

SOCIAL. Through its Elan initiative, Safran allows young disabled persons to enter work-study programs. The Group supports these enthusiastic employees all the way through their degree and into the workforce.

ELAN PROGRAM KEEPS DISABLED EMPLOYMENT ON TRACK

Skilled hands, a keen-eyed regard, intense concentration... when you watch Patxi Elissalde repair a part, it's hard to imagine that this 23 year old has a significant disability, but in fact he is deaf. Like about 30 other young adults he joined the Safran group as part of the Elan program, launched back in September 2005.

The instigator of this program was Christian Mari, treasurer of the Safran Foundation and executive vice president of Group company Messier-Bugatti. "We noticed that disabled persons were generally stuck in administrative jobs," he explains. "By having these young people as apprentices in the Group, or through work-study programs, I wanted to show that we could offer them a much wider range of skilled jobs."

The Elan program has met this goal, and is continuing its work with funding from the Safran Foundation. Human resources teams from the Group and its



Patxi Elissalde (right) hard at work in the Turbomeca sheet metal shop.

companies are also heavily involved, to support these young people's quest to earn a degree and join the workforce.

"Just like everybody else..."

"The first few days were a bit confusing," admits Patxi Elissalde, who communicates

using sign language, "but I quickly found my place in the team thanks to a warm welcome by all the skilled workmen in the shop." Hired by Turbomeca two years ago, he is now a skilled trade worker like his colleagues in the sheet metal shop, where he repairs parts.

"Patxi joined us in 2007 with a professional qualification contract, and at the time nobody in the shop spoke 'his' language," recalls Bruno Duboz, sheet metal welding and repair supervisor. "Two of our workers volunteered to learn sign language, and soon we were able to communicate." Today, the whole team knows at least some signs, and only a few figures still have to be written down on paper. "I really wanted to prove that we all have the same skills," says Patxi with a smile. ■

MORE

The complete interview with Christian Mari is online at www.safran-group.com

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Actions by the Safran Foundation in the "Commitments" section on www.safran-group.com

VIEWPOINT

JEAN-PAUL COLESSE,
MOLSHEIM PLANT MANAGER, MESSIER-BUGATTI

Textbook success

"In Molsheim we've always had a culture of welcoming and training young people to help them integrate the workforce. So we quite naturally agreed to participate in Elan by welcoming six disabled young adults to our plant. The history of Grégory Edel, who has a physical disability, is a perfect example. At 17, he didn't really know what he wanted to do. He came to us for a vocational diploma in logistics – which he finished in a year instead of the usual two! Greg then asked if he could stay to earn his professional baccalaureate in a work-study program. He finished his degree this summer, and now he's on temporary contract to our logistics service provider on site. By working with us, this company has also embraced our value of welcoming people who may seem a bit different."