APPRENTICESHIP
CASE STUDY:
ASTON VILLA
FOOTBALL CLUB

“The Villa Midlands Food (VMF) apprenticeship scheme with Walsall College is a fantastic triumph of community cohesion, that has helped us to recruit and develop new staff and inspire local young people.”

Paul Faulkner, CEO, Aston Villa Football Club
THE COMPANY

VMF (Villa Midlands Food) is a unique scheme run by Aston Villa Football Club, offering youngsters a career opportunity in the hospitality industry. The training restaurant, located in the Directors suite at Villa Park, bucks the trend in using regional produce, with dishes cooked and served by youngsters from the area.

THE TRAINING

As part of the scheme, apprentices spend two years with Aston Villa Hospitality and Events and take a Level 2 NVQ Diploma in Hospitality Services working with Walsall College as the training provider. The restaurant and students have won a whole host of awards, including Chef Team of the Year (Gold) in the Football Hospitality Awards and Young Chef of the Year (Silver) in the Marche Awards.

THE IMPACT

Paul Plant, Training Manager for Aston Villa said: “We chose to work with Walsall College because they absolutely identified what our requirements are and helped us achieve this. After the success of the first intake of students, we now have a second intake beginning their apprenticeships.

“Aston Villa as an organisation is socially aware and this project has allowed us to invest in the future of young people and reach people who may not usually have these opportunities. We are committed to apprenticeships in the long-term; they’re definitely the way forward.”

VMF Apprentice, Asher Robinson said: “I enjoy working with the ingredients and learning to make new things. It’s challenging but I really enjoy it. I really enjoy preparing all the food and service day; you’ve got to get things right. It’s been great learning how to plate up food and make it good enough to go out. I would eventually like to work in the main Villa kitchens and one day, I would like to travel the world and work in different restaurants.”

Fellow Apprentice, Lawrence Jervis added: “I like making people happy with food. I get a lot of pleasure from running my own section and dealing with orders coming in fast during service. At school I was doing 9am - 3pm and now it’s more like 3pm -11pm; I love it! After my apprenticeship, I would like to get as much experience as possible in restaurants and I eventually want to become a chef or to open my own restaurant.”

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