

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM



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Celebrating the success of your students



Autumn/Winter 2013

In this issue



new for 2013



Students' summer travels



Outstanding Graduates 2013

Awards for success

We are delighted that the work the University of Birmingham undertakes both with its students, and with you, our partner schools, has been recognised in a variety of ways in recent weeks. We have been awarded University of the Year by *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*. We have also been shortlisted for *The Times Higher Education* awards for University of the Year, and also Widening Participation Initiative of the Year, for our Access to Birmingham (A2B) programme. The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in London at the end of November. We would particularly like to thank you for your support, without which we would not have been recognised in this way. In this edition of our annual newsletter you can also share in the success and experiences of your former students during their time at Birmingham.

Once again, our A2B programme has achieved a record high with 334 students joining us this September, a 15% increase on last year. Many of our A2B students go on to be mentors and role models for new students working with the Outreach Department, and some of their stories are showcased inside. More information about A2B can be found at www.birmingham.ac.uk/a2b including a new video of A2B students who have moved on to their professional careers.

We have an increasing range of scholarships and bursaries available to students and our

new partnerships with Lloyds Bank and HSBC bank are outlined in this edition. In 2013 we also launched a new programme of activity to support students interested in careers in the professions – Routes to the Professions (R2P). With introductory streams in Medicine and Law this includes an 'Insight Day' for initial awareness raising in Year 10, followed by a Year 12/13 programme of more targeted and focused support.

The scope and scale of our outreach work is extensive and in 2012–13 we welcomed 92 tailored visits onto campus by schools in the West Midlands, and made more than 220 visits out to you. In addition to this our RAISE programme, mentoring activities, our residential experiences, master classes, Forward Thinking and our Aimhigher Partnership provided a wide range of activities for you to engage with us. More information on what we have to offer can be found on the Outreach pages of our website www.birmingham.ac.uk/outreach We also hope that our e-newsletter launched in 2013 is a useful update during the year on forthcoming events and opportunities at the University. Please contact us at outreach@contacts.bham.ac.uk if you would like to receive copies of this. We look forward to working with you all again in 2013–14, and if you are new to the school or the area please do not hesitate to get in touch!

Gail Rothnie
Head of Outreach



Celebrating YOUR success!

A2B Presentation Evening

In May this year we were delighted to welcome several of our partner schools and colleges onto campus, to award them a plaque in recognition of their longstanding support and valuable contribution to the A2B scheme, through having sent over ten A2B applications during the last three years. The evening also gave our partners the opportunity to catch up with some of their former pupils.



New for 2013

Routes to the Professions: Medicine and Law

Routes to the Professions (R2P) is an exciting new initiative as part of our continuing commitment to support access of under-represented groups into professions such as Medicine and Law. Both programmes are delivered by the Outreach team in partnership with the College of Medical and Dental Sciences and the Birmingham Law School.

R2P: Medicine launched in 2013

Students have a unique opportunity to gain a real insight into studying medicine at the University as well as receiving tailored advice, guidance and support at key points through their university application process. Following a launch event in Year 12, students are assigned a current undergraduate as a mentor, who works with them throughout the application process.

As participants on the programme, students could shadow their mentor, attending lectures. They also received advice and guidance on applying, and some were also offered work experience at the University's Cardiovascular Labs in the School of Clinical and Experimental Medicine.

At the start of Year 13, students attended a workshop to help them prepare in more detail for their medicine application. The workshop allowed students to find out more about the UKCAT and BMAT admissions tests, looking at skills and tools to help them reflect on their work experience which they can use on the UCAS application and during interviews, and offered advice on writing successful personal statements.

We are currently recruiting students for both R2P: Medicine and R2P: Law programmes. Deadline for applications is Friday 22 November 2013. For further information and application forms please visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/routes-professions



Comments from a student about the launch event:

'The admissions session gave me a better understanding of entry requirements and the hard work involved to achieve goals.'

Comments from students about the workshop:

'I now feel confident about reflecting on my work experience and preparing for the UKCAT/BMAT.'

'No one in my family has gone to university so I felt clueless with regards to applications and backup plans. This event has really helped me with thinking about these things.'

Insight into law

The Insight events are aimed at Year 10 students who are interested in finding out more about professional careers. We hope that some students who have attended Insight events will eventually participate in our R2P programmes.

Our first Insight event – *Insight into Law* – took place on 2 July 2013. During this event students found out more about careers in the legal profession including:

- ❑ Subject and entry requirements to study Law
- ❑ Different routes into Law
- ❑ Careers in the legal profession
- ❑ Interactive law challenges
- ❑ The chance to meet and hear from current Law students

We will be running another Year 10 Insight into Law event and a new Insight into Medicine event in the new year.

Teacher comment:

'The event really inspired students to work harder.'



From our correspondent...



Max Gibson (formerly of Bishop Walsh Catholic School) – National University of Singapore (NUS) Summer School

This year, in collaboration with the International Relations team, we gave students from a care background the opportunity to apply for a bursary to attend a summer school at one of our Universitas 21¹ (U21) partners. Max Gibson was this year's recipient.

'The summer school involved two courses "Southeast Asia in Context" and "Southeast Asia's Cultural Mosaic". In the former I had

Three students have spent their summer vacation doing something a little more out of the ordinary. Below you can hear from them in their own words about their experiences.

lectures on broad aspects of the archaeology, anthropology, politics, sociology, religion and culture of Southeast Asia; this also included how Southeast Asia has interacted with the rest of the world.

'In the second module, we studied other things like food, which is central to the cultural heritage of Southeast Asia – in particular Singapore, renowned for its wealth of different foods from all over the globe, something I learnt through experience!

'As part of this course, we went on a field trip to Cambodia and Thailand in which we experienced the different lifestyles of people: rich, poor and religious. This was one of the best experiences of my time in Southeast Asia. The key highlight of the field trip was a very early morning visit to Bayon Temple². The field photographer, another student and I went

there at 4.00am to watch the sunrise. In Thailand we planted rice in the rice-fields, in a village in Kohn Kaen. The farmer organised an entire paddy just for our use. I was apprehensive at first, but once in the paddy, knee deep in mud, I really enjoyed the novelty of it!

'By participating in this NUS Summer School I have learnt a great deal about the exotic lands of Southeast Asia. If you want to learn about the society, culture, places, history and a long list of other important things then this is the summer school to do it at! I had such a fantastic time on the programme, I learnt new things, made friends with people from all over the globe, and I tried lots of new things that I never would have done otherwise. This is a place to learn, and more importantly *experience*.'

¹ Universitas 21 is an international network of 27 leading research-intensive universities in 16 countries

² The central temple of the ancient city of Angkor Thom



Emma James (formerly of Halesowen College) has spent her summer vacation working at Deutsche Bank here in Birmingham. Below she explains how this internship came about.

During my second year, I was introduced to Martin Slumbers, former CEO for Global Business Services at Deutsche Bank. Martin is an alumnus of the University and as a recipient of the Access to Birmingham Scholarship, I spoke to him about the scheme and its benefits. After the meeting, Martin asked if I would be interested in pursuing some work experience within the investment banking industry. Although initially overwhelmed, I decided to take up this

fantastic opportunity in such a competitive industry and was referred to Deutsche Bank.

I decided that my skills and interests were most suited to the Human Resources department and I worked alongside Graduate Recruitment lead, Sean Sales. I started the internship alongside around 50 other employees which was fantastic as I made some great friends and we supported each other throughout the duration of the 'Train to Hire' programme.

For the majority of my internship, I recruited candidates for the next intake of graduates for the 'Train to Hire' programme. I carried out CV screenings, conducted telephone interviews and organised assessment centres for the prospective interns. Alongside recruitment, I contributed ideas towards employee reward and benefit initiatives. I also worked on the visa population for the Birmingham site, reviewing and monitoring all visa applications.

One of my most favourable experiences was appearing in the weekly newsletter, where I was able to introduce myself to all employees across the site. I also had the opportunity to meet with Jim Turley (Managing Director) to discuss my time at Deutsche Bank. This will be a fantastic opportunity as only a select few have been picked to do this!

There is genuinely nothing that I could fault about my internship, other than it ended too soon and went too quickly! I intend to return to Deutsche Bank upon graduation. I would definitely recommend the bank to any student interested in global investment banking. I am so pleased with my professional development and progression as a result of working in the corporate world, particularly as it was something I would never have imagined doing! They say things happen for a reason, and it couldn't be more true!



Khumehra Mohammed (formerly of Great Barr School and Sixth Form) spent her summer at the University of Connecticut, on another U21 Summer School.

Having heard that the University of Birmingham is a founding member of Universitas 21, I wanted to find out more and discovered that the University was keen to promote the summer schools to its students. There is a competitive application process which took around three months, and as a successful candidate I was given a £1,000 bursary to cover my flights and visa cost to the United States and the programme was also

paid for. I was ecstatic that I received the bursary as being from a single parent household I would not have been able to participate without this funding.

At the U21 summer school I discovered and explored a wide range of issues relating to human rights. We had a reading list before the summer school started, which included *The Dew Breaker* by Edwidge Danticat and various articles written by the academics who were going to lecture us.

We followed an intensive course with lectures and seminars, exploring various human rights issues, and went on field trips to various human rights institutions to see the work they do. My highlight was the United Nations field trip to New York as we were given an insight to the workings of the general assembly, and how much more work is still required for the future of human rights. I was given access to facilities which I wouldn't have had otherwise, which has developed my research skills. For example, I visited the Dodd archives, to look at documentation from the Nuremberg trials, in relation to war crimes and how this relates

to human rights issues. The visit exceeded my expectations in that it has allowed me to think about prevailing human rights issues critically and how even where we seem to have established human rights in *de jure*, we haven't *de facto*.

This trip allowed me to work alongside international students, showcase my ideas and get involved in small discussion groups. My group created a human rights blog for all the students to blog about human rights issues in order to generate awareness.

In addition this has given me the extra support for my human rights module next year as it has allowed me to develop my own individual perspective on the rights of people. I have grown to be more independent and confident on this experience and also been able to adjust to living life abroad. I have made some great contacts with people from various places in the world that I have come to know and befriend.



Outstanding graduates of 2013

Once again, we bid a fond farewell to our final year students on their graduation, wishing them every success in their future. We have known some of these students since they joined us on the Academic Enrichment Programme (AEP) when they were in Year 12 and it is always a delight to maintain that relationship with them throughout their time at the University and beyond. Below are stories of two such students.

Bethany Prottey (formerly of Baverstock Academy) graduated this summer with a First Class Honours degree in English, and has now embarked on a PGDipEd here at the University to become a primary school teacher. Beth participated in the AEP and applied through A2B.

'Participating in both the AEP and the A2B scheme has made an immeasurable difference to my life. Without it I am uncertain that I would have applied to higher education, and now three years on I have a first class degree from a Russell Group university! Furthermore, even if I had decided to apply to Birmingham, without the alternative offer of the A2B scheme I would not have met the standard entry requirements and therefore would have missed out on the incredible experience that the University of Birmingham has provided.

'As the first generation in my family to attend college let alone university, AEP had a significant impact upon my future career aspirations. Before attending the AEP I was

uncertain that a Russell Group university would be for students with no experience of higher education at all; however, the week residential soon made me realise that a redbrick university education was and should be accessible for students like me.

'Whilst at University I was keen to get involved as a Student Ambassador to provide younger students with the inspirational role models I had experienced on both Open Days and the AEP. In this role I have worked on two further AEPs, where I have not only mentored applicants who have successfully secured places at the University, but who have then gone on to become student ambassadors who I have had the pleasure to work alongside. This has been an extremely rewarding experience.

'To get onto the teacher training course at the University of Birmingham, I had to demonstrate, amongst other criteria, evidence of working with young people over a sustained period of time. Working as a student ambassador during the three years of my undergraduate degree

Eiranpreet Khangura (formerly of Wood Green High School & Sixth Form College) is now on a graduate programme with UBS Investment Bank, having graduated with a First Class Honours degree in Artificial Intelligence and Computer Science this July.

'The AEP programme gave me a great insight to university life as well as the academia it offered. At the end of the summer school I knew the University of Birmingham was the university for me; the vast diversity and community that existed here was also a key contributor in my decision to study at the University of Birmingham.

'The A2B scheme has played a key role within my life. After hearing about the programme at the AEP, I wanted to take advantage of this opportunity and knew that I would have to work harder to attain the standard grades to qualify

for the A2B Scholarship. This gave me some vital motivation which meant my final results were beyond the A2B offer for my course. I was also required to produce an essay which related to the field of study I was interested in, ie, computer science. Doing this essay exposed me to the level required for university-standard essays and therefore allowed me to get a head start amongst my peers.

'Once at the University, I applied to become a student ambassador and also represented the A2B Scholarship recipients at various events organised by the University's Alumni team to meet with the donors. One of these events occurred at the House of Lords in London, a phenomenal experience which I will never forget, where I met many donors who I shared my experiences with. At another, hosted by the Slaughter and May law firm, I made a speech in

front of the guests. I was both nervous and excited to share my appreciation for the A2B scheme with the donors first hand.

'I strongly believe these events have paid a vital role to the person I am today. They helped me build upon my core skills, such as communication, interpersonal and public speaking; and further to these my networking skills which are all now being put to full use at my new employment with UBS.'



Bethany Prottey



Eiranpreet Khangura

Scholarships and bursaries

The University continues to develop its offering of scholarships and bursaries, and this year joined the award-winning Lloyds Scholars Programme.

Lloyds Scholars

Along with seven other leading universities across the UK, the University of Birmingham will partner with the Lloyds Banking Group to offer students from lower household incomes a complete package of financial support, paid internships and the opportunity to develop their employability skills. The full package of support includes:

- ❑ Annual bursaries to help with living costs and study materials
- ❑ Performance related cash awards each year for good grades
- ❑ End of course excellence awards for top scholars upon graduation
- ❑ Real, hands-on work experience on paid summer internships
- ❑ Access to advice and support from a dedicated mentor
- ❑ Training and development opportunities

In return for these benefits, Lloyds Scholars will be expected to fulfil certain roles during their time at the university that will have a positive effect on both future students and the local community, through:

- ❑ Completing at least 100 hours of volunteering each year
- ❑ Championing the programme to future applicants by offering advice and support

We can select up to 15 offer holders to be a part of this programme each year, and this year eight of the 'Scholars' are also A2B applicants. Further information regarding this programme can be found online at Lloyds Scholars and the University of Birmingham's websites:

www.lloyds-scholars.com

www.birmingham.ac.uk/lloyds-scholars



HSBC Scholarship

We are delighted to announce our second cohort of students who are in receipt of the HSBC University Scholarship programme. Through this programme, HSBC match-funds the tuition fees for selected students for the duration of their course. We selected our five students from the A2B cohort via an interview process, who are:

Jay Harris (BA History, formerly of King Edward VI Sixth Form College, Stourbridge and Dormston School)

'My first few days at university have been a fantastic experience and I am settling in well. The HSBC Scholarship has provided me with the security to enjoy my time at university. I feel that it is a great privilege to be one of the five people to receive the award this year and hope that I can show how much the scholarship has helped me over the next year through my studies.'

Tehjveer Sandhu (BSc Accounting and Finance, formerly of Barr Beacon School)

'Having this scholarship has been a brilliant opportunity. I feel that not having the financial stress enables me to purely focus on achieving the best degree possible. As well as this, it has given me more self-belief in my ability to succeed in life. My first few days have been surreal, I have had the opportunity to meet great hall mates and have been enjoying all the freshers' events. I look forward to continuing to enjoy freshers and then more importantly focusing on my studies.'

Michael Pearson (BSc Computer Science, formerly of Thorns Community College and Halesowen College)

'The HSBC scholarship has meant a lot to me, it's allowing me to fully immerse myself into studying what I enjoy without the worry of how I am going to pay off my tuition fees. Everyone I have met so far and spoken to are welcoming, enthusiastic and more than happy to answer any questions I may have.'

Madeeha Bano (BSc Biological Sciences, formerly of Swanshurst School & Sixth Form)

'I am so grateful to HSBC for providing this scholarship and the A2B team for their support and guidance, I really can't express how much it means to me as being part of the A2B Scheme has been such an invaluable experience. It has made me even more determined to succeed and to make the most of my time at this brilliant university.'

Amina Abdullahi (BMedSci Medical Science, formerly of Shireland Collegiate Academy and King Edward VI Handsworth School)

'I love it here! I've met loads of interesting people from many different cultures – university really is where you make friends for life and have the most amazing time. The HSBC scholarship has been a lifeline for me, allowing me to study at the University of Birmingham for the next three years so I can enjoy the countless benefits that a university education can bring without any financial burdens to worry about!'

Gateway Bursary

We continue to offer this bursary to students from priority groups, to enable them to take up placements during the summer to improve their personal and professional development. This year, 21 A2B students were successful in applying for bursaries, and were awarded a total of just under £17,000. Some examples of placements included:

- ❑ A Financial Internship Placement with ABV Rock Group Co Ltd in Saudi Arabia
- ❑ A Legal Intern with Dacheng Law in Paris
- ❑ A Pre-Dentistry Placement through Gap Medics in Thailand
- ❑ An Editorial Experience – Technology placement with *the Guardian* in London
- ❑ A four-week placement with Birmingham City Council
- ❑ A two-week Genetics Internship with Birmingham Women's Hospital

Forthcoming events 2013–14

RAISE (Raising Aspirations in Secondary Education) Programme

A range of free and fun interactive lectures, workshops and competitive subject-based events for Years 7–12. These events are designed to support students' motivation and commitment to secondary education and in the long term, support attainment at GCSE and A level.

These events are highly popular and bookings are made on a strictly first-come, first-served basis. Colleagues are reminded to ensure relevant permissions have been sought before making a booking as cancelled bookings or non-attendance will incur a charge of £15 per student.

Learn more

Contact: Mohammed Ansar,
m.ansar@bham.ac.uk

Year	Event	Date
Year 7	Christmas Science Lectures One-hour interactive lectures.	December 16 and 17 2013 10.00am, 12.00noon and 1.30pm
Year 8	Sunshine Lecture One-hour interactive lectures.	June 18 2014 10.00am, 12.00noon and 1.30pm
Year 9	Physics Big Quiz Maximum of 12 students per school	January 27 2014 9.45am–2.30pm
Year 9	History Quest Maximum of 30 students per school	April 9 2014 9.45am–2.30pm
Year 10	Biology Big Quiz Maximum of 12 students per school	March 28 2014 9.45am–2.30pm
Year 10	Birmingham Science Festival Maximum of 40 students per school	April 3 2014 9.45am–2.45pm
Year 10	Maths Big Quiz Maximum of 12 students per school	March 11 2014 9.45am–2.30pm
Year 12	Success or Failure – the Importance of Year 12 <i>This conference will focus on the importance Year 12 has on the future higher education aspirations of students and will concentrate on how admissions tutors make decisions, what students should be doing in Year 12 to prepare for their personal statements and the difference between GCSEs and AS level study.</i>	November 20 2013 5.00–7.45pm

Residential activity

Learn more

www.birmingham.ac.uk/summerschools

Year	Event	Date
Year 10	Your Future – Your Choice Residential Further information will be sent to schools in early 2014	July 2014
Year 12	Academic Enrichment Programme Information will be sent to schools in early 2014	18–22 August 2014



Basic Life Support teaching in schools – 'Heartstart'

In the coming year, medical students from the University of Birmingham are offering school children the chance to learn Basic Life Support (BLS) skills in practical, one-off teaching sessions – completely free of charge! Each session is delivered using a curriculum and equipment kindly provided by the British Heart Foundation as part of their 'Heartstart' scheme, and on completion of the course students receive a certificate for their attendance. Feedback from schools this year has been excellent, with teachers stating that they would recommend our scheme to other

schools, and would welcome us back in the future. In addition, our instructors are happy to answer any questions students may have about higher education and life as a healthcare student.

Learn more

For more information about the scheme (including how to register your interest in taking part), please contact us via email – basiclifesupport@contacts.bham.ac.uk

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