



Southampton
SOLENT
University

University gets on board for Seafarers Awareness Week

'Opportunities to Work at Sea' is the theme for this year's Seafarers Awareness Week (20-28 June), and Southampton Solent University will be helping to highlight the many career possibilities the maritime world offers young people through social media and an open day at its Warsash Maritime Academy.

Co-ordinated by Seafarers UK, Seafarers Awareness Week will promote the vital role seafarers play in the UK and global economies - an industry employing 1.5 million seafarers worldwide, of which 71,310 are from the UK.

The annual event involves maritime industry associations, employers, training providers and recruitment organisations, raising the profile of seafaring and maritime jobs to a wide audience, in particular young people, their parents and educators.

The University will be using social media to share interesting facts and figures about the maritime industry. This often surprising information is being used in a University research project studying 'sea blindness' - the lack of public awareness surrounding the shipping industry and ways of plugging a perceived skills gap.

In Southampton, the maritime industry contributes £714 million to the local economy. The port supports approximately 15,000 local jobs and the Southampton cruise sector a further 30,000 jobs. The maritime industry is also responsible for one in every 50 jobs in the United Kingdom.

Dr Kate Pike, Senior Research Fellow at Solent and research lead says: "Despite its importance, there is virtually nothing about the shipping industry included on the national schools' curriculum, which is significant when you consider that it offers very real employment opportunities."

"Part of our research will examine whether this is a conscious career choice or if young people still at school or at Sixth Form College are simply unaware of the variety of careers at sea available to them," she continues.

With an international reputation for its maritime courses, training and graduates, Southampton Solent continues to respond to the skills gap within the industry.

On Friday 26 June the University's Warsash Maritime Academy is holding an Open Day to showcase the exciting study opportunities available to school and college leavers and those looking for a change of career.

As well as information and talks on life as a deck or engineering officer, visitors will have the opportunity to experience what it is like to be on a ship's bridge and take a virtual walk through an engine room, on the Academy's state-of-the-art simulators.

Some of the major shipping companies will also be on-hand to answer questions on officer training, recruitment, commercial yacht training and maritime careers.

Visual displays by the Fire School will show how blazes are battled at sea and the maritime and the offshore safety team will be demonstrating and talking about survival training and equipment, as well as the deployment of distress flares.

For further information visit www.warsash.co.uk and to register your attendance email wma@solent.ac.uk or call 023 8201

The University will also be celebrating the next generation of professional seafarers when newly qualified HND and Foundation degree deck and engineering offers from Warsash Maritime Academy take part in their Passing Out Ceremony on Saturday 27 June.

Commenting on the importance of promoting the exciting career opportunities available within the maritime industry, Nick Harvey, Campaigns Manager at Seafarers UK, says: 'We look forward to another successful Seafarers Awareness Week and want the British public to see how important ships and seafarers are to our everyday living. With so many opportunities, including in growth areas such as cruise ships, superyachts and renewable energy developments, it is paramount we ensure that the next generation views working at sea as a viable and exciting career option too.'

For further information about Seafarers Awareness Week visit www.seafarersawarenessweek.org

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT THE MEDIA OFFICE ON 023 8201 3040 or press.office@solent.ac.uk

About Southampton Solent University

Southampton Solent University offers more than 19,000 students over 200 qualifications ranging from HND to PhD, in subjects such as maritime education and training, fashion and design, media and television, music, health, sport and leisure, business, IT and technology. The University was awarded the 2013 Quality Assurance kitemark for quality and standards of teaching and learning. Solent was voted one of the most creative universities in the UK in a Which? University 2014 poll of students. Solent Business School has been awarded the Small Business Charter Award, which is supported by the Association of Business Schools and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and 'gold approval' by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA).