

Horizons

The newsletter for **Cardiff Met** Supporters

Issue 10 | Spring 2016

Donations enable *Cardiff Met* students to disseminate life- changing research at **ARTERY** conference in Krakow

Your donations to The Development Fund have enabled two students to attend the international **ARTERY** conference in Krakow to present their 3rd year research findings, undertaken as part of their Sports Biomedicine and Nutrition undergraduate studies. The students, Matthew Armstrong and Niamh Chapman, attended the conference as part of supervisor Dr. Barry McDonnell's Vascular Physiology Research Group. This internationally recognised conference is the world's flagship conference in the area of clinical physiology associated with Hypertension and Vascular Disease.

Continued on Page 1



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We are committed to reducing the environmental impact of our activities. If you would prefer to receive this newsletter by email, do let us know.

Horizons yn Gymraeg:
www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/horizons

If you would like to get in touch you can email us at: developmentoffice@cardiffmet.ac.uk or call on 029 2020 1590.

Alternatively, write to us at: Development and Alumni Relations Office, Cyncoed Campus, Cyncoed Road, Cardiff, CF23 6XD

For more information about our fundraising activities, please see our website:

www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/supportus



Welcome to Horizons! If you are reading this for the first time, perhaps after making a donation towards the Cyncoed Campus sports developments, welcome to our community of Cardiff Met supporters!

In this edition we focus on several projects made possible by donations like yours. Students from the School of Health Sciences were able to travel to Krakow to share exciting biomedical research that they have been working on as part of their undergraduate degrees. We were able to carry out a Community Philosophy project, the first of its kind in Cardiff. Your donations have helped fledgling student

entrepreneurs to start and grow their small businesses, and you are supporting students of all disciplines who are in financial crisis through the Student Hardship Fund.

The Development Fund is very important in enabling these opportunities and we would not be able to fulfil our ambitions without the funding made available through the support of our very generous donors.

I hope that you enjoy reading about how you are making a difference. If you would like to pop in for a coffee and visit the campus, we'd be delighted to see you.

Thank you!

Andrew Walker
Director of External Engagement
awalker@cardiffmet.ac.uk

Gift Aid and Tax Relief for Donors

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All you need to do is fill in the Gift Aid section of the donation form or tell us verbally that you want us to claim Gift Aid. If you are a Higher Rate taxpayer, you can also request a rebate for the difference between the basic rate and higher rate when you submit your tax returns. We can also accept gifts of shares, securities and other investments which are also eligible for tax relief.

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Your Support of Students: Researchers of the future

...Continued from front page

The introduction and close network of world leading academics at this particular conference enabled the students to meet and talk openly about their research in a professional but friendly environment and has had an immensely positive impact on both students' career progression. Attending the conference directly led to both students receiving PhD offers at internationally renowned universities (Menzies Institute, University of Tasmania, Australia and Kings College London, UK).

"Both students gained invaluable experience and significant international visibility from this opportunity and would like to thank all the alumni donors who have supported the Development Fund to enable this to happen."

Dr Barry McDonnell

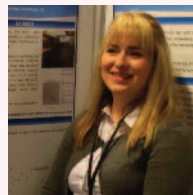
Sport Biomedicine Students, Matthew Armstrong and Niamh Chapman delivering their 3rd year research project findings at the international ARTERY conference in Krakow, Poland, October 2015.



Matthew's area of research:

As we get older, our arteries age and get stiffer which leads to increased blood pressure and risk of heart attack and stroke. A number

of factors increase this ageing process and affect the stiffness of arteries e.g. obesity and diseases like diabetes, where individuals have high levels of inflammation in their blood. Matthew investigated if a newly discovered marker of inflammation present in human blood (soluble IL-6 receptor) was associated with increased arterial stiffness in young individuals. Matthew's novel findings suggest that elevated concentrations of this blood marker at an early age may be indicative of an underlying vulnerability to inflammation associated with arterial stiffening.



Niamh's area of research:

Stiffening of the arterial system is an inevitable consequence of ageing. However, increased physical activity has been shown to delay this stiffening process.

Niamh's work illustrated that even at an early age, increased levels of physical activity have a beneficial effect on arterial health. What was even more novel, was that the measures of arterial health were observed over 24 hours, which is a more robust measure of actual arterial health compared to a one off reading which varies depending on the time of day. This means of assessing vascular health over 24 hours will have major implications for understanding the relationships between exercise, ageing and disease management for the future.

"The experience I have gained from the ARTERY conference in Krakow has been invaluable to me.

I would like to thank all those whose donations funded the trip. As a direct result of the conference I will hopefully be starting my PhD next year. Thank you!"

Matt Armstrong

"I would like to sincerely thank the alumni whose donations made this possible. Your generosity provided me with an opportunity that has transformed my career opportunities and has made me very excited for my future - thank you".

Niamh Chapman

One of Cardiff Met's oldest gyms gets a face lift, thanks to donations

Over summer 2015 the Syd Aaron Gymnasium at Cyncoed was refurbished. Following many years of daily use as a teaching facility for undergraduate students and as a training facility for children attending the junior academies, the gym and its equipment were in need of replacement and redecoration.

The windows were replaced and the walls painted; this improved the levels of light and heat retention in the gym. Included in the new equipment was a semi-suspended pit with new loose foam and wall padding, new rings, a competition beam, an inflatable tumble track and new landing mats.

Thanks to your generous donations the gym named after



one of Cardiff Met's most famous lecturers is now a specialist gymnastic facility. It is fully equipped to meet the coaching education needs

and gymnastic specific abilities of students within the School of Sport, Cardiff Met Gymnastics squad and the Junior Gymnastics Academy.

The Gymnasium is equipped with:

- 12m x 12m fully sprung floor area
- Tumble track (14m), trampoline, vaulting table and parallel bars (into foam pit)
- High bar and rings (over foam pit)
- Asymmetric Bars (over competition landing area)
- Beam (full competition size and floor based)
- Springboards and trampettes
- Full range of functional skill develop foam modules and landing mats





Community philosophy participants with Cardiff Met tutor Jan Huyton

Your support of community: bringing philosophy to Cardiff

A recent donation has enabled Cardiff Met's Widening Access Team to develop an innovative Community Philosophy project to benefit our local community.

The University aims to ensure that everyone with the determination, skills and desire to access Higher Education should be able to do so. That's why our Widening Access Team work closely with local communities helping to raise aspirations and encourage all people who may think higher education is "not for them" to start thinking about the opportunities available to them.

Community or 'grass roots philosophy' is an established practice whereby a facilitator uses a model of philosophical

discussion to encourage group dialogue about life's big questions. Learning about philosophy and philosophers may sometimes be included, but community philosophy is much more about the process of 'philosophising'. It can be used as a tool to develop critical thinking, empathy, social skills, and self-awareness. It has successfully been used as a model to help some groups to make a transition into mainstream society - this has included elite sports professionals, prisoners and people with mental health needs.

Over the past year, Cardiff Met has worked with Inroads (a drug and substance misuse charity), The Wallich (a homelessness charity) and St Giles Trust Cymru (a charity who aim to break the

cycle of offending) to deliver the project. The overall aim of the project was to explore taking philosophical constructs, which are often thought to be elitist or overtly intellectual, and bring them to people in the community. Although the sessions were initially facilitated by a tutor, participants were encouraged to lead discussions themselves so they could develop the skills and abilities required to run the sessions independently after the project ended. Making the project sustainable in the community was our key aim.

We are really grateful to the Simon Gibson Charitable Trust for enabling this project to go ahead – thank you!

Your support of opportunity: Student entrepreneurship



"The whole experience has been fantastic and it has given me a real insight into what it's like running a small business."

Cardiff Met Business Management student Nia Hassett-Rees sold her upcycled artwork at Cardiff Christmas Market in 2014.



Thanks to your support, the Development Fund has been able to fund two projects through Cardiff Met's Centre for Student Entrepreneurship this year.

The Flash Fund (which was also supported by your donations in 2014), received £2,000 this year. Flash Fund is a week-long micro-funding competition, open to Cardiff Met students from all five academic schools. It is designed to engage with students and graduates who have either started trading on a small scale, or who have a great idea, but need a little help to get started.

Twenty students were supported and their successful business ideas were very diverse, ranging from post-apocalyptic fashion, to coach trips and illustrative reportage.

The award of Flash Funding is often the tipping point which encourages students to go from the 'idea' stage into test trading;

"The 'Flash Funding' has been instrumental in taking my business further. There are still items which I need to purchase in order to move forwards, but the money has made a huge difference to the speed in which my business has progressed. Thank you!"

Gemma Iqbal, student entrepreneur

The second project received £1,000 and has enabled student entrepreneurs to gain hands-on experience in a real-world setting – on a market stall. It has allowed more students the opportunity to develop their entrepreneurial skills through hands-on activity at Cardiff's Christmas, Easter, and summer markets. Students will be able to sell their products, test the market, check their pricing and gain valuable feedback from the public. Funding from your donations means that students do not have to pay a fee to sell from the market stall, thereby ensuring that all have access to this opportunity regardless of their own financial circumstances.

The Centre for Student Entrepreneurship works under the ethos of 'learning by doing'. Initial start-up bursaries from Flash Fund, combined with test trading opportunities such as the market stalls, give our students an invaluable insight into the practicalities of running a business.

Thank you for enabling these fantastic projects to continue this year - you are supporting the entrepreneurs of the future!

Your support of research: Cystic Fibrosis

Cardiff Met's Department of Biomedical Sciences has a dedicated Microbiology and Infection Research Team. Over the years, their award-winning work has been generously supported by charitable trusts and alumni donors. At present, one particular area of their work being supported by donations relates to reducing lung infection in patients with Cystic Fibrosis.

In issue 9 of Horizons, we saw Dr Rowena Jenkins and Dr Helen

Brown investigating the use of Manuka honey in controlling the bacteria associated with Cystic Fibrosis and they have since received promising data results. Now thanks to the support of alumni donors through the Development Fund, Drs Jenkins and Brown have also been able to explore the possibility of isolating and identifying new antimicrobial compounds from other natural sources, such as plant material. They have been making great

progress and have recently isolated an active fraction from a natural source, which has antibacterial efficacy against several bacteria related to Cystic Fibrosis.

Ultimately, their research aims to develop novel compounds and formulations for use in Cystic Fibrosis and other bacterial infections, improving patients' lives and their long-term prognosis.

Your support of student resources: Cardiff Met libraries

Thanks to all our alumni and staff donors who direct their support to Cardiff Met libraries we have been able to improve our collection of eBooks on a variety of subjects that directly support our students and academic staff.

The eBook scheme follows a 'Patron Driven Acquisition' model, which allows library users to partner with the library and choose the content that is most relevant for their research needs. The eBook platform means that our Librarians can select a broad collection of eBooks (more

than what they would normally purchase outright) and make these available for users to browse from within the library catalogue. The library is only charged for the eBooks that experience substantial usage, and access is made available to the library user immediately.





Entrance view of the new sports hall complex

Fundraising Appeal Updates:

Cyncoed Campus Developments

You may already be aware that we have been fundraising to support some new developments on the Cyncoed Campus. Cardiff Met is seeking to safeguard its sport programmes for the 18,000+ children and young people that use its facilities every year, through a major redevelopment of its sports facilities. With donations already

received from the Garfield Weston Foundation, alumni and other charitable trusts, the project will transform the 1970s-era facilities over three years. The proposed works include a new sports hall complex, a replacement swimming pool, new outdoor running track and 3G pitch and improvements to NIAC.

During term-time, the Cyncoed Campus has over 2,500 children participating in a wide variety of activities every week. These new facilities will provide an outstanding experience for our local community, children in particular, which we believe will help to encourage a lifelong love of sport.



World Awareness Days

Some of you will have been receiving our email updates on the impact that Cardiff Met has been making in a range of fields on World Awareness Days. In the past year we have focussed on a range

of health issues such as Malaria, Diabetes and Cancer – all of which we are helping to address through transformational research. In many cases, this research would not be possible without the donations we

receive. If you have missed these, make sure we have your correct email address by updating your details at www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/updateyourdetails



Student Hardship Fund

With the cost of living rising, many students will face a severe financial crisis at some point during their studies. Cardiff Met's Student Hardship Fund is now more important than ever. It has been over a year now since we launched our Student Hardship Fund appeal

and we have been overwhelmed by your response. Almost 200 alumni and staff have signed up to make regular monthly donations to support the Student Hardship Fund. This fund is used to create emergency bursaries for students in immediate financial crisis; it is

making a life-changing difference to our most disadvantaged students. Evidence demonstrates that these additional funds play a crucial role in allowing students to continue their studies instead of having to drop out due to financial problems.

“On behalf of the students that are helped and the staff that support them, a very sincere thank you to all those that donate - you make a real difference.”

Karen Robson (Acting Dean of Students)





Our Supporters

Cardiff Metropolitan University would like to publicly thank all alumni, staff, friends and organisations for their generosity over the past 12 months. Through philanthropic support the University can remain truly progressive.

Names in bold indicate Cardiff Met staff members.

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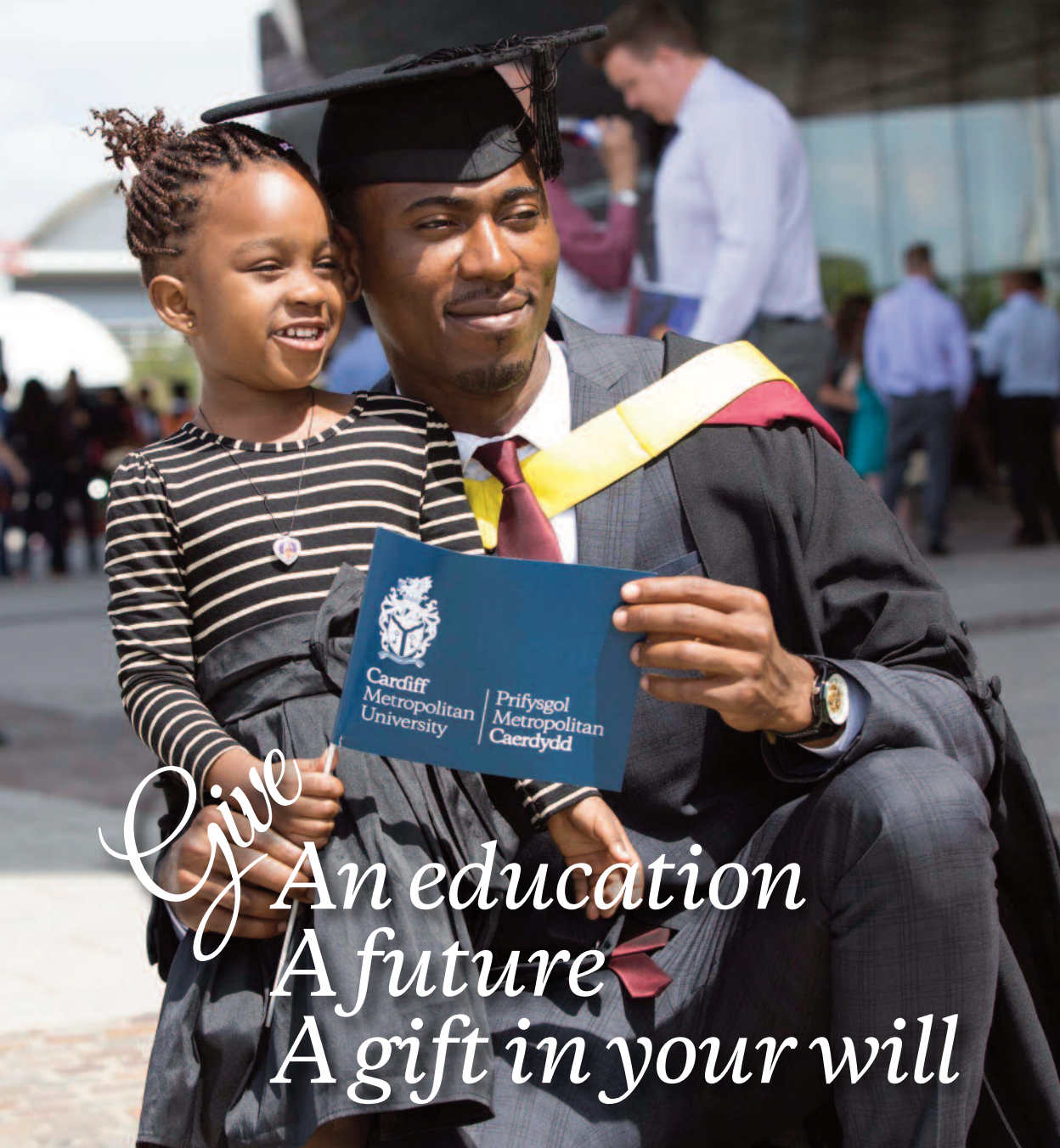
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www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/supportus
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