying to solve these problems in industry, has been extremely valuable. Many of the participants have gone on to study engineering at university, with one winning the national Year in Industry prize.

“The EES has raised the profile of engineering within the school, and not just for those actually taking part. This would not have been possible without the on-going, generous support of Aquaterra Energy, both financially and in time. We continue to be extremely grateful for Aquaterra Energy’s commitment to the project and hope that the relationship will continue to be a positive and productive one.”