



**MCAST**

Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology

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# MCAST LINK

Issue 51 // SPECIAL EDITION 2019

# SUCCESS

Graduation Ceremonies 2019

# STORIES



PROFESSOR

**Joachim James  
Calleja**

Message from the Principal and CEO

## Success Breeds Success

**With** such a plethora of success stories we can look at the future of our country with optimism.

Students who have achieved their qualification at MCAST are on their way to a successful career. This implies that vocational education and training is an established sector in our system of learning which really and truly provides the knowledge, skills and competence needed to be employable, entrepreneurial and successful.

This publication bears evidence to the fact that there is only one kind of education: quality education which is applied in an employment context and personal enrichment.

MCAST today is proud to implement a strategy for its students and staff members which aims at attracting and retaining more learners in a lifelong learning process. This is due to the fact that no one can afford to do away with education and training in today's ever-changing labour market and that of tomorrow. Knowledge proliferation, technology and innovation are determining our way of life and to a large extent compromising our own survival. We can never stop learning!

For this purpose, the stories that our former and ongoing students have agreed to share are meant to illustrate that learning at MCAST is an enriching experience that brings one in touch with the world of work.

Vocational education has reinvented itself over these last twenty years. The changing role of this sector has had a very positive impact on employment not only in Malta but in many other countries that were wise enough to invest seriously in this approach to learning. The testimonials in this booklet as well as the large developments that MCAST is currently undertaking augur well for the future of this institution.

As Principal and CEO of this remarkable College, I encourage parents and young people to tap on our web portal and discover more about the over 189 and over 300 full-time and part-time courses respectively that the College offers. Our dedicated staff members will certainly go out of their way to support your interest in your learning experience. Obtaining a qualification from MCAST is the start of a lifelong learning journey that will surely open many opportunities for employment and a better quality of life. Through our work-based learning approach (including apprenticeships at degree level) we are moving towards industry-driven qualifications and community-based curricula at a fast pace.

Valued learning is that which is applied in our lives consistently. The stories in this publication illustrate that the relationship between MCAST and the student is much more than a formal learning experience; it is about applying a competence to a working environment.

We want our students to make an impact in other people's lives and on our country. Hence, I am very proud to share with you these work experiences of our former and ongoing students and hope that with these testimonials more learners continue to make MCAST their first choice on leaving secondary education and returning to the College for their lifelong learning experiences.

Success breeds success! Mia Hamm believes that achievement is no accident but the result of hard work, perseverance and love of what you are doing and learning to do! At MCAST our mission is to continue providing learning experiences that produce high calibre workers, as illustrated in this special edition of MCASTlink.

# KEITH DEMICOLI

## Journalist

In summer of 2001, I vividly remember receiving my highly anticipated Matriculation Certificate results. Since childhood I was told that they will shape my future and determine where I will spend around 90,000 working hours during my lifetime. They weren't wholly correct. Following unfortunate family and health issues, I failed to obtain the desired results to pursue my dream of becoming a qualified and professional broadcast journalist after successfully completing a related Bachelors Degree course at the University of Malta. Instead of throwing in the towel and abandon my educational journey, I considered other available options. In 2003, I graduated from MCAST as an IT specialist!

Academic results were not the only reason contributing to this sudden and dramatic change in the course of events. A glossy publication of a newly launched educational and vocational institution printed on shiny high-quality paper full of colour photographs changed this path altogether. During a summer full of darkness, the glossy MCAST Prospectus was the precious light I desperately needed to defeat that darkness.

Although I was always interested in pursuing a career in the media industry, I soon realised that Information Technology will be the main driver of transformation in all industries including the media sector. Notwithstanding my poor understanding and technical knowledge of such a highly dynamic sector, I enrolled for the Diploma in ICT at the Institute of Information and Communication Technology. In 2003, I was one of the very first MCAST graduates and prior to the graduation ceremony I landed a highly-paid job in the private sector which however I refused as in parallel I was unexpectedly offered a dream job opportunity, notwithstanding with half the pay, as broadcasting journalist. Notwithstanding

my unrelated academic background at MCAST, my media employer strongly believed that I was equipped with the right skills for the unrelated job.

I had chosen MCAST hoping it will help me obtain the right skills for the jobs of the future. Unknowingly, it has shaped my personality, work ethic and developed the social skills and competences which with hindsight are equally important to brave the challenging demands of the highly competitive industry.

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# MARLON GRECH

## Founder at Thynk Software Ltd

I was one of the first students at the MCAST Gozo Campus way back in 2002. I completed a two-year Level 4 programme in Software Development and was one of the first students to benefit from a Leonardo da Vinci work placement in Dublin, Ireland. I am proud to say that MCAST paved the way to my brilliant career.

After a three-year working spell as a .NET expert at Uniblue Malta, I moved to Infusion, hopping between Malta and the UK, team-leading projects based out of London and Dubai. I was also involved with the Microsoft team when they first started building Windows Presentation Foundation. From there I started blogging on the technology and became a Microsoft Most Valued Professional (MVP) and an active member in the online technology community. I worked with various clients consulting on applications ranging from FX Trading platforms to large-scale government documents systems.

Six years later, with ample experience in product development, software consultancy and a vast network of technical people in the field, I decided to return to Malta where I founded Thynk Software. The venture started as a one-man operation, but quickly grew to a 25+ team with offices in Malta, New York and Dubai.

My team and I are driven by a passion to build products that aid users' everyday lives and solve problems. Thynk adopted a hybrid approach by offering in-house built off-the-shelf products while also providing additional development services to customize such product implementations depending on the business needs.

In the last five years, my team and I have won a number of prestigious awards including the Trade Malta High Potential Award, Gozo Best Start-up Company, Gozo's Best Young Entrepreneur of the Year and Gozo Best Digital / ICT Company of the Year.





# thynk

Software

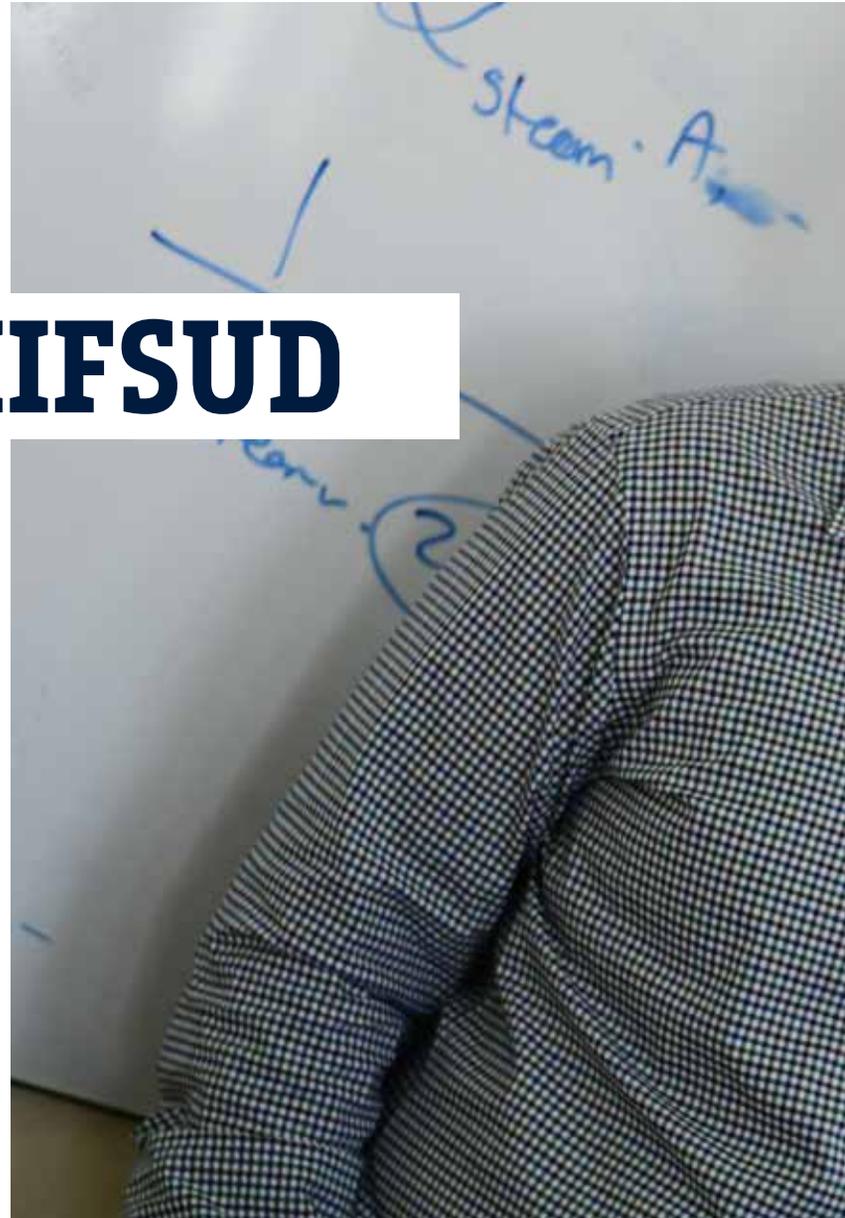
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# Dr Ing. DARREN MIFSUD

Senior Lecturer and  
Researcher at MCAST  
and Visiting Researcher  
and Technologist at  
Cranfield University UK

I am an engineer with a doctorate in Fluid Mechanics and Multiphase Flow Systems from Cranfield University. I earned a B.Eng (Hons) degree in Mechanical Engineering (Plant) from the MCAST University College, a M.Sc in Process Systems Engineering from Cranfield University, and a doctorate (Ph.D) in Fluid Mechanics and Multiphase Flow Systems from Cranfield University. During my term in the UK, I had the opportunity to gain work experience in strategic oil and gas consultancy and energy production companies, such as British Petroleum (BP) and Petrofac.

During the time studying at MCAST, I was awarded a highly commended certificate by the international awarding body Edexcel London, recognising the first Maltese MCAST student who obtained distinctive results in this course leading to the MCAST-BTEC Higher National Diploma in Mechanical Engineering. Later, I was also awarded a certificate of recognition by the Minister of the Economy and Small Business for contributing ideas leading to the best business plan and the strongest entrepreneurial skills. On completing the degree course, I was awarded the best B.Eng (Hons) overall student in the Mechanical Engineering



(Plant) course – MCAST Institute of Mechanical Engineering 2010/2014.

My doctoral work comprised a multitude of research topics, mainly specialising in the development of Multiphase Surface Jet Pump Technology (SJP), particularly for applications in the oil and gas sectors. My work explored novel conceptual design ideas and performed testing and validation via a series of dedicated computational fluid dynamics softwares, numerical methods and lab-based experimental work. My findings contributed knowledge to phenomena attributed to the performance degradation of multiphase surface jet pumps (SJPs) when operated under transient multiphase flow conditions.



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**Author of publications that are published in well regarded international engineering-related journals.**

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Currently, besides my workload at MCAST, namely that of lecturing several core engineering subjects in the MCAST Level 6 engineering degree programmes, I am also working on driving my patented technology onto a new level, particularly by validating the benefits of applicability of the multiphase SJP technology for applications which are either novel in their scope of use and/or installation location.

I am the author of publications that are published in well regarded international engineering-related journals. I am also an active member of the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE), an Associate Member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers (AMIMEche), and a professional member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME).

The background of the top half of the page is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the Aurobindo logo and name. The logo consists of three overlapping curved lines in teal, blue, and grey. Below the logo, the word 'AUROBINDO' is written in a large, blue, serif font, slanted upwards from left to right.

# INA GHERGEL

Planning Manager  
at Aurobindo

I started my studies in Applied Science with MCAST seven years ago when I moved to Malta from Romania. I had to face the problems of not knowing the language well or how the education system worked. Everything was different from my country, however I was very motivated to study and succeed.

My lecturers and my colleagues helped me a lot. They offered me all the necessary support and showed a lot of patience. The focus was not only on teaching, but also on the students' learning process. My goal then was to graduate and find a job. The course I chose offered me the opportunity to become an apprentice at Aurobindo, which gave me an opportunity to gain more knowledge and insight into the pharmaceutical field. I was exposed to modern techniques and industry practices. I also had

a chance to gain more experience in an area of work that attracted me. Finally, upon successfully completing this programme, I was employed at Aurobindo.

I worked as a Quality Control Reviewer and a Laboratory Analyst. I was then promoted to Quality Control Team Leader at the Chemistry Laboratory. I had to assist the QC Manager in the shift management process. I also monitored ongoing analysis of shift members and ensured that the work plans were completed.

My next career move was to the Planning Department where I currently am. As a Planner I had to coordinate and plan the workflow according to manpower and equipment needed for testing. I had to ensure that goods were tested on time in a cost-efficient manner by constantly collaborating with quality control, warehouse and other



staff members. My main focus was to address issues as soon as they arose, aiming for minimum disruption and ensuring the smooth flow of operations. In April of this year, I was promoted to Planning Manager, and I now head the department, an achievement that I am very proud of.

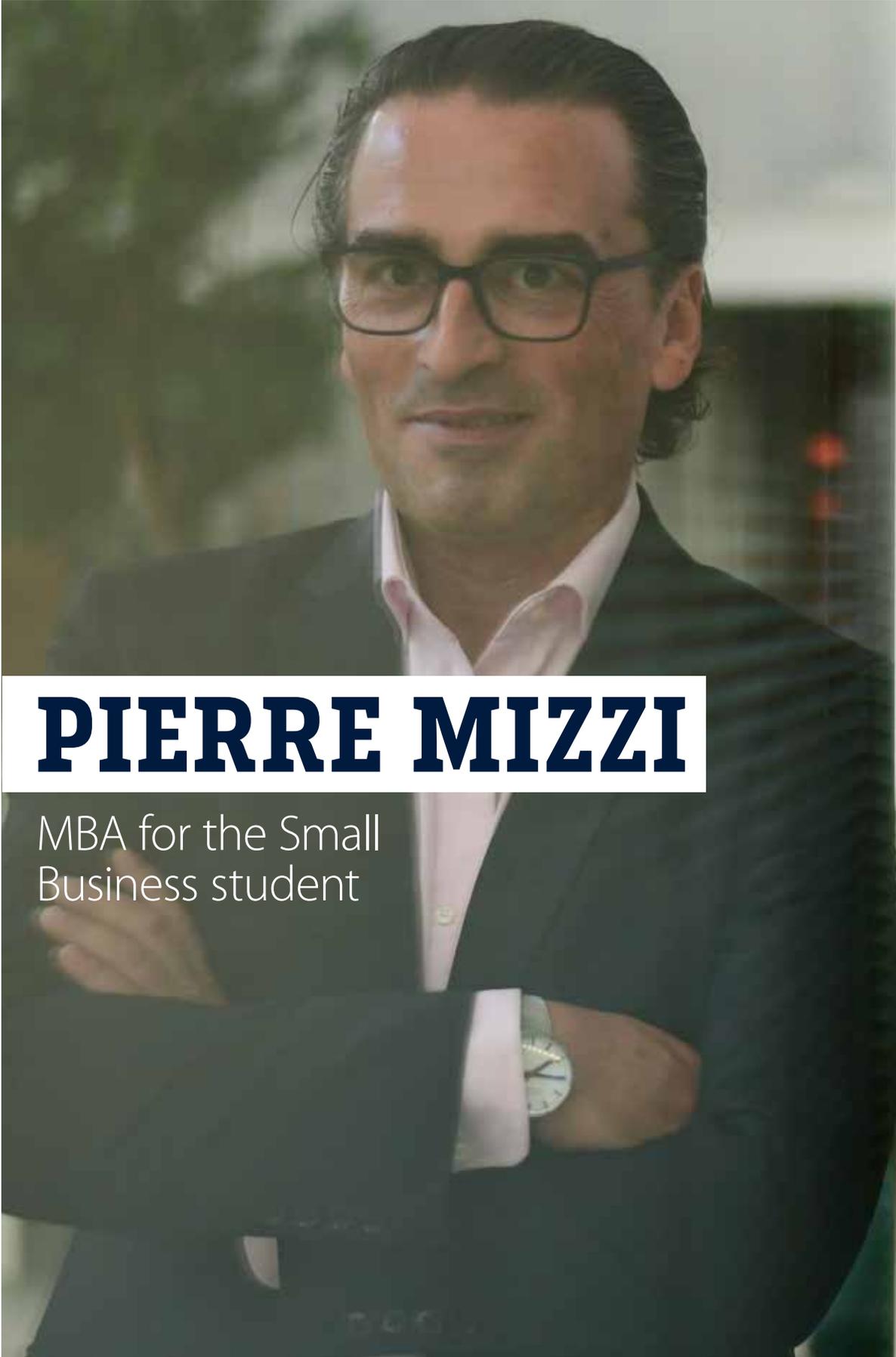
MCAST was an important step in my career, as it led me to develop myself and to implement the knowledge I learned. I plan on continuing my education as well as remain working throughout the next few years, as I endeavour to pursue my Master's Degree. In this way, I will be able to achieve my childhood dream of becoming a qualified professional in my area of study.

I am proud of my work at Aurobindo, and I look forward to continue my personal and professional journey with this company.

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**MCAST was an important step in my career, as it led me to this career, to develop myself and to implement the knowledge I learned.**

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A portrait of Pierre Mizzi, a man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored shirt. He is standing in front of a window with blinds, looking slightly to the right. The background is blurred, showing some greenery and a building.

# PIERRE MIZZI

MBA for the Small  
Business student



I am currently reading for the MBA for the Small Business at MCAST. At the beginning of my career I did not have any opportunities to pursue my studies further, so I learned through experience. Although I read many self-help books and attended various short courses to improve my skills, pursuing an MBA was an ambition that I had for many years. MCAST's MBA for the Small Business offered me the possibility of fulfilling this aspiration as I saw that, with some effort, I could fit the lectures and coursework in my very busy work schedule.

The modules are very well co-ordinated in a very logical sequence to cover the most important elements of business management without excessive theoretical work that may be less relevant in the day-to-day scenarios of an SME. I often managed to apply the research into my work sphere so that while I was working on my coursework, I was also directly improving my productivity in my own business.

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## The impact on my entrepreneurship activities of the MBA modules covered in the programme, has been tremendous.

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The impact on my entrepreneurship activities, of the MBA modules covered in the programme, has been tremendous as I could immediately apply the knowledge and experience gained. I am aware that in the future I shall continue to reap the benefits from this programme. In many ways, I can state that this specific MCAST MBA programme focusing on the Small Business has exceeded my expectations.



# ARNOLD SCIBERRAS

Founder of The Exterminator  
Pest Control, the Animal  
Kingdom Veterinary Clinic,  
the Pied Piper Rat Farm



**When** I first joined the MCAST Agribusiness Institute in 2002/2003 I did not get much encouragement since the agricultural industry was in decline at that time. Yet I always knew that I can only study what I love despite others telling me that I had much more potential to study more 'serious' careers. I always knew that I could achieve my dreams if I continued to pursue my studies. At the same time MCAST started the quarterly College magazine entitled MCASTlink and it was one of my first opportunities to contribute with my writings, thus representing my Institute.

At MCAST I was provided with opportunities to do serious conservation projects such as bringing back the Maltese rock dove, exhibiting my first entomological collections to the public as well as collaborating with foreign universities on several ecological projects. In 2005 I won the Young Scientist 2005 and represented Malta for the conservation of a particular population of lizard.

I was also exposed to the local media where I had opportunities to speak about my academic work during my years of study at MCAST. My articles on the Maltese

Landraces also started at the Institute. I was also introduced to pesticides and agricultural pests, which later on became my main career. I owe all these accomplishments to a wonderful group of lecturers that not only are my friends today, but mentors that I still look up to.

After graduating in 2006 I pursued Agribusiness at the University of Malta. I ended up doing entomological reports (the study of insects) with a local pest control company and thanks to the latter I learned a lot.

I pursued my studies at Warwick University UK and after spending more than a decade in the industry I opened my own company named The Exterminator. During the course we were exposed to veterinary medicine and practice which in 2016 led me to the opening of a veterinary hospital called Animal Kingdom. The course provided insight into horticulture and, together with my brother who is a botanist, we work on several projects within private gardens. The most interesting of all is my Rat Farm named the Pied Piper which is the largest on the island and a first of its kind. This initiative started during my term at MCAST which exposed us to all the situations in agriculture and I really got interested in this pest species and its effect on wildlife. In 2013 I had to

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At MCAST I was provided with opportunities to do serious conservation projects such as bringing back the Maltese rock dove.

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develop a breeding system of rodents for a private zoo which led to the demand of these domestic rats in several sectors including the consumption, pet trade and cinematic industry. I am still not done and my final aim is to give back to nature what it has given to me. So, an insect park is in the pipeline to promote insects' diversity, their importance and educate the public, in this regard.

# LARKIN BONNICI

Compliance Officer at the Public Service Commission; Human Resources Management Lecturer; Fitness Trainer and President of Fgura United Football Club

I can still clearly remember my secondary school days, precisely when we had a career information session delivered by a MCAST representative. I knew straight away that MCAST was the right choice for me. Over the span of five years (2009/2014), I successfully completed the National Diploma in Business Statistics, the Higher National Diploma in Business Studies and the Bachelor of Honours in Business Enterprise. While I studied on a full-time basis at the MCAST Institute of Business and Commerce, I also carried out various jobs on a part-time basis and attended evening classes at MCAST, on topics related to sports, health and well-being.

With pride I can say that these five years at MCAST were very challenging, but also extremely rewarding. They were fruitful not only because they introduced me to new and interesting management modules and concepts, but most importantly because they instilled in me values of commitment, perseverance, time management and above all, a positive 'can-do' attitude. The assignments, group discussions, presentations, work placements/experiences, exams, research projects and the dissertation were all relevant to real-life business situations. At the end of my studies, MCAST had prepared me with the required skills needed to join the labour market.

I started my career at the Central Procurement and Supplies Unit of the Ministry for Health, the largest procurement government entity in Malta. I formed part of a working team that procured various medicines and medical equipment, often within very tight

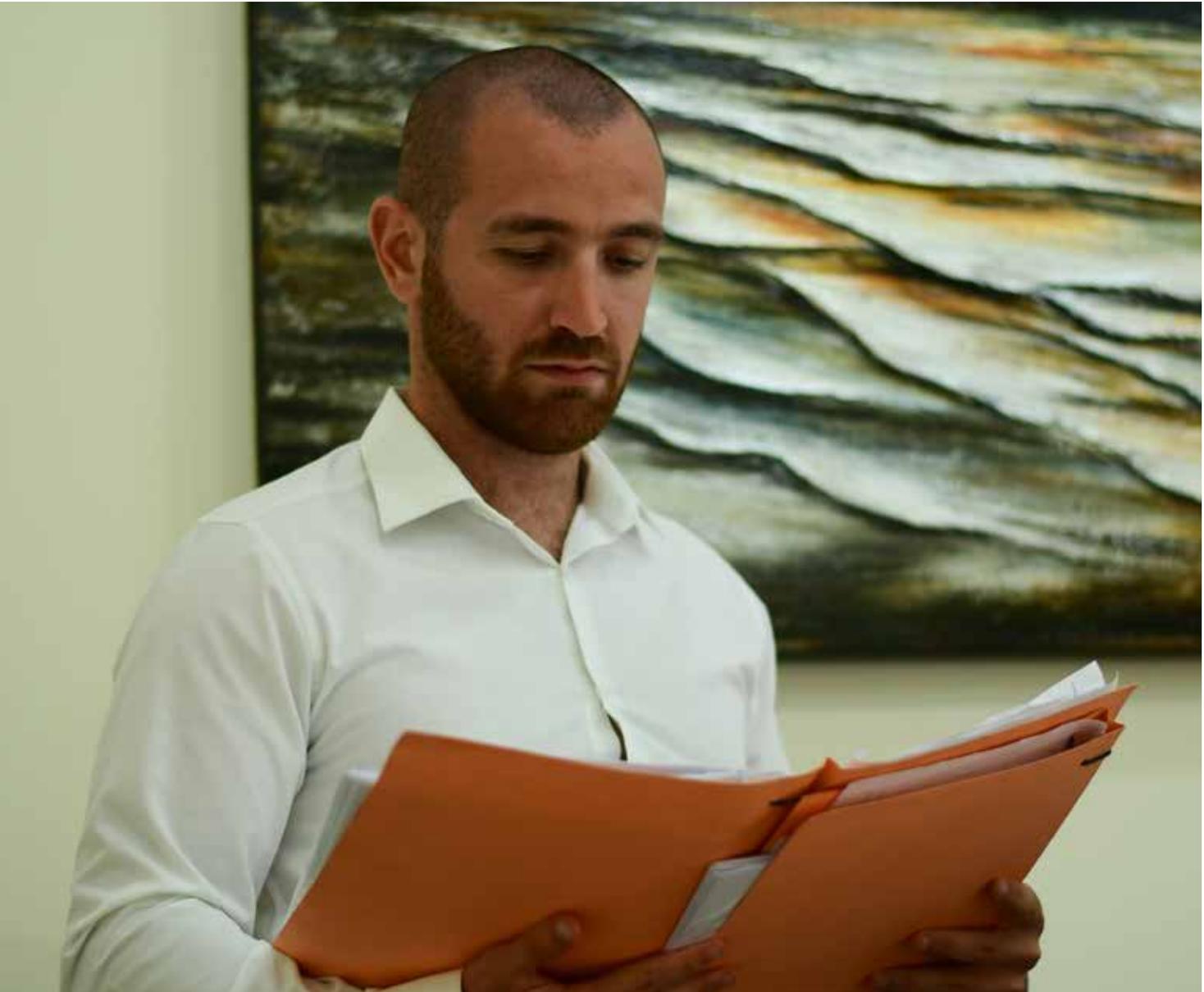
deadlines, as is expected in a hospital environment. The pressing deadlines of assignments that I was used to while studying at MCAST helped me manage these situations effectively.

Following that, I served as a Projects Officer within the Ministry for Tourism. My role was to secure funds for EU-funded projects aimed at creating awareness of Maltese secondary destinations and 'hidden gems'. Study modules related to marketing, project management, strategy and entrepreneurship definitely played an important role in helping me succeed in this role.

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For the past two years I have worked as a Compliance Officer within the Public Service Commission, one of the most esteemed offices within the Public Service. I form part of a team that monitors recruitment and selection processes within the Public Service. My days at MCAST helped me to improve my Business English, report writing and interpretation of laws and regulations, all skills necessary to perform well in my current role.

I am also a freelance Human Resource Management lecturer and a freelance Fitness Trainer at the Inspire Fitness Centre. Such opportunities were made possible thanks to the skills and certificates that I obtained at MCAST in both my full-time and part-time studies.

I am now proud to be the President of Fgura

United FC, a sports organisation that employs over 50 employees and hosts over 230 kids and young adults. My job is to face and subsequently defeat all challenges and obstacles that hinder the survival and growth of our club, which to date is a leading football school in the region. I became a volunteer at the club in June 2014, following my dissertation that revolved around the social investment of Maltese football clubs in their youth development.

MCAST surely contributed to my personal and professional development which enabled me to be exposed to all this. I wish to take this opportunity to thank all the lecturers and administrators that made 'my MCAST days' so very memorable.



# KARL SCIORTINO

Football coach



I started my first coaching experience with Tarxien Rainbows Youth Nursery as part of my coaching placement during the course of my studies at MCAST. After that, I joined Qormi FC for five years, training young athletes to further develop their skills at the nursery.

After completing my MCAST Extended Diploma, I pursued my studies by setting up a programme called DAPmalta (Developing Athletes' Performance). This programme is a spin-off initiative that started as a College programme during my course in Sports and Fitness, together with other professionals in the field. I decided to launch the programme locally, and it is now in its sixth year of operation. Over the years, the programme grew and started to offer classes on a 'one-to-one' basis. These included rehabilitation, private classes to sports teams and fitness testing.

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## My ambition is to join a foreign team and to coach athletes on an international level.

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This programme brought me closer to premier league players like Jonathan Caruana, Samir Arab, Ryan Fenech, Matthew Tabone and national team futsal player Melvin Borg, to mention a few who trained for months under my supervision.

When I was 18 years old, I joined Valletta Futsal as their Physical Trainer and spent four seasons with the team. During my time with the futsal team, they won the League twice; the Super Cup; and then passed through the main round to the Champions League.

The following year I was called to join Mqabba FC as their Physical Trainer and worked closely with their former coach and mentor Clive Mizzi. I then moved to join Malta's top tier football club - Qormi FC, and I finished off the season 2018/2019 with the club. Today, I am with the current league champions Valletta FC on a two-year contract as their Physical Trainer.

I was always keen on sports and when I finished secondary school, MCAST actually gave me the opportunity to further my studies in the field I always dreamt of. The hands-on experience and the knowledge that I learned from my tutors at MCAST, is something that I shall carry with me and cherish all my life.

My ambition is to join a foreign team and to coach athletes on an international level.

# RAISA SCICLUNA

## Early Years Educator

**At** the age of twenty-three years I felt the need for a career change as I was not feeling fulfilled with my job. I had an interest in the early years' education sector and a friend of mine encouraged me to apply for a MCAST course. The Open Day organized by MCAST was a good opportunity for me to understand which course interested me and the requirements needed to enrol as a mature student.

The Higher National Diploma in Early Years was the perfect course for me and once completed this led me to my career. The thing I liked most about MCAST was the sense of community and the fact that lecturers were always there to offer support and guidance. Their critical feedback throughout the programme enabled me to progress, learn new skills and also contributed to my personal and professional development.

The Higher National Diploma in Early Years helped me to understand children's development and behaviour. I learned about children's rights, how to teach through play, and also the importance of parental involvement. Apart from various other study units, this course exposed me to hands-on practice with young children and with other early years professionals.

MCAST has helped me gain the necessary qualifications and experience and led me to increase my confidence as well as to improve my leadership skills. At the end of the two-year full-time programme I was immediately employed as a manager at a well-established childcare centre.

I am now employed as a kindergarten educator at St. Nicholas College, Rabat Primary School A, where I focus on motivating and stimulating the children's learning abilities, often encouraging learning through

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play. As a kindergarten educator I support the children in their holistic development and help them reach their full potential.

The programme at MCAST was the best learning experience in my life. It opened new doors in my career and empowered me to succeed. I would recommend this Early Years course to those that are interested in the early years sector and have a passion to work with children.



# MARK PHILIP CAMILLERI GAMBIN

Technical Director, Preeo Software

I started my studies in software engineering at MCAST. I read for a National Diploma in Computing, followed by a Higher National Diploma and graduated with a BSc. in Software Engineering. During my years at MCAST I made sure to get some industry exposure as a junior web developer and eventually joined Konnekt. I also partnered with two classmates to start a software company which is called Preeo Software.

Along the years I had the opportunity to experience working in the UK as a front-end team leader with RentalCars and occupied the role of interim CTO at FitnessGenes - a science and genetics company with whom Preeo still works very closely. During my time in the UK, I read for and graduated with a Master's Degree in Advanced Computer Science.

Ten years later Preeo is still going strong. This year Preeo launched Talexio, a complete HR software suite with machine learning components. Preeo continues to provide bespoke software solutions and mobile development services to various clients including Konnekt, Maltatoday, Business Leaders Malta, IzolaBank and JobsInMalta.

Preeo employs five MCAST alumni in a team of ten. The team works with various technologies and keeps up with new technologies. We are currently building full-stack javascript and typescript solutions using ReactJS and GraphQL. Besides the passion for technology, at the core of Preeo is a genuine desire to leave a positive impact with useful and effective software.



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# AMADEO AQUILINA

IT Systems  
Administrator at  
Aurobindo

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I am grateful for  
the countless  
opportunities to  
learn and progress.  
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**Back** in 2016, I was selected as one of the few students to be part of a Student Placement Program, between MCAST and companies within industry, and that is where my journey with Aurobindo started.

Even though I was a student, Aurobindo treated me just like any other employee, making sure that I was assigned tasks that would be beneficial for my career growth in the IT industry, helping me bridge the gap between school and the workplace, as well as allowing me to be part of the company's progression.

After the placement programme was finished, I stayed at Aurobindo as a student within the internal IT Department, where I continued to undertake tasks that were primarily focused on the material I had covered in my course at MCAST. The topics covered during my studies were very relevant, and helped me understand what was expected of me by Aurobindo. I was also able to apply the knowledge acquired and execute the required tasks in a highly professional and controlled manner.

I continued my final year of studies at MCAST, where I successfully achieved my BSc in Computer Networks. Once I graduated, I was offered a full-time position as one of the company's IT Systems Administrators.

I am grateful for the countless opportunities to learn and progress, both at MCAST and at Aurobindo.

# MATTHEW DIMECH

## Veterinary Nurse

I started my studies at the MCAST Institute of Agribusiness (now MCAST's Centre for Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Sciences) in 2007 reading for a two-year Advanced Diploma in Agriculture. Following this, I progressed to the Higher Diploma in Animal Management, which I successfully completed in 2011. During these years I acquired the knowledge and experience - through lectures and hands-on practice - to allow me to work in the animal care sector.

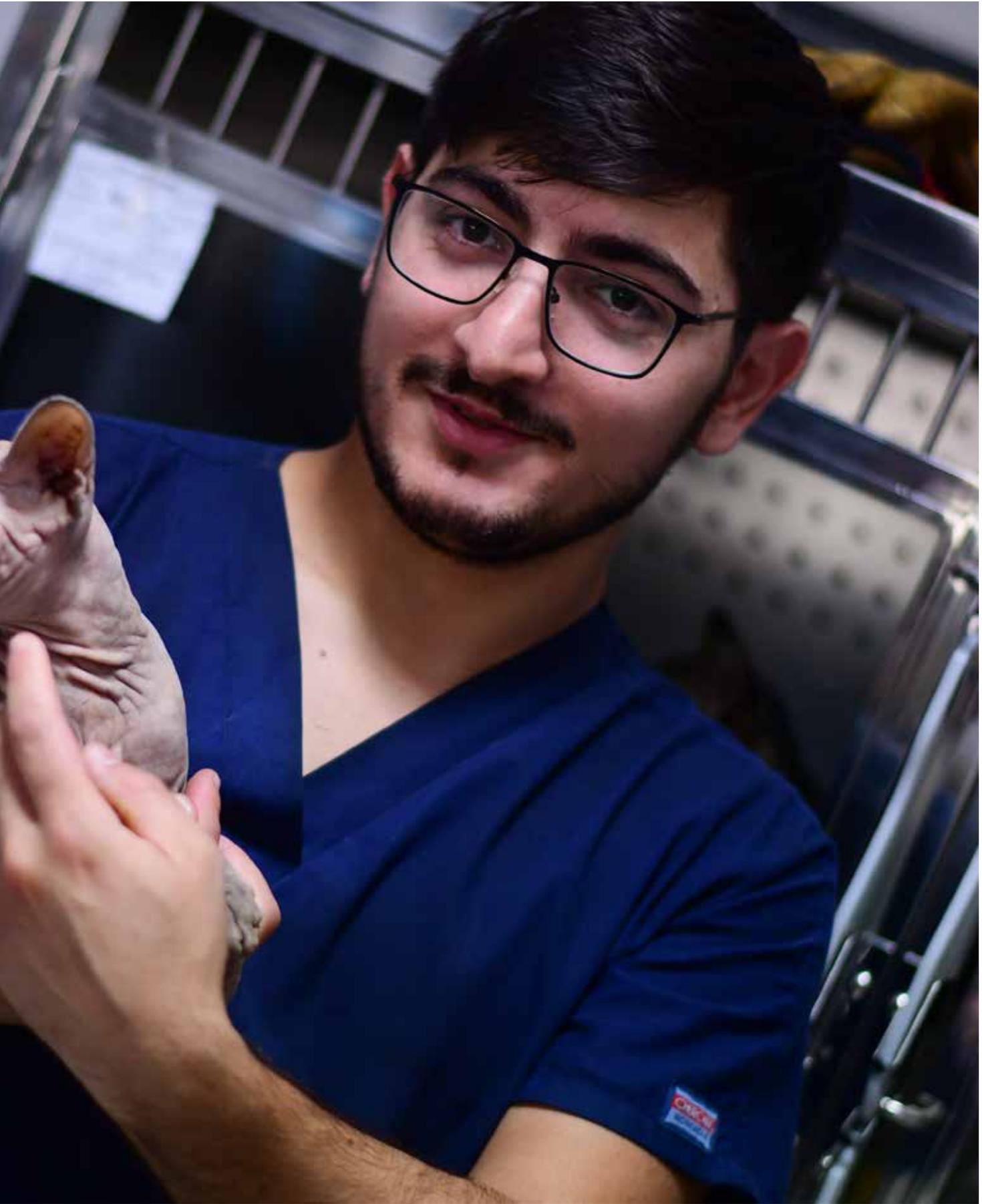
It was during the time studying for my Higher Diploma that I also got my first experience working in this sector as a veterinary nurse at Ċentru San Franġisk in Ta' Qali as part of the industry experience required for the completion of the course. I remained at this job until 2015, at which time I was offered the opportunity to work in a privately owned clinic in Naxxar, a job that I still hold today.

During these past four years, I have gained even more experience and have since been promoted to Head Nurse, with my tasks expanding to include, among other things, the education of clients regarding the health of their pets, as well as training of new staff and students completing their on-the-job experience. In addition to working in clinics, I have also had the opportunity to work as a part-time lecturer in Animal Care and Nursing at the Youth.inc programme run by Aġenzija Żgħażaġh as well as at MCAST.

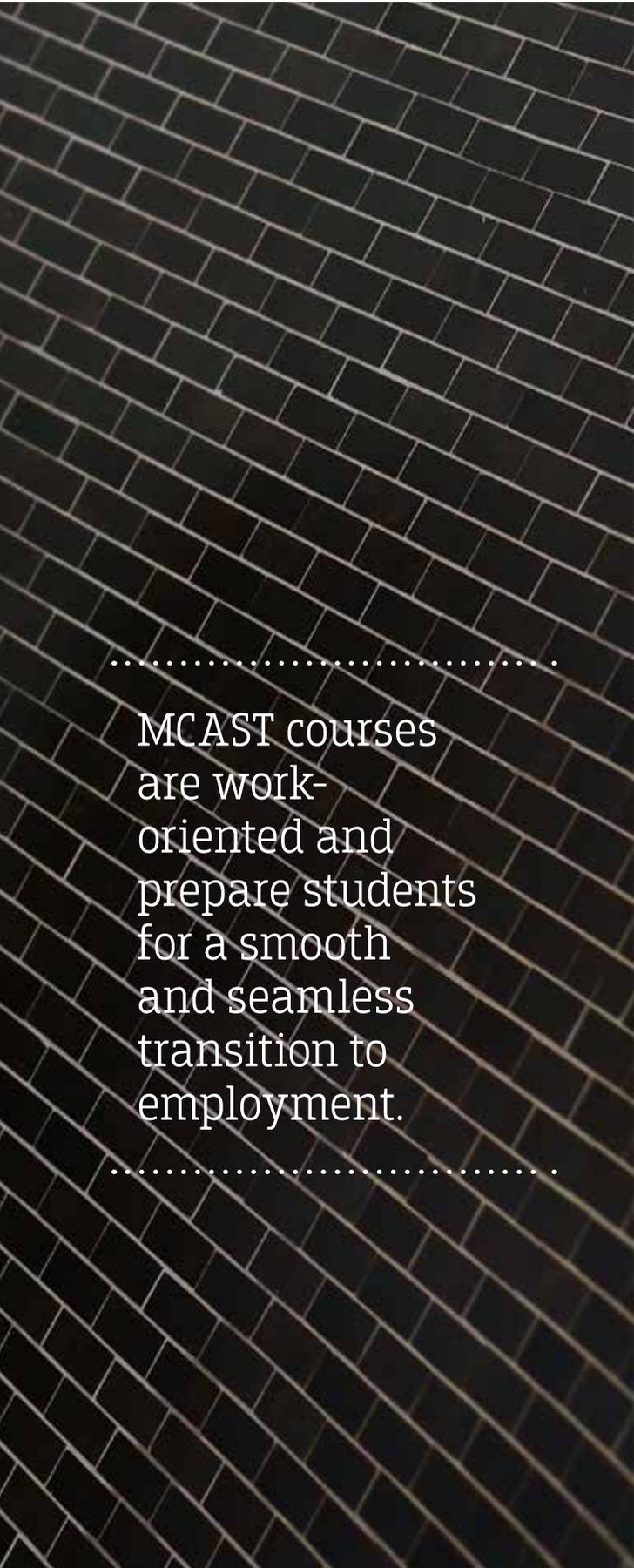
I would suggest this career to anyone who has a genuine love for the care and well-being of animals. With a little motivation and a lot of hard work, I believe that a career in Animal Care and Nursing can be very rewarding. MCAST's Centre for Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Sciences provides the perfect route for such a rewarding career.

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I acquired the knowledge and experience – through lectures and hands-on practice.  
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MCAST courses  
are work-  
oriented and  
prepare students  
for a smooth  
and seamless  
transition to  
employment.

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# CAROLINE APAP

Senior Officer  
at APS Bank plc

I have always aspired to work in the banking and financial services industry as it offers exciting and challenging career opportunities. When I was still a Form 5 student I attended the MCAST Open Day which provided an insight into a variety of interesting courses. I was determined that I wanted to pursue a vocational path and my choice was between financial services and accounting. My career aspirations eventually led me to enrol in the Diploma in Banking and Financial Services. This was the foundation to my career.

I feel that studying at MCAST is greatly beneficial when compared to other institutions since the MCAST courses are work-oriented and prepare students for a smooth and seamless transition to employment. I remember my first work placement, which was a mandatory component of my studies, in a local commercial bank. This work placement not only gave me the opportunity to put into practice what I had learned, but also served as a stepping stone to my full-time employment.

On finishing my studies at MCAST I joined APS Bank as a clerk and since then I have occupied both front office and back office positions, gaining experience in different banking department operations. The experience gained together with my performance and commitment enabled me to advance in my career. I was eventually promoted to the position of a Senior Officer within the Commercial Business Unit at APS Bank plc. and I aspire to advancing to positions of higher responsibility in the sector in the coming years.

# IMAN BUSUTTIL

Scientific Officer at  
MESDC (DFA)

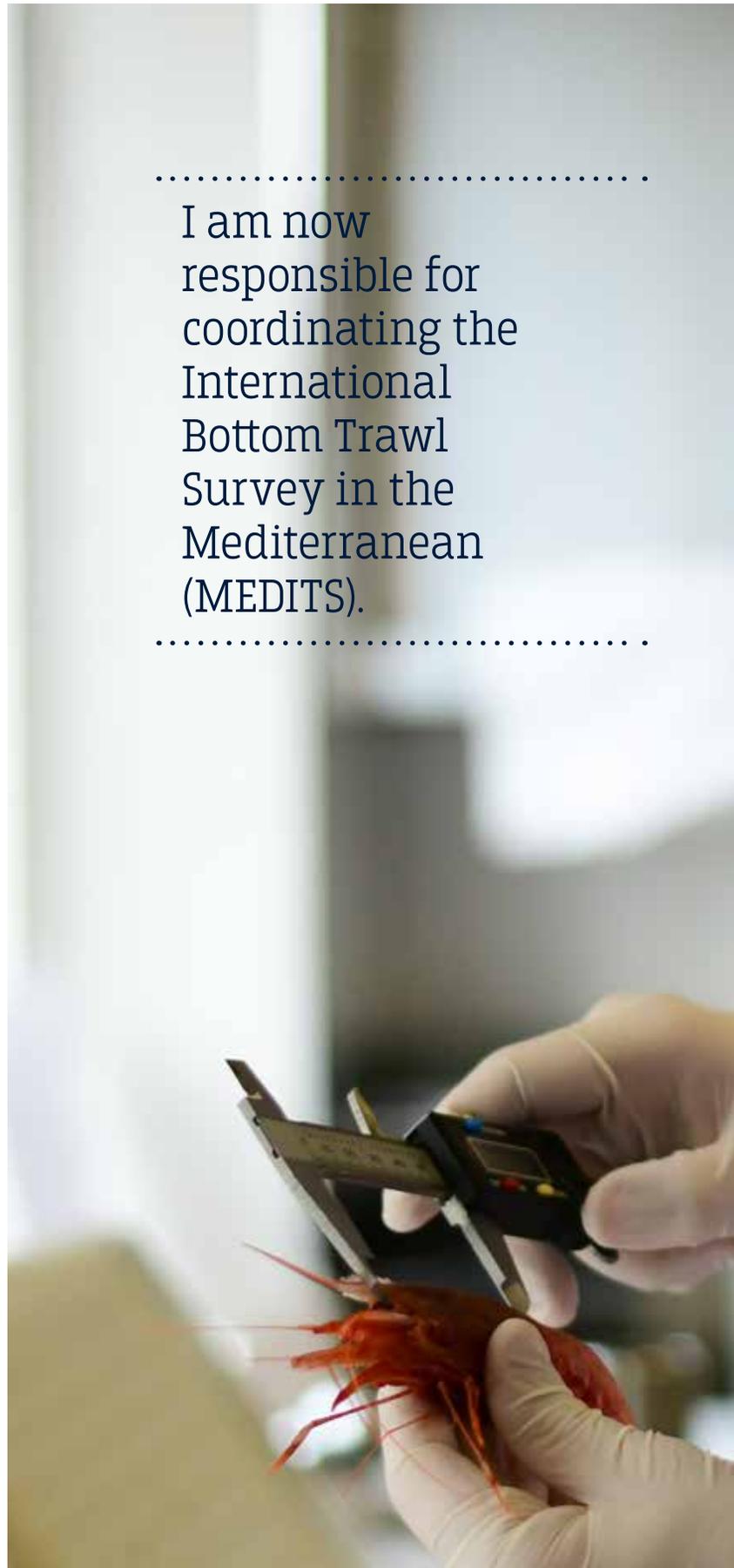
**My** passion for fish and fishing led me to enrol in the MCAST Diploma in Fish Husbandry course. In 2017, after successful completion of the diploma, I read for the Bachelor's Degree (Hons) in Fish Management. Once I finished my studies I was employed as a Scientific Officer at the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture (DFA) within the Ministry for the Environment, Sustainable Development and Climate Change (MESDC).

Working as a Scientific Officer at MESDC (DFA) was challenging, yet I felt very well prepared due to the skills and knowledge I acquired during my studies and work placement programmes at MCAST.

I am now responsible for coordinating the International Bottom Trawl Survey in the Mediterranean (MEDITS) to obtain independent knowledge useful for fisheries management. I also coordinate the project BYTHOS which aims to develop bio-active molecule (BAM)-based antibacterial/antimicrobial/anti-tumour products from fish waste.

My experience in fishing, my keen interest in aquaculture, my strong network of stakeholders that I have built over the years, together with the competences gained through my studies at MCAST, have given me a holistic and complete set of tools to be able to work aptly in this sector.

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I am now  
responsible for  
coordinating the  
International  
Bottom Trawl  
Survey in the  
Mediterranean  
(MEDITS).  
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# LEANDER SCHEMBRI

Graphic Designer at St John's Co-Cathedral





**After** completing my studies at the MCAST Institute for the Creative Arts I started off my career as a Graphic Designer at a printing company called Emotion Sign Works.

In April 2017 I moved on and found employment at Malta Dairy Products (Benna) as a Graphic Designer. I consider this one of my greatest achievements so far as there I created the new rebranding for the Benna products. These products are found in 90% of Maltese households and, needless to say, having my portfolio in people's fridges gives me great pride! Working for Benna gave me a great boost in my career and has opened me for endless opportunities.

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## Having my portfolio in people's fridges gives me great pride!

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After Benna I decided to move on and I am currently employed at St John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta as a Designer and Marketer. Besides working on graphic design, I am also responsible for marketing. I am extremely happy in this new role as I merge what I learned at the Institute for the Creative Arts, including design, photography, art history, to promote this beautiful co-cathedral, which is full of unique treasures.

MCAST provided me with the skills and knowledge I needed to pursue a successful career in the area of Graphic Design and Marketing.

# JOHANN CARUANA

## Video Content Executive with Lovin Malta

**Filmmaking** has always been an art form that I was passionate about and very eager to learn more about. My passion about film making led me to enrol in the Extended Diploma in Creative Media Production at the MCAST Institute for the Creative Arts. Following the successful completion of this course, I furthered my studies and read for the Bachelor of Arts in Creative Media Production also at the Institute for the Creative Arts.

MCAST provided me with the fundamental skills and knowledge needed for a successful career in video production. At MCAST I learned how to deal effectively with stress at work due to the training the Institute provided when it came to handing in assignments on time. These soft skills together with the technical media production skills and various work placement opportunities have laid the foundation to my successful career.

I am currently employed as a Video Content Executive at Lovin Malta. I am responsible for the management of the Video Department which includes the production of videos and overseeing all video content on the Lovin Malta platform. In my free time I also work on various freelance film making production projects. MCAST has greatly helped me fulfil my dream to successfully work in the film making and video production industry.

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...have laid the foundation to my successful career.  
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# NATHANIEL CASSAR

## QC Team Leader at Aurobindo

**Ever** since I was a little boy, I have always been fascinated by laboratory work. The act of following a specific procedure and using dedicated elaborated equipment, which results in data showing whether or not a medicine is safe for consumption, has always amazed me. That was one of the main reasons that I pursued an MCAST course which covers lab work and pharmaceutical study.

Studying Applied Science at MCAST allowed me to learn

different aspects of laboratory techniques using a hands-on approach. This aided in the practical work carried out when I started working at Aurobindo.

My time studying at MCAST was a very positive experience. The professional way in which lectures were held by our lecturers helped to develop my knowledge in the subject. As such, this allowed me to grasp Aurobindo's training with relative ease, following what was taught in my lectures.



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Topics covered in school provided me with a sense of familiarity when I started my apprenticeship.

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Topics covered in school provided me with a sense of familiarity when I started my apprenticeship. Even though the theoretical aspects of my studies, especially Chemistry and Mathematics, proved to be very important in my work as an analyst, the fact that I also experienced laboratory work – and thus a practical hands-on approach – helped a great deal in grasping the required technical skills when I then became an analyst at Aurobindo, and vice-versa. When I was still studying as well as undergoing my apprenticeship, the knowledge learned from my work experience provided greater assistance in learning certain topics at MCAST.

MCAST prepared me for my transition into the working world, and it was a wonderful foundation that I was able to build on, and which helped me to progress from Analyst to my current role as Team Leader.

# JOSEPH BALLUCCI

## Owner, Ballucci Computer Services

I left school when I was only fifteen years old and started working on a part-time basis at a local restaurant. I soon realised that this was not the life that I wanted. So I plucked up courage and visited the MCAST Gozo Campus to explore my options. Following a meeting with the Campus administration staff, I applied for the Level 3 Diploma in IT. Within a couple of weeks, I had made a life-changing decision, quitting my job and enrolling in this MCAST course.

Switching back to student life was not easy at all and the adaptation period was hard, especially in the first weeks and months. I quickly realised that I needed to work very hard to progress. I worked hard and, notwithstanding all the difficulties, I completed the Level 3 diploma successfully. This instilled in me an even greater determination to prove myself and without much hesitation I progressed to the Level 4 Diploma in IT. The subsequent two years were quite intensive and different, and I was on the verge of quitting my studies several times. Despite all the hardships and sacrifices, through hard work, I managed to complete the Level 4 MCAST Diploma in IT successfully.

At twenty-five years of age I opted to take on full-time employment as Support Officer at the state hospital, following a summer job at the same hospital under a government-MITA work traineeship scheme. After eight years in that position, I was promoted to ICT Support Officer. I was recently appointed Senior Systems Administrator at Mater Dei Hospital. This position entails being responsible for various crucial applications as well as for the hospital's day-to-day running of IT systems requirements.

During these years, I have also managed to set up my own business venture, offering various IT services to companies and individuals. These include computer sales and repairs, website creations and network setups for

small businesses. To keep up with the demand, I employ technical support personnel on a part-time basis.

I recently decided to further my studies once again by reading for a Diploma in Leadership and Management from which I will eventually progress to a degree-level programme in management next year.

I am the type of person who wants to help others. Voluntary work overseas has always been on my bucket list. Last year I had the opportunity to carry out voluntary work in India with the local NGO Right to Smile.

On looking back, I realise how, through my own personal will and determination, my parents' encouragement and support, as well as through the opportunities and support I found at MCAST, my life changed completely. I am proud to say that, at times, I cannot believe how far I have come. I feel lucky and am especially grateful to my parents and MCAST staff members, who helped me turn my life around and achieve my dreams.

I believe that nothing is impossible. One has to believe in oneself, work hard and keep pushing. The opportunities are out there for you. Hard work pays off in the end.

.....  
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and support I  
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# CHRISTOPHER SACCO

## Advent Lifts Ltd

In 2017 I obtained a B. Eng (Hons.) in Mechanical Engineering (Plant) from the MCAST Institute of Mechanical Engineering.

As soon as I graduated I was employed with the world-renowned company in the pharmaceutical industry, Baxter. My responsibilities included overseeing the jigs, testing tools as well as designing and validation of these tools. During this period at Baxter I had the opportunity to attend various training sessions as well as to continue to pursue my studies while still being employed. The studies carried out were on the new technology of 3D printing and on the new design software Pro-E. Even though the design software Pro-E was relatively new, I had a strong background due to the usage of AutoCAD during my studies at MCAST.

I am currently employed at Advent Lifts Ltd as a Lift Designer and Technical Engineer. My duties include measuring of lift shafts on site and drawing the lift that fits within those measurements. After the installation of the lift, a third party engineering company certifies the lift and the second part of my job is to provide the calculations and documents to this company. Even here the learning does not stop as I'm carrying out research on how to improve the products. As a company we are collaborating with an Italian company to help us in the research sector.

On a personal note, being a fireworks enthusiast, I am currently conducting research on how to improve and reduce the preparation time for a fireworks display system. This study involves a lot of mechatronic and software engineering due to the controllers involved. In my free time I am also working on the syncing of the music and the fireworks as well as the display simulation.

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I had a strong background due to the usage of AutoCAD during my studies at MCAST.  
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# ISAAC MASSA

Research and  
Innovation  
Programmes  
Executive, Malta  
Council for Science  
and Technology  
(MCST)

**My** journey at MCAST began in 2007 after completing secondary school education. I enrolled for a First Diploma (Level 3) in Mechanical Engineering and a year later I read for the National Diploma (Level 4) in Manufacturing Engineering. I started working with Methode Electronics Malta Limited as a toolmaker apprentice within the Injection Moulding Department and acquired advanced mould making and design skills. As I furthered my studies in the Higher National Diploma (Level 5) in Mechanical Engineering, I remained employed as a part-time tool maker with Methode Electronics. In 2016 I obtained a Bachelor's degree in Manufacturing Engineering with first class honours from MCAST, and shortly after was promoted to Tooling Engineer.

During my time at MCAST, I built and designed various



projects including an injection mould, a CNC 3-Axis engraver and a semi-active magnetorheological damper whilst gaining professional skills in engineering research. At Methode, I managed several tooling projects for new product launches in

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**During my time at MCAST, I built and designed various projects.**

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the automotive industry.

After nine years at Methode, I was employed with by Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) as a Research and Innovation Programmes Executive. In this position, I monitor nationally funded projects under the Fusion Technology Development Programme (TDP). I also manage and oversee the Space Education Programme in collaboration with the European Space Agency. This has opened several opportunities to all schools in Malta for the first time. Furthermore, I was awarded the Endeavour Scholarship Scheme to further my studies abroad. I am currently reading for a master's degree in Materials Science and Technology at Loughborough University (UK) in order to enhance my skills that will eventually benefit the Maltese economy.



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...I was eligible to enrol into the final year of the Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Education and Care at the University of Malta.

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# GEORGINE XERRI

## Early Childhood Education Teacher

I successfully completed my compulsory education five years ago, passed all my SEC exams and was greatly intrigued by the vocational options available at MCAST. Most of my friends chose the traditional academic studies route but I was determined to take the vocational path. Due to my strong passion to work with young children, the Level 4 Diploma in Children's Care, Learning and Development was the natural choice for me to follow.

I worked hard and enjoyed attending lectures, working on assignments and gaining practical experience through vocational placements at child care centres in Qawra and Mosta, where I worked with babies and toddlers. During the second year of my course, I undertook placements in Kindergarten settings in two primary schools in Gozo. On successful completion of this course, I progressed to the Higher Diploma in Advanced Studies in Early Years.

This new experience in my life exposed me to broader areas of study in early childhood education and enabled me to establish contacts with more lecturers and experts in the field as well as expand my social network. As part of this course, I undertook more placements at kindergarten setups in schools, gaining even more experience. I admit that although the Higher Diploma was quite challenging, I still had a very positive learning experience.

On successful completion of the Level 5 Higher Diploma I was eligible to enrol into the final year of the Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Education and Care at the University of Malta. I read for the degree and will be graduating in December 2019. I am now thinking of furthering my studies to read for a Masters in Teaching and Learning in Early Childhood and Primary Education.



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