

Summer 2015



THE NEWS MAGAZINE FOR CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

# NEWS CARDIFF

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**Congratulations  
to the class of 2015**

# Introduction

**In this special edition of Cardiff News, we celebrate the academic achievements of our graduates: the class of 2015.**



**“ Over the course of this week, some 7,000 students graduate. This represents a huge logistical and administrative challenge for our dedicated staff.**

Porters, caterers, Students' Union staff, senior administrative and academic staff all pull together to make this unique event happen and I would like to pay tribute to their sterling and cheerful efforts. I remain struck by what a vibrant and exciting community Cardiff is.

We're also celebrating the genuine excellence of our teaching and research and the effect this has, not least in the huge contribution our graduates make to society and the wider economy.

In this dedicated Graduation edition you'll hear from our Pro Vice-Chancellor for Student

Experience and Academic Standards, Professor Patricia Price, as she reflects on some of our students' accomplishments over the academic year.

You'll also learn more about some of the year's key University highlights which have seen us become a top five UK university for research excellence and impact and unveil a new £300M plan to become a trailblazer for innovation.

But more importantly, you will learn about some of our graduates' unique stories.

From the intrepid adventurer, to the first cohort of Pathway students to graduate with honours, to an award winning student journalist who overcame adversity to secure first class honours.

I hope our graduates will take a minute or two to reflect on their experience. To think about the emotions they felt on their first day, the first people they met or the lecturers who have supported them along their academic journey.

I am pretty sure it will invoke a whole host of mixed emotions, both good and bad. It's certainly a chapter in their lives that will never be forgotten.

However, this should not be the end of their Cardiff story. Some students will carry on with us through postgraduate or professional studies, but for most, attention will turn to securing employment, which is where the help and advice of our dedicated Careers and Employability Team – featured in this edition – can be of help.

We also offer a genuine invitation to our graduates to stay in touch. As Cardiff graduates they act as our champions wherever they end up.

You can keep in touch on-line, attend the variety of events organised for alumni, or volunteer to be a mentor for current Cardiff University students.

Finally, I would like to thank all staff and students for their enthusiasm, dedication and contribution to Cardiff University, and wish our graduating students every success in the future. **”**

**Professor Colin Riordan**  
Vice-Chancellor and President

# The year that was...



**Professor Patricia Price is the University's Pro Vice-Chancellor for Student Experience and Academic Standards. Here, she takes a whistle stop tour of some of the key highlights of the University year.**

**“** I consider myself to be extremely lucky. In my role, I get to engage and witness - on a daily basis - the outstanding achievements of our students.

From individual stories of academic excellence to tales of personal and sporting achievements, I am privileged to experience them first-hand.

Looking back over the last academic year, it's been quite a year.

Investment in new facilities was a recurrent theme.

In fact, even before students arrived, it was already a story of outstanding success, with our students excelling at The Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 2014. Eight of our high performance athletes competed in the Games, with Physiotherapy student Sally Peake taking a silver medal in the Pole Vault and Biosciences student Natalie Powell achieving a gold medal in Judo.

At the start of the academic year I was fortunate enough to be asked to open the University's new six-storey £6.4M halls of

residence that accommodates 179 undergraduate and postgraduate students. I also unveiled a new £14.5M world class centre for teaching and training tomorrow's global business leaders at Cardiff Business School. The state-of-the-art learning and teaching hub provides high-tech lecture theatres, executive study zones and a high-tech 'trading room' to attract the very best business students from around the world.

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I joined Wales football manager Chris Coleman to unveil the University's 3G (third generation) pitch. Based at the University's Sports Fields in Llanrumney, it can be used for student sports fixtures in any weather. To continue the sporting theme, I was absolutely delighted when we retained the annual Varsity shield but even sweeter was the fact we managed to regain the coveted men's rugby Varsity Cup at Swansea City's Premiership's, Liberty Stadium.

In this edition, you'll also learn more about some of our

exceptional graduates, from an award winning student journalist to our first batch of successful Pathway graduates. We highlight our law students who made history, making national and international media headlines for their work after they successfully overturned a murder conviction as part of the Innocence Project run by the School of Law and Politics. Their stories are an inspiration to us all.

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One project of particular note was a rubbish clean-up, part of the Community Gateway flagship engagement project. It helped people in Grangetown transform their community. Litter pickers, with the help of Keep Wales Tidy, took to the streets to collect bags of rubbish. A relatively small but significant gesture nevertheless. It's impossible to cover everything that has happened over the last year but I hope this has provided a flavour of some of the key stories. It just leaves me on behalf of everyone at Cardiff University to wish you good health, happiness and success as you depart. I hope that you will be part of our growing alumni, demonstrating the transformational nature of higher education. **”**

Finally, one thing that continues to amaze me is what our students actually give back to the community. Too often we read about students' drunken exploits

(and this year we've had our fair share!) but it's also important to appreciate our students' wider contribution. From volunteering to maths revision clubs, our students are helping support the wider communities.

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**Professor Patricia Price**  
Pro Vice-Chancellor for Student Experience and Academic Standards



# Pathways to degrees celebrates first graduating students



An innovative scheme offering people a way back into education celebrate its first group of graduates this week.

The Exploring the Past pathway is one of nine pathways available from Cardiff University's Centre for Lifelong Learning.

It has been developed to help adults realise their ambition to study history, ancient history, archaeology or religion at degree level.

The Exploring the Past pathway is taught and assessed in similar ways to first year undergraduate degree courses and students do not need previous qualifications to enrol.

Students study at the University part-time for one year, which qualifies them for an interview onto either a part-time or full-time

degree delivered by the School of History, Archaeology and Religion.

Professor Kevin Passmore, Professor of History, School of History, Archaeology and Religion said: "Everyone in the School of History, Archaeology and Religion is extremely proud of the Exploring the Past pathway."

"It combines exciting research-led teaching with a welcoming and supportive environment which enables adults from all walks of life to study with us."

"Every lecturer wants adult learners on their modules. Exploring the Past has been fantastic at recruiting students who are an asset to our degrees."

Hornblower TV series), and she learnt about different sails and rigging, and how to steer and navigate.

It eventually led to her return to Cardiff in 2006 to discuss studying for a PhD. Now, some eight years later and married with two daughters, Dr Phillips completed her doctorate studies and began an academic career at the Open University in 2010.

Dr Phillips added: "It has taken more than eight years to complete my doctoral studies but I am very grateful to Cardiff University for supporting me throughout and today I feel proud to be a Doctor and a mother."

## Round-the-world voyage sparked love of maritime fiction

A round-the-world voyage and new-found knowledge of the sea has seen one graduate return to Cardiff to indulge her love of English literature.

Alexandra Caroline Phillips first completed a BA in English literature at Cardiff back in 1997. Following a career in sales and marketing Alexandra then completed an MA at King's College London. However, it wasn't until she left London to go travelling at the end of 2002 and embarked on a six-month leg of a round-the-world voyage she realised that her new-found love of the sea had sparked a passion

for maritime fiction and a return to Cardiff.

"I was in Thailand writing an article on Phuket when I was invited to participate in a regatta and, subsequently, was asked to sail as a cook on the last six-month leg of a round-the-world voyage," she adds.

This knowledge led her to research other maritime authors while continuing to sail on different ships, including the tall ship The Grand Turk (used in the

# Graduation for top sporting trio

A trio of top sporting talent graduate this week with the help of a unique support package.

Natalie Powell, Tom Barras and Chris Hugh are all members of the University's High Performance Programme (HPP).

The Programme provides structured support to individuals, enabling them to excel in both their academic and sporting careers, whilst raising the profile

and standard of sport at Cardiff University.

This year the High Performance Programme (HPP) has supported a record 75 students across 30 different sports.

Paul Jones, Performance Sport Officer for Cardiff University

Sport, said: "We are really proud of the achievements of all our sportspeople – but particular credit to Natalie, Tom and Chris who graduate this year.

"Their achievements show how Cardiff University Sport's investment in the High Performance Programme has

created an environment in which student athletes can develop and excel whilst in higher education.

"Balancing the life of a student at a Russell Group university with that of an aspiring elite athlete is far from easy and they have made many sacrifices along the way. It is fantastic to see them all graduate and we wish them well in the future."



### Natalie Powell

Biomedical Science graduate, Natalie Powell is the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games judo gold medallist. She is currently ranked eighth in the World Senior Rankings and first in Great Britain.

As well as her Commonwealth title Natalie has also won various medals at World Grand Prix's, World Masters and BUCS Championships. Natalie's most recent result was a very good fifth place whilst representing Great Britain in the European Games in Baku.



### Tom Barras

Physiotherapy graduate, Tom Barras combined his studies with elite rowing. As well as securing a place in the coveted Great Britain under 23s team he proved to be a key member of the England Seniors squad at last summer's Commonwealth Championships.

Having recently won a Gold medal in the Single Sculls at the BUCS Regatta, Tom will now represent British Universities in the European Universities Championships in Hannover, Germany.



### Chris Hugh

Dentistry graduate, Chris Hugh is a Futsal Welsh Senior International and Cardiff University Futsal club captain. This year he captained both the BUCS and National League teams to unprecedented success.

The University team won the BUCS Premier League and FAW Futsal Cup, which means they will be representing Wales in the UEFA Futsal Cup this summer.

# Honorary Fellows 2015

**A leading journalist and presenter, a Welsh and British & Irish Lions rugby captain and one of the UK's leading business women are amongst those to be honoured by Cardiff University during this week's degree ceremonies.**

## Susanna Reid

Respected journalist and presenter Susanna Reid presents Good Morning Britain.

Before joining ITV, Susanna presented BBC Breakfast, and hosted her own show Sunday Morning Live on BBC1. She stood in for Andrew Marr in 2013, and in September that year Susanna took part in the BBC1 show Strictly Come Dancing, making it all the way to the final.

During her career, Susanna has grilled the Prime Minister, talked to Kate Winslet and a host of other stars on the red carpet at the Oscars, auditioned for Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber



and been given a lesson in kung-fu by Jackie Chan.

Susanna studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the University of Bristol before completing her postgraduate studies at Cardiff University's School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies.

## Sam Warburton

Sam Warburton is a Welsh international rugby player. Sam plays regional rugby for the Cardiff Blues and was first capped for Wales in 2009. He has gone on to win 54 Wales caps. In June 2011, he was named as Wales's captain versus the Barbarians, and subsequently in August 2011 he was named as the Wales captain for the 2011 Rugby World Cup, at the age of just 22.



In April 2013, he was named the Lions' captain for the 2013

tour to Australia which they won. Warburton holds the record for the most Wales caps as captain, leading the side on 35 occasions.

## Professor Dame Anne Glover

Professor Dame Anne Glover CBE FRSE FASM is Vice-Principal for External Affairs and Dean for Europe at the University of Aberdeen. Professor Glover has a BSc in Biochemistry from Edinburgh and a PhD in Molecular Microbiology from Cambridge. From 2006 to 2011 she was the Chief Scientific Adviser for Scotland, before being appointed as the first Chief Scientific Adviser to the President of the European Commission in 2012, a position



she held for three years. In 2013 she was ranked as the 19th most powerful woman in the UK by Woman's Hour on BBC Radio 4.

## Ruth Hunt

Ruth Hunt was appointed Chief Executive of Stonewall in August 2014. She has successfully led the development of Stonewall's groundbreaking policy, campaigning and research outputs, including its work to tackle homophobic bullying in schools, effective interventions to improve the health of lesbian, gay and bisexual people and Stonewall's acclaimed leadership development programmes.



700 trans people and will see Stonewall use its platform and experience to help create real change for trans people.

She has also spearheaded Stonewall's commitment to campaign for trans equality; a decision that will shape Stonewall's work going forward. This historic move followed an extensive consultation with more than

In 2014, Ruth was voted the eighth most influential LGBT person in Britain in The Independent's Rainbow List.

## Philippa Gregory

Philippa Gregory was an established historian and writer when she discovered her interest in the Tudor period and wrote the novel *The Other Boleyn Girl*.



Now, 14 novels later, after writing a series on the magnificent Plantagenets, she is returning to the Tudors with Henry VIII's sixth wife.

Her other great interest is the charity that she founded nearly 20 years ago: *Gardens for The Gambia*. She has raised funds and paid for almost 200 wells in the country's primary schools.

## Laura Tenison

Laura Tenison is the founder and MD of JoJo Maman Bébé, the UK's leading boutique mother and baby brand.



Her company has grown organically from tiny start-up in 1993 to a current turnover of £50M and 700 employees.

It is run with a strict code of moral conduct; putting people and the planet above profit. Laura and her team are currently working on the export growth and a new distribution centre has been set up in the USA in order to

fulfil the growing number of stateside orders.

She is a regular mentor to other business people and also runs an environmental initiative that works to recycle little worn children's clothing for distribution by Barnardo's.

## David Pountney

David Pountney director, became internationally known through his production of *Katya Kabanova* at the 1972 Wexford Festival. Between 1975 and 1980, he was Director of Productions for Scottish Opera. He directed the world premiere of David Blake's *Toussaint* in 1977 (ENO) and went on to become ENO's Director of Productions in 1980, directing over 20 operas.



He has directed many world premieres, including three by Peter Maxwell Davies for which he also wrote the libretto, and has translated operas into English from Russian, Czech,

German and Italian. As a freelance director from 1992, he worked regularly in Zurich, at Vienna State Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper as well as opera houses in America and Japan, and in the UK has a long-standing association with Opera North. Since 2011 he has been Chief Executive and Artistic Director of WNO.

## Marcus McGilvray

Marcus McGilvray grew up in Monmouthshire and trained in London as a HIV Nurse Specialist.

Now based in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, Marcus is the founder and CEO of Africaid - Whizzkids United, a non-profit company that provides health, education and empowerment

## Ceri Powell

Ceri Powell is the Executive Vice-President of Exploration for Shell, overseeing technical aspects of exploration in the company and accountable for exploration operations and new business opportunities.

Ceri is an active member of the prestigious Advisory Board of the United Nations Sustainable Energy for All programme, chaired by the Secretary General of the UN. Since 2014 Ceri has served as a Non-Executive Director on the Board of Carillion PLC, and as the Chairman of the Board Sustainability Committee.

## Thomas Kielinger

Thomas Kielinger has been UK correspondent for the German national daily *Die Welt* since 1998, having previously reported for the paper from Washington, DC between 1977 and 1985. On his return he became editor-in-chief of the weekly *Rheinischer Merkur*, and in 1994 started his own business as writer, broadcaster and political consultant.



services to disadvantaged youth. Over 20 programmes make up WhizzKids United (all designed by Marcus) including sexual and reproductive health, HIV prevention and treatment, OVC care and support, girls' empowerment and a mixed gender football league all run from the WhizzKids United Health Academy.



Carillion is a construction and services company with an international portfolio including the UK, Canada and the Middle East.

As one of the most senior women in the Energy Industry today, Ceri has twice been awarded the accolade of being on the Fortune Top 50 most Powerful Women in International Business list.



Earlier in his career he was a Lecturer in German at Cardiff University, where in 1993 he became a fellow at the School of Journalism, Media and Cultural studies.

# TV Presenter, explorer, adventurer ... Dr

You might think that cycling the highest road in the world, canoeing the River Yukon, mountaineering in the Alps and Greenland, rock climbing in Europe and a glittering media career would be enough for most people but not for one intrepid 2015 graduate.

Niall becomes Dr McCann this week after successfully completing his PhD in the School of Biosciences studying Baird's tapir - the largest mammal in the Neotropics and one of the most threatened species in all of the Americas.

"It has been a juggling act, that's for sure," explains Dr McCann. "I've been juggling expeditions, media work and extra-curricular conservation work with my academic studies and it is fair to say that my PhD did suffer from the extra workload, which would explain why I spent six months correcting my original thesis!" he added.

However, whilst it's been a difficult juggling act Dr McCann insists that it was made easier by a supportive research environment and the support of his supervisor, Professor Mike Bruford.

Dr McCann adds: "When I decided that I wanted to do a PhD in conservation genetics I asked a lot of family friends - who work in biology departments at other UK universities - who they would recommend as an ideal supervisor.

"I received several recommendations from each person, but one name was common to each list, Professor Mike Bruford.

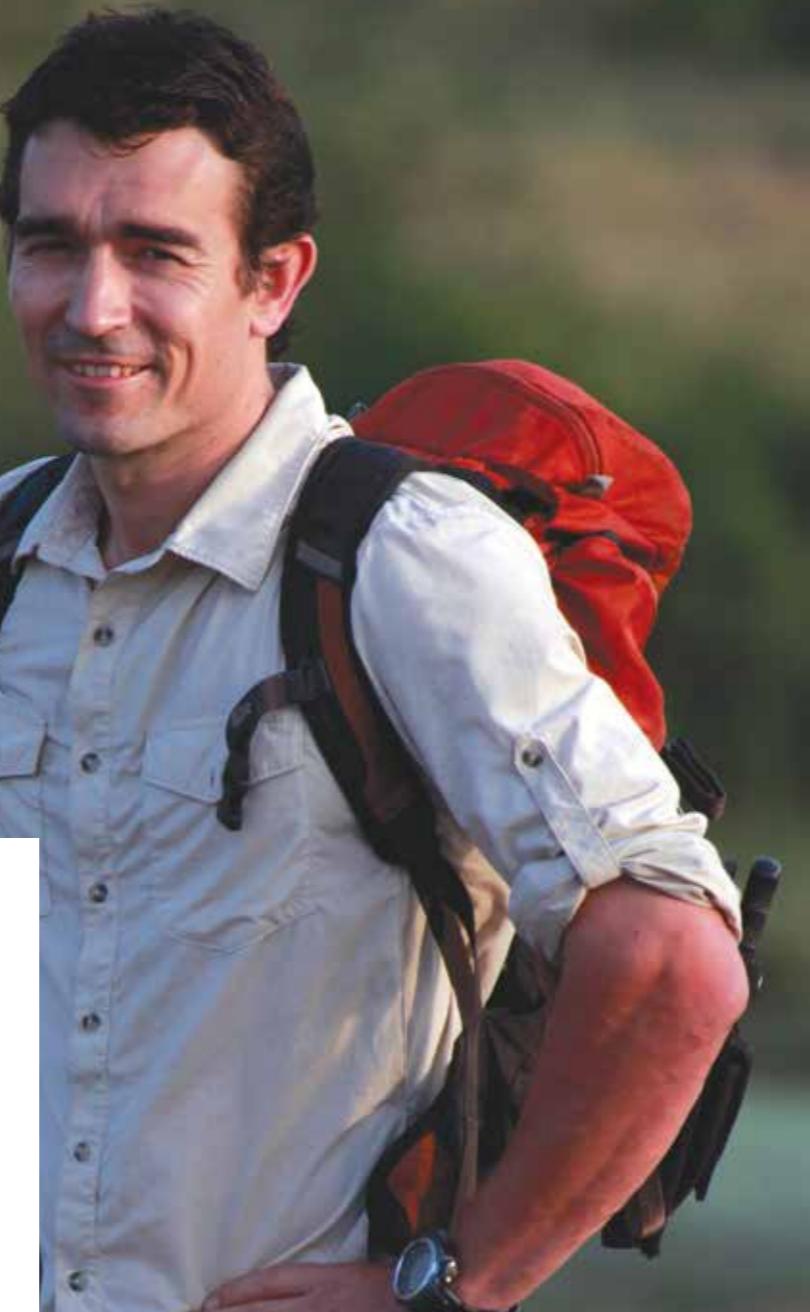
"If I could single out one thing it would be the wonderfully inclusive and multicultural nature of Mike's lab, the daily cultural exchange that we enjoy, the rich conversation and the informal support network that exists to help whenever help is required.

"Mike is a constant inspiration. Not only has he had a stellar academic career but he is a concerned conservationist who is dedicating more and more of his time to conservation at precisely the time that the world most needs it."

Dr McCann has dedicated his life to seeking out adventure in the natural world, either in combination with his zoological studies, or on stand-alone adventures.

Dr McCann recently completed filming the second season of this series, which won two awards at Worldfest Houston International Film Festival. The Mountain Gorilla episode won a Special Jury Award, and Niall Picked up a Platinum Remi for best on-screen talent.

In his career as a zoologist, Dr McCann has specialised



As a result of the success of this documentary, which won two international awards, Niall landed a six-part wildlife adventure series '*Biggest and Baddest*' with Animal Planet Canada and Nat Geo Wild, directed by Peter von Puttkamer and produced by Gryphon Productions.

As well as his involvement in research, Niall is actively engaged in ongoing conservation projects in Honduras, Nepal and Guyana, and is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

So, what's next for the intrepid Dr McCann? "I hope to stay in Cardiff and combine teaching and research with my media work and my ongoing conservation activities."

# It's far from 'a dog's life' for Dr Dando

A demanding full-time job, the challenge of becoming a first-time mum, not to mention running around after three sprightly Labradors, is enough for most people - but not for graduate Dr Victoria Dando.

Graduation marks the end of seven gruelling years of part-time research study comparing the reporting of climate change and terrorism in the British press.

All of her hard work pays off this week when Dr Dando finally achieves her long-term ambition of becoming a Doctor of Philosophy.

"I'm not going to lie, it is extremely challenging juggling full-time work with postgraduate study," according to Dr Dando, who is currently on maternity leave from her role as a Senior Communications Officer following the birth of her son, Teddy.

"The years of researching and writing have brought happiness and sadness, milestones and memories. Two house moves, the second into a beautiful building in need of total renovation, have tested the robustness of my thesis filing and my resolve.

"It's taken an incredible amount of self-discipline, some very long nights and weekends to get through. However, with the support - and patience - of my husband, family and friends not to mention my supervisor, Professor Justin Lewis, I got there in the end," she adds.

Not content with achieving a first in her undergraduate degree and a successful career at BBC Wales, Victoria returned to the University in 2008 to take up a role in the University's Public Relations Office, as it was back then, and embarked on her part-time postgraduate study. However, despite her studies coming to an end, it seems this is not the end of the line for Dr Dando's academic endeavours.

Having now completed her research, she hopes to publish her research findings. She also jokes she can finally get to know her husband, Martin, now her research is complete.



Dr Victoria Dando pictured with her son, Teddy, and her three Labradors, Sophie, Willow and Louis.

Dr Dando adds: "The plan now is to get the work published in key academic journals, adjust to becoming a first time mum and balance my new life with ongoing research and full-time job."

Dr Dando is set to return to her full-time University role towards the end of 2015, six months since giving birth to her first child.

## A production line of top rugby talent

Rugby player, James Thomas, follows in the footsteps of a growing band of graduates to have juggled their academic studies with a professional rugby career.

James, who plays for the Newport Gwent Dragons, graduates from the School of Biosciences this week.

However, for all his professional playing success, James still

considers playing for the University's team and winning the annual Varsity grudge match as one of his most notable highlights of his rugby career.

James said: "Varsity was a brilliant experience. To play in the Millennium Stadium in front of the whole University was an unbelievable experience.

"For me when I joined the University I was just coming

back from two bad knee injuries. I hadn't played for close to 14 months so the rugby club allowed me to ease back in and play regularly and ultimately allow me to start enjoying the game again."

James's Newport Gwent Dragons team mate, Hallam Amos, is a current undergraduate medical student.

Undertaking two such taxing careers is a big ask for anyone but it seems Hallam's making a pretty good job of it so far, as his call-up to make his recent Wales debut on the wing against Tonga confirms.



# Enriching student life

Staff and students have been recognised for their contribution to the student experience at the annual University Enriching Student Life Awards.

The contribution and dedication of students and staff have been celebrated at the University's annual Enriching Student Life Awards.

The annual awards provide an opportunity to give thanks to those who work to enhance the student experience at Cardiff University.

Among a long list of winners were Einir Evans and Jumana Nabulsi.

Einir secured the Enriching Student Life Award for helping to provide profound and life-changing opportunities to care leavers, whilst Jumana was chosen as overall winner of the Student Academic Rep of the Year, and was commended for being friendly, approachable, dedicated and passionate about her work.

The Enriching Student Life Awards are organised annually by Cardiff University Students' Union, and are an opportunity for students to nominate members of staff and fellow students who have made a difference to their studies and experience.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Elizabeth Treasure, said: "These awards are an excellent example of partnership, just one facet demonstrating how student engagement is helping the University to raise the profile and prestige of education."

"The awards themselves focus on key aspects of education and the student experience, for example the Innovation and Effectiveness awards reflect the culture for lifelong learning that we instill in our staff."

## The full list of 2015 winners

### Most Uplifting Staff Member

Emma Stone,  
School of Dentistry

### Personal Tutor of the Year

Michelle Aldridge-Waddon,  
School of English,  
Communication and  
Philosophy

### Most Effective Teacher

Mark Elliott,  
School of Chemistry

### Most Innovative Staff Member

Ilona Johnson, School of  
Dentistry

### The Employability Award

Catherine Jones,  
School of Psychology

### Student Rep Coordinator of the Year

Louise Hughes,  
School of Pharmacy

### Enriching Student Life Award

Einir Evans, Student Support and Wellbeing

### Vice-Chancellor's Award for Commitment to Student Experience

Claire Morgan,  
College of Biomedical and Life Sciences

### Lifetime Achievement Award

Chris Turner,  
Academic and Student Support Services

### Honour Roll

Maryambibi Bham,  
College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

### Student Academic Rep of the Year

Maximilian Schulze Wenning,  
College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

### Student Academic Rep of the Year

Jumana Nabulsi,  
College of Biomedical and Life Sciences

### Student Academic Rep of the Year

Thom Davies,  
College of Physical Sciences and Engineering

# Cardiff People

## Laura Hodges – Class of 2010

Laura Hodges graduated in journalism in 2010. Since graduating she spent a year in London working at a couple of beauty brand head offices, then returned to Cardiff and worked for a digital design agency. Laura returned to the University when she joined the University's Communications Team in September 2014.

**Dead or alive - who would be your three ideal dinner guests and why?**

Nigella Lawson – she can cook.  
Rachel Bilson – so we can chat and realise we are meant to be best friends.  
Michael Buble – he can provide the music.

**In Desert Island Discs style, if you were cast away alone on a desert island which three songs would you take with you?**

*Stand by me* – Ben E King;  
*Love on Top* – Beyoncé;  
*Killer Queen* – Queen.

**Who and what inspires you most?**

Anyone who has written a novel.  
One day I will write one.

**What makes you smile?**  
Music, food and the people I love.

**Tweet or not to Tweet?**  
Tweet!



**If you could banish one thing into room 101, what would it be?**  
Traffic Wardens.

**If you were Vice-Chancellor for the day what would you do?**  
I would put a huge tent in Coopers Field and hire a load of comedians and invite all staff out for an evening of laughing. Some advance warning to plan this would be appreciated though!

"I play it for the academic processions as they walk in and it's not a bad tune either!"

He has a number of other favourite pieces for graduation including the middle section of Bach's Pièce d'Orgue and Crown Imperial by William Walton.

Mr Court is an illustrious musician who has played with most of the leading orchestras in the country.

He performed on the recent BBC Dr Who Symphonic Spectacular tour with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and also at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition which was broadcast internationally.

But he is always keen to continue his tradition of performing at graduation ceremonies.

"When I started playing at graduation, it was called University College, Cardiff in those days and the choir used to sing the College Song," he said.

"It was written for the opening of the library in Cathays Park by the Professor of Music at the time, David Evans.

## Organist celebrates 40 years of graduation ceremonies



The University organist is celebrating 40 years of hitting the right note at our graduation ceremonies when he performs again this year.

Robert Court, a freelance keyboard player, first performed as a Cardiff music student when Graduation was held in the Great Hall of the Students' Union.

He has performed every year since, apart from 1979 which clashed with his wedding.

Mr Court said he looked forward to playing at the event – now staged at St Davids Hall in Cardiff city centre – every year.

"I love playing in these ceremonies – graduation is such a milestone in people's lives," he said.

# From care leaver to editor

**Journalism graduate Michael O'Connell Davidson was made homeless at 16, and with no family support, persevered through sixth-form college while living in a rented room.**



Now, he graduates with first class honours as one of the brightest future prospects from Cardiff University's School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies.

Care leavers are the most under-represented group in higher education.

Michael is among just seven per cent of care leavers who made it to full-time education by the age 19, compared with 43 per cent of all young people.

After three years of struggling to balance a full-time college education with full-time work, Michael got the grades needed to pursue his dream of studying journalism.

Yet his problems weren't over because he had no support for his application for student finance. His future seemed in jeopardy and he was left in limbo, "without a box to tick."

However, Cardiff University's Student Support Centre refused

to let Michael fall through the cracks; they offered him all-year-round accommodation with the sustenance of a Care Leaver Bursary worth £1000, and further financial support in his second and third year.

"Student Finance and other public bodies dedicated to supporting young people pale by comparison when placed next to the work of Einir Evans and all those at Cardiff University involved in working with care leavers and students from non-standard backgrounds."

Further information on the support available can be found at: [www.cardiff.ac.uk/advice/careleavers/care-leavers.html](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/advice/careleavers/care-leavers.html)

## Family affair for mother-daughter law duo

A mother and daughter thought to be the first to have studied the same degree at the same time will be celebrating during graduation this week.

Jane Heard enrolled on a BA in Law in 2012 and her daughter, Chloe Walkley followed suit in 2013. Following three years of study, Jane graduates this week, one year ahead of her daughter.

Jane said: "I always had a keen interest in law but did not have the opportunity to go to University when I finished school. I had, among other things, worked as a legal secretary so had a good insight into life in a legal firm.

"Once my children were in secondary school, I enrolled with the Open University and studied law for four years part-time while working in human resources. But life threw some obstacles in the way and I had to postpone my studies.

"I eventually enrolled again at Cardiff University in 2012, and have continued working in human resources alongside my degree."

Being a mother-daughter duo at university has resulted in a few unusual situations, as Jane explains.

"My friends ask if we work together on everything but being a year below means a lot of it changes. I think it's more the fact

it's funny that I was friends with her now boyfriend Joe before they even met, and when she brings him home we talk more than they do!"

"Sometimes, in lectures or in tutorials, the teaching staff would comment to the students "you probably won't remember this, but your parents will!".

But despite the uniqueness of the situation, Chloe is incredibly proud of her mum's achievements.

Chloe added: "I definitely wouldn't change it. My mum is an incredible person and one of my biggest inspirations, especially when I made the decision to study law.

"I feel very privileged to have been able to share this experience with her and I love seeing her happy doing a degree she is so passionate about. Plus I never have to buy any textbooks!"



## A helping hand to a successful career

**As celebrations begin, it's unlikely that the University's Careers and Employability service is at the front of most graduates minds. But, as the partying ends and the graduation photo takes pride of place in the mantelpiece, attention turns to the next steps...**

As a Cardiff graduate you can access careers and employability workshops, employer events and careers fairs to assist you in moving from study to employment.

You can access careers advice for up to two years after graduation.

From your own Careers Account you can register to book for appointments, see event listings and set up job searches and alerts for jobs with organisations targeting Cardiff University.

For more information contact the Careers & Employability Team, drop in at The Student Support Centre, 50 Park Place or find them online: [www.cardiff.ac.uk/alumni/benefits/careers](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/alumni/benefits/careers).

### Would you like a paid internship?

Available in local organisations (subsidised by Santander), Internships are available all year round. For more information contact the Work Experience Team Email: [experienceworks@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:experienceworks@cardiff.ac.uk), Tel: 029 2087 6409.

### Do you have a business or social enterprise idea, or want to gain new skills?

Alumni can access one-to-one business advice, business start-up and skills workshops, FREE start-up office space for technology-based businesses, networking opportunities, business mentoring and coaching and guest speaker events, for up to five years after graduating. If you're a graduate interested in supporting student entrepreneurs through mentoring

or sharing your experience, contact us.

Email: [enterprise@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:enterprise@cardiff.ac.uk)  
Tel: 029 2078 1442.

### Are you willing to share your career plans with Cardiff University?

Later this year you will be sent a survey and asked to provide information on what you are doing six months after graduation. The Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) Survey helps to determine general employment and study outcomes from higher education courses. The University has a legal obligation to record this information for the UK Government.

Find out more:  
[www.cardiff.ac.uk/alumni/get-involved/graduate-survey](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/alumni/get-involved/graduate-survey)

### Cardiff News

**Editor:** Claire Sanders

**The Editor reserves the right to edit contributions received. Whilst care is taken to ensure the accuracy of information, this cannot be guaranteed.**

**Views expressed in 'Cardiff News' do not necessarily reflect those of the University. Items of interest relating to the University and its staff are welcome and should be sent to: Communications and Marketing Department.**

**Tel:** 029 2087 5596

**Twitter:** @cardiffuninews

**Email:** [newsletter@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:newsletter@cardiff.ac.uk)

**Online:** [www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/newsletter.html](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/news/newsletter.html)

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# 2015

## You've graduated – what's next?

You're now a member of Cardiff University's 120,000-strong global alumni community.

### Don't forget ...

- Stay connected to Cardiff on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter
- Join alumni events all over the world
- Share your successes so fellow alumni, students and staff can celebrate with you
- Respond to the national Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education Survey in six months' time
- Keep the University posted of your contact details so we can invite you to alumni events, share career opportunities, and enable networks around the world.

Send updates to: [alumni@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@cardiff.ac.uk)