

Media Release

January 16, 2005

Schoolchildren head for Desirable Destinations **PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES: Wednesday, January 18 & Thursday, January 19 at** **Ramside Hall, Durham**

PANCAKES might not spring to mind when you think of a career in tourism – but youngsters will be getting the chance to cook up a storm with the Army catering corps this week (**January 18 & 19**).

Students from across Tyne and Wear will gain hands on experience of a range of jobs from various sections of the tourism industry at two day-long events. One of the activities on offer is the chance to cook in the Army's field kitchen – which is being brought up from the south coast for the event. The large wagon will be parked outside the stately Ramside Hall Hotel to show the children how it is used when the Army is on manoeuvres.

Pupils from 14 schools will have tasters of a variety of activities connected with jobs in the tourism sector. They can learn how to create garnishes for fine dining with Steven Jobson of Louis Restaurant if they are interested in catering.

If they would like to try something a bit more active there will be an air hockey tournament – and the chance to find out about sports coaching from the City of Sunderland's Sport and Leisure department. Sporty youngsters will also get to try out some of the harnesses and equipment used by Sunderland Wall

The pupils will work in small teams and have half-an-hour slots on various activities throughout the morning. During the afternoon they will work on customer service skills – useful in all sections of the industry. They will take part in role play to find the best way of dealing with a variety of tricky situations. The students will also speak to experts in customer service and design their own questionnaire about customer service in a hotel. This activity is supported by computer equipment supplied by the e-Champions Project as part of Sunderland City Council's e-Neighbourhoods programme.

Later on they will take part in a careers carousel which will provide an opportunity to ask questions about specific areas of the tourism sector. Sarah Nicklin, Business Liaison Officer from Education Business Connections (EBC) said "This event gives the students an excellent hands on opportunity to experience careers available within the tourism sector"

The Desirable Destinations days are part of the major Exploring Tourism project being run by Sunderland-based EBC. It is funded by the Learning + Skills Council Tyne and Wear.

On Wednesday 139 pupils from Monkseaton High School; Margaret Sutton School and Brinkburn School, South Shields; Jarrow School; Hylton Red House School, Sunderland, and Houghton Kepier School will take part.

On Thursday there will be 180 pupils from Kenton School and Heaton Manor School, Newcastle; Castle View School, Castlegreen School and Sandhill View School, Sunderland; St Thomas More School and St Edmund Campion School, Gateshead, and Hebburn School.

Businesses supporting the event include:

- City of Sunderland Council Sport & Leisure Dept
- Tyne & Wear Museums
- Hotel & Catering Training Co
- District of Easington Council
- Army
- Gala Bingo
- Blue Badge Tourist Guide
- NEXUS
- Louis Restaurant
- Little Chef
- McDonalds
- Aspire
- Frankie and Benny's
- Hadrians Wall Tourism Partnership
- Great North Forest
- E-champions City of Sunderland ICT Dept
- NISAI Group
- Tees Valley Tourism Bureau
- DFDS Seaways
- Sunderland Wall
- Access Training

Education Business Connections was formed eight years ago to support closer working between schools and businesses in Sunderland. Its success means that now the team delivers innovative educational programmes to children across Tyne and Wear.

Programmes are funded from a variety of sources but EBC's ongoing development is supported by Futurebuilders (for more details go to www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk). EBC also receives funding from the European Social Fund.

IMPORTANT NOTE: PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES

The event will run on two days between 9.30am and 3.30pm. However the best time for photos will be between 11am and noon when the children will be working on creative activities, including cookery, origami napkins and making Roman eagles on sceptres. This will allow for you to picture some of the completed items as well as catch the children at work.

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