

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

School of Chemical Engineering Community

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THE EPS COMMUNITY



Autumn/Winter 2013

Dear First Name

Welcome to the second alumni newsletter - as I write this, another tranche of possible students is being bussed round Birmingham to find out whether they want to come here. This year's first year is probably the largest it has ever been, with about 140, of which 115 are from the UK. Applications are up again, about 25%. Popularity creates its own problems; the trick will be to make sure that these larger numbers have the same experience as their forebears had in smaller classes. To this end, new staff are being hired - we have appointed four staff members in the last six months, and our first female Professor, Paula Mendes, has just celebrated both the award of a (very prestigious) 5-year Fellowship from the European Research Council, and the birth of her second child.

Best wishes for this season and the New Year.

Professor Peter Fryer
Head of School
Chemical Engineering

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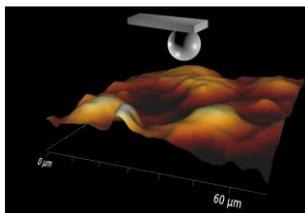
News from the School of Chemical Engineering

Global ranking reinforces Birmingham's position as a world-class university

New food energy research centre to create up to 40 jobs

Up to 40 new jobs will be created at the new National Centre for Sustainable Energy Use in Food Chains which opened at Brunel University in September. The £12million centre – the first of six to be opened in the UK dedicated to sustainable energy use – will focus on developing energy-efficient food manufacturing, distribution and retail systems to support the government's target of 80% CO₂ emissions reduction by 2050. Head of School Professor Peter Fryer will be leading Birmingham's contribution to the Centre. [Read more.](#)

Accurately probing cells and tissues



Drs James Andrews (Chemical Engineering), James Bowen (Chemical Engineering), and David Cheneler (Mechanical Engineering) have developed a model and methodology which ensures accurate measurement of the mechanical properties of soft materials. Description of the behaviour of biological tissues, individual cells, and organic polymers has applications in cancer detection, tissue engineering and biomedical research. Their model applies to a wide range of instrumental techniques, from millimetre-scale mechanical testers to nanometre-scale optical tweezers. [Read more here.](#)

ChemSoc: Examples of What We Do!

ChemSoc are known for their nights out and "parental" approach to first years. Read what they've been up to this year so far [here](#).

The water-hating egg found on many coastal cliff faces



In the last EPS College Newsletter you read about the clever guillemot and their self-cleaning eggs. Since then researchers Drs James Bowen and Steve Portugal have conducted a Q&A providing further insight into their work. [Read more about their research here.](#)

Engineering: skills or qualifications?



Not a week seems to pass without the national media reporting a shortage of engineers. This is not a criticism; it is in fact an achievement. What was once a very much overlooked issue is now quite rightly receiving the profile and attention it deserves. A strong, sustainable supply of high-quality engineers is essential if the UK is to meet its current and future skills needs for economic growth. Read more of Michael Grove's Director of the University's STEM Education Centre, comments on this debate [here](#).

Irresistible Materials



[Irresistible Materials](#) is a spinout company from the University of Birmingham that began operations in 2010 and aims to commercialise novel fullerene materials for applications in the semiconductor industry. It was formed by the entrepreneur and alumnus David Ure together with the three academic founders: Dr Alex Robinson, Professor Jon Preece, and Professor Richard Palmer. [Dr. Robinson explains the team's research and the journey from idea to business.](#)

New staff in 2013

There have been a number of appointments in the School this term. **Read a summary of our new staff [online here](#).**

Your School needs you...

Would you be able to share some of your time, expertise or connections to help Chemical Engineering to succeed? There are many ways in which you can give a little back, from providing a career profile, to speaking to students. **Details can be found [online](#) and [email us](#) if you would like to get involved.**

Events taking place shortly...

School events

EPS Inaugural Lecture Series

The EPS Inaugural Lecture series celebrates the promotion of leading academics across the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences.

04/12/2013 [Fuel Cells and Hydrogen - What can they contribute to our energy future?](#)

Professor Dr Robert Steinberger-Wilckens, Chair in Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Research, delivers his Inaugural Lecture. The efficient and economic supply of energy is one of the key challenges of human and economic development. The past 200 years of energy supply systems have left us with climate change problems, high degrees of pollution, and an extremely unfair worldwide distribution of access to energy resources.

13/02/2014 [Professor Liam Grover's Inaugural Lecture](#)

01/05/2013 [Professor Yulong Ding's Inaugural Lecture](#)

For more information on other lectures in the EPS Inaugural Lecture Series please visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/eps/inaugural

University events

09/12/2013 [University Carol Service](#)

6:15-7:30pm, on campus

This annual event, organised by University Chaplains and the Department of Music, is a joyful Christmas celebration for staff, students and families.

11/12/2013 [Festive Drinks at the Birmingham Frankfurt Christmas Market](#)

6-9pm, Victoria Square, Birmingham City Centre

Join fellow alumni for a festive drink at the largest authentic German market outside Germany and Austria.

12/12/2013 [USA Christmas Gathering in New York](#)

6:30-9:30pm, Revival, New York, USA

You are invited to the annual alumni holiday party. This is always the busiest get together of the year and we are looking forward to another fun evening.

14/12/2013 [USA Christmas Gathering in California](#)

5:30-7:30pm, California, USA

You and your partner are invited to join fellow alumni at a winter gathering cocktail party with UK University alumni from Birmingham, Nottingham and Sheffield.

27/03/2013 [Leaders of Tomorrow Reception](#)

6:30-8pm, London

Meet with current student recipients of the Access to Birmingham (A2B) scheme and students involved with the Academic Enrichment Programme at this drinks and canapés reception.

Do we have the right details for you?

According to our records your current business details are as follows: **Position** at **Organisation Name** If this is not correct, please visit [your.bham](#) or email alumnioffice@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

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