

## Heroes and Cultural Identity

When I found out I was nominated as “a Hero” by the course participants of the Occupational Health and Safety course via Stevenson College, you could have knocked me over with a feather. None of the participants, especially me, see us as heroes, just common or garden Health and Safety Representatives.

What I have learned participating in this project is that many people, from various walks of life, have made a difference to the world we live in. To be included in this list was a great honour for me, as I see it as only doing my job.

Meeting up with the other students was tremendous, but to do it in Rome was totally mind-blowing, the atmosphere, the location, the history, everything about the place was just incredible. To be the oldest student there was different to say the least. What could I, a 46 year old Scotsman have in common with a 17 year old student from Norway or a 19 year old from Turkey? The project was the answer; we had all studied different subjects, with different outlooks and from very different backgrounds. Take all this in to account and throw it in the melting pot and what do you get? A group of people with common interests in learning and discussing many topics from Trade Union Health and Safety to Chemistry and bacteria to folk heroes and political heroes to Italian Design to philosophers and basketball players. The discussions between the students were only made slightly difficult because of the language barriers, but we got there, usually over food or meeting for a coffee in one of the many cafes.

Overall I believe I have learned a lot from participating in this project and made many friends from many countries that will hopefully last for many many years to come. Would I do it again? What do you think?

David Mackie  
Unite the Union  
Health and Safety Representative  
“Hero”