

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

School of Chemistry Community

Part of
THE EPS COMMUNITY



Winter 2015

Greetings

As you will see from this newsletter it has been a busy start to the new academic year in which we have welcomed over 160 new undergraduate and postgraduate students to the School. Professor Zoe Pikramenou has helped demonstrate the use of coated silica nanoparticles in preventing tooth decay, we have celebrated Professor Graham Worth's Inaugural Lecture, Dr Simon Cotton and Dr Louise Male have both recently been featured in the media, Dr Zoe Schnepf had her research published in Science, and Dr Rob Neely, in his first year as an academic, won a £0.5M grant from the EU to carry out ground-breaking research in chemical biophysics.

Our students have also been busy, with an eventful start to the year for ChemSoc helping to integrate our new students into the School and supporting Water Aid in honour of Dr Zoe Schnepf's work with the charity.

It's always a pleasure to hear from our alumni and I'm delighted to read about Carly Thomas' start to graduate life and look forward to hearing more about her continued successes.

I am delighted to say that we have continued to provide an excellent student experience, and in the last National Students Survey we were ranked 5th out of the 21 Russell Group Schools of Chemistry, meaning we have been in the top quartile for the last three years, and have maintained a 90% or better overall satisfaction for the last 6 years: only 4 other Russell Group Schools of Chemistry have achieved this high level of consistency.

Not only are our students enjoying the experience of studying Chemistry at Birmingham, but more than ever they are gaining higher levels of graduate employment within 6 months of graduation, and we are ranked 6th amongst the Russell Group on this measure.

My colleagues and I take a great deal of satisfaction in these results, but are far from complacent and have set up the School's first Industrial Advisory Board this year, to obtain expert advice on what industrialist want from chemistry graduates. Using these industrial contacts we are constructing a new curriculum to give an even more rewarding experience to, and better place, our graduates for the job market. Indeed, the number of students who have secured a one year industrial placement has increased by 70% this year.

So as the end of the first semester in the 2015/16 academic year approaches, I would like to wish you all a pleasant and restful Christmas and New Year and I look forward to updating you with the latest news from the School and our students in the Spring Term.

With best wishes

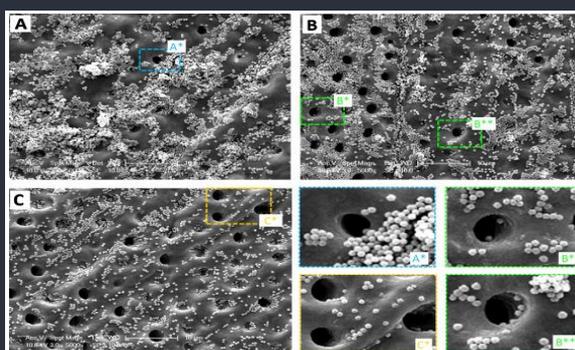
Professor Jon Preece

Head of School
Chemistry



EPS Christmas Lecture 2015: Stuff Matters

This year's EPS Christmas Lecture
will be delivered on 8 December



Tiny silica particles could be used to repair damaged teeth

by Professor Mark Miodownik, internationally renowned materials engineer, broadcaster and resident scientist on BBC programme *Dara O Briain's Science Club*. Professor Miodownik will be revealing the changes to the material world that are coming our way from bionic people with synthetic organs to living buildings and objects that heal themselves.

[FIND OUT MORE >](#)

Professor Zoe Pikramenou has been part of a team showing how the development of coated silica nanoparticles could be used in restorative treatment of sensitive teeth and preventing the onset of tooth decay.

[FIND OUT MORE >](#)

"The best place in Birmingham..."

In a new feature we'll be asking students and alumni in the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences about their favourite places in Birmingham. In this edition they tell us "The best place in Birmingham to socialise after lectures".



[FIND OUT MORE >](#)



Pushing boundaries - Professor Graham Worth

Professor Graham Worth, Professor in Theoretical Chemistry, recently celebrated his Inaugural Lecture discussing the Schrodinger equation, light initiated reactions and femtochemistry.

[FIND OUT MORE >](#)



Societies News

It's been a busy start to the new year for our societies! Alice Sayers, President of [ChemSoc](#), and the [WISE](#) committee tell us about their events over the past few weeks welcoming new members to their plans for the coming months.

[FIND OUT MORE >](#)

School News

There have been a number of appointments in the School over the past few months. Read a summary of our new staff [here](#).

[Dr Simon Cotton](#) was interviewed for a [Guardian](#) article in August about how ancient civilisations created perfume, and its influence on present day perfumes.

In October [Dr Louise Male](#) appeared on BBC Inside Out West Midlands providing an analysis of a DIY tattoo removal kit which has left users badly burned.

The University recently unveiled its [five-year plan](#) to deliver real impact, tackle major

challenges and transform lives through its research, education, investment and influence.

Birmingham has been named [University of the Year for Graduate Employment](#) in The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2015-16.

A Qur'an manuscript held by the Cadbury Research Library and thought to be among the oldest in the world, was [recently exhibited at the University](#).



Alumni News

In this edition Carly Thomas (BSc Chemistry, 2015) tells us how she's adjusting to life after Birmingham on the Nationwide graduate scheme.

[FIND OUT MORE >](#)



Get involved!

There are many ways you can get involved with us:

- Send us your news for a chance to feature in our next edition
- Become a mentor and help support our students
- Offer a work experience placement
- [Hang a personalised bauble on our Christmas tree!](#)

And don't forget to let us know where your favourite place to socialise after lectures was!

[EMAIL US >](#)

Events

[EPS Inaugural Lecture Series](#)

For information on upcoming lectures in the EPS Inaugural Lecture Series please [visit our website](#).

Saturday 5 December 2015

[Christmas at Winterbourne](#)

Winterbourne's ever popular Christmas event returns on 5th December, bringing a traditional Christmas to Birmingham. With the house beautifully dressed in traditional decorations, carol singers providing an unforgettable atmosphere, magic lantern shows and an expanded craft stalls areas, there's plenty to keep you entertained.

Time: 11am-7pm

Venue: Winterbourne House and Garden, Edgbaston Campus

Monday 7 December 2015

[Festive Drinks at the University Carol Service](#)

Join fellow University of Birmingham alumni, staff and students for the perfect start to the Christmas season. Come back to campus for an uplifting and joyful carol service, organised by the University Chaplaincy and Department of Music and featuring carols, readings and festive poems, all in the beautiful surroundings of the Great Hall. Alumni are then invited to join us in the Rotunda (above the Aston Webb foyer) for mulled wine, fruit juice and mince pies.

Time: 6.15pm-9pm

Venue: Great Hall, Aston Webb Building, Edgbaston Campus

Tuesday 8 December 2015

EPS Christmas Lecture

[Professor Mark Miodownik: Stuff Matters](#)

Whatever people think about the rapid pace of change of technology, our most fundamental categorization of stuff on the planet has not altered: there are living things that we call life, and there is non-living stuff that we call rocks, tools, buildings and so on. As a result of our greater understanding of matter, this distinction is now becoming blurred and is likely to usher in a new materials age. Bionic people with synthetic organs, bones and even brains will be the norm. Just as we are becoming more synthetic, so our man-made environment is changing to become more lifelike: living buildings, and objects that heal-themselves are on the horizon. This lecture reviews the changes to the material world that are coming our way.

Time: 6.30pm-8.30pm

Venue: Leonard Deacon Lecture Theatre, Medical School, Edgbaston Campus

Tuesday 19 January 2016

[Distinguished Leaders Series: Paul Szumilewicz and Lucy Williams \(HSBC\)](#)

In the latest lecture in the Distinguished Leaders Series, the Birmingham Business School (BBS) Alumni Relations team are delighted to welcome Paul Szumilewicz and Lucy Williams to discuss 'Leading Change: Challenges and opportunities of moving HSBC's Ring-fenced bank from London to Birmingham'.

Time: 6pm-8pm

Venue: Room G12, Main Lecture Theatre, Birmingham Business School, Edgbaston Campus

Wednesday 9 March 2016

[EPS Distinguished Lecture: Professor Dave Charlton FRS](#)

Professor Dave Charlton FRS, spokesperson of the ATLAS Collaboration at the Large Hadron Collider at CERN will be delivering the next EPS Distinguished Lecture. Please see the [website](#) for more information.

Time: 6pm-7.30pm

Venue: Edgbaston Campus

Wednesday 8 June 2016

[EPS Societies' Awards](#)

Come and celebrate with our student societies as we recognise their fabulous achievements in 2016/17.

Time: 7pm-11pm

Venue: The Great Hall, Edgbaston Campus

Saturday 18 June 2016

[EPS Alumni Reunion](#)

As a graduate of one of the nine schools in the College of Engineering & Physical Sciences (EPS), you are invited back to campus for a Summer Reunion to get together with your fellow alumni to celebrate your experiences, accomplishments and friendships at the University of Birmingham.

Time: 9.30am-6pm

Venue: Edgbaston Campus

Monday 12 September 2016

[Alumni Golf Day 2016](#)

Following on from the success of the inaugural University of Birmingham Alumni Golf Day held in 2015 at Edgbaston Golf Club, we are delighted to announce that another event is planned for 2016. Please see the [website](#) for further information.

Time: 10am-6pm

Venue: Edgbaston Golf Club

The University of Birmingham has alumni groups all over the world that organise local events. To join a group and see details of upcoming events please visit the [webpage](#) and select your location.



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