Caroline Radnor

1. What do you do?
   I am the University’s Sustainable Travel Coordinator, responsible for implementing the Sustainable Travel Plan to help achieve our carbon reduction targets. I also help to improve the wellbeing of the workforce and future development of the campus, implementing initiatives around walking, cycling, public transport and reducing the need to travel.

2. What do you really do?
   Try and get people to leave their cars at home and travel sustainably!

3. How do you get to work?
   Train from Lichfield.

4. What’s the best aspect of your job?
   Having the opportunity to make a difference and work with very a diverse group of people. Being an alumna of the University it’s great to be working at the place I originally studied.

5. What’s the worst aspect of your job?
   It is a challenge trying to change people’s attitudes and behaviour towards travelling sustainably.

6. What would you like to be doing in five years’ time?
   Progressing my career at the University.

7. What do you enjoy most about University life?
   I love the campus, it’s such a great environment to work in and there is always something going on.

8. How do you unwind?
   Spending time with friends and family, cycling and going to concerts.

9. Which book is on your bedside table?
   Picking up the Pieces by Paul Britton.

10. What is your favourite tipple?
    Red wine.

11. What makes a good night out?
    Dinner and dancing with my husband, family and friends.

12. Which animal are you most like?
    A butterfly as I’m very social and interact with lots of different groups of people both professionally and socially.

13. Describe your favourite holiday.
    The Maldives; sunshine, relaxation and cocktails!

14. What is your favourite sport?
    Watching – probably tennis and playing – you can’t beat a game of rounders!

15. Who are the top three people on your fantasy dinner party list?
    Jon Bon Jovi
    Paul Britton
    Sir Winston Churchill.

16. If you were a superheroine, who would you be?
    Superwoman!

17. What has been the highlight of your life to date?
    It has to be our wedding day in December 2008. I’d love to do it all over again!

18. What could you banish one thing from the world what would it be?
    Ignorance.

19. Describe yourself in three words
    Thoughtful, reliable and happy.

20. What is your personal motto?
    Keep smiling.

Have you read the feature on sustainable travel in this issue? Turn to page 8 for more.

Would you like to appear on Question Time or know a colleague who would?
Contact: university-buzz@bham.ac.uk
An engaged university

I am often asked by colleagues (and my family), ‘Exactly what is the Provost and Vice-Principal?’ Indeed, the question came up again from a Head of School over dinner at the excellent University Leadership Forum meeting recently. Well, the title Provost was originally ecclesiastical: the Provost was the immediate subordinate of the Abbot in a monastery or, of the Bishop in a cathedral. In England the title of Provost in cathedrals was completely replaced by that of Dean; how times have changed. The title later migrated into the academy and is in common usage in North America and Australasia, where it sometimes appears as Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs. At this University, the Provost has specific oversight of the University’s academic work and, crucially, the necessary resources required to deliver a high-academic standard. This includes the annual compact process with Heads of College and Corporate Services, agreeing student numbers, research targets and staffing requirements, as well as opportunities for strategic investment. The Vice-Principal role, meanwhile, is to support directly the Vice-Chancellor and Provost in his challenging role of leading this great University and is particularly responsible for external engagement. In combining the two roles, the University is making a statement about the interconnected nature of our academic work and our external engagement as well as our international aspirations. For me, being Provost and Vice-Principal means being involved in some of the most exciting work the University does.

Engagement in action

One of the five strategic goals in the new Strategic Framework is to enhance our performance and status as an engaged University. This will involve our academic and professional staff, our students and our extended community of alumni, enhancing the University’s position as a body capable of leading local, national and international agendas. I hope you will agree that in this issue of Buzz we can see several examples of this in action. A few weeks ago I represented the University at the launch of the new National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Centre for Surgical Reconstruction and Microbiology at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the culmination of several months of intense discussions with the Ministry of Defence and the NHS, with the University as a key partner. This £20 million collaboration will lead to ground-breaking advances that have the potential, not only to save the lives of our soldiers in the field, but also of accident victims here at home. Microbiology research at the Centre will be supported by the University’s high-throughput sequencing capability, and laboratory studies will be complemented by the University’s world-leading expertise in clinical trials. The Centre is a compelling example of how translational research is worth originating in our laboratories can lead directly to better care for patients.

Leading locally

The University is also an important leader regionally. Many of you will be aware that the Coalition Government has abolished the Regional Development Agencies, including our local Advantage West Midlands. As AWM pulls back, regional organisations such as the University become increasingly important through engagement in partnerships with other key players. A good example of this is the Science City with West Midlands Alliance, a package of collaborative research between the Universities of Birmingham and Warwick, building on three areas of complementary research strengths of regional and national relevance: energy futures, advanced materials, and translational medicine. This is a remarkable success story funded by AWM initially and now seemingly successful in leveraging research and commercial funding. We will continue to lead this initiative after AWM’s closure because we committed to our aim of building on the strong scientific base in the Birmingham region to benefit the region’s economy and residents.

Our global profile

Another exciting area of development is our global profile. I chair the Strategic Review of Global Engagement Group, a diverse group of academic and non-academic staff as well as several members of our University Council. The Review has been tasked to look at three areas: the University’s global engagement strategy, new international markets (including Brazil) and our overseas presence (for example our recent proposal for a University of Birmingham Centre in Guangzhou, China). The Group will report in the summer term and I am confident that this work and Vice-Principal’s initiatives will maximise Birmingham’s global impact and profile.

Celebrating staff

But perhaps the best part of my job is engaging with people here on campus. When I moved across to this role from Dean of Medicine the thing that struck me most was the passion, commitment and enthusiasm of staff, wanting to make the University a great environment for students and colleagues alike. So there we have examples of some of the challenges ahead, this vibrancy still runs through the community and was exemplified to me by the recent Birmingham University Awards for Tremendous Achievement (BUAFTA), details of which appear in this issue. These awards, as you all know, are an opportunity to celebrate the success of administrative, technical and support staff who have made an outstanding contribution across the University. As the line goes – ‘we all know people who do a great job for our students, colleagues and visitors day in day out; those awards are by staff, for staff’. It was such a privilege to be involved in that ceremony, to see our wonderful leaders and winners living the University’s mission and values and recognising each other’s efforts.

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Major collaboration with University of Nottingham announced

The University recently announced a new framework for collaboration with the University of Nottingham. The two universities have many complementary strengths and share characteristics of scale, history, outstanding research, high quality student experience and international engagement. As UK higher education faces its most challenging time for a generation, this signature partnership will offer a distinctive approach to working together and sharing expertise – where it is in both universities’ mutual interest to do so. Creative approaches to developing intellectual capital are at the heart of the partnership. The framework for collaboration will see us working jointly with Nottingham in six areas:

- Joint academic appointments
- Teaching, learning and student experience
- Research initiatives
- International opportunities, including emerging markets and student mobility
- Business engagement and knowledge transfer
- Management and administration

As details emerge of what opportunities this framework may bring for individuals and teams, staff will be kept informed. Learn more www.intranet.bham.ac.uk/staff/news/framework.

New members of University Executive Board (UEB)

Professor Adam Tickell
Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research and Knowledge Transfer

Professor Karen O’Brien
Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Education

Professor David Eastwood
Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research

Karen joined the University in February and was previously Vice-Principal (Research, Enterprise and Communications) at Royal Holloway, University of London. She brings a wealth of leadership experience in Higher Education, particularly in developing and implementing research strategy. He is also a leading, research active, social scientist and has extensive experience in working with inter-disciplinary research teams.

Want to know more about the members of UEB?

Download the Buzz UEB special edition which also includes the University Leadership Forum Group (ULFG), details of which appear in this issue. Visit www.intranet.bham.ac.uk/staff/resources/resources.

Want to know who sits on the University Council?

Professor Michael Sheppard
Provost and Vice-Principal

As views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the University or a statement of University policy. The publication of advertisements does not imply any endorsement by the University of the goods or services advertised. All submissions may be subject to editing. The Editor’s decision is final.}

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Banner by SharePoint, Birmingham University
Virtual rehab technology brings the countryside to you

Researchers in the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS) are developing ways to bring natural beauty spots to people who can’t visit them in person. For example, the team from the School of Electrical Electronic and Computer Engineering (ECEE) are currently using digital terrain model assets and aerial photographs to develop an interactive 3D model of part of the South West Coastal Path near Plymouth. These virtual technologies aim to improve location-based rehabilitation with restorative environments such as these from the National Trust and Ministry of Defence Centre. The project has received interest from the National Marine Aquarium and the Human Rights Commission.

More generally, restorative environments as simple as window views onto garden-like scenes can also be influential in reducing post-operative recovery periods and the need for pain relief medication. The research is part of a collaborative project with the European Centre for Environment and Human Health, the National Marine Aquarium and the Human Factors Integration Defence Technology Centre. The project has received interest from the National Trust and Ministry of Defence, who are looking at how virtual restorative environments such as these can be used in the future to improve the well-being of sailors and submariners on long-duration missions.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Unleash your research online

Library Services is offering a range of means to make your research available online. The initiative is part of a growing movement to open up access to research resources created in universities for maximum impact worldwide. All active researchers are welcome to use these services to publish your research papers, doctoral theses and other materials online.

Learn more: www.library.bham.ac.uk, contact ubra@lists.bham.ac.uk or engage the Digital Assets Team on x43918.

Staff discounts and deals now available through the University

The University has launched a new range of discounts and deals on a website called Staff Extras. It’s a one-stop online shop where you can get discounts or build up and redeem points on products from holidays and theatre tickets to clothes, electrical goods and even fast food from well-known brands. For example, current deals include:

- Save 20% when you spend £20 or more online at Domino’s Pizza
- Save 10% at Interflora
- Earn 4 points per £1 spent at Burton, Miss Selfridge, Urban Outfitters, Monsoon and more

Learn more: www.hr.bham.ac.uk/benefits/staffextras

Business School climbs in MBA rankings

We’re one of just 15 UK Business Schools included in this year’s Global FT MBA Rankings. We have risen seven places to become UK 11th and world rank of 68th.

2010 pay claim concludes

A 0.4% increase to all spine points for academic and related staff has been paid with February salaries, back-dated to 1 August 2010, as appropriate. Locally, the support staff pay claim has been settled on a one-off payment was made with December back pay, as appropriate, to 1 August 2010 was paid last month.

Learn more: www.intranet.bham.ac.uk/staffnews/2010/2010pay

CLAD now officially open in the Watson Building

The new Centre for Learning and Academic Development (CLAD) was officially opened by the Vice-Chancellor (VC), Professor David Eastwood on Friday 29 January. CLAD works collaboratively with colleges to improve the student learning experience. Enhanced services are available including dedicated support and guidance for teaching enhancement work and an improved focus on learning and teaching technologies, as well as some valuable existing services such as accredited training, an annual teaching and learning conference and teaching reward and recognition programme.

Learn more: www.as.bham.ac.uk/clad

Big Society: is it already ‘below the radar’?

New research from the Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC) based at the University has studied the crucial role that the estimated 800,000 or more small community groups can play in delivering the ‘big society’. This informal and semi-formal voluntary and charitable activity is often described as ‘below the radar’ because groups are either not registered with the Charity Commission, do not appear in official directories or lack a regular, substantial annual income.

TSRC researcher Angus McCabe said ‘Looking at the range and diversity of “below the radar” activity, it can be argued that we already have a big society. The question is whether government can engage with this a ctitively to meet ambitious agendas that include empowered and active citizens, devolved local decision making, a restoration of public trust in politics, flexible and cost effective services. A lot will depend on whether the Big Society agenda can become a bottom up process with communities in control, rather than being seen as a top down process driven by a more sophisticated understanding of how and why community organisations operate. People primarily take part in community action for very personal reasons rather than from a sense of civic duty, and the research questions whether this can be co-opted to deliver particular policy objectives.’

The team also found that there were major concerns among organisations involved in this activity that the Big Society agenda would create greater inequalities, by favouring strong communities with the resources, skills and knowledge to engage. Where governments have been successful at directly motivating people to act, anger has also played a major role.

This can be seen in the establishment of the Countryside Alliance, the anti-Iraq war demonstrations, anti-globalisation actions at the G8 and G20 Summits and recent demonstrations against increased tuition fees. Yet this has received very little attention in the ‘Big Society’ debate.

Youth Hostels Association records move into library

Special Collections is delighted to announce the acquisition of the archives of the Youth Hostels Association (YHA) currently celebrating its 80th anniversary. The YHA has pioneered the provision of holidays for people of limited means and which played a major role in providing access to the countryside as a form of social recreation. Its historical archive – which comprises records of both the national and the regional structure, as well as papers of individuals such as wardens and youth hostelers – is a research collection of national importance.

Learn more: www.tsrch.ac.uk

The Barber serves up Court on Canvas

Court on Canvas is the first-ever exhibition of tennis in art and will explore how lawn tennis has been portrayed in art from the 1870s to modern times. Learn more in the May issue of Buzz.

The new steam bridge by University station takes waste heat from our energy generating plant to heat the Medical School. It will save us a considerable amount of CO2 per year. Learn more in a future issue of Buzz.
University teams rise to Energy challenge

Each year nPower challenges teams of final and penultimate year students from across Europe to give them solutions to topical questions faced by the power industry and to present their ideas to a panel of industry experts for a cash prize. This year Birmingham has two shortlisted teams and looks set to maintain its record as the University with the most finalists overall! Fingers crossed for a win.

Andy Williams (Metalurgy and Materials) and Lawrence Coates (Civil Engineering) are the academics supporting the nPower teams who deliver Advanced Conventional Energy with the most finalists overall! Details of the Energy Challenge can be found on www.npower.com/energychallenge

Creative industries mapped out for NESTA

Business School academics are calling for a Government intervention to support creative industries. Their report, funded by the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) explains where these industries are currently based and how they operate within their local economies. This is important at the moment because creative industries are growing twice as quickly as the rest of the economy. They also contribute to the vitality of cities and regions and feed into other sectors through technological breakthroughs and innovation.

The report shows that Birmingham has an above average concentration of firms in designer fashion, photography, video and film, advertising and software publishing. Birmingham has a similar profile to Liverpool, Newcastle, Sheffield and Leeds. Overall, West Midlands’ creative firms perform above the national average for product and process, manufacturing and knowledge-intensive business sectors. However, London emerges as Britain’s creative heart.

On the NESTA web site, you can find an online tool that can be used to zoom in on any area of the UK – from a regional level down to local level – to scrutinise which types of creative businesses are located there. NESTA argues that a better understanding of an area’s true creative strengths will make it easier for policymakers to create the right conditions for further growth, and to avoid wasting money on poorly considered interventions.

Learn more online: www.nesta.org.uk/events/assets/features/creative_clusters_and_innovation_report

Particle physics explained

Particle Physicists from Birmingham Cambridge will exhibit on the topic of ‘Discovering Particles’ to 10,000 visitors to the Royal Society’s Summer Science Exhibition in London, 5–10 July 2011. The exhibit will feature an introduction to the development of particle physics, including two fully functioning particle detectors. It will also explain the current research we are involved in at the Large Hadron Collider in Geneva. Topics covered will include the origin of mass, the apparent dominance of matter over antimatter in the Universe, conditions in the first fraction of a second after the Big Bang, and the number of space-time dimensions.

Learn more http://royalsociety.org/summer-science/2011/ or contact Dr Cristina Lazzeroni (cl@hep.ph.bham.ac.uk)

Talking research with business on campus

Research and Commercial Services (RCS) has successfully encouraged over 70 businesses to visit the campus to engage with academics and view the facilities available here. Targeted firms included both big names such as Jaguar LandRover, Merck and BAE Systems as well as smaller local businesses like Robinson Brothers, JC’s, Indestructible Paints and Diamond Hard Surfaces.

One example of this approach is an inorganic Materials workshop in the Chemistry focused on research in biomaterials, pigments, piezoelectrics, ferroelectrics, metal phosphates and functional ceramics. Another workshop was held to demonstrate to manufacturing companies, from food to pharmaceuticals, how they can get involved in the Advanced Materials project in general.

The workshops have led to number of enquiries from business looking to work with the University and these have been followed up by the RCS business engagement team.

The workshops were facilitated by the Advanced Materials project, part of the Science City Research Alliance programme delivered by the Universities of Birmingham and Warwick.

The University’s commitment to supporting research initiatives and entrepreneurship of staff members was showcased by Research and Commercial Services in the inaugural Enterprising Birmingham – Business Plan Competition where two researchers were awarded £15,000 each to develop their business plans into viable commercial enterprises with the support of the University.

The event was launched by Sir Dominic Cadbury, Chancellor of the University, who commented ‘This event demonstrates the University’s commitment, enthusiasm and support for taking research projects and ideas, which have practical opportunities, into the market.’

He continued: ‘Universities are breeding grounds for ideas, with new people joining all the time, and the fresh thinking, ethos and culture of a university all provide an excellent environment to develop these new ideas. New products and companies are the lifefood of our economy and there shouldn’t be a better time to do this.’

The January showcase celebrated the wealth of business ideas emerging from research staff and doctoral researchers across the University and saw presentations of research-based business ideas from six finalists to an expert panel of ‘Dragons’ from the business world. The winning projects led by Dr Rustam Stolkin, from the Department of Computer Science, and Dr Wei-Ling Bickerton, from the School of Psychology were each awarded £15,000 to help further development into a commercial product or service and the four runners-up were awarded £1,000, presented by Pro-Vice Chancellor Edward Peck.

Winning projects

Dr Stolkin’s winning product idea, in collaboration with Professor Bob Stone and Dr Marek Kopicz, focuses on the development of a range of a new generation, tele-operated, robots that will overcome current limitations including mobility, manipulation and ease of operation benefitting both the defense and civil sectors. ‘As a post-doctoral researcher funding like this is absolutely critical for me to develop my ideas and I think this competition demonstrates the forward thinking of the institution to open the competition up to people like me.’

Cognition Matters took the prize for the best service based idea, led by Dr Bickerton with Professor Glyn Humphreys for the innovation of Birmingham University Cognitive Screen (BUCS), a service to screen patients suffering from brain damage to identify the most appropriate rehabilitation strategy for patients at a much earlier stage than at present. Dr Bickerton explains: ‘Half the mission for this project is getting the message out there that there is a need for a service like this, I’m really excited to have won but even if I didn’t win the prize money, I would have still felt like a winner because of the opportunity to spread the message.’

The competition was organised by Catherine Mansell, Knowledge Transfer Development Officer at the Enterprise and Innovation Centre. Catherine believes, ‘This competition has successfully raised the profile of our researchers and innovations both internally and externally and hopefully to the extent that the University will support and encourage this kind of endeavour. We will now be working closely with the winners to help them develop their projects further.’

More than 130 internal and external delegates attended the event, with a keynote speech delivered by Professor Terrence Cogrove, from the University of Bristol and winner of a similar competition which he described as ‘life-changing’. It is hoped that the competition will become a bi-annual event to showcase the wealth of talent and innovation the University has to offer.

Runners up

Runners up of the Enterprising Birmingham – Business Plan Competition were: Dr Mark Redwood (Biosciences), Xavier Disley (Sport and Exercise Sciences), Dr Oliver Mason (English) and Dr Bushra Al-Duni (Chemical Engineering).

Event sponsors were: Central Technology Belt; PricewaterhouseCoopers; Marks & Clerk LLP; Circles of Influence Campaign; The Knowledge Transfer Development Fund; Withers & Rogers LLP and Birmingham Research Park.

‘Universities are breeding grounds for ideas, with new people joining all of the time, and the fresh thinking, ethos and culture of a university all provide an excellent environment to develop these new ideas.’
Sustainable travel, the story so far by Sustainable Travel Coordinator, Caroline Radnor.

Environmental sustainability is an underpinning principle for Shaping our Future: Birmingham 2015. The University’s vision for the future highlights the increasing importance of sustainability and its impact on funding, reputation and the staff and student experience. As part of the University’s continued commitment to improve environmental performance a Sustainable Travel Plan is now being implemented. The Plan will help the University to meet its targets for reducing carbon emissions. A wide range of measures are being implemented to encourage the use of more sustainable travel options, to travel to and from the University, between campuses and to internal and external meetings.

Some of the current Travel Plan initiatives include:
- **Cycling Roadshows and bike maintenance classes**
  Cycling Roadshows are held throughout the year providing free bike maintenance and lessons, and the selling of second hand bikes. The next Roadshow is on Thursday 31 March.

Unfortunately, bike theft is always a problem around campus, so West Midlands Police are working with the University to reduce it by selling D-locks at a heavily subsidised rate in an effort to reduce the number of bikes being locked up with locks that are not strong enough for the purpose. They also offer security coding for bikes.

We are also offering beginners bicycle maintenance classes to staff and students to give you the skills you need to fix your bike. The programme consists of five, two-hour sessions giving a complete course of beginner cycle maintenance. The next course will start on Monday 21 March.

- **Shower and changing facilities**
  New shower and changing facilities on the lower ground floor of the Aston Webb building are just opened for all staff to use. The Munrow Sports Centre also offers free shower and changing facilities for staff and students, you just need your University ID cards.

- **Cycle scheme**
  The cycle salary sacrifice scheme provides tax-free bikes as part of the Government’s Cycle to Work initiative. You can save on the cost of a bike like the 450 staff who have already bought bikes through the scheme in the four years it has been running.

- **Electric bikes**
  The University is currently exploring the potential to have a pool of electric bikes for staff to use to travel around campus and to local University sites for meetings. Departments are currently trialling the bikes and providing feedback on how useful they may be.

- **New cycle parking**
  Cycle parking facilities are available at locations across the campus and current provision is approximately 1,300 spaces. New spaces are being provided all of the time, look out for regular updates online at [www.cycling.bham.ac.uk/cycling/facilities.shtml](http://www.cycling.bham.ac.uk/cycling/facilities.shtml).

- **Season ticket loans**
  The University offers interest free season ticket loans for staff who use public transport to travel to work. The University purchases a West Midlands Travel or Centro annual season ticket on your behalf, and then recovers the cost through salary deductions over ten months.

- **Free bus travel**
  Staff and students benefit from free bus travel on the Selly Shuttle between the Edgbaston campus and the Selly Oak campus, just show your University ID cards.

- **Electric car charging points**
  Three electric charging points are to be installed around campus later this year for those members of staff travelling to campus by electric car. Those travelling by electric car will qualify for free car parking.

- **Transport**
  Transport is, of course, also one of our research strengths and you may have seen the hydrogen microcabs around campus which is a practical example of how our research is making a difference to the environment. During summer 2009 Dr Phil Jones, lecturer in Human Geography recruited a series of volunteers to record their thoughts while cycling to and from the University of Birmingham. The results of this project will be very useful in assisting the travel initiatives to be targeted at making the right improvements for the future. There are also a number of research projects being developed and undertaken in the Centre of Obesity Research, particularly in the School of Sport and Exercise Sciences, related to active travel.

The Travel Plan needs support from all staff and students to be successful. You could change your travel behaviour for one or two days of the week and it would help to make a difference. So please think ahead… be a Smartmover.

For more information please visit [www.bham.ac.uk/travel](http://www.bham.ac.uk/travel) or email the University Sustainable Travel Coordinator Caroline Radnor at sustainabletravel@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

Learn more about Caroline as she is featured in Question Time on the back cover of this issue of Buzz.

The Communications team has kicked off 2011 with a bang in terms of broadcast and print media coverage seeking to demonstrate the breadth of work at Birmingham and enhance the University’s reputation. Here are some of the highlights, with these five stories alone generating coverage with an Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE) of more than £430,000 and a potential audience reach of almost 60 million people. Amy Cory shares the highlights.

Learn more about each story by visiting [www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/index.aspx](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/index.aspx) and using the search terms specified.
Our 2011 award winners

On 4 February 2011, staff from across the University gathered in the Great Hall to enjoy a gala award ceremony and to hear which colleagues had won a BUAFTA (Birmingham University Awards for Tremendous Achievement).

Our winners

1. **Team Player of the Year**
   Rachel Balhers, Undergraduate Administrator, School of Philosophy, Theology and Religion

2. **Team of the Year**
   Project Transfer Team within the Children’s Cancer Trials Team, School of Cancer Sciences

3. **Best Customer Service**
   Juliet Greese, Administrator, Admissions and Student Records, Shakespeare Institute
   Also commended: Trish Kelly, Reccptionist, School of Electronic, Electrical and Computer Engineering

4. **Best Newcomer**
   Sarah Proctor, PA to Pro-Vice Chancellor for Learning, Teaching and Quality

5. **Role Model of the Year**
   Conor McGoldrick, Development Manager, Human Resources

6. **The Student Experience Award**
   Alexander Cross, Mental Health Advisor, Academic Services

7. **Innovation of the Year**
   Alison Darby, Head of Winterbourne, Hospitality and Accommodation Services

8. **Reflecting the University’s Values**
   Gary Walsh, Senior Technician, School of Physics and Astronomy

9. **The Vice-Chancellor’s Award**
   Collaboration of Marketing and Communications and International Relations, External Relations
   Also commended: Community Day Team

10. **The Principal’s Award**
    The Vice-Chancellor utilised his title of Principal to give a second award to the Leaders Debate Team, University wide.

Charity raffle
This year the BUAFTA charity raffle raised over £3,200 for the Teenage Cancer Trust’s Young Adult Unit at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Learn more about the charity and see a list of the lucky winners: [www.intranet.bham.ac.uk/buafta/raffle](http://www.intranet.bham.ac.uk/buafta/raffle)

Learn more: [www.intranet.bham.ac.uk/buafta](http://www.intranet.bham.ac.uk/buafta)

And finally…a big thank you to our sponsors, without whose generous support the BUAFTAs would not be possible.
- Couch Perry Wilkes Partnership
- Gresham Office Furniture
- Oyster Communications
- Pteretemps
- Office Depot (UK) Limited
- Associated Architects
- Volker Fitzpatrick
- Bergen Energi
- Prolinx

Host for the evening was actor and speaker, Nicholas Bailey, best known for his role as Dr Truman in Eastenders. The ceremony opened with a dramatic light and juggling show from performance artists. Flax and guests were also entertained by the The Michelle Hyatt Dance Troup and pianist, Nick Wiley before ending the evening dancing to the band, Lynus.
 Most of us are fortunate, we will never directly experience the personal tragedies that these words conjure up, but for one University department it’s all in a day’s work. The College of Social Science’s International Development Department (IDD) has been at the forefront of this work for over 40 years.

It would be all too easy to focus on the negative and destructive, particularly as so much of IDD’s work and its students are stories of success and achievement against so much adversity.

Take IDD’s Director, Professor Paul Jackson. His passport reads like a who’s who of conflict zones; Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Rwanda, Uganda, Bhutan and the Congo. His work (and time) reaches far further than the campus with roles such as member of the Advisory Board for the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces and Co-Chair to the International Organisation of Trainers in Security Sector Reform.

Paul heads up a team of over 20 staff with research and teaching interests that span challenging problems; the deployment of aid, poverty reduction, electoral reform, peacekeeping and post genocide states and more. A significant number of the department’s students are from developing countries or countries that are engaged in, or post, conflict. Their stories are inspirational and a lesson in personal achievement for us all.

A life changing experience

Dhiaa N. Al-Asadi is currently studying for his PhD with IDD. For most people that challenge would be enough but for Iraqi, Dhiaa, his time in Birmingham has provided him with the security to develop his thoughts and ideas and helped him be elected as Minister of State for the new Iraq government.

Dhiaa is a survivor. He was involved in the first revolt against Saddam Husain’s regime in Basra in the early 90’s — well before Bush or Blair were even elected. The leader of that revolt, Ayatollah Al-Sadr was executed by Saddam and Dhiaa was subsequently imprisoned as a political prisoner. His family were imprisoned for thinking that you were listening to the latest report on the BBC.

The leader of that revolt, Ayatollah Al-Sadr was executed by Saddam and Dhiaa was subsequently imprisoned as a political prisoner. His family were imprisoned for thinking that you were listening to the latest report on the BBC. The last six years alone have seen 99 countries represented on their Postgraduate programmes. Staff act as advisors and consultants globally. The department has a very active Chevening Scholarship and Fellowship Programme run by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The fellowships are intended for mid-career professionals from emerging democracies who have been identified by British Embassies as being important to the development of democratic institutions, practice and culture in those countries. The courses all support UK government goals including preventing and resolving conflict and countering terrorism and weapons proliferation.

Under Paul’s direction, IDD will continue to help countries develop and become democratic. But, perhaps more importantly, IDD will continue to help support those brave and selfless individuals like Dhiaa and Concy whose work makes real change and democracy happen.

Learn more

www.idd.bham.ac.uk

Creating international impact

Carrie Bennett describes how International Development students are helping to shape positive futures for countries in conflict.

The legacy

Concy Aciro who graduated with an MSc in Poverty Reduction and Development Management in 2007 had no choice but to become interested in politics at an early age. Aged 10 she was abducted by Ugandan rebels to be trained as a fighter in sub-Saharan Africa. After escaping she was then faced with considerable hardship: from significant food shortages to the abuse of relatives and friends by soldiers and rebels.

Still at school, one of her first projects was to organise football matches to raise money for children in need. She then went on to study law and politics and went on to become a lawyer and a politician in Uganda. Away from national politics and government of President Museveni. She has been elected as an MP to the Ugandan Parliament in opposition to the government of President Museveni. That, in Ugandan politics, is brave in itself. Her time spent in Birmingham was absolutely crucial in her decision to go into formal politics.

As an MP, Concy is involved at a national level in the peace talks between the government and the rebels to try and resolve the armed conflict in northern Uganda. Away from national politics and in her community, she has been responsible for a whole series of initiatives including the creation of a football league with the aim of building unity between refugee camps. She also believes that it helps to re-integrate former child soldiers back into their communities. With the support of Paul Jackson, Concy has secured donations of 300,000 football kits from premierhship football clubs across the UK.

Concy’s immediate ambition is that in five years’ time she wants to see the whole of Uganda as an effective democracy, building respect for human rights. She is clear that she wants to be a role model for others, a woman who is socially, economically and politically empowered.

The Future

Over the years, IDD’s activities have broadened to cover the full range of academic research, publication and postgraduate teaching. The last six years alone have seen 99 countries represented on their Postgraduate programmes. Staff act as advisors and consultants globally.

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The University’s world-leading scientific expertise is fuelling the work of a groundbreaking £20 million trauma care initiative in Birmingham.

Birmingham is one of four partners in the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Centre for Surgical Reconstruction and Microbiology at the Queen Elizabeth hospital, where all returning injured UK military personnel are treated.

The collaboration includes the NHS, the Ministry of Defence (MoD), University Hospitals Birmingham Foundation Trust (UHBFT) and the University. UHBFT and the University will contribute £5 million towards the work of the Centre over the next five years.

Officially launched last month by Health Secretary Andrew Lansley, the Centre brings together military and civilian trauma surgeons and scientists to boost trauma care delivery at the earliest stages of injury.

At the opening ceremony, attended by key stakeholder representatives, University Provost and Vice-Principal Professor Michael Sheppard commented: ‘We expect the NIHR Centre to provide an unrivalled research environment to improve the treatment of military and civilian trauma patients. This will, in part, be achieved by applying the latest microbiological and immunological techniques to improve our understanding, diagnosis and management of trauma-related infection.’

Microbiology research at the Centre is supported by the University’s high-throughput sequencing capability funded via Birmingham Science City. Earlier this month, Professor Lawrence Young, Head of the College of Medical and Dental Sciences, announced that the University’s laboratory space at the Centre will also house a brand new Centre for Translational Inflammation, headed by Professor Janet Lord. The Centre will bring together the University’s research in the areas of rheumatology, ageing, respiratory medicine, nephrology, ophthalmology, immune senescence and trauma.

Professor Young commented: ‘This is an exciting opportunity to present and promote our work in this area in a more coherent manner.’

Interim Director of the Centre will be Professor Sir Keith Porter, Honorary Professor of Clinical Traumatology and a Consultant at the QE, who was knighthed in the new year honours for services to the armed forces.

The work of the Centre will be complimented by the University’s renowned expertise in clinical trials. The Birmingham Centre for Clinical Trials manages more than 100 clinical trials per year, generating around £15 million.

**Sequencing the wound**

‘Hospital infections are of serious concern to the public, to policy-makers and to the press,’ comments Professor Mark Pallen. ‘There has even been talk of an imminent outbreak. A new technology – high-throughput sequencing – means we can now determine the entire genetic blueprint of individual bacterial isolates relatively quickly, easily and cheaply. This enables us to distinguish bacteria that differ by as little as a millionth of a genome.

‘We expect the NIHR Centre to provide an unrivalled research environment to improve the treatment of military and civilian trauma patients.’

The team is hoping to use this information to develop a therapy for trauma victims, namely giving patients DHEAS to lower the cortisol:DHEAS ratio, in the hope that this will improve recovery from trauma and may also have long-term health benefits.

**‘Stress hormone hope for trauma patients’**

Birmingham immune cell biologist expert Professor Janet Lord and collaborators (Professor Wielbke Arit and Dr Anna Phillips) are exploring how the body’s endocrine response to stress influences physical and emotional recovery from trauma.

Their research focuses on two stress hormones: cortisol and DHEAS (Deydroepiandrosterone sulphate) and how their relative levels in the blood affect the body. Their work in adults suffering from physical trauma (hip-fracture) and emotional trauma (bereavement) has shown that the ratio of these hormones affects the immune system and influences the ability of patients to fight infections.

‘We have shown recently that DHEAS acts on immune function by increasing the ability of white blood cells (neutrophils) to kill bacteria and therefore giving DHEAS to patients should help to boost their immune systems,’ says Professor Lord.

‘It is also known that DHEAS has effects on mood and also can prevent the loss of muscle, so there is a good case for giving this to patients after trauma as being confined to bed causes loss of muscle. In addition, the trauma and injury itself have profound effects on mood in many adults and this is known to affect their recovery from injury.

In work relevant to the NIHR Centre, the team have analysed the cortisol: DHEAS ratio in a group of Vietnam War veterans who had regular health checks in the United States following the conflict. The results showed that a high cortisol: DHEAS ratio was associated with increased mortality, hypertension, metabolic syndrome, anxiety and depression.

The team is hoping to use this information to develop a therapy for trauma victims, namely giving patients DHEAS to lower the cortisol: DHEAS ratio, in the hope that this will improve recovery from trauma and may also have long-term health benefits.

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As part of the Royal Society Pairing Scheme, Biogeochemistry lecturer Dr Rebecca Bartlett spent a week in Westminster gaining an insight into the life of an MP. Rebecca was paired with Gisela Stuart, MP for Birmingham Edgbaston.

When scientists get together, the conversation can be intense. Academia is a competitive forum with a mix of social, promotional, and occasionally geeky discussion of the latest research data or laboratory techniques in the comfort of like-minded, corduroyed company. Our week in Westminster as part of a mutual learning partnership with MPs and civil servants was a new education in rhetoric and persuasion. Scientists from a range of disciplines that would never usually assemble, from the worlds of experimental gravity to climate change, were brought together by the Royal Society to discuss the mechanism of science policy. As the days progressed in the aftermath of the Brown Report, Comprehensive Spending Review and Statement on Tuition Fees, I realised that despite our difference in specialism, we had a common agenda to uphold and protect the importance of scientific excellence and transparency in parliament and government.

Science in politics has an interesting history – in 1664, the Royal Society published *A Discourse of Forest Trees and the Propagation of Timber* promoting the prescription and planting of oak which had suffered great losses during the Civil War. Considering this, I am struck by a sense of history repeating itself; how science, earth resources and the environment are intricately coupled by the actions of mankind, and the importance through history of good governance for sustainable living. Sustainability is no new concept then, but our depth of understanding and approach has changed. There is now an awareness of the fragility of the environment and the power of earth systems that is influencing technology, society and of course finance and policy.

The Royal Society have a clear presence in Westminster and I was impressed by their involvement with policy makers and I am largely encouraged by the openness of the Select Committee enquiry process to hear evidence from those with an interest. This is inevitably limited by a conflict between the complexity and uncertainty of science with government’s need for numbers and thresholds to inform policy. The necessary consideration of finance and public opinion may obscure the clarity of what the science shows and in the past the decision to act on scientific evidence has not always been taken. Universities as the home of scientific research and the platform for evidence in policy are on the brink of change. Spending cuts will inevitably bite, although the cohesion of the scientific community has had some protective influence. The importance of the tangible science that can inform technology has perhaps played a part, yet this could leave blue skies science in a stormier future. Competition for research funding is tough and a grim judgement can be made in a comparison with our international competitors. There is now a pervasive requirement from research councils for impact statements and the justification of research in social and economic terms. Rightly so perhaps, but at a research project level, an immediate return on investment in science is rarely possible or appropriate.

As the UK commits to an 80% cut in CO2 emissions by 2050, the need for rapid advances in technology is essential, and investment in science must be a driver. It is not yet clear how we can manage such a dramatic change in the modern carbon cycle while still an imbalance of scientific education and expertise, and resources and application across the world. The water crisis is looming, and we are still needlessly flushing our toilets with drinking water, while in other parts of the world, drinking water is dug out of the mud, or sold via illegal abstractions. In the UK we have an opportunity for policy to address the disconnect between scientific research, education, technology and society. I find my role as a lecturer in the development of science and education can play an important part, and by engaging with society’s representatives in parliament through the Royal Society scheme, the dialogue should begin to move forward.

Read Rebecca’s blog www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/impact/week-westminster

**By Day**

We all work in either the Main Library or the IT Services Data Centre at Elms Road.

- Sylvia Gardiner and Rebecca Shakes are both members of the Library Acquisitions team, who purchase new material and process reading lists. Sylvia also deals with University publications, donations and awarded University theses. Louise Gessey works for Document Supply and oversees the Reception Desk team. Her department obtain and supply a variety of material to borrowers, such as interlibrary loans and postal loan items. Jill Russell is responsible for the University’s Institutional Repository, a growing digital archive of research materials produced at the University, including electronic theses, published work and other datasets. Over at the Elms Road Data Centre, Stephen Burton works in IT. His department manage the University’s core IT Facilities and help keep the networks running smoothly and securely.

**By Night**

We run an innovative local charity called Life Uplifted by Change in Africa (LUCIA) that supports women and children in Ethiopia. We raise money for various projects including the formation of women’s self help groups and the provision of healthcare, food and education for orphan girls and street children. Sylvia founded the charity after visiting her son who was working in Ethiopia. She was struck by the poverty of the country and wanted to do something to help. When she returned, she asked some of her colleagues to join her and we all leapt at the chance! We regularly visit Ethiopia at our own expense to see the progress being made by our projects.

The women and children move from being treated and marginalised to a motivated and independent life. It is wonderful to see them learn to make the most of their talents and opportunities and begin to blossom. At the same time we are learning ourselves! With the gained activities we undertake it’s a constant and enjoyable learning curve full of new experiences. We raise funds and awareness of the issues in Ethiopia by selling beautiful crafts from Africa, organising fundraising events, giving talks to schools and community groups and recycling old printer cartridges, postage stamps and mobile phones. Of course, we also gladly accept cheques and standing orders! In the same way that the University aims to give students an advantage in life, LUCIA helps to educate and improve the lives of those living in Africa. Both organisations try to help people be the best they can be and live the best life they can.

Learn more
More information about our work can be found at www.luciacharity.org.uk
If you can help us in any way please get in touch. Contact us at info@luciacharity.org.uk.
Thank you to all our supporters!
Wednesday 4 and 5 April College MDS Research and Enterprise Gala

All staff and students are invited to attend this event which starts with a poster session on Monday, 3.30–6.00pm followed by a full day of talks and activities on Tuesday. The keynote lecture will be given by Professor Andrew Hattersley, Professor of Molecular Medicine, Peninsula Medical School, University of Exeter. In addition to the presentations there will be a session on ‘my career in research’ and Clive Dix (Chairman of the Bio-industry Association Board and former Research Director, Glaxo Wellcome UK) will present as part of the Commercialisation session.

Venue: Leonard Deacon lecture theatre and Wolfson Centre for Education (Medical School)
Cost: Free of charge
Contact: Karen Carter
Email: k.s.carter@bham.ac.uk
Learn more: www.mds.bham.ac.uk/researchgala

Tuesday 12 July, 6.00pm
Happiness Lecture 2011

This year’s Briggs Memorial Lecture on the theme of Happiness will be delivered by Alastair Campbell. He is a writer, communicator and strategist best known for his role as former Prime Minister Tony Blair’s spokesman, press secretary and director of communications and strategy.

Venue: Great Hall
Cost: Free of charge
Contact: Eleanor Leftwich
Email: e.events@contacts.bham.ac.uk
Learn more: www.mds.bham.ac.uk/researchgala

Want to volunteer at the Antiques Roadshow?

Volunteers are required from 8.00am–5.00pm to actively marshal and coordinate the crowds. You must be available for a briefing on the previous day, 4.00–5.00pm and be able to work the whole day on the 20 April (if you are working on this day you would need to book leave). In return you will receive a free lunch, a discount on the Antiques Roadshow Shop and coordinate the crowds. You must be available for a briefing on the previous day, 4.00–5.00pm and be able to work the whole day on the 20 April (if you are working on this day you would need to book leave). In return you will receive a free lunch, a discount on the Antiques Roadshow Shop and coordinate the crowds. You must be available for a briefing on the previous day, 4.00–5.00pm and be able to work the whole day on the 20 April (if you are working on this day you would need to book leave). In return you will receive a free lunch, a discount on the Antiques Roadshow Shop and coordinate the crowds. You must be available for a briefing on the previous day, 4.00–5.00pm and be able to work the whole day on the 20 April (if you are working on this day you would need to book leave). In return you will receive a free lunch, a discount on the Antiques Roadshow Shop and coordinate the crowds. You must be available for a briefing on the previous day, 4.00–5.00pm and be able to work the whole day on the 20 April (if you are working on this day you would need to book leave). In return you will receive a free lunch, a discount on the Antiques Roadshow Shop and coordinate the crowds. You must be available for a briefing on

Conferences and seminars

Wednesday 6 April, 2.00–4.00pm
Elitist, irrelevant and boring or the key to understanding the world: have traditional subject disciplines had their day?

Venue: Education Building, room 524
Cost: Free of charge
Register with: Aidan Thompson
Email: a.p.thompson@bham.ac.uk, Tel: 0121 414 3602

Tuesday 19 April, 10.00am–3.00pm
Teaching and Learning Symposium

This event is open to all members of staff across the University and will showcase examples of good practice, excellence and innovation in teaching within the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences. Registration is required as places are limited.

Venue: Murihead lecture theatre, G15
Cost: Free of charge
Register with: Natalie Rowley
Email: n.m.rowley@bham.ac.uk

Antiques Roadshow?

Venue: Great Hall
Cost: Free of charge
Contact: antiques.roadshow@bbc.co.uk

Venue:

Great Hall

Cost:

Free

Contact:

antiques.roadshow@bbc.co.uk

Wanted

Activity and entertainment

Fancy Fencing for fitness and fun?

Want to be fitter this year? Already working on it but need some sport-related focus? www.birminghamfencing.co.uk has courses, kit and coaches for all ages and abilities. Whether junior, social or competitive there is something for everyone.

Drama 13 welcomes new members. We meet Tuesdays 7.30pm, Baptist Church Hall, Kings Heath High Street. More details at www.drama13.co.uk.

Queensbridge Musical Theatre Society are rehearsing ‘Thoroughly Modern Millie’, Baptist Church Hall, Kings Heath, Thursday evenings. Interested? Call 01386 793622

BURLESQUE, fundraiser for St Mary’s Hospice, with a 50s glamour theme, 27 March at The Chameleon Bar, 1 Victoria Square. Nationally-renowned performers, live rock’n’roll band, DJ and raffle. 7.45pm for 8pm start. Tickets £15 from Yvonne McPhilips at events@bsmh.org.uk.

Services

Books

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Tax return still in the in-tray?

Mynette & Co (est 1976) offers a local, personalised accountant/tax advisory service. Tel: 0121 449 7322, email: a.mynette@btinternet.com

For all your proofreading needs - academic, commercial or creative, print or online. References available.

Contact Liz Broomfield at LIBRO http://libroediting.wordpress.com/home

Staff groups

Your staff group can advertise here and for FREE and we’ll also list on www.intranet.bham.ac.uk/staff/useful/internal.shtml

For sale

Stompa pine bunk bed with low level desk. £150. Tel: Colin Thomas 0121 414 5355 (day) 0121 608 1324 (eve).

Tabletop snooker table, 6 x 3ft, with balls and accessories. Tel: Colin Thomas 0121 414 5355 (day) 0121 608 1324 (eve).

Community Day 2011 –

Free fun for all the family

Due to the success of last year’s event, Community Day 2011 will be held on Sunday 19 June. Activities available on the day include culture trails, pedal shoot-out, golf coaching, arts and craft, fun and fair lots and more. The full programme of events will be available in April.

Venue: University of Birmingham, Edgbaston campus
Cost: Free

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