

**MAKING A
DIFFERENCE
WITH
PLYMOUTH
UNIVERSITY**

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Whether it is through our annual telethon or sponsoring prizes, providing bursaries or leaving a legacy, giving to Plymouth University makes a powerful and positive difference to our current and future students.

Your support is truly appreciated, as the testimonies in this brochure show.

We hope you enjoy reading about the many ways in which your support is helping the University, our students, and those we impact beyond, go from strength to strength.



Message from the Vice-Chancellor

Dear Friends of Plymouth University

Welcome to the first edition of our annual stewardship brochure, with news of recent projects which would not have been possible without your generous support.

Ensuring all those who have the talent to benefit from Plymouth University's teaching and learning can access it, and supporting enterprise in action, are key challenges for us. We have therefore focussed our student awards and bursaries in these mission-critical areas. Your support has been crucial in ensuring we can continue to create exciting opportunities and enriching experiences that help our students achieve their full potential and, in turn, make a positive difference to the lives of others.

These are challenging times for universities, as we experience huge reductions in government funding. Plymouth remains committed to ensuring these cuts do not impact negatively on current and future students, and your generosity is helping us meet the challenges creatively and tenaciously.

This brochure showcases just some of the individuals who have benefited from your support, and highlights the impact your gifts are having. One shining example is marine biology undergraduate Tom Greenwood, who travelled to South America to help improve educational facilities in a struggling community.

The Student Hardship Fund continues to provide vital support to students experiencing a severe shortfall in their finances that could impact on their ability to continue their studies. Your support enables them to achieve their goal of completing their studies, and you can read a personal account from Sophia Cuddy, who benefited directly from this fund.

I hope you enjoy reading about the people you have helped to inspire, encourage and support. The difference made by the gifts of all our supporters cannot be underestimated and, as a Plymouth alumna myself, I am humbled by your generosity. Thank you very much.

Warm regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy Purcell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Professor Wendy Purcell
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive

Making a difference

Well connected

A dedicated team of 35 student callers (some of whom are pictured below) undertook this year's telethon campaign.

Our callers spoke with alumni about the latest developments at the University and invited them to support the Annual Fund through regular or one-off donations. The result was fantastic, with almost £63,000

being pledged to support the University and our students over the next five years.

Every penny raised will go to a good cause, such as supporting students experiencing hardship, encouraging students to undertake extra-curricular, horizon-expanding projects and activities, and improving student facilities and resources on campus.



Help for hardship

The Student Hardship Fund is ever increasing, often as a result of an accumulation of small donations, helping us support undergraduate and postgraduate students in financial need.

Plymouth already has a generous needs-based bursary scheme, but through this

extra support you are helping ensure more students in need of financial assistance are able to continue their studies, make the most of the Plymouth experience and achieve their potential.

One of the students to receive this help recently is Sophia Cuddy, MA Social Work. She said:



// This fund is a lifeline. It enabled me to continue with my course when it looked like I would have to give up, which would have been crushing as I was getting good grades.

I was on maternity leave with my little boy when I decided to return to study and work towards a career in social work. A full-time work placement is a course requirement, which meant I had to cover the cost of more childcare, even though I was already struggling to afford it. I wasn't entitled to government help for childcare costs, something I found out just two days before the course started.

The University's Hardship Fund was the only source of help. I used the money to pay for the childcare and it was such a relief.

Alumni support for current students is incredibly important, especially in the current economic climate. It has made such a big difference to me and my future, and I would like to say a very big thank you. //



Learning from the past shapes the future

Created by local sculptor Frana Favata, the Portland Square Memorial 'Hope', commemorates 70 civilians who lost their lives on the night of 22/23 April 1941. The tragedy was caused by the bombing of the air-raid shelter situated close to where the memorial now stands on the campus. It demonstrates to this generation that we are proud to honour lost members of our community.

Supporters have been donating generously to the Vice-Chancellor's Appeal 2011 to raise money for an additional plaque naming the victims of the tragedy, and towards the cost of ongoing maintenance of the memorial.

Gift of a lifetime

The University was honoured to receive a legacy of over £40,000 from alumna Helen Dean, BA (Hons) Geography, 1980. Miss Dean's legacy will be used to provide named hardship awards to students on an annual basis.

If you'd like to find out how you can support the University by leaving a gift in your will, please contact: Amanda Pléven, Development Manager, on +44 (0)1752 585690.

“ I look back with great fondness at my time at Plymouth. The financial commitment students have to make today is so different from my own. I would like to support today's students through leaving something to the University in my will. **”**

Helen Dean

Nurturing talent



Support hits the right note

University supporters Bryan and Susan Foster have generously pledged to donate a bursary of £1,500 a year for five years to provide financial support for students studying a music discipline.

Keen to support the arts in the South West, the Fosters want to help ensure these students are well equipped to get the most from their degree studies.

Recognition for high-fliers

With 2009 marking the 250th anniversary of the commissioning of Smeaton's Tower, the Smeatonian Society of Civil Engineers kindly undertook to award a prestigious commemorative medal to a high-flying engineering student on an annual basis. The most recent beneficiary, Samuel Nicholls, MEng Mechanical Engineering, said:

“ The award was recognition of the effort I put into every aspect of my degree. Receiving it has also enhanced my belief in my ability. And its inclusion on my CV will provide an interesting topic of discussion in the future!



Broadening horizons

A gift of £10,000 from a graduate of 2005 will be supporting Faculty of Arts students over the next five years. The Art and World Culture Travel Bursary will be awarded to students on an annual basis, enabling them to travel overseas, broaden their cultural horizons and undertake research.

Encouragement from endowment

Female science or technology students who are the first in their family to enter higher education are benefiting from an endowment of £85,000 from Guildford Academic Associates. The money is being used for an annual bursary, helping students such as Eleanor Raw, the most recent to benefit. She said:

// I came to Plymouth to discover more about the subject I'm so passionate about: electronics. I grew up taking things apart and was delighted when I was accepted by the University to learn how to put them back together again! This bursary is helping me afford equipment I can use at home to enhance my studies. //

Rewarding work

Corporate sponsors have kindly provided prizes for students, rewarding them for excellence within specific subject areas.

Recent sponsors include Toucan Graphic Design – in recognition of excellence in typographic design; Foot Anstey solicitors – for the most enterprising Law graduate, and the Plymouth Nautical Degree Association (PYNDA), which supported prizes for Maritime Business and Maritime Law graduates.

Experience enhancement

A new partnership with Santander Universities will provide the University with almost £60,000 a year for the next three years.

The funding – awarded to students for academic excellence – will provide scholarships that enhance the student experience and their career opportunities. This includes activities such as work-based learning; support for voluntary projects; overseas visits to study and work, and language exchange programmes with Spain and Portugal.



Inspiring futures

Encouraging enterprise

Our Student Enterprise Awards have attracted interest from students across the University.

One of those who particularly impressed the judges with his enterprising outlook was Tom Greenwood, BSc (Hons) Marine Biology (pictured below).



// My story shows that the people who give to this fund are not only enhancing the experience of a committed student and inspiring them, but making a huge positive difference to communities in need.

Having already visited friends in Guyana, I knew of a struggling school there and was already planning a return trip when I heard about the Student Enterprise Awards.

I was over the moon that my entry was successful and I couldn't wait to get started, contacting the school to find out how the money could best be used. Their request was simple and incredibly humbling – a CD player on which to play literacy lessons that had been supplied on disk from the USA.

I realised this left me with 95 per cent of the money from my award and set about spending it wisely. I ended up with two suitcases full of books: a combination of children's books and academic texts on teaching. Low levels of literacy are a huge issue at the school, mainly due to poor teaching practice and inadequate materials.

Laden with the books, I arrived in Georgetown, the capital of Guyana, where I was able to buy even more. On arriving at the village, I went to deliver the books to the school and found they'd already cleared a large space to create a library. Only one problem – it was incredibly dirty and full of ants and cockroaches. Not exactly an inviting place for a child to read! Over the next ten days I cleaned the space, painted every surface in vibrant white and green and made bookcases, tables and benches.



Improving literacy in the school in Georgetown.



// I want the University's supporters to know that this project has made a massive difference to the teachers and children. And not only did I gain experience of making the grant application in the first place – and managing the money I was awarded – I've now got the self-belief to realise my dream of helping improve education in Guyana.

I would like to say a huge thank you to the donors – from me and the school. //

Creating opportunities

Roland Levinsky Memorial Fund

The Roland Levinsky Memorial Fund was established in 2007 after the tragic death of the then Vice-Chancellor, Professor Roland Levinsky, who was dedicated to the principle that individuals should be encouraged to achieve their full potential.

Supporters have generously donated in Professor Levinsky's memory, providing awards of up to £1,500, offering students an exciting opportunity to undertake projects enhancing their personal development.

Presenting this year's awards, Mrs Beth Levinsky said: "I'm bowled over at the range of activities taken on. My husband was keen for students to have the opportunity at university to expand their own interests and he would have been immensely proud this is going on."

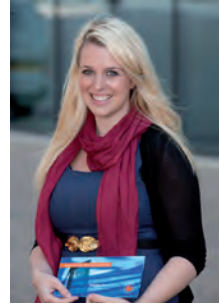
Find out how some of our winners are using their awards...



Ben Anderson Millington, BSc (Hons) Geography with Geology (above, with Mrs Beth Levinsky), is going to Ecuador, where he'll produce a videography of ecology conservation and assist Professor Paul Ramsay and two PhD students with their research. They'll travel up to 4,000m above sea-level to record endangered wildlife and plant species based in the Andes.

// Everyone who supports these awards should be very proud of giving to such a worthy cause. I'm so grateful to have been given this opportunity. Thank you all very much. //

Dental student Natasha Clare (right) used her award towards the cost of travelling to Peru with a small group of fellow students. They worked with The Vine Trust, helping to provide free dental care to indigenous people in the Amazon jungle.



// Thank you so much for donating towards such an important cause. It gave us invaluable clinical experience and tested our initiative, pushing our skills to the limit by working in challenging conditions. //

Craig Lee-Holt, FdSc Archaeology will take up an archaeological work placement in Monmouthshire. His aim is to develop a partnership between Monmouthshire Archaeology Society and Truro and Penwith College, in order to provide a rare opportunity enabling their students to experience practical archaeology.

// Thank you for helping me achieve my dream of attending my first excavation. Your support is enabling me to make the most of this great opportunity, which will help students in the future too. It should be the experience of a lifetime! //

Medical student Rachel Fletcher (below), is spending her summer volunteering in a hospital in Vanuatu, in the South Pacific, as part of her medical elective. This will extend her insight into the burden tropical diseases have on a developing country, and increase her knowledge and clinical skills for managing infectious diseases.



// The money is a huge contribution to the cost of the trip and without it I'm not sure whether the elective would be a reality. I'm so grateful to the donors who've made this possible. //

To read more about these and other RLMF beneficiaries, visit www.plymouth.ac.uk/alumni

Regenerating hidden gems

Thanks to Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) support of nearly £60,000, we are working closely with students, staff, local schools and other organisations to restore historic Drake's Place Gardens and Reservoir on North Hill into the life of the community.

The tranquil gardens (below) and disused reservoir provide scope for a range of leisure and learning activities and events, from biodiversity studies to outdoor theatre.

Plans are taking shape and we'll be bidding for further HLF funding in 2012 to help take them forward.

You can keep up to date with the project's progress at

www.plymouth.ac.uk/community





Thank you for your support

This brochure provides a snapshot of the many ways your donations – no matter what size – are making a real difference to the University, our students and those whose lives they touch.

Thank you once again for your support. If you'd like to make a contribution to the Annual Fund, please:

- donate online at www.plymouth.ac.uk/donate or
- post your cheque, payable to Plymouth University, to:

**Development and Alumni Relations
Plymouth University
Freepost PY271
PL4 8ZZ**

- Alternatively, you can contact us for a donation form at:
telephone **+44 (0)1752 588020**
email alumni@plymouth.ac.uk

For more information about Plymouth's alumni programme, visit www.plymouth.ac.uk/alumni

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