

MARK COSTELLO

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Hello everyone!

I do hope you all have managed to watch our video highlighting the work we do at 'Foxes Community Kitchen' featured on last weeks newsletter. I have to admit I must have watched it about 20 times! We are very lucky at Foxes to have such strong community links which enhances both the local area and the learning opportunities for our students.

I hope you agree that the true uniqueness of Foxes is the way we are embedded within the community of Minehead. It allows our students to gain independence and confidence in a safe setting.

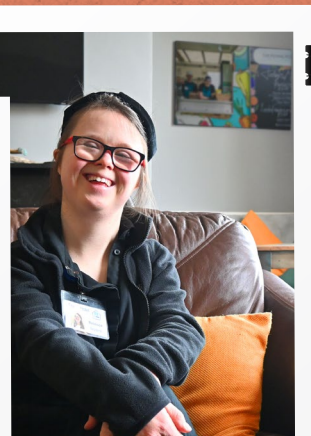
We were all delighted to see actor James Martin pick up an Oscar for the film 'An Irish Goodbye' and what a lovely touch to see the Oscars crowd serenade him on his birthday.

On Tuesday it is World Down Syndrome Day and this years theme is 'with us, not for us'. We asked two students their thoughts on what this means to them. Please take a moment to read below!

I hope you have a lovely weekend.

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

21ST MARCH 2023



WITH US, NOT FOR US

READ OUR STUDENTS' FIRST PERSON INTERVIEWS ON PAGE 2 >>>



NAME: REBECCA

AGE: 23

STUDYING: LEVEL 1 NVQ IN HOSPITALITY SERVICES

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

WITH US, NOT FOR US

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY 2023

21st March is World Down Syndrome Day - and that date's no coincidence. It was chosen because it's the 21st day of the third month, relating to the uniqueness of the triplication (trisomy) of the 21st chromosome which causes Down Syndrome. The theme this year is With Us Not for Us. That's something that Foxes students believe passionately.



REBECCA IN FRONT OF HOUSE

What does 'with us, not for us' mean to you?

"With Us Not for Us means being independent but with help - so others stepping back and allowing me to be the independent person that I am!"

How does foxes support you with this?

"They support me to be independent in the home and also in the community. I used to really struggle with making my bed but now I'm getting better at it. I couldn't cross the road on my own before and I'm happy I can do it now. Learning at Foxes makes me feel more confident and I'm now more assertive because I've learnt to say 'no'. My parents are really proud because before Foxes I wasn't independent and now I am. I look forward to the future now."

What achievements are you most proud of - both in and out of education?

"I am really proud of achieving my NVQ and I'm very proud that I've got a Merit for my ESB and I'm proud of being independent. I also won the Most Inspirational Student award. For the first time I got a trophy - in my whole life I never had a trophy and now I do. My first trophy.

When I was in Weston College after school I did some work experience at a museum. I didn't like that and then when I did work experience in a café in front of house I loved it. I carried on since. I love front of house so much. It's the customer side I love the most because I love to talk to the customers. I like helping people.

I've made loads of friends. My best friend has to be Saffron because she loves to talk as much as me.

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What are some of the extra curricular activities you participate in at Foxes?

"At Minehead Eye we go on the scooters and I do some climbing, but I'm not very good at it! It doesn't stop me trying though! I go to mindfulness, drama and I sing in a Makaton choir. I also do karaoke and my favourite song is Greatest Day by Take That. I love Gary Barlow!

Ballroom dancing is fun too. My favourite dance is the waltz which I love to do with my boyfriend Charlie."

What are you hoping to do after leaving Foxes?

"After Foxes I'm planning to get a job in the Hilton near Bristol Airport. My family live in Portishead near there. I've decided that for a bit I'm going to be living at home until I get a paid job and after that I might go into supported living."

What message would you like to give to people about Down Syndrome?

"My experience of Down Syndrome is that I love who I am as a person and I would recommend being Down Syndrome because it is amazing to be and everybody is special and different. I've always felt special since I was born. I love who I am and I am so proud of myself.

I love Foxes and this place is just amazing all the staff and the students are just amazing - I've got no words it's just amazing. This is my final year and I'm so proud of what I've achieved here. I know I have to leave Foxes but I don't want to. I love it here."



REBECCA & HEAD OF EDUCATION, NICOLA GIBBS

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NAME: TOM

AGE: 21

STUDYING: LEVEL 1 NVQ IN HOSPITALITY SERVICES

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY 2023

Next up we have 3rd year Foxes student Tom, who is talking to us about his experience as a person with Down Syndrome...

How does Foxes support you to be independent?

"They help me to arrive on time for sessions and to wake up at the right time. They also help me with travel training in PDHW. Before coming to Foxes I was independent with some things, but I remember once I accidentally fell asleep on the bus and that was stressful because I had to figure out where to go next. Now, I can problem solve and I am more aware. I can cross the road safely and I remember to get the right bus!"

What achievements are you most proud of at Foxes?

"I'm most proud of being helpful, kind and adaptable and working as part of a team. I am helpful and kind to everyone, and because of this I have lots of friends. My family are very proud of me.

I am also proud of myself for going to the Hilton HR Conference in January with Saffy, James, David and Kim, as we had to plan the journey together which involved buses, trains and London Underground. London was really nice. I have been to London lots of times but this was my first time without my family. I felt good and confident doing that."



TOM & NICOLA



SAFFY, TOM & JAMES IN LONDON, JANUARY 2023

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Which session at Foxes do you enjoy the most?

"I love to be in food prep. My family are coming down to visit this weekend and I will be in food prep when they eat their dinner in the restaurant, so I will help to cook for them. I love cooking. I remember I always cooked at home and I had a carer that I did cooking with. I like to cook fajitas and stew and dumplings... and Chocolate brownies on a treat day!"

What are you hoping to do after leaving Foxes?

"I am hoping to live in a flat near Swindon, with Charlie, Rebecca and Saffron. I want to work in a bar near Swindon. I will be sad to leave Foxes but I am excited for the future."

What message would you like to give to people about Down Syndrome?

"My message is to be happy. You are special."

FUNDRAISING

£7,292

RAISED OF £2100 TARGET

A huge thank you to everyone who has generously donated to our JustGiving page for World Down Syndrome Day to raise money for people with learning disabilities, with Mencap UK. We have raised a whopping £7,292 thanks to some incredibly generous donors. Make sure to check our social media pages next week for updates on our students' 21 mile walk!

AN UPDATE FROM EDUCATION

This week students joined a live streamed event led by ESB's Chief Executive Tina Renshaw for the English-Speaking Board's 70th Anniversary Celebration. Our students were excited to be part of the celebrations and they did themselves and Foxes proud! Rebecca, Saffy and Sephie shared their recent ESB results. Tina (ESB) read out all the winners of the Milestone competition, some students were in the room. I will be sharing the video of the event and the ESB visit in February shortly.

Second year students have completed travel training this week. The Hollow group completed theirs independently with a trip to Watchet. Well done! First year students have been busy planning for their travel training trip taking place next week.

In Functional Skills students have been learning about different bills, those that need paying as well as essential and non-essential items. In Health & Wellbeing students have been learning about food waste and have cooked a meal as independently as possible creating minimal waste, and in EMP students continued to celebrate their results which were 'Amazing', as shared by Nicky last week.