

PRESS RELEASE

Coty Prestige visits The College of Fragrance for the Visually Impaired in Mumbai (COFVI)

January, 2017

Mr Andrew Burton of Coty Prestige visited V.G. Vaze College Mumbai in November to learn more about the work of COFVI and explore potential areas of cooperation with the aim of helping to provide employment opportunities for the visually impaired.

The students and teachers at The College of Fragrance for the Visually Impaired (COFVI) were delighted to welcome Mr Andrew Burton of Coty Prestige from The UK who visited the V.G. Vaze College, located in Mumbai, during November to learn more about their Perfumery course.

COFVI was founded in 2011 to help enrich the lives of the blind and partially sighted enabling students, who suffer from sight problems, to receive an advanced education and to find employment within the fragrance industry. The college is an initiative funded by fragrance industry partners and the one-year education program is entirely free to students, who travel from across India to apply to the College for admission.

During his visit Mr Burton was able to witness first-hand the remarkable olfactory abilities of the students who are either completely blind or have very limited sight. COFVI Director Ms. Renuka Thergaonkar together with Professor Deepak Rohr outlined details of the course which sets out the basic principles of odour assessment employed in the fragrance industry and introduces students to the thousands of raw materials used by Perfumers to create fragrances.



Research commissioned by CPL Aromas and the Blind Persons Association (Mumbai) during 2011 showed significantly heightened levels of odour perception in the visually impaired. This research was published in the industry journal *Perfumer & Flavorist* in February 2012. Based on these findings the Department of Cosmetics and Perfumery, V.G. Vaze College in Mumbai agreed to design a course for the visually impaired that would give them the basic skills and training to work in the fragrance industry.

Since then graduates of the college have found employment in the Indian fragrance industry in roles such as trainee evaluators, fragrance selectors and quality control technicians. These placements have provided a foundation that COFVI is keen to build on and the visit of such an important industry name as Coty has the potential to significantly raise awareness of the potential contribution the students can make to industry.

Speaking about his visit Mr Burton said.

"I was most impressed with the skill and dedication of the students at COFVI who clearly have an excellent ability to differentiate complex odour groups. I was pleased to be able to discuss suggestions on how the course might be expanded by the introduction of a module focusing on finished products which would be of particular interest to companies such as Coty"

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COFVI is funded by fragrance industry partners.

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Mr Burton added

“I look forward to further cooperation between The College and Coty as we explore ways in which we can be of assistance in developing the careers of these students who clearly have so much to offer”

During his visit Mr Burton conducted an industry standard smelling test to judge the ability of the students. The results showed that all the students scored above the pass mark with a number achieving an outstanding score.



Coty Prestige has indicated that it would be pleased to offer the college assistance by offering supplies and samples of various fragranced products to facilitate the expansion of the syllabus into finished product applications.

COFVI is most grateful to Mr Burton for his time in visiting the college and looks forward to developing further areas of cooperation

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