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Top alumni to boost student career prospects

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Some of the University's most prominent and successful alumni are to volunteer their time and expertise to undergraduates as part of a groundbreaking new career scheme.

Twelve final year students are to be given a once-in-a-lifetime chance to gain firsthand career insight and guidance from graduates who have excelled in their field in the newly-launched programme.

Among those involved are former UK Chief Medical Officer Sir Liam Donaldson (MSc Anatomy, 1976); *Green Wing* and *Black Books* actress Tamsin Greig (BA Drama and Theatre Arts, 1988); and Phyllida Lloyd CBE (BA Arts and Law, 1979), director of the most successful British film ever released, *Mamma Mia!.*

The programme is the brainchild of Cilla Snowball CBE (BA French Language and Literature, 1981), Group Chairman and Group Chief Executive Officer at advertising and communications company Abbott Mead Vickers.

Cilla, who is one of the mentors, explains: 'At a time when employability is so high on the student agenda, it is great that the University's alumni can apply their mentoring skills to help Birmingham undergraduates.'

The initiative is part of a wider programme of activities at the University geared towards improving the employment prospects of graduates.

An investment of £3.5 million in employability has been pledged over five years from the 2011-2012 academic year onwards.

The full list of alumni involved in the programme is as follows:

Health and social care

Sir Liam Donaldson - Former Chief Medical Officer (MSc, Anatomy 1976; DSc, Honorary Degree, 2005)

Baroness Doreen Massey – Chair, The National Treatment Agency For Substance Misuse (PGCE, Education, 1962; BA, French Language & Literature, 1961)

Sir Charles George – Chairman, The Stroke Association (Interc BSc, Anatomy, 1962; MBChB 1965; MD, Medicine, 1974; DSc Honorary Degree, 2003)

Business, financial and consumer

Martin Devenish – Managing Director, Goldman Sachs International (BCom, Industrial Economics & Business Studies)

Mike Welton - Chairman, Premier Oil Plc (BSc, Civil Engineering, 1968; Deng, Honorary Degree, 2008)

Mike Coupe - Director, J Sainsbury's (BSc, Physics, 1982)

Media and the arts

Cilla Snowball CBE – Group Chairman and Group CEO, AMV BBDO (BA, French, 1981)

Phyllida Lloyd CBE - Director of plays, opera and film including Mamma Mia! on stage and screen (BA, English, 1979; DLitt, Honorary Degree, 2009)

Tamsin Greig - Actress (BA, Drama & Theatre Arts, 1988)

Simon Halsey - Chorus Director, City of Birmingham Symphony Choruses (DMus, Honorary Degree, 2008)

Alan Davey - Chief Executive, Arts Council England (BA, English, 1982)

Baroness Patience Wheatcroft – Former Editor of the Wall Street Journal Europe (LLB, Law, 1972)

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