

Apprentice star and top athlete honoured

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Lord Alan Sugar's right-hand woman and a triple Ironman World Record holder were among those given honorary degrees by the University in December.

Chrissie Wellington MBE is a British triathlete who graduated from the University in 1998 with a first class honours BSc Geography. In 2007, less than a year after becoming a professional triathlete, she became the first British athlete to win the World Ironman Championships in Kona, Hawaii.



She went on to achieve three consecutive victories at the Championships (2007, 2008, 2009) and is currently undefeated at the Ironman distance.

Meanwhile, Karren Brady has been acknowledged by the University for her impact within the business world and close links to the West Midlands. Her honorary degree means she now holds the title of Dr of the University.

Brady took over as Managing Director of Birmingham City Football Club in 1993 aged just 23, holding the position until 2009. She joined Birmingham City when it was in administration but by 1996 the club made an overall profit for the first time in modern history.

In 1997 the club launched on the stock market, making Brady the UK's youngest Managing Director of a Plc. In January 2010 she was appointed Vice Chairman of West Ham United FC.

She is a previous recipient of Business Woman of the Year (2007), named as one of the top leadership role-models in a national poll (2008), and included in the Sunday Telegraph's '100 Most Powerful Women in Britain' list (2010).

Following appearances as one of Lord Sugar's interrogators on BBC TV series The Apprentice, she replaced Margaret Mountford as one of his two key advisors.

The University has also acknowledged Jane Slowey, who was named Alumna of the Year. Slowey, who has been Chief Executive of the Foyer Foundation since 2004 is also Chair of Skills - Third Sector, a national charity that promotes skills development across voluntary organisations.

She was awarded a CBE for services to disadvantaged young people in 2009.

Honorary degrees were also awarded to Professor Dato' Dr Hassan Said, the current Vice-Chancellor and President of Taylor's University, and Paul Sabapathy, chairman of NHS Birmingham East and North.

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