Research into the Lived Experience of Asthma

As part of the community engagement portfolio of the School of Sport & Exercise Science, our researchers often incorporate a community engagement aspect to research projects. The Health Advancement Research Team (HART), directed by Dr Jacquelyn Allen-Collinson, Reader in the Sociology of Sport, has recently commenced an interdisciplinary, multi-institutional research project, which engages both members of the healthcare community and sportspeople with asthma.

The research project, led by Dr Allen-Collinson, focuses upon a phenomenological investigation into sportspeople and serious exercisers’ lived experience of asthma and asthma self-care. In collaboration with Dr Helen Owton of De Montfort University, participants are also involved with the DMU ‘Square Mile’ programme, which draws upon academic expertise to work with the community to improve health and education.

Full details of the project and all members of the research team can be found on the HART website at: http://www.hartresearch.org.uk/ and at the dedicated project website: http://helenowton.wix.com/sportasthma

Supporting the Golden Cricket Initiative

Lincolnshire Cricket, in partnership with our School, have been giving residents of retirement homes in Lincoln the chance to play an adapted form of table cricket.

Before delivering table cricket sessions, students studying BSc Sport Development and Coaching received a workshop from Cricket Development Officer Andy Hibberd, one of our former students, on the table cricket skills sets including batting, bowling and fielding challenges.

The project falls under the ‘Golden Cricket’ initiative, which provides physical activity and psychological stimulation for elderly participants. The scheme has also given Sport Development undergraduates the chance to gain real experience of working within the sector. There are many challenges the students have to overcome whilst working with elderly players, such as adapting games for wheelchair users, limited mobility and often cases of dementia.

Andy says: “It was great to see the students roll their sleeves up and get stuck in. They have delivered some fantastic sessions and we are looking forward to working with the University again and expanding the project.”

Sports Focus

from the School of Sport & Exercise Science

Welcome

We are immensely proud of our engagement within the community. A wide range of work experience opportunities are provided for students and uniquely some assessments are community based and embedded within the student’s taught programme, these include coaching community groups, assisting with GP referral schemes, working with governing bodies of sport and gaining teaching experience. What is particularly rewarding is that now it is often our previous students who are the employers that are providing placements for our current students.

Specific expertise within the School means that prestigious groups work closely with us. Sport Science consultancy is currently being provided for elite athletes and our students are encouraged to shadow and support these athletes during their consultancy. Links extend beyond the UK, an innovative example that is featured in this newsletter is the support that is being provided for Pullers Canada - a team of Aboriginal teenagers who are training for the 2014 North American Indigenous Games.

At Lincoln we believe that the University should not place a boundary around the opportunities available for the people within the organisation, but enhance and extend the possibilities for the people within it.
Canoeing has provided staff and students with opportunities to engage with communities near and far. Growing links with local coaches and paddlers from Lincoln Canoe Club have included specialist strength and conditioning support and help with video analysis, and the success of these initiatives led to an invitation to work with GB Canoeing. English National Talent squad and Super Regional Squad members from the Central Region are now coming to the Human Performance Centre for regular physiological and strength testing.

In a unique project further afield, the School has been supporting Pullers Canada - a team of Aboriginal teenagers from Vancouver Island, Canada who are training for the 2014 North American Indigenous Games. The team have had no local access to sports science support but staff and students from the School have been holding online tutorials with the teens on topics such as nutrition, sports psychology and video-based technique analysis. The link is also providing a novel case study for sociological research.

Students are encouraged to put into practice a variety of skills, including research design and implementation, communication and networking with a variety of organisations, successful team working, project administration, sourcing coaching staff and facilities, report writing, presentation skills, and financial management. Students are encouraged to adopt an ongoing monitoring and evaluation of projects, in which they integrate policy-based, sociological and practical knowledge with a view to producing shared learning outcomes.

Students are assessed through their report writing and presentational skills with a view to taking these skills forward into the workplace. Over the past two years, the results and shared learning outcomes of a total of five group projects have been presented on a national stage at the annual student BASES conference.

Opportunities delivered through work-based learning are available at level three in Sociological Issues in Sports Development and Contemporary Issues in Physical Education. Both modules are delivered in a manner in which theory is linked to practice through offering the opportunity to address inequality in sports provision in the community and in schools. Students put theory into practice via group projects in a variety of community and school settings, with the stated aim of reducing inequality in a sporting context. Contexts are defined in collaboration with a variety of partner organisations and individuals, including sports development officers, teachers, club officials, coaches, and strategic partners at sports governance level (such as the county sports partnership). Projects are designed to encourage students to implement sustainable projects that contribute significantly to the remit of these organisations and individuals.

The School of Sport & Exercise Science has been collaborating and benefitting the local community within the context of the Applied Principles of Teaching & Coaching module.

With mutual agreement with local schools, clubs and teams, small groups of students fulfil their placements gaining valuable experience, which is excellent for their degree as well as their CV. Under the supervision of the community coach or PE teacher, they deliver physical education classes during school hours or extra curricula clubs. Students always say they enjoy their experience and in many occasions volunteer to work for another six weeks.

Great Britain Junior Kayakers Peter Quittendon and Lizzie Gray have been visiting the Human Performance Centre three times a week for strength and conditioning sessions led by Dr Tom Gee, as they prepare for a busy summer season of national and international racing.

In addition, Dr Tom Gee and Dan Bishop (Strength and Conditioning), Dr Christian Swann (Sports Psychology) and Geoff Middleton (Sports Nutrition) have been closely working with nine University of Lincoln student athletes who were awarded specialist sport bursaries for the current academic year. Students within the School have been given the opportunity to work alongside the staff during athlete support work, and in doing so have obtained relevant applied experience to assist their development as future practitioners.

The School recently welcomed back two of its graduates to talk about their involvement with sports initiatives in local communities.

Leanne Woodhead (pictured), a graduate of the BSc (Hons) Sport and Exercise Science course, is a Football Development Officer with Lincolnshire FA, where she has particular responsibilities for equality and inclusion across the county. In this role she has developed new disability and girls’ football programmes. Fiona Houghton, a graduate from the BSc (Hons) Sport Development and Coaching course, is Club and Coach Development Officer at Newark and Sherwood District Council. Her current projects include organising Newark Parkrun and managing the Council’s Sportivate programme.

Canoeing at Home and Away

Community within the Curriculum

Working with Athletes

Alumni Working in the Community