



PRESS RELEASE

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Media Works for young people

The Foyer Federation launches its new project, 'MediaWorks' - a media resource for young people

LOCATION: Channel 4 Headquarters, Friday 2nd July 2010.

The launch will showcase the work of some of the young people who have been involved in the project so far. Guests will have the opportunity to watch several films created and produced by young people in Foyers as part of the MediaWorks initiative, as well as hear from a range of influential speakers including: Jane Slowey, Chief Executive of the Foyer Federation; Philip Udeh, Director of Community Builders and Kate Edwards from 4Talent at Channel 4. The event will be hosted by media presenter and producer, Shivani Mair.

The aim of MediaWorks is to enable young people to use media technology as a tool to express themselves creatively, have their say on issues that are important to them, develop skills that can prepare them for training or job opportunities and get their creative work into the public domain.

The Foyer Federation's Chief Executive, Jane Slowey explained: "with all the talk of the Big Society it is essential that young people are given a voice to express what life feels like for them. The MediaWorks initiative will help young people from all across the Foyer network to express their views and talents to a wider audience. By doing this, they are also gaining valuable skills and experiences that will help them to thrive in the future."

MediaWorks has been created by the Foyer Federation and supported by Virgin Unite, the non-profit foundation of The Virgin Group, who have provided funding for all the equipment and training in the nine media centres across England for staff and young people. The centres have been set up in nine Foyers across the country. The 'hub' is in Bristol and satellite centres have been set up in Bedford, Bradford, Harlow, Hereford, Ludlow, Southwark and Hayes in London, and a mobile centre across the Arena Options projects in the North West. More than 50 Foyer young people and staff have been trained in media content-creation skills such as film-making, podcasting and photography.

"Young people when given the chance can be incredibly creative and can play a positive role in society today. Virgin Unite is always looking for ways to ensure young people's voices can be heard, that's why we love the MediaWorks initiative. As a strategic partner, the Foyer Federation's work is fully supported by Virgin Unite and we are delighted to have funded the media centres in England. It is encouraging that businesses and community leaders are beginning to act as a force for good and help organisations like the Foyer Federation," comments Jean Oelwang, CEO, Virgin Unite.

For further information about the event, please email amber@foyer.net or telephone +44 (0)207 430 2212. Photos will be available upon request from amber@foyer.net from 9am on Monday 5th July.

For information on Virgin Unite contact: jodie.dalmeda@virginunite.co.uk Tel: +44 (0)203 126 3967

Notes to editors

- As many as one in five young people between the ages of 14-30 will experience disadvantage in Britain today because they lack the skills, resources and opportunities to take control of their lives and realise their potential as active and engaged young citizens.
- The Foyer Federation develops and encourages new approaches to supporting young people at risk as they make their transition to adulthood.
- For nearly two decades, the Foyer Federation has mainly worked through a network of over 130 integrated learning and accommodation providers, known as Foyers, who re-connect up to 10,000 young people a year with personal development, education, training and employment opportunities.
- The Foyer Federation is now exploring how the holistic Foyer approach can be stretched and targeted to improve services for young people at risk, who include young offenders, care leavers and other vulnerable young people. Further information about the Foyer Federation is available at www.foyer.net or by calling 020 7430 2212.

▪ About Virgin Unite:

Virgin Unite is the non-profit foundation of the Virgin Group. We unite people to tackle tough social and environmental problems in an entrepreneurial way. Our aim is to help revolutionize the way businesses and the social sector work together - driving business as a force for good. This is based on the belief that this is the only way we can tackle the scale and urgency of the challenges facing the world today. Virgin Unite's overheads are covered by Sir Richard Branson and the Virgin Group, meaning that 100% of additional donations received go direct to the frontline where they are needed most. For more information please visit www.virginunite.com.

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