

The Difference

How your gifts have helped...

Donor Newsletter Summer 2006 Issue 2

Thank you for your support!

A phenomenal £3.5 million has been pledged to Birmingham in the last year and your generous support has made a real difference to University life – funding projects that would not have otherwise been possible.

You are playing a significant role in Birmingham's commitment to educational excellence and innovation and your continued support will be vital in ensuring that we can continue to offer an unforgettable, life-changing experience to future students.

Your gifts have an immense impact on University life and make an enormous difference to the people who work, study, research and teach at Birmingham. Thank you for your support!



In November, The Chancellor, Sir Dominic Cadbury, was delighted to welcome almost 250 of our most enthusiastic alumni back to campus to thank them for their support at our second donor event.

A focal point for the day's events was an exhibition of projects supported by the University of Birmingham Fund, which included displays from Jobzone, Earth Sciences and The Priestley Centre and demonstrations from engineering students, who raced their inventions in the Great Robot Eggstravaganza, University Sport Birmingham, with their AU Superstars event, and the Guild Media Suite, who showed off the new equipment purchased for Redbrick, Burn FM and Guild Television. This provided alumni with the unique opportunity to meet the staff and students who had benefited from their support and to view and experience first hand some of the new equipment and activities.

A highlight of the day was an outstanding musical demonstration by students from the Centre for Early Music Performance and Research, which had been able to purchase 2 rare handmade horns and 2 natural trumpets, thanks to alumni support.

For some people, the reception was also chance to meet friends who they had not seen for over forty years and judging by the lively conversation during afternoon tea, many welcomed the opportunity to meet alumni from before the pre-1960s, who were visiting campus for a special reunion.

This year's donor event also saw the inaugural gathering of the 1900 Society – a society which has been set up to publicly thank and recognise the generosity of those who have made a gift of £1,000 or more to the University to strengthen the foundations of major giving at Birmingham.

Eighteen members of the Society attended a reception hosted by the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor in his private office. Michael Rawlinson and James Martin, who have remained firm friends since meeting at University and now lead the group, were present to welcome guests and tell them about the future plans for the Society.

In January, the Medical School also welcomed back more than 200 alumni to thank them for their contributions to the building of the new Wolfson Centre for Medical Education. The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Sterling, opened the event, speaking to the assembled donors in the 450 seat Leonard Deacon Lecture Theatre, which is the centrepiece of the new facilities. Many of the donors were even able to sit in the seats they had personally sponsored.

Given the setting, it was particularly fitting that Leonard's son, Andrew Deacon, spoke personally about his decision to remember his father's medical career, with a substantial donation to the Medical School where Leonard trained.

The £11.7 million Wolfson Centre for Medical Education, which was built with the help of generous donations from organisations and supporters including the Wolfson Foundation, HEFCE, the NHS and alumni, is integral to the widespread changes taking place at the



Medical School. Professor Doe, Dean of the Medical School, first put the new development in the context of these ongoing changes, ranging from the already completed IBR and NMR facilities to the new hospital site.

Kirsty Stewart, President of the University student Medical Society (Med Soc), thanked alumni on behalf of all current and future students at the Medical school, for their generous donations that made the new facilities possible. Kirsty said, 'the new building now forms an integral and central part of student life, both academically and socially and is an eminently more comfortable environment.'

Alumni were also able to see the new donor wall, which includes the name of every alumnus or alumna who helped raise more than £1 million towards the cost of the building. The reception also gave the donors the chance to meet some of the students whose telephone calls to alumni helped raise such phenomenal gifts.



From the Vice-Chancellor:

Welcome to The Difference

Our newsletter for supporters
of the University of Birmingham

Over the past hundred years, your University has grown from being a red brick 'school of universal instruction' to a University that is advancing its reputation as one of the foremost research and teaching institutions in the UK.

Indeed, to help realise his dream of creating a University to serve the people of Birmingham, Joseph Chamberlain sought out philanthropists who would be prepared to back his vision. We have now entered our 'Second Century' and are currently actively seeking the views of our alumni and key friends to determine how they can help us to drive the University forward to even greater achievements, building on the success of past generations. We are delighted that you have already chosen to share that same vision and ambition in offering your support to Birmingham.

However, the Birmingham experience is not simply limited to an excellent education. The opportunities offered in areas such as sport, music and a wide range of student societies help to make the University experience an unforgettable one and sends out people into the world with the ability to make a difference to society. Indeed, Birmingham's staff, students and alumni are all making an important contribution in the world today and you have certainly played your part: by offering your support, you too have made a difference.

The following features demonstrate the impact that your support has had on all aspects of University life. Every single gift does help, and so in this edition we are delighted to highlight some of the individuals who have generously chosen to support the University in the last year.

Thank you again for giving so generously – I do hope that you will continue to support the University of Birmingham in the future.

Honey Pot providing sweet summer success for students

Birmingham students are currently being asked the question, 'What will you do this summer?' In a brand new initiative supported by alumni, The Honey Pot is offering awards of up to £1,000 towards the cost of ambitious student summer enterprise and internships.

All registered full-time undergraduates at the University of Birmingham are eligible to apply for the awards, which offer funding and support to enable them to take a business idea forward or undertake a work placement or voluntary opportunity which would not otherwise be possible.

Initiated by the Student Life Division and Research and Enterprise Services the fund also seeks to make it possible for more students to engage in unfunded work placements, particularly in those sectors and occupations where paid placements are rare, including political and some public sector roles, media, the cultural industries, not-for-profit organisations and research. Making a career in these fields often depends on having work experience and this programme will help students to achieve this.

'The scheme is designed to help students be ambitious about what they can do in their summer break,' explains Kate Dodd, Director of Student Life. 'Money can often be a deciding factor so if students can put money worries aside, they can become really committed and develop some exciting ideas.'

This first year of the scheme has seen eighteen applications, evenly split between small business ideas and work experience proposals. Small business ideas have included both innovative business solutions and service-related companies, whilst the work experience projects have included environmental projects, medical internships and projects linked closely to research.

The shortlisted applicants will then be given the opportunity to pitch their proposals to the panel, before the first set of successful activities will take place this summer. Alumni support through the University of Birmingham Fund has provided the Honey Pot with funding for its first year and we will be looking to continue our support in future years. 'We want to encourage students to "think big" and for them to start planning their work experience at the start of their second year,' says Kate. 'We hope that the Honey Pot will be a sustained and sustainable campaign that will encourage students enterprises to have and experiences that would not otherwise be possible.'

For more information on how you can support the Honey Pot or to volunteer as a panel adjudicator for next year, please contact David King on 0121 414 6220 or at d.j.king@bham.ac.uk



Highest honour for University supporter

The University is delighted to be inducting Dr. Charles Gillett on behalf of the Edward Cadbury Charitable Trust (Incorporated) into The Chancellor’s Guild of Benefactors later this month. This is the highest honour that can be bestowed upon a donor to the University.

The Guild was established in 2002, as a way of publicly recognising those who have made extraordinary lifetime financial contributions that have transformed the University in some way and to date, there are three members, Dr Paul and Mrs Yuanbi Ramsay and Dr Elnora Ferguson on behalf of the Allan & Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust. Dr Gillett was awarded an honorary degree by the University in December 2001 in recognition of his long-standing connection to and support of Birmingham and is Chair of the Edward Cadbury Charitable Trust, founded by his great-uncle, Dr Edward Cadbury.

Edward Cadbury funded the Mingana Collection of Middle Eastern manuscripts, a significant heritage collection which has a world-wide reputation. In 2003 the trusteeship of the Collection was transferred to the University of Birmingham by the Edward Cadbury Charitable Trust (Inc.) and forms an important research resource within the Special Collections. Edward Cadbury was also responsible for funding the Chair of Theology which was established at the University in 1939. The Edward Cadbury Charitable Trust (Inc.) has continued to support the University over the years; most recently through grants to the Centre of Studies for Security and Diplomacy, based at the University and to research projects being undertaken within the Department of Theology.

The Cadbury family as a whole has been a long standing supporter of the University and has been closely associated with the Society of Friends, or Quakers, over the years. Quakers traditionally held strong

beliefs and ideals which they carried into ‘campaigns for justice, equality and social reform, putting an end to poverty and deprivation’ This family theme continues to this day, with many Cadbury family members still active both within the Edward Cadbury Trust and other charitable organisations. Dr Gillett’s son, Charles R Gillett, is also a Trustee of the Edward Cadbury Charitable Trust.

Charles Gillett will be inducted into the Guild in a small ceremony at which he will be presented with a specially designed gown and a certificate by the Chancellor, Sir Dominic Cadbury.



A rubai (aquatrain) – Mingana Persian



Al-Masnavi-i Mânavi – Mingana Persian

Alumni and friends advise on developments

As the University enters its second century, we are building on the philanthropic foundation laid down by Joseph Chamberlain and are actively seeking the views of our alumni and key friends to determine how they can help us to drive forward the University to even greater achievements, building on the success of past generations.

We have developed a group of influential volunteers who have made strong financial and time commitments to play a leadership role in continuing the vision and ambitions of the University. This Development Advisory Council will help and advise the University as we move forward with our development plans and will be active in helping the development team to solicit gifts.

The first meeting of this influential group was held on 17 March, internationally-acclaimed consultant, John Glier, President and CEO of Grenzebach Glier & Associates presented to the council, regarding the landscape of philanthropy in the UK and the role of leadership volunteers.

Senior Management of the University and the Development Team are excited to be working with this group.

Currently, the members of the Development Advisory Council are:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Mr James Bardrick | Mr David Pascall CBE |
| Mr Roger Matthews | Dr Charles Proctor |
| Mr Christopher Outram | Sir Peter Walters |



Chris Gait

Best of friends

The Birmingham experience is an unforgettable one and sends out into the world people with the ability to make a difference to communities. The high calibre of a Birmingham education and its students so impressed local orthodontics consultant Christopher Gait, that he decided to support the University by endowing the Christopher Gait Orthodontic Prize to the School of Dentistry.

The annual prize of £1,000 is awarded to the student who submits the best proposal for an elective project in orthodontics. The project should include a significant travel component, with the recipient expected to spend time at an overseas centre. This element of travel was of great importance to Chris, as he felt that this opportunity would provide an excellent additional experience to their education. ‘I felt it would be good for students to experience a different flavour and culture,’ explains Chris, ‘I thought it would give an added dimension to their University education.’

Chris Gait has worked in the local area as a consultant since 1982 and so felt that it was important to support a local University, from which he has already employed a number of graduates. ‘I wanted to give something back to the local community,’ says Chris, ‘I believe that orthodontics is highly important and so I wanted to encourage the best and brightest students to think about choosing the area as their speciality. It is an important part of the dental health of the individual and gives them back their confidence and, quite literally, gives them back their smile.’

Chris has also supported the local community by undertaking fundraising activities for local hospitals and charities, cycling from Lands End to John O’Groats and then amazingly across the USA from Seattle to Boston.

Chris enjoyed attending the awards ceremony for the first recipient, Emily Hopkins, who travelled to North Carolina last year. ‘I found the ceremony very rewarding, it was very satisfying to see that my gift had helped a new student to go and do something interesting and unforgettable.’

US alumni state their support

In the last year, our alumni in the US have made gifts of more than \$130,000 to the Foundation. We would like to thank you for your support and are delighted to report that these gifts have been used to support projects across campus that would otherwise not have been able to take place.

Alumni certainly took up the challenge to offer increasing support to Birmingham, which was laid down by Paul Ramsay with last year's Ramsay Challenge. In 2005, every Dollar given to the Foundation up to \$20,000 was generously matched by Paul and Yuanbi Ramsay.

Your generosity dramatically exceeded our expectations and every dollar of the challenge fund was matched by alumni, with the total raised standing at \$130,700. The total number of alumni who gave was more than double the previous year! We thank you all.

We are extremely grateful to Paul and Yuanbi for continuing the programme again this year. The difference is that until November, they will make a donation of \$5,000 for every gift of \$5,000 or more made to the US Foundation.

Paul explains the rationale: This year, we would like to encourage those who are able to increase their donations to \$5,000 or more to do so, in the knowledge that we will increase the value of their

gift by \$5,000. Every Dollar we give as former students is used to ensure that the University remains at the cutting edge and a place we can be proud to have attended. Please join us in securing the future of our great University.

If you would like more information about the Foundation, please contact Craig Klafter on cklafter@bhamf.org



Image © Anita Marc

For many alumni, their experiences at University not only helped them embark on successful careers, but also equipped them with knowledge and skills stretching far beyond the contents of their degrees. One such alumnus, Dr Paul Ramsay, generously decided to give to the University, to enable students to benefit from the education and opportunities offered by the University.

The Ramsay Endowment is used by the School of Computer Science to fund cutting-edge research that would not be likely to receive statutory or corporate funding, and to establish undergraduate and postgraduate bursaries.

For Paul, his gift is testament to the opportunities offered by the Birmingham experience. 'I very much enjoyed my days at the University of Birmingham,' explains Paul, 'the experience prepared me for the rest of my life by giving me the tools to go forward and I wanted other students to have that same opportunity. Funding in the UK has changed significantly since my time at University but I feel that all students should be able to have a good opportunity of education regardless of their financial situation.'

Paul studied in the School of Computer Science himself and still has a strong affinity with his department, 'I spent a long time in the Computer Science department – I made strong connections with both students and staff and still keep in touch with several people from my time there. In those days it was very rare to have such an excellent opportunity to work on computers and so it was a very exciting time.'

Indeed, Paul is most impressed with the research that has been enabled by his gift and has been astonished by the quality of work that has been produced by the recipients of his endowment. 'I receive an annual report on the research and have been very impressed – every time I get an update on a student's progress, such as Philipp Rohlfshagen, I am simply amazed.'



Gifts such as Paul's have an impact on the lives of current students. One such beneficiary is Philipp Rohlfshagen, who is currently working on his PhD in Evolutionary Computation in the School of Computer Science, thanks to the support of the Ramsay Endowment.

Philipp is conducting research into natural computation – looking at the natural design patterns that work in nature and utilising these to solve mathematical or industrial problems. 'It is helpful to use biochemical models as we know they work in nature,' explains Philipp, 'however, we can then add in elements that are not found in nature to fit our framework

of research.' Philipp's research is currently focusing on genetics.

His work has so impressed the research community that Philipp has also recently been accepted to present a paper at the Congress of Evolutionary Computation this year in Vancouver, one of the most prestigious events in this field.

Philipp also regularly assists with teaching in his department, passing on his knowledge to undergraduate students, which he very much enjoys. 'It's very interactive and it is a good chance for me to keep up to date with a wide range of computer science issues.'

However, as Philipp explains, it would not have been possible for him to continue his research ambitions without the support from the Ramsay Endowment. 'My parents managed to support me through my Masters but I couldn't have continued through to my PhD without funding. I feel very lucky as without this help I wouldn't be here doing this research. There is a fantastic atmosphere at Birmingham; the department has outstanding facilities and helpful staff and there is an excellent research community here. I would very much like to thank Paul for all his help and support.'

Sharing alumnus offers assistance with technology

The Birmingham experience can be such an unforgettable one that, for many alumni, the memories of their time at University stay with them long after graduation. Robert Spier is one such alumnus, who so much enjoyed his University experience and benefited from what Birmingham has to offer that he decided to give back to the University with a gift of shares.

After graduation, Robert travelled the world as a Chartered Account with Price Waterhouse & Co and worked in places as far afield as Sudan, Yemen and Zambia, which gave him the opportunity to travel to places like Egypt, Ethiopia, Beirut, Rio and Johannesburg. It was these valued experiences gained as a result of his University education that encouraged him to offer his support. 'I was very lucky when I was at University in that I received a grant and was given help from the council,' says Robert, 'my education then enabled me to travel round the world with my job and therefore I felt that it was time to give something back. I wanted to make a significant gift to the University and a gift of shares made it possible for me to do so.'

Robert gave his shares to the University in order to offer support to Birmingham's Assistive Technology Service, which improves technology for students with disabilities. 'I wanted to help a group of students rather than one individual and I thought it was important to encourage those who may generally feel discouraged and enable them to study on equal terms.' Robert's interest in Assistive Technology also comes from his work as a Trustee for the Centre for Accessible Environments – encouraging business and industry to invest in inclusive design initiatives, to improve access to the built environment, including lifts, ramps and specialist signage for partially sighted people.



Robert's gift is now making a real difference to the lives of students at Birmingham; the Assistive Technology department have already been able to purchase dictaphones, voice-activated software, digital recorders and a video-magnifier, all of which are helping students with dyslexia, visual impairment and other disabilities to enjoy their Birmingham experience to the full.

Global gift for ACS students

The Birmingham experience does not only make a difference to the lives of students – it can also be an unforgettable experience for members of staff, who have always played a fundamental part in the University's success and commitment to educational excellence and innovation.

One such member of staff was John Arkas Hawgood (1905–1971), who worked at the University for nearly 40 years and became the first Professor of American History at the University. An integral part of his work in this relatively new field was a great deal of travel, conducting research abroad in Europe, South American and the US, sourcing archives and collecting anecdotal evidence. Therefore, on the event of the centenary of his birth, 20 November 2005, his family generously decided to commemorate the occasion by establishing the J A Hawgood Travel Award for American History Postgraduate Research.

This annual award will provide travel assistance for a postgraduate researcher in the Department of American and Canadian Studies to carry out research into any field of American History. The first recipient of the award is Stephen Long, who travelled to Independence, Missouri to conduct research at the Truman Presidential Library for his dissertation, which focuses on the Truman administration's European strategy at the beginning of the Cold War. 'The award has been absolutely crucial to my studies,' says Stephen. 'I would not have been able to afford this trip and so I am extremely grateful to the kindness and generosity of the Hawgood family. The trip has reinvigorated my research and given me more confidence in my ability to accomplish my project. These are just as significant to me as the practical outcomes of the trip.'

Professor Hawgood's son John recently visited the University, accompanied by his wife and brother and sister, to meet Stephen and they were pleased to see the place their father had worked for many years. 'Travel was one of the main features of my father's work at the University and I remember just how much he benefited from those experiences. Therefore, I thought that it would be a fitting commemoration for other students to also be able to gain that kind of experience.'



The Hawgood family with Head of ACS, Dr Richard Ellis and Stephen Long



Calling campaign gains strong support from alumni

In October last year we began to telephone alumni as part of this year’s University of Birmingham Fund campaign.

By mid-March, our student callers had spoken with 4,500 alumni, sharing university experiences and memories, updating them on life at Birmingham today and raising thousands of pounds for the Fund.

The calling team thoroughly enjoyed talking to alumni about their Birmingham experiences and in many cases, also gained valuable career advice; thank you for taking the time to talk with our students.

For the first time since the launch of the Fund, we telephoned alumni in the USA and the response was superb. As with our UK alumni, those of you living in the States welcomed the chance to catch up on recent developments and offer your support. At the end of the campaign over £330,000 had been pledged to the Fund and your continued generosity means that we will be able to enhance many more areas of University life once again next year.

Those of you who we could not contact by telephone were also given the chance to contribute when we mailed 45,000 alumni in April. Subsequently, gifts have flooded in from all over the world and we are still receiving donations today.

The response to this year’s Fund has been fantastic. Your support really does make a difference to the lives of our students. Thank you!

Students of yesterday supporting students of today

In February, the University of Birmingham Fund Distribution Committee met to undertake the important task of allocating your generous gifts to projects throughout the University.

Some of the projects you have funded this year include the refurbishment of the University’s Grubb Telescope, modernising the Mermaid Square outside the Guild, connecting the Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity departmental museum to the world, sailing dinghies for the University’s Raymond Priestley Centre and international student hardship funds, scholarships and bursaries.

The extensive range and high quality of the projects submitted made the Committee’s decision very difficult but also reinforced the fact that there is a substantial need throughout the University for this kind of funding. The criteria used to assist the distribution process ensures that each project has a direct impact on the day to day experience of our students. All of the projects supported to date simply could not happen without your support, so thank you!

To view the full range of exciting projects please go to: www.alumni.bham.ac.uk

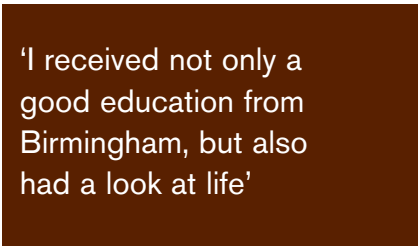
Thank you!



‘My experience as a student caller has been an invaluable one. I feel as though I have helped the University whilst also gaining some excellent advice from alumni. I very much enjoyed chatting to former students and got some good ideas as to what I might like to do after University.

It was also interesting to find out what University life was like years ago. Some alumni spoke of how they had to live in digs and had curfews when they were coming back from the ‘Hops’ at the Guild. It was amazing to see the impact that the University experience has had on people’s lives.’

Hayley Moore Fourth Year MSci Environmental and Geological Science



‘I received not only a good education from Birmingham, but also had a look at life – learning values such as fair play, how to stick up for a point of view if you have a strong, well worked argument and indeed, a strong appreciation for music.

Sitting on the UBF distribution committee was very rewarding and reminded me of the many strands there are to University life.’

John Stradling (BMus Music 1968)



‘As a student caller, it has been amazing to speak to such a wide variety of people and to listen to their experiences of University life. Many alumni have shared their memories of Birmingham with me and were interested to hear how the University has changed and developed.

The people I have spoken to have been extremely open and friendly and have said how much they enjoyed their time at Birmingham

I have very much enjoyed the experience and I have felt a real sense of satisfaction that I have been able to help the University.’

Vivek Aggarwal Economic Policy and International Business

Teaching, Research and IT

Restoration of the Grubb Telescope

The Grubb telescope on the roof of the Poynting Building of the Department of Physics, is older than the University itself and was built by the Grubb brothers of Dublin, who were responsible for the biggest telescopes built in the late 19th century.

Recently, students from the University of Birmingham Astronomical Society have brought the telescope back into use, utilising it for regular viewing of the sky. The generous alumni funding will be used for a major refurbishment of this historic telescope, repairing its drive, cleaning its machinery and optics and upgrading its enclosure, so that it can be regularly used by members of the University and by the public on Outreach nights.

Thank you very much.

Dr Somak Raychaudhury, Senior Lecturer, Department of Physics



Campus Environment and Facilities



The Raymond Priestley Centre, Coniston

Sitting on the shore of Coniston Water is the University of Birmingham's Raymond Priestley Centre for Outdoor Pursuits and Field Studies.

The Centre is a year-round operation and is able to provide bespoke courses for University departments, clubs and societies. The staff of the Priestley Centre are extremely grateful to alumni for the provision of two new RS Vision sailing dinghies through the University of Birmingham Fund.

The design of the RS Vision dinghy allows for the full range of sailing skills to be taught from introductory seamanship skills, to advanced sailing skills. By sailing in identical boats students can also compare their skills directly with other crews, as instructors help them to learn by observing each other during teaching sessions. The Centre is a Royal Yachting Association recognised teaching establishment and the new dinghies ideally compliment the work we carry out with students, adding fun and enjoyment through use of the latest boats. Thank you very much!

Norman Beech, Director, Raymond Priestley Centre



IAA Museum

The Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity is delighted to be able to connect its museum to the world thanks to your generous support. This means that the central seminar room of the archaeologists, historians and experts of ancient cultures will be able to display exhibitions relating to these cultures not only through the artefacts that are housed in the museum cases, but also through the latest forms of computer presentation with high-speed internet access.

Through 'Access Grid', a new technology pioneered by Professor Vince Gaffney with support from Hewlett Packard, it will also be possible to link scholars and research students across the world with astonishing immediacy: questions from any part of the world will get instant answers.

That collaboration will soon expand to become a whole Universitas 21 International Ancient World Network in which we might jointly teach courses. Thank you for your support.

Professor Ken Dowden, Director of the Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity

Design Centre

In March, the School of Engineering unveiled a new facility that will be a one-stop shop for students from any University department to learn about all aspects of design, in relation to function and manufacture. It will also include facilities for archaeologists to build a picture of the past, by recreating artefacts that no longer exist or cannot be handled, by creating a 3D picture or model.

Funding from the UBF will enable a mezzanine level to be built in the centre, enhancing the student experience by providing a stimulating, relaxed environment, which will encourage discussion and collaboration between students. Thank you.

Dr Mark Jolly, Head of the Design Centre

Sport and Exercise Sciences

The School of Sport and Exercise Sciences has now moved into its new building and has just been awarded funds from University of Birmingham Fund to purchase works of art for the atrium of the new building. The atrium is an exceptionally impressive and dedicated interactive space for students to meet and work in groups and the funding will allow us to commission six large canvasses by three contemporary local landscape artists. The canvasses will range from depictions of the city of Birmingham, to the University and the new School of Sport and Exercise Sciences building. The intention is for the art to reinforce students' pride in and their experience of belonging to their new School, the University, and the city. Thank you for your support.

Professor Doug Carroll, Head of School, Sport and Exercise Science

The Guild of Students

Guild of Students

The Guild of Students would like to thank alumni for their support through the UBF, for three separate projects that will help enhance the student experience of, in, and around the Guild.

The three projects that the fund has kindly supported include the redevelopment of Mermaid Square which will create a great atmosphere for students by allowing us to furnish the area. Another project is the establishment of a multimedia suite which will improve student presentations and talks via the sound system and open many opportunities for student groups to use the facilities. Finally we will be radically developing our current website, enabling us to provide a more comprehensive and entertaining portal for student groups and the student community at large.

Thank you once again; we will gladly welcome any visitors to see the huge differences that your gifts have made the student experience.

Richard Angell, Guild President



University Sport Birmingham



The University of Birmingham has always had a strong tradition in a diverse range of sports, finishing at least 3rd in BUSA for the past 10 years. This year, USB has been awarded funding towards an electronic scoreboard and a new VIII's rowing boat.

An increase in the number of Athletic Union events in the past 12 months has led to a number of high profile matches being watched by over 6000 students and local community members. An outdoor electronic board is to be purchased to enhance spectator enjoyment and to highlight the professionalism of sporting events at Birmingham.

The University Boat Club (UBBC) has progressed significantly over recent times, offering rowing to students of all levels of experience. However, despite its growing successes, the club's performances have been undeniably hampered by the state of the current VIII boat which slowed the teams down significantly.

Boat club president James Wilton says, 'The purchase of a new VIII with the help of UBF funding is a great step forward for UBBC. It's a fantastic reward for the hard work put in by our members and is going to accelerate the already growing levels of success that we are enjoying.'

Thank you for your support.

Glen O'Donovan, Marketing Manager, USB

Student Financial Support

International Student Advisory Service

The International Student Advisory Service and the Student Funding Office were delighted to receive generous support from the University of Birmingham Fund. This funding will be used to assist international students who encounter unexpected financial hardship during their time at Birmingham.

We are very grateful to alumni for this award as we know it will make a significant difference to a number of deserving students. In some cases, this funding will mean the difference between a student withdrawing from their course and returning home empty-handed and successfully graduating from the University.

A large number of our international students are sponsored by parents or relatives, who make great sacrifices to send their children to university in the UK. These students are not entitled to any financial support from the UK Government. Therefore, if their funding arrangements should be disrupted for reasons such as the death of a sponsor, political/economic unrest or natural disaster, these students would have no financial safety net. This award means that we can offer a modest but vital source of support to students in dire need.

Thank you.

Claire O'Leary, Head of International Student Advisory Service



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For more information on any of the projects featured in this newsletter, please contact Louise Binder in the Development and Alumni Relations Office on 0121 414 8136 or l.binder@bham.ac.uk

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