

**27<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

### **Tillery Valley Appoints Apprentice: A First for Food Firm**

Gwent-based, national meal provider to the healthcare, education and local authority sector, Tillery Valley, has taken on its first apprentice in a new three year scheme in conjunction with Coleg Gwent.

Matthew Sweet, from Aberdare, joined the Tillery Valley team on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011 as an engineering apprentice at the company's advanced food production plant in Abertillery, South Wales. As the largest private employer in Abertillery, the three year scheme was set up by Tillery Valley to encourage young people to look to the Welsh Valleys for future career opportunities and training.

For the first year of his apprenticeship, the seventeen-year-old trainee will begin studying a full-time Performing Engineering Operations Level 2 Foundation Apprenticeship course at Coleg Gwent's Crosskeys Campus. Matthew will then go on to undertake a Level 3 Maintenance Diploma whilst working on site for four days a week at Tillery Valley. On completing the course, Matthew will receive a guaranteed full time position within the food firm's engineering team.

Phil Hall, Site Director, Tillery Valley says:

"Having previously achieved Investors in People status, we pride ourselves on the training and support provided to our 350 employees here in Abertillery. We hope our new apprenticeship scheme will see many young people succeed within the business over the coming years and wish Matthew every success in both his study at Coleg Gwent and on-the-job learning at Tillery Valley."

Coleg Gwent Work Based Learning Manager Victoria King says:

"We are grateful to Phil and his team for enlisting Matthew on the company's new Apprenticeship scheme and hope many more of our students will benefit from this great opportunity in the future.

She continues:

“In this economic climate, we need more successful companies in Wales, like Tillery Valley, to provide the opportunities our students need to secure full-time employment.”

Matthew Sweet, engineering apprentice at Tillery Valley says:

“I am very much looking forward to the opportunity to work with Tillery Valley whilst studying towards my Engineering Diploma and really hope I succeed within the scheme in order to gain full-time employment.”