UNIVERSITY OF Southampton

theVoice

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Branching out overseas

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A competitive edge

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Leader Column

Summer graduation is an exciting, joyful time on campus - a highly visible and symbolic marker of the end of an academic year. It offers graduating students a formal opportunity to celebrate personal achievements with their parents and friends, and to ref ect on the transforming experience their Southampton education has offered them. It is an especially busy time of year for Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors as we get the opportunity to dress in our robes, and share in the excitement of the occasion.

For many staff, it is also a time of reflection on a job well done on behalf of graduating students, as well as an opportunity to take stock before moving on to the demands of the next academic year.

What a year we have ahead of us. The arrival of new and continuing students throughout September will test our new organisational arrangements, and I am sure that some challenges will arise. I have great confidence that all staff involved in supporting students will, as they always do, work creatively to ensure that our students have a smooth start to the new academic year. No doubt there will be lessons learned from this first test of the changes in student support and administration but I hope that we can quickly adapt to deliver responsive central and local services to our students.

During the 2011-12 academic year we will also be piloting a range of innovative teaching modules that reflect our aspirations for curriculum reform. In the future these modules will be accessible to all students, offering them the opportunity to add breadth to depth in their education. On a series of occasions both Debra Humphris (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Education) and I have spoken with prospective students and school advisors, as well as graduate employers about these reforms. We receive consistently positive feedback about the approach the University is taking to educational reform, and I am convinced that all of the hard work going into timetabling, module development and educational innovation will deliver better quality, more responsive and flexible educational opportunities for our students.

During this coming year we will also be planning for a radically changed higher education landscape. The long-awaited White Paper on the government's vision for higher education offers opportunities for the University, but has left us with many unanswered questions and some concerns about the unintended consequences of the proposals. I welcome the move to greater contestability for student places that is signalled in the White Paper. It should have the effect of creating a more diverse and competitive higher education sector that is more responsive to student needs, and will allow us to compete to attract a larger cohort of talented home students into high demand courses at the University.

2012 will see the first cohort of students recruited from within a more contested pool of applicants. They will also be the first intake to be charged £9,000 for a Southampton education. The next academic year will be critical, as we prepare for the approaching changes.

As a member of University staff, each of us has an impact, large or small, on the student experience; the colleagues who groom our grounds and clean the lecture theatres, the lecturer who inspires, the advisor who guides the student from the lecture theatre to the world of work. Together, we will all need to be responsive to the changing needs and expectations of students.

Thank you for your perseverance during the past year. I wish you a safe and restful summer holiday and I look forward to a rigorous start to the year in September.

Professor Don Nutbeam
emailthevc@southampton.ac.uk



Profile

Simon Coles

A collaborative career

When Dr Simon Coles was a third year undergraduate, he wasn't convinced chemistry was the career for him - until he started working with the eminent Crystallographer, Emeritus Professor Mike Hursthouse. Working alongside him at the very moment of revolutionary change in the subject inspired Simon and reversed his thoughts about his future in chemistry. He has now been at Southampton and leading the National Crystallography Service (NCS) for 13 years.

Simon is co-author on around 400 publications across the chemical and information sciences and with collaborators on every continent as well as across the UK. He spoke to *the Voice* about a career built on collaborations and managing a world-leading facility.

Q *Tell us more about your early days studying crystallography.*

A It was a serendipitous choice of third year undergraduate project that found me working with one of the most eminent and highly cited scientists in the field. I started working with Mike at Cardiff University. At the time he was just setting up what was then the next generation of technology for crystallography techniques, a piece of equipment (specifically, a measuring instrument) that created a whole new era in crystallography and led to a total shift in the subject.

As a wide-eyed undergraduate, it was thrilling to be right there at the cutting edge, putting this piece of equipment together. I was in the lab the first time we made it work.

Within a few years every crystallography laboratory in the world was using this technology – and I had been there at the beginning. I completed my PhD whilst working part-time on the National Crystallography Service (NCS) and went on to a postdoctoral position that involved constructing a user facility at a central laboratory. This lab became the basis of the NCS and I have been working with, for or leading the service for most of my career.

Q *When did you come to Southampton?*

A I came here in 1998, soon after Mike joined the University. We brought the Cardiff laboratory all the way to Southampton and set up a new facility here. We were the first occupants of building 30 – and I am still there. At that point Mike gave me an open remit to develop the NCS going forward and I managed it for twelve years before becoming its Director last year.

Q *How have you developed it in that time?*

A That instrument has remained the hub of the service and we have developed the technology significantly. We have increased the throughput of the service by an order of magnitude.

Part of managing the service has been about developing people – and we're now an established group of experts, with several of us having been here for around a decade or more. We provide a service to our colleagues at the University as well as to academics all around the UK.

Last year after a competitive tender we received extensive renewal funding from EPSRC and the University. Altogether we have approximately £4.3 million to run the service for five years.

As a result, we're now dismantling that first piece of kit and using £1.5 million of the funding to build a new laboratory – developing the new cutting edge technology of today, with a new instrument manufacturer, so that we can continue to offer the world-leading service that we do now. The new facility will be the most powerful lab of its kind in the world.

Q *Would you say your flair for collaborative work has defined your career?*

A It has certainly shaped my career and created countless new opportunities. Collaboration is intrinsic to the work of the NCS: people send us stuff to look at, we send them some results and then we often work together on journal papers so we can publish the findings.

I instigated this emphasis on collaboration when first involved with the service in Cardiff. Then when the internet arrived, I was an early adopter and it has enabled much closer collaboration with all of those we work with around the UK.

Nowadays we actively invite people to come here to do experiments and we have also developed novel web-based systems to allow people to remotely interact with our experiments. As they see our capabilities and we see theirs, this leads to even more new work.

Q *You've successfully renewed the contract to manage the NCS. Why do you think Southampton has been successful so consistently?*

A I think this understanding of the need to run the service collaboratively and the commitment to breaking down 'us' and 'them' boundaries and actually fostering a community within the field has given us the edge with contract renewals.

Much of my work is also multidisciplinary - I am working very closely with the Institute for Life Sciences (IfLS), with Electronics and Computer Science (ECS) and most of my research students are co-supervised with an academic in another discipline, for example Engineering Sciences, Statistics and ECS.

Added to this, we've not only done crystallography within Chemistry, we've used the techniques to work with areas such as the earth sciences, physics and in particular life sciences. It is common to specialise in crystallography for just one of these disciplines so we have done some innovative work at the interfaces and there is now University-wide access to crystallisation facilities in the IfLS and the subsequent crystallography experiments in Chemistry.

Q *Your work on data management has also received additional funding recently. Could you tell us more about this?*

A I first teamed up with Jeremy Frey, also a Southampton chemist, around ten years ago. We were interested in how the internet would change the way we did science and how to get what we do in the laboratory into a digital environment. This work has continued to grow over the years.

We recently received a £1million grant from HEFCE for a project managed by JISC to build on a prototype data management tool that we've created and which is being used by colleagues around the University already.

At a basic level, it is a tool to enable researchers, wherever they are – an archaeologist in a muddy field or a scientist in a laboratory for example - to record their observations and thoughts during an experiment electronically. It will structure these pieces of data in various ways and enable researchers to share this with their colleagues and then publish the information. The tool will also capture data about the environment in which the experiment took place and link into other services such as safety requirements for handling chemicals.

At the moment I would estimate we publish around 10-20 per cent of the research that is done. This tool should enable researchers to publish much more – in fact we would love to see researchers publishing all the work they do - sharing their findings for the benefit of the research community.



From left to right:

Neha Sinha
Data Manager

Tikki Immins
Trial Coordinator

Louise Dent
Senior Statistician

Gintare Amber Rutkauskaite
Trial Coordinator

Emily Moore
Operations Director

Peter Navin
Data Officer

Making a difference

By providing expertise in the design, conduct and analysis of clinical trials, the University of Southampton Clinical Trials Unit (UoSCTU) is improving clinical research for the benefit of patients. The team welcomed *the Voice* to one of its meetings where they described how a combination of professionalism, mutual support and laughter has created a positive working environment and improved outcomes for many patients.

UoSCTU was first established in 2006 as part of the Cancer Sciences Academic Group. The Unit became a fully registered national clinical trials unit in 2007 and has continued to grow rapidly ever since.

Initially core funding from Cancer Research UK allowed the unit to develop a portfolio of large, multi-centre cancer trials. Since then, additional funding from the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) has enabled the unit to expand its portfolio to include non-cancer trials.

The unit, now comprising 32 team members following a period of growth, is led by Professor Diana Eccles (Director), along with Emily Moore (Operations Director), two senior trials managers and the senior statistician.



Jen Black
Trial Coordinator

Jess Borras
Trial Coordinator

Barry Andrews
Trials Manager

Sarah Benge
Senior Trials Managers

Q *Where is your team based?*

A We are located on F level, Centre Block, Southampton General Hospital.

Q *Could you briefly describe what the team does?*

A We provide expertise to investigators who are seeking to establish a clinical trial. This includes advice on trial design, costing and grant submissions to help them secure funding. We run the trial from set-up to reporting, this includes the setting up of the site for a trial, its smooth running and conclusion through high quality data acquisition and analysis.

We are currently managing 24 trials, covering several disease areas and at varying stages of delivery – in follow-up, actively recruiting, in set-up and in development.

We receive proposals for new studies on an ongoing basis. They are reviewed fortnightly by the senior management team. The core resource is limited so applications for support are carefully weighed against available capacity, the strategic direction and available expertise. We also like to be involved from the early stages of a trial.

Q *What does the team enjoy most about the work you do?*

A We are driven by the hope that by doing what we do we make a difference to patients and the outcome of their treatment, as well as to future patients.

It is also a very supportive group – people tend to have been through the same things and we are able to share experiences. That is a nice way to come to work.

We have managed to maintain the positive, supportive and fun working atmosphere despite the rapid growth of the team. In fact, it has improved as the team has expanded.

Q *If you could wave a magic wand and change one thing what would it be?*

A More office space or a space that is truly our own would make a real difference. With the space we have, there is sometimes a sense it is a borrowed space.

Any university colleagues who work at the hospital will already know that parking is also a real issue here. Those of us who drive would love to be able to park closer to work.

Q *Who is the joker in the team?*

A We are hard pressed to pick just one person.

The team is both professional and a lot of fun at the same time – everyone has a great sense of humour and there is plenty of laughter. And in some ways there needs to be, given the inherent seriousness of our work and some of the associated frustrations – the administrative hurdles and time constraints. Perhaps to work in a Clinical Trials Unit you also need a bit of a dark sense of humour from time to time!

Q *Who is the sports enthusiast?*

A Julia, Jane and Carol are all runners and Diana plays tennis. As we've already mentioned, most of us get quite a bit of exercise walking from the car to work! Several of us regularly take part in the Cancer Research UK Race for Life event in Southampton – motivated by our professional and sometimes also personal connections to cancer research.

Profile

Sabu Padmadas

A global outlook



As Co-Director of the Centre for Global Health, Population, Poverty and Policy, Dr Sabu Padmadas is currently managing several international research projects. He also teaches a number of demographic and statistics modules including 'Population and Health'. In 2010 he received a Vice-Chancellor's Teaching Award, having been nominated by some of his students. When *the Voice* met up with him, he had just returned from a month in China, working on a UN-funded project.

Q *What projects are you working on at the moment?*

A Since 2003 I have been involved in evaluating a reproductive health intervention programme in China, which is funded by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) with the aim of removing birth targets and promoting informed choices. I have recently completed the final evaluation. I'm also working with a large global network of researchers on a project funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), looking at health care inequalities in Brazil and India.

Q *You are leading an interdisciplinary team to develop a new module as part of the Curriculum Innovation Programme (CIP). How did the idea for the Global Health module come about?*

A I was teaching a module called Population and Health and student representatives from Medicine wanted an opportunity to study this area as well as part of their intercalated study programme. At the time, their option to study global health was to go to London or Bristol. I got together a team of very enthusiastic colleagues and we realised that there was scope to develop a new module for a wider student community. In particular, Dr. Julie Wintrup from Health Sciences has been incredibly proactive in facilitating student-staff interaction.

Professor Allan Hill, currently based in our Faculty, is also involved with the design of the module. He felt that what they already offered at Harvard was different to our discussions and that we were heading in the right direction. He even encouraged us to produce an academic textbook on the subject, which is something we plan to do in the future.

Although we had already started the conversation about designing something new, it has been great to continue this work with the support of the CIP.

Q *What will the Global Health module involve for the students who take it?*

A They will gain a unique opportunity to learn multiple dimensions of global health, which is under-explored and defined in many ways. They will study areas such as the role of society and technology in health promotion, the transition of dietary patterns and global burden of chronic diseases as well as the spread of infectious diseases in a global context. The expertise and resources available to them through a group of research-active teachers from Social and Human Sciences, Medicine and Health Sciences will be a major strength. The Vice-Chancellor will also be involved by teaching a session on health promotion and policy as part of the module.

One of the criteria for CIP modules is that they should make use of innovative delivery and assessment tools. Students studying Global Health will experience interactive lectures and multi-media tutorials, internet research and written essays, as well as taking part in online assessment.

Q *What do you think about the Curriculum Innovation Programme?*

A The CIP opens up a wide range of flexible opportunities for education and research. I think it is a brilliant initiative, which is long overdue. There are a lot of interdependencies and overlap around the world nowadays, in terms of issues and needs. The CIP's attempt to address this should motivate students to reach for a new knowledge horizon to meet new challenges. We want them to open windows to the outside world and prepare them for the global society in which they live. This is about preparing our future leaders.

Q *What achievements are you most proud of in your career?*

A Building an international research network with colleagues from China, India, Brazil, South Africa and some other African countries has not been easy, but I am proud that we have managed to build a strong team and maintain fruitful academic collaborations. It is a vibrant network and we are always looking for opportunities to apply for research grants – I'm pleased to say that we have been successful with most of our applications.

I am also proud of my six PhD students who have completed their doctorates. They are all well-placed, with good jobs and strong academic interests. One in particular came to me as a second-year undergraduate student attending one of my modules: he told me that through his reading he had identified an area that was under-researched and he wanted to research it himself through a PhD. He went on to complete his Masters and then his PhD, and is now working at the University of Bristol. Knowing that my lectures stimulated new thinking for research is highly rewarding.

Q *If you hadn't followed an academic career, what would you have done?*

A I love films, so I think I would have done something creative in the film industry. I have a long list of favourite films and whenever I try to pick one or two, it is impossible to favour one over the others.

Q *What are you currently reading?*

A *The Rational Optimist* by Matt Ridley; *The Chinese Century* by Oded Shenkar.

Q *And finally, who would be your ideal dinner party guests, dead or alive?*

A Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Florence Nightingale, Frans Willekens, Tony Blair and Aishwarya Rai. Cooking is another of my passions, so I think I would experiment to cook them something delicious.

Find out more about the Curriculum Innovation Programme by visiting **www.soton.ac.uk/cip**

Feature

Ideas for airport ef ciency take f ight

As air traffic increases throughout the skies, academics at Southampton are making strides to maximise the efficiency of European airports, while potentially reducing carbon emissions.



Air traffic is expected to double or triple in the next 20 years

Getting the most out of airport runways is an ongoing challenge for air traffic controllers. There were 9.5 million flights taken in Europe in 2010 and air traffic is expected to double or triple in the next 15 to 20 years. Any reduction in the capacity of an airport to cope, results in significant delays and therefore costs for airlines. In 2009, air traffic delays cost the US airline industry around $10 billion, 70 per cent of which was due to ground operations.

Maximising capacity without compromising safety

The EUROCONTROL project, a collaborative effort that brings together academics from Mathematics, led by Professor Chris Potts, and the Southampton Management School, led by Julia Bennell, aims to tackle this problem. The team is using the techniques of operational research and management science, which focus on the effective use of technology, to come up with new ways of increasing capacity.

"The main goal of the project is to look at improvements to methods for scheduling aircraft on an airport's runways, both for take-off and landing," explains Chris.

Aircraft cause air turbulence that can endanger the stability of trailing aircrafts. "Because aircraft create wake vortices (rotating air), safety considerations require minimum separations (normally defined as minimum time gaps) between aircraft," says Chris.

These separation times are dependent on the size or type of aircraft, explains Julia. "A light aircraft landing after a heavy aircraft needs a greater separation then a heavy aircraft landing after another heavy one, for example."

The order in which the aircraft land may therefore play an important role for the capacity of the runway.

Useful algorithms may hold the answers

The team are using various algorithms and mathematical methods to tackle this complex optimisation problem, using data provided by Heathrow Airport – the world's busiest international airport.

"Our work will allow air traffic controllers to work more efficiently if they have access to our algorithms in the form of a decision support system," explains Chris.

"Should this research result in improved scheduling in practice by air traffic controllers, then it could lead to better usage of existing infrastructure providing more flights without the need for extra runways," adds Julia. In light of recent objections to a third runway at Heathrow, this adds another facet to the importance of their work.

Previous research in this area has typically had many shortcomings, such as models that take too long to operate or don't capture all of the elements of the problem with the result that the solutions aren't useful and cannot be used or models that don't take the preferences of all stakeholders into account.

"Our research aims to overcome these shortcomings by designing algorithms that can run in one or two seconds and in addition to maximising runway throughput, take into account the interests of other stakeholders for example, by reducing delay for passengers and reducing fuel used, and consequently carbon emissions," says Chris.

The team believe they can achieve significant improvements in runway efficiency by creating schedules that avoid, as far as is possible, frequent changes of weight class between aircraft in the take-off or landing sequence.

"Through better sequencing of aircraft the total separation times between all landings can be reduced thus improving throughput, which is the number of planes landing in a given period or the time required to land a given number of planes. The sequencing also takes into account other safety considerations, fairness between flights and additional fuel burn involved in manoeuvres and delaying landings," says Julia.

A collaboration of knowledge

Julia and Chris are members of the Centre for Operational Research, Management Science and Information Systems (CORMSIS), a cross faculty research group, which actively encourages collaboration.

"We have worked together on a number of research projects and have developed a good working relationship of over 10 years," says Julia.

Past collaborations have included working on a number of knowledge transfer partnerships and undertaking the joint supervision of postgraduate students.

"The disciplines of operational research and management science are closely related and it is natural for the two research groups to work together," explains Chris. "Both operational research and management science use similar techniques such as optimisation and simulation for example, and there are many common application areas, such as defence, finance, healthcare, production/manufacturing and transportation."

Julia agrees: "Our research fields significantly overlap despite being from different disciplines, particularly in researching optimisation problems, transportation problems and common methodologies."

However, Chris recognises that while their skill sets are similar, there are also some significant differences and these are "particularly useful for the collaboration".

The team was awarded funding for their project from EUROCONTROL, the European organisation for the safety of air navigation. The Operational Research Group in Mathematics has strong links to EUROCONTROL as they have previously worked together.

The team will complete their project in September this year.

The EUROCONTROL website **www.eurocontrol.int** features information about collaborations with academia. For information about CORMSIS, go to **www.cormsis.soton.ac.uk**

Going global

In October 2012, the University will open the doors of its first overseas branch campus in the Iskandar region of Malaysia, within an international education hub called 'EduCity.' The University of Southampton Malaysia Campus (USMC) provides a pivotal opportunity to increase our international presence and profile. *the Voice* set out to discover more.

In January 2011, Vice-Chancellor Professor Don Nutbeam, signed an agreement to establish the new branch campus. Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) Mark Spearing explains the background: "Some time ago the University, and in particular my predecessor, Professor Alistair Fitt (Mark took up this post in May 2011), began to explore several possibilities for an overseas campus."

"Southampton has set out to realise its aspirations to be a world-class university in a range of ways, including: increasing international student recruitment (by 17 per cent last year), building our international community on campus and developing strategic links with institutions and organisations around the world. An overseas campus will add significantly to these efforts to increase our international profile."



The Southampton building at EduCity will house our teaching and research facilities (artist's impression)

Mark continues: "While other regions and developments were considered, Malaysia offered us the most compelling combination of a strategic location, with easy access to Singapore (a ten minute drive from a new crossing), combined with incentives such as the exclusive right to offer engineering degrees in EduCity for nine years."

The EduCity Campus

The 600 acre EduCity site is being positioned as a destination for world-class education, encompassing pre-school through to tertiary provision. USMC will join a list of globally respected educational institutions including Newcastle University (also of the Russell Group and whose campus specialises in Medicine), and the prestigious independent British boarding school, Marlborough College.

In addition to other institutions, EduCity will be home to a cluster of knowledge - based, industry-focussed facilities, including research and development sites. It will also offer full student facilities, accommodation, recreational facilities and conference and exhibition amenities.

John McBride, the Associate Dean for Research in Engineering and the Environment, has spent 18 months meeting and negotiating with the Malaysian government and the site developers in order to get to this point in the project.

Current Malaysian students are helping with the project by providing case studies about their experiences of the University.



Nur Muhammad Safwan Azman: "I am the President of the Malaysian Students Association. I often get in touch with the International Office and I helped them during the predeparture briefing for prospective students in Kuala Lumpur in 2010.

The University of Southampton is simply one of the best institutes in the United Kingdom. Be it the course structure, the environment, it is amazing!"

John comments: "Planning how to replicate our courses and the Southampton student experience on the other side of the world and in another culture is hugely complex and not without challenges, but it is an incredibly exciting step for the University."

He continues: "We are setting out to deliver, in Malaysia, engineering programmes that are, as far as is possible the same as the University's UK based courses. The first two years of a 3 or 4 year programme will take place at USMC, followed by one or two years in Southampton and will lead to the award of the same degrees. Research is a cornerstone of our degree programmes and it is essential this is reflected in the experience of USMC students."

Initially, the intention is to offer Mechanical Engineering programmes for an intake of up to 60 students. As USMC matures it is intended to expand the number of programmes, with electrical and electromechanical engineering programmes the first additions (for academic year 2013/14). Mark comments: "It is still early days but our vision is to develop the Malaysia campus over the next five to ten years."

Southampton staff in Malaysia

When the campus opens there will be two members of current Southampton academic staff based at USMC who will work together with locally recruited academic staff. Additional academic colleagues will go out to teach specific modules, typically for several weeks at a time.

To ensure continuity of the teaching as these visiting members of staff return to the UK, there will be a small group of PhD students who will also work as teaching assistants. The first cohort are currently being recruited – and they will have a year in Southampton, getting started with their research and with local supervision, before heading out to research and work at USMC.

There is still plenty of preparation ahead before the opening of the new campus. The numerous professional and academic colleagues who are involved - including in the International Office, iSolutions, Estates and Facilities and Communications and Marketing - are working hard to ensure a smooth start for our first overseas intake.

John comments: "Colleagues involved from different parts of the University are working together to address some of the complex issues - from construction of the building through to the model for academic delivery - in order to reach solutions that will enable us to make this a success for the future students of USMC, the Faculties involved and as a strategic and financial investment for the University."

If you would like to follow the progress of USMC in more detail, please visit the USMC site on SUSSED.

Community **and Outreach**

Keeping you up-to-date with our activities in the community



Community-based language teachers at the Community Cafe project

Supporting local community-based language teachers

The University has helped to create a new project that provides learning materials and teaching resources for community-based language teachers in Southampton.

The Community Café project was developed by the Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (LLAS) in collaboration with community-based language teachers working with Southampton City Council. The aim of the project was to create a collection of online language and cultural materials for use by those engaged in the community-based teaching and learning of languages, within Southampton and beyond.

The project combined informal 'café' style meetings for the sharing of teaching knowledge in a social environment and networking, with workshops held at the University on various aspects of using technology in teaching. All materials created under the project have been released on an open access website, called the LanguageBox (**www.languagebox.ac.uk**), which is a free online space for the publication and sharing of teaching and learning resources among language teachers across all sectors of education within the UK.

Alison Dickens, Assistant Director of LLAS, says: "The teachers involved in the project are incredibly enthusiastic learners who have started creating and sharing resources on the LanguageBox. These are available online to all community-based language teachers across the UK to share and re-use, and so we hope that the project's good work will spread far beyond Southampton. The project is an example of a really ef ective collaboration between the University and members of the local community."

Community-based language teachers usually teach outside of the mainstream education system and are often volunteers. They teach languages spoken in the wider community, and in Southampton this includes Gujarati, Bengali, Chinese, Afghan Farsi, Hindi, Malay, Malayalam, Persian, Punjabi, Polish and Urdu. Many students pursue these languages to success at GCSE level, but there are very few resources available to teachers and little opportunity for meeting other teachers to share ideas and learn new methods - the Community Café project sought to address this.

Dr Sarwar Jamil, Manager of the City Council's Community Languages service, adds: "Tutors are already applying some of the things they have learnt in the classroom and this has made a big dif erence to teaching quality. They are also creating resources to publish in the LanguageBox and using these too. The project has opened a new door for them."

The Community Café project was funded by JISC, who inspire UK colleges and universities in the innovative use of digital technologies. Paola Marchionni, programme manager at JISC, says: "This has been a very successful project. Community Café has created a strong relationship and dialogue between university staf and community teachers. It has tackled issues of digital literacy and produced teaching resources for the benefit of the wider higher education sector and other communities of teachers and students."



Thea Bjaaland and Adam Tewkesbury

Increasing sheltered cycle storage on campus

Cyclists at the Highfield and Waterfront Campuses have had their parking options increased thanks to the Sustrans 'Cycle Parking Grant' project, which has part-funded new cycle storage at each campus.

The Highfield Campus has a new secure cycle store with capacity for 40 bikes to the rear of the Hartley Library, while covered racks have been installed at the Waterfront Campus's North wing, with capacity for an additional 60 bikes onsite.

Adam Tewkesbury, Transport Operations Manager at the University, says: "The number of cyclists at the University is increasing, and it is great to be able to support this trend. I am very grateful for the support that Sustrans has provided."

For more information on cycling, or to access the University Travel Plan, please visit the University Transport website; (**www.soton.ac.uk/transport**).

Access to the secure stores on the Highfield campus can be arranged at the uni-*link* of ce, located above the Students' Union shop.

Junior neighbourhourhood wardens learn about higher education

The Junior Neigbourhood Warden Scheme, led by Southampton City Council, helps Southampton youngsters aged 7-12 to play a positive and active role in the local community. The junior wardens work with their adult counterparts, assisting with activities such as removing graffiti, picking up litter and fundraising for local charities.

As part of this programme, the University hosts a series of events to introduce the junior wardens to the possibilities and value of higher education. Over the last year this has included a day at the National Oceanography Centre which involved taking a trip on the research ship Callista, meeting PhD students in the aquarium and learning about the latest underwater technology from some of the centre's staf .



Local Year 10 pupils racing in the Greenpower Challengeproject

Engineering gets the green f ag in schools'racing challenge

Teams from Hampshire schools competed to qualify for pole position at the final of the University of Southampton's Greenpower Challenge. Year 10 pupils modified and raced a Greenpower Goblin racing car supervised by engineering students from the University.

"The Greenpower Challenge aims to get pupils aged 14 and 15 to think about engineering as a career. They are introduced to the possibilities of 'green' energy and the technical aspects of building a racing car, plus having the chance to modify and design their own 24-volt electric motor car," says Charlotte Everitt, Outreach and Partnership Of cer at the University.

Participating schools were Quilley School of Engineering, Bitterne Park Secondary School, Isle of Wight College, Wildern School, Crestwood College for Business and Enterprise and St Anne's Catholic School.

Now in its fifth year, the event is part of the University's Sustainable Energy Scheme.

This event was also part of the University's wider outreach programme. Find out more: **http://www.southampton.ac.uk/schoolsandcolleges/**



Find your voice

the Voice asked five colleagues from the University Library to discuss three questions about their working life at the University and the services they provide.

1. How does your role, and the work of your team, contribute to the day-to-day running of the University?

2. What do you find most rewarding about working in the Library?

3. Can you tell us about a success or a proud moment that you have experienced during your time at the University?

Nick Gates

Avenue Library Service Manager

1. My role as manager of the Avenue Library Service is to lead a small team of enthusiastic and dedicated staff in providing a service to students and staff in Humanities. We provide a lending and general enquiry point at the Avenue Campus, but our primary role is to ensure the core texts, films, and digitized extracts (e-reserve) are available within the Avenue Reserve Collection at the beginning of each semester. This is an on-going process, to ensure our collection directly reflects the units being taught each academic year.

2. Problem solving and providing an effective service to staff and students.

3. It's more of an on-going development than a 'moment', but the introduction of e-reserve during the academic year 2006-07. e-reserve has largely replaced the photocopied resources held in course boxes within the Library's Reserve Collections. The Avenue Library team took a lead role in its introduction and promotion and we now have more than 6,000 articles available as e-reserve. The benefit to students is 24/7 access (on and off campus) to many of their key readings.



Isobel Stark

Academic Liaison Librarian

1. I am often the first point of contact for staff and students in my academic units. I manage the book budgets and stock; liaise with academics over book and journal purchases; attend meetings such as student/staff liaison committees; and provide both information skills training for students and deskside training for staff. I help staff the enquiry desk and specialise in e-theses and copyright support across the University. I am also the co-ordinator for the Library's contribution to the University Open Days, so I keep busy!

2. Ensuring users get the information they need. Mostly this goes un-thanked, and as it's my job I don't expect anything, but occasionally you get an unexpected card or an email that lets you know you've made a real difference to someone's work.

3. When we went to our son's first Christmas concert at the Early Years Centre. He'd been practising for weeks. Definitely one for the family album.



Melissa Donne

Library Assistant

1. My role as a Library Assistant in the Hartley loans department is vital to the effective circulation of library stock. Users rely on our team to promptly replace returned items to shelves and ensure material is accessible by keeping it tidy and in order.

2. The Library is a rewarding place to work, not only because we have a great team but also through the opportunities for training and development. Additionally, the support and flexibility I have received from management to enable me to study for a PhD and work at the same time has been fantastic.

3. I was pleased to recently be elected chair for the Library Assistant meetings and oversee what is a valuable forum for the discussion of matters affecting us directly in the course of our work. As a part-time member of staff, it has also been an excellent way to get more actively involved in Library affairs.



John Dover

Senior Library Assistant, Cataloguing

1. I'm one of the team that records the Library's collections in our online catalogue 'WebCat.' We give everything a call number – its place on a shelf where it sits alongside others of related subject matter. We add some 1000 new records to 'WebCat' each month and we also improve existing ones. My role is focused on resources for the Education department and for the study of film and music.

2. My colleagues. Working here is a real pleasure; work is approached conscientiously, advice is supplied readily, and good humour reigns supreme. We get on well and get on with the job!

3. Providing a record for each volume in two monumental series: *Hallische Händel-Ausgabe* and *Werke* of Haydn. It was impossible to discover which compositions by either composer were available within these key editions. A pleasing moment for me was the comprehensive completion of this project, illustrating the kind of work we do daily which is enhancing the quality of 'WebCat' as a reliable tool for making searches.



Jane Stephenson

Head of Information Services, National Oceanography Centre

1. One of my roles is to lead Information Literacy for the University Library. Librarians help students and staff to search, retrieve, organise and evaluate information and provide life skills. My team of subject librarians are working on developing learning and teaching objects, web pages and are training staff and students at all levels to provide them with the tools and skills to be information literate.

2. It is rewarding to lead a group of committed staff who work with the students. Staff can see it makes a difference to students and we are always looking at new ways of delivery.

3. I enjoy the variety of my work at the University, including my role as Head of Information Services at the National Oceanography Centre and working with the Natural Environment Research Council. Last year I was invited by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to give a paper on Information Management at the International Congress for the Exploration of the Seas, so there are always new challenges.

Your News

News from around the University Campus

New tool to help response to threat of asteroid collision

A new software system has been developed that could support decisions on how to respond to potential Near Earth Object (NEO) impacts on Earth. The Near Earth Object Mitigation Support System (NEOMiSS) has been designed to inform decision-makers about human vulnerability due to a collision by a NEO, typically an asteroid or a comet.

NEOMiSS is designed to provide information about the ability to evacuate a threatened region prior to an impact. It combines models of the physical effects of a potential NEO impact with historical knowledge of a variety of natural hazards and local building strength. This creates a measure of human vulnerability in the form of expected number of casualties.

What makes the system unique is the addition of behaviour-based evacuation models, which simulate and measure the ability to evacuate an affected area. These models rely on global gridded data, statistical data and knowledge of transportation infrastructure collected by astronautics student Charlotte Norlund during her PhD.

"The likelihood of a NEO, such as an asteroid or comet, impacting the Earth might be small but the damage would be devastating. Earth-threatening NEOs may be discovered days or years before an impact, giving us the chance to launch a deflection mission or evacuate an area," explains Charlotte.

The NEOMiSS tool, developed by Charlotte and supervisors Professor Peter Atkinson and Dr Hugh Lewis, addresses some of these factors. It also gives some indication of the resilience of regions that may be at risk and identifies areas that may need further investment in transportation infrastructure to avoid congestion 'bottlenecks'.

"This has been such a valuable opportunity for me, and it's great to see the sponsors of SIFE champion all the students who take part in the competition."



Helen Alexander

New Chancellor, Dame Helen Alexander

Dame Helen Alexander, CBE, former President of the CBI, has been appointed to succeed Sir John Parker as Chancellor of the University of Southampton. Sir John reached the end of his term in office on 31 July.

Helen Alexander is known for her wide and varied experience in international business. She is currently chair of the Port of London Authority and Incisive Media, and a senior adviser to Bain Capital. She is a Trustee of the WWW (World Wide Web) Foundation, and chair of the Business Advisory Council of the Said Business School, Oxford University. She holds non-executive positions at Centrica and Rolls-Royce Group and was previously a trustee of the Tate Gallery and held non-executive positions with Northern Foods and BT. She came to the end of her term as President of the CBI in June.

The Chancellor is the principal lay officer of the University. This is largely an ambassadorial and ceremonial role, a key feature of which involves the Chancellor presiding over degree ceremonies at Graduation.

Helen Alexander comments: "It is a great honour to be Chancellor of one of the UK's leading research universities. As a trustee of the WWW Foundation, I already have close links with Southampton academics through their world-leading work in relation to the future of the Web. I am looking forward to gaining an even deeper understanding of the University, its staff and students and the distinctive research and teaching that makes Southampton such a unique place of learning."

WSA Students' scarf designs launched at Liberty in London

Scarves designed by textile students from Winchester School of Art have been launched at the prestigious scarf hall at Liberty department store in London.

International conservation charity the World Land Trust collaborated with Liberty and WSA on a competition to find the winning designs. World-famous model Lily Cole has also backed it with a photo-shoot to promote them.

The students' brief was to design a scarf inspired by WLT projects to go on sale in Liberty's illustrious central atrium. A judging panel of artists and accessory experts including; Vogue's Senior Fashion Assistant, Tammy Tinker, the Head of Buying at Liberty, Alex Stylianidis, prominent shoe designer Michael Lewis, celebrated wildlife artist and WLT trustee, Bruce Pearson, and jewellery designer Dominic Jones.

The panel was asked to select five winning designs from fourteen finalists at WSA. After much deliberation, the judges named the winners as Evelyn Males Echeverria, Phoebe Farrell, Freya Perrett and Lauren Dunbar – who won in two categories.

The five designs went into production and were launched at the store on 11 May 2011. All profits made from the sales will be donated to the World Land Trust to save endangered habitats all over the world.

For more information visit: **http://blog.liberty.co.uk/8007/save-it-with-a-scarf/**



Freya Perrett, with her scarf design. Photo by Sarah Molloy at Liberty

Improved OFSTED rating for the Early Years Centre

The University's Early Years Centre, situated on Highfield Campus, has received an improved rating from Ofsted following its inspection early this year. In 2007, the Centre was given a 'satisfactory' rating. In January this year Ofsted found the provision to be 'good' in all areas assessed. The other ratings are 'unsatisfactory,' which is the lowest ranking and 'outstanding,' the top ranking that can be awarded.

Amongst the comments, the report noted that children were eager and confident about coming into the Centre and that staf fostered good relationships with parents.

The Centre team, led by Centre manager Tracy Pointon, is thrilled with this result and is already looking at how they can improve their provision in order to achieve an 'outstanding' rating, at least in some criteria, from the next inspection.

To find out more about the Early Years Centre, visit **http://www.soton.ac.uk/studentservices/earlyyearscentre/nursery.html**

SIFE students will represent UK in a global competition for business leaders of the future

A team of students from Southampton has been named 2011 national champions in the annual SIFE competition and will now go forward to the SIFE World Cup in Malaysia in October.

SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise) is a not-for-profit global organisation that works to mobilise university students to make a dif erence within their communities while developing their skills to become socially responsible business leaders.

SIFE Southampton president Jack Stanbury, who was also named UK Team Leader of the Year at the national competition, says: "The real-life experience of creating and running business programmes in a socially responsible way has transformed the way I think about my future.

"This has been such a valuable opportunity for me, and it's great to see the sponsors of SIFE champion all the students who take part in the competition."

Your News

News from around the University Campus



A device to help with stroke rehabilitation

New options for stroke rehabilitation

Devices which could be used to rehabilitate the arms and hands of people who have experienced a stroke have been developed by some of our researchers.

Dr Geof Merrett, a lecturer in electronic systems and devices worked with Dr Sara Demain, a lecturer in physiotherapy and Dr Cheryl Metcalf, a researcher in biomechanics, to develop three 'tactile' devices which generate a realistic 'sense of touch' and sensation - mimicking those involved in everyday activities.

Dr Demain says: "Most stroke rehabilitation systems ignore the role of sensation and they only allow people repetitive movement. Our aim is to develop technology which provides people with a sense of holding something or of feeling something, like, for example, holding a hot cup of tea, and we want to integrate this with improving motor function."

Three tactile devices were developed and tested on patients who'd had a stroke and on healthy participants. The devices were: a 'vibration' tactile device, which users felt provided a good indication of touch, but did not really feel as if they were holding anything; a 'motor-driven squeezer' device, which users said felt like they were holding something, a bit like catching a ball; and a 'shape memory alloy' device which has thermal properties and creates a sensation like picking up a cup of tea.

Dr Merrett adds: "We now have a number of technologies, which we can use to develop sensation." Dr Metcalf concludes: "This technology can be used on its own as a stand-alone system to help with sensory rehabilitation or it could be used alongside existing health technologies such as rehabilitation robots or gaming technologies which help patient rehabilitation."

A copy of the paper can be accessed at: **http://eprints.ecs.soton.ac.uk/**

David Blow Prize success for Dr Ivo Tews

Dr Ivo Tews has been awarded the David Blow Prize for Crystallography by the Biological Structures Group (BSG) at the Annual Spring Meeting of the British Crystallographic Association (BCA), held at the University of Keele in April 2011.

Dr Tews says: "I am very honoured by the award. The prize strengthens our ef orts to develop the Structural Biology profile for Southampton. We already have excellent NMR facilities, and the recent success of the National Crystallography Service, based in Chemistry, to secure funding, has meant that we could make a technology investment with nanodrop crystallisation facilities now available at the Institute for Life Sciences."

The prestigious prize, named in David Blow's honour, recognises key research within the field of cellular and molecular biosciences, and its award to Dr Tews demonstrates the innovative nature of research in this area at Southampton.

http://www.southampton.ac.uk/biosci/news/2011/05/06_david_blow_award.page



Dr Ivo Tews



The Life Sciences building

Life Sciences building wins a prestigious RIBA award

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) awards are presented to buildings that have high architectural standards and make a substantial contribution to the local environment. The £50 million investment on the Highfield campus opened in September 2010.

Peter Smith, Director of the Institute for Life Sciences which is based in the new building, comments: "This brilliantly-designed building is not only energy ef cient and sympathetic to the environment, it also provides an inspirational space for creative thinking and learning."

Commenting on its design by architects NBBJ, the RIBA judges said: "In bringing together students and academics from Medicine and Biological Sciences, with additional research groups from Electronics and Computer Science, the building ref ects the University's cross-disciplinary research vision."

Kevin Monaghan, Director of Estates and Facilities, added: "The new Life Sciences building enhances our Highfield campus and makes a clear statement about how we are delivering 21st century science in a sustainable and inspiring physical environment.

"Recognition by RIBA demonstrates that great design can be af ordable and extends the University's success in achieving recognition for its commitment to high quality in its built environment. Our thanks are extended to all participants in the project."

Find out more:
http://www.southampton.ac.uk/ifls/about_us/lsb.html

Short rotation crops could help meet UK's renewable energy targets

Planting short rotation energy crops on England's unused agricultural land could produce enough biomass to meet renewable energy targets without disrupting the food industry or the environment, according to research led by Professor Gail Taylor.

The study, funded by the UK Energy Research Centre (UKERC), is a rare investigation into energy crop supply which looks at the potential of planting short rotation coppice (poplar and willow) in England, taking into account social, economic and environmental constraints. It found that with ef cient land use, England is able to produce enough biomass to generate approximately four per cent of current UK electricity demand, without compromising environmental sustainability or food production.

UKERC researcher and co-author Gail Taylor, Professor of Plant Biology, said: "This study shows that bioenergy crops can be grown sustainably in parts of England, with no detrimental impact on food crops or other ecosystem services. Our current work is taking this approach further to determine how future climate scenarios will inf uence biomass supply."

The UK is committed to meeting 15 per cent of all energy and 30 per cent electricity demand via renewable sources by 2020 and bioenergy is expected to play an important role in this. Dedicated energy crops are currently only responsible for less than 0.1 per cent of the UK electricity, but growing demand has led to conf icts with food production, attributing to the rising cost of food, and ecosystem services.

Leading the way in nursing degrees

Southampton will train all its nursing students to degree standard from September, as the first educator in England to move over to an all-graduate programme according to new UK standards.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council, the UK's nursing and midwifery regulator, has given approval for the move after the University met strict assessment criteria to ensure the nursing degree programme met the highest standards of quality.

"This is an historic moment for nursing – we have been pressing for this for a very long time. From September we will be preparing a new generation of nurses for the NHS," says Professor Jessica Corner, Dean of Health Sciences.

Dr Steve Tee, Associate Director of Education in Health Sciences, comments: "By of ering a degree we are giving our students a head start. Compassion and sensitive care are at the heart of the course; graduates will also leave with excellent problem solving, management and communications skills, along with an excellent knowledge of patient care in their chosen specialism."

Your News

News from around the University Campus

Nigel Shadbolt appointed chair of mydata

Professor Nigel Shadbolt has been appointed chair of mydata, an initiative designed to give consumers easier access to data held about them by businesses.

The initiative will enable consumers to use the digital data held about them by a whole range of businesses: financial, retail, telecoms and utility companies. This data can empower consumers aiming to get the best deals for products and services - for example, in price comparison sites.

The project will assess how to give people their personal data in a format that is safe to pass on to third parties.

Professor Shadbolt, Professor of Artificial Intelligence, commented: "Information about how we shop, travel, communicate and live our lives is a powerful source of insight, so it's important that each of us should be able to access our own data.

"I am very much looking forward to chairing the mydata group, which aims to make accessing this data much simpler, and should be a watershed on how we use data to get a better deal every day."



Nigel Shadbolt

Southampton chemists among the best in the world

Four Southampton scientists have been named in the latest list of the world's highest-achieving chemists on the magazine *Chemistry World's* website. They are Professors Phil Bartlett, Phil Gale and Malcolm Levitt together with Emeritus Professor Mike Hursthouse.

The quartet feature in the list of chemists with the highest h-indices in the world. The h-index, which was devised by physicist Jorge Hirsh in 2005, is used to measure the research impact of living scientists. Their position on the list is determined according to the highest number of papers they have published which have each amassed at least that number of citations.

Professor Steven Hawkins, Dean of Natural and Environmental Sciences says: "This set of rankings confirms the outstanding quality of Chemistry in Southampton as evidenced by independent quantitative bibliometrics."

Student audit reveals room for improvement in on-campus recycling

75 students recently spent their Wednesday afternoon going through our general (landfill) waste performing an audit on what staff and students are putting in the waste bins around campus, including in halls.

They revealed that over half of the general waste from on-campus bins could easily have been recycled. Students in halls performed better, where a third of the waste sent to landfill could have been recycled.

Dr Neil Smith, Environment Manager, reported back on the performance of various sites: "Avenue campus was the worst performer with the Shackleton building a close second. WSA was the best performing campus site, where only 15 per cent of the landfill waste could have been recycled."

He commented: "Many staf and students are already enthusiastic recyclers and we thank them for helping us divert waste away from landfill. But, clearly there's plenty of room for improvement. I would like to remind everyone to make use of the mixed recycling bins on campus, which can take paper, cans, cardboard and all plastics, including sandwich boxes."

Find out more:

http://www.southampton.ac.uk/estates/services/wasterecycling/waste_man.html

Research finds clear link between height and longevity

New research shows that the way we live directly affects the length of our bodies – and our lives. Southampton's Professor Bernard Harris is one of the co-authors of a new book, *The Changing Body* (Cambridge University Press), which confirms that there is a clear link between height and longevity.

By exploring the links between nutrition and economic development in Europe and North America since the early-1700s, the researchers linked the changing size, shape and capability of the human body to economic and demographic change.

Professor Bernard Harris, whose work focused on developments in height, health and mortality in Britain and in Continental Europe, says: "The aim is to describe, analyse and explain changes in height and health in different countries over time. However, we also want to emphasise the ways in which the changes may affect patterns of human development in the future.

"Our work shows that there have been dramatic changes in child health (as reflected in achieved adult height) over the last 100 years, and other researchers have highlighted the existence of close links between improvements in child health and health in later life. These changes have profound implications for developments in later-life health, longevity and economic performance over the coming century.

"The investments we make in the health of today's children can play a pivotal role in determining the economic wellbeing of future generations."

Southampton scientists begin £100k study into new Alzheimer's treatment

Scientists at the University are investigating whether a diabetes drug could help treat Alzheimer's disease, thanks to a £99,221 grant from Alzheimer's Research UK.

The two-year project will see Southampton scientists working with researchers in Northern Ireland and London to explore the effects of a drug called Liraglutide (Victoza). The drug is currently used to treat type 2 diabetes, but recent findings suggest it may also be beneficial for Alzheimer's.

Led by Professor Hugh Perry, the team at Southampton will collaborate with scientists at the University of Ulster and Imperial College London, pooling their expertise to further test the drug and understand its effects on the brain. It's hoped that positive results from the project could lead to clinical trials.

Professor Perry says: "Our team is very interested in how inflammation contributes to Alzheimer's disease. Previously we've found that where people with Alzheimer's also have common infections and systematic inflammation, their cognitive decline is more rapid. Our hope is that this drug could be able to mitigate against that effect.

"We are very grateful to Alzheimer's Research UK for this funding, which will enable us to share our knowledge and find out whether Liraglutide could in fact benefit people with Alzheimer's. Dementia is not a normal part of ageing – with research, it can be held at bay, and we hope our work will bring us closer to that goal."



Neil Wrigley

Geography professor leads new study to help shape the future of Romsey town centre

Test Valley Borough Council has appointed the University to undertake a study to help shape future plans for Romsey town centre.

The aim of the study is to investigate how the town centre functions and how its retailing and services are used. This will provide an understanding of why visits to the town centre are made, the extent of visits for multiple purposes, and how the centre is used. The study will also consider the town centre's current perceived strengths and weaknesses, their impact on people's behaviour, and the potential for enhancing the trade attracted by the centre.

The University's retail research team, led by Professor Neil Wrigley who will carry out the study, recently published a major study of retail impacts in market towns and district centres in the UK. That study included research on towns of a comparable size to Romsey in south west England, and the Southampton team is acknowledged to have made significant contributions to national planning policy debate on these issues.

The results of the study are expected to the published in the autumn and will inform the Council's future strategy and policies for the town centre.

Staff Stories

Your experiences of University life

Providing a warm welcome

Arrivals weekend is a crucial moment in the student experience. Providing a warm welcome and making a positive first impression on students and parents alike takes many months of planning by colleagues across the University, as well as by the team at Southampton University Students Union (SUSU). *the Voice* spoke to a few of those who are involved.

Every year, over a weekend towards the end of September, around 5,000 first year undergraduates arrive in Southampton, often with their parents, to take up their places in the University's halls of residence.

Sarah-Jayne Boulton is one of the Residences Deputy Managers within Student Services. She explains: "The student experience really starts here. It is very daunting for students leaving home and often moving thousands of miles away. This is a fabulous University and we want to set the scene on arrivals weekend; we set out to make students feel that everything they need is right here.

Alice Canning-Thompson, Accommodation Advisor in the Student Services Centre comments: "Many of the students have mixed feelings of excitement and anxiousness, and the general anticipation that builds up to this weekend is huge."

Sarah-Jayne adds: "It is an important weekend for parents too; they need to feel their child has made the right choice of University and it is up to us to ensure they feel that."

Charlotte Woods, SUSU Vice-President, Media and Communications 2010/11, is in agreement: "This is the first moment the reality of moving away, living with new people and beginning a new phase of life sets in. This weekend sets the tone for students, which makes it so important they feel welcomed and secure as they move into halls."

Many of those involved refer to the importance of the first impressions that the University makes on new students and their families. With everybody highlighting the role of customer service during arrivals weekend, *the Voice* went on to find out more about the areas of work involved.

Alice explains her role in the weekend: "I work on arrivals weekend as part of a team of staff within Residences, who are spread out and work across more than 20 halls of residence sites in Southampton, Winchester and in The Student Services Centre on Highfield Campus. Our job is to greet, welcome and ensure the arrival of around 5,000 students, across two days, runs smoothly and to plan."

Sarah-Jayne and her team are on the frontline at Glen Eyre Halls: "We provide an efficient check-in experience, organise parking for parents and information stalls covering important aspects of life in halls of residence. We work with many other teams around the University: there is a cleaning team on hand, maintenance contractors in case of any issues, and plenty of student helpers to direct people and assist with luggage."

Alice adds: "As it is such a big day for them, nearly all students and their parents or guardians have questions or concerns so we



Current students are on hand to provide information about Freshers Week



Montefiore Halls



Students start getting to know their flatmates during arrivals weekend

are constantly advising, reassuring and talking to the new arrivals."

Kev Terry, Reactive Building Manager for halls and satellite sites, oversees maintenance and coordinates repairs during the course of the weekend. "This includes plumbing, locks and carpentry. We smooth out any potential issues with living accommodation and address requests from students and their families. We need to give a clear, quick, positive and friendly response."

Lynda Breen , an Administrator for *uni-link*, says: "During arrivals weekend, the *uni-link* team deal with the issuing of bike keys for bike cages in halls and the purchase of bus passes and parking permits. Our now famous yellow t-shirt ambassadors are on the *uni-link* buses giving travel advice and general guidance as well."

Charlotte explains more about the role of the Union: "We coordinate a team to meet new students and provide them with a Freshers' Survival Kit on arrival. The student media departments of SUSU are on hand, providing live radio broadcasts with helpful tips and information.

"We also provide a series of night and daytime events to keep students entertained during their first weekend."

Even with all the effort that goes into the event, situations can arise that need to be handled gently: "Sometimes a student will arrive that has not booked accommodation but is expecting a room. In this instance we will guide them toward the Student Services Centre where members of our team will help advise them on their accommodation options and what to do next," Alice explains.

When *the Voice* asked these colleagues how early they started preparing for arrivals weekend, it became evident that planning for this key moment in the student experience is continuous.

Alice explains: "Arrivals weekend requires a huge amount of preparation and organisation which needs to be thought about and done well in advance." Lynda adds: "As soon as one year ends we start planning for the start of the next, discussing ways in which we can make the transition from home life to university life as smooth as possible."

Sarah-Jayne says: "We are always planning for intake! As soon as one is over we are thinking about the next. It is great seeing it come together in the months leading up to it and we are always looking at ways to improve things."

With so much planning and preparation, how do those involved feel at the end of the weekend?

Kev says he feels "relief and satisfaction." Charlotte responds for the SUSU team: "We're exhausted! But confident we have made a measurable difference to students' first weekend at University." Lynda comments: "It is pleasing to see how quickly students bond with their contemporaries."

Alice says: "This will be the 5th year I have worked over arrivals weekend for Residences. Usually there is a great sense of achievement. It is rewarding to see it all come together, knowing that all the hard work and preparation has meant that it has been a success, and the students are happy."

Sarah-Jayne comments: "We will have worked flat-out over the summer to ensure intake weekend is a success; the build-up is exhausting. Even though everyone is tired afterwards, the sense of pride you feel when you see the students smiling and meeting their new flat mates is fantastic. You know you and your team have done everything they can to make the weekend a positive experience.

She concludes: "Everyone that works at the University should have the experience of arrivals weekend: it really does give you a buzz!"

Making **Headlines**

A round-up of stories that featured the University in the media

Want to know why the University is making the news? In each issue, we will feature a round-up of the stories that have featured in the broadcast, online and print media promoting the work of our staff, research centres and students. In this issue, we look at the big stories from the last couple of months.

The devastating earthquake and tsunami in Japan earlier this year was covered extensively in media outlets across the world. Our scientists were on hand to provide expert assessment of the disaster.

Oceanographer Dr Simon Boxall was interviewed by Sky News, BBC World Service, CNN, Al Jazeera, ABC in Australia, CBC in Canada, BBC Radio 2,4 and Radio Solent, ITV Meridian, *The Telegraph, The Mirror* as well as many local news providers. BBC News, New Zealand newspaper *The Press*, France 24 and Austrian national radio featured geophyicist Dr Lisa McNeill, while Dr Mike Byfield, an expert in civil engineering, spoke to Sky News about how Japanese buildings are specially designed to withstand earthquakes. Professor Richard Werner, an international banking expert, give an assessment of the economic impact of the disaster to BBC National News and *The Asian Times*.

A major Andy Warhol exhibition in Southampton, co-hosted by the John Hansard Gallery, attracted widepsread national and regional media coverage. BBC Radio 4's 'Front Row' and Radio 2's Claudia Winkleman programme both recorded features, while *The Guardian*, BBC TV South, ITV Meridian, BBC Radio Solent, Wave 105, BBC News online, *The Daily Echo, Hampshire Chronicle, Hampshire Society* and numerous art websites all ran news items.

There was widespread national and regional media coverage about Denise Westgate, the first person in the UK to receive a totally implantable hearing aid, thanks to the work of the South of England Cochlear Implant Centre (SOECIC), based at the University. BBC2's 'See Hear' programme, *The Daily Telegraph, The Daily Mail, Metro,* BBC News online, BBC TV South, ITV Meridian, The News, Breeze 107FM, *The Engineer* and various technology and health websites all covered the story.

Pioneering research by Professor Sandor Veres, an expert in autonomous control systems, that allows spacecraft to be controlled by artificial intelligence was the subject of articles in *The Sunday Telegraph, The Daily Mirror, The Daily Echo, Hampshire Chronicle,* ITV Meridian, *The Times of India, The Tehran Times, The Engineer* and websites around the world. Sandor also did interviews with BBC Radio Solent and The Coast 106FM.

Research by Professor Bernard Harris from Social Sciences found that better living standards lead to humans growing taller was reported in *The Independent on Sunday, The Daily Telegraph, The Daily Mail, The New York Times* and the *Times Higher Education*. Bernard also did interviews with BBC Radio 5 Live, BBC World Service and BBC Radio Solent.

A global webcast that showed copper killing the MRSA superbug was watched by almost 3,000 people from 93 countries around the world. *New Scientist* and many news outlets internationally covered the successful experiment and Professor Bill Keevil, Director of Environmental Healthcare, did interviews with BBC Radio 4's 'You and Yours' programme, BBC Radio Solent and France's national newspaper *Le Figaro*.

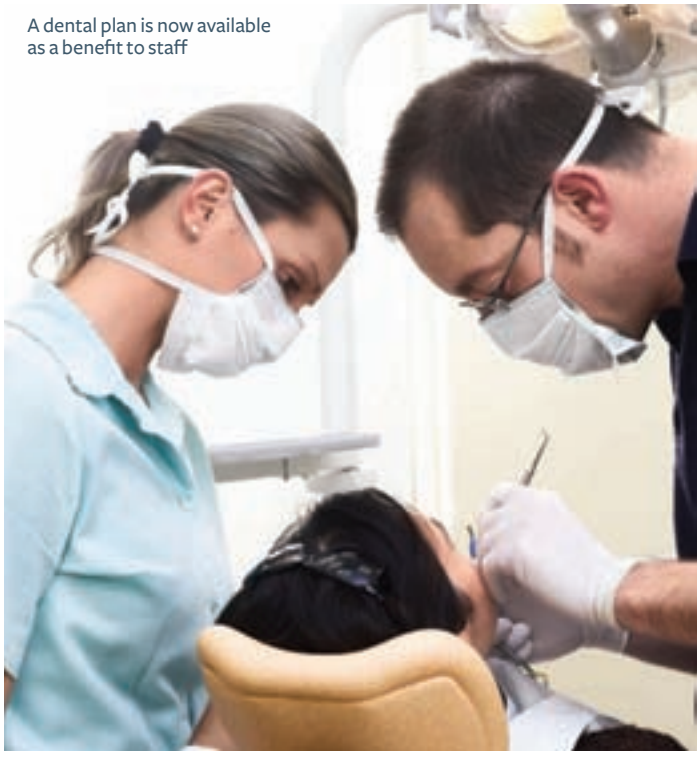
Professor of English, John McGavin's research into early-modern London theatres (EMLoT) featured in the *Times Higher Education*. The new EMLoT database brings together a wealth of documentary evidence on 16th and 17th century theatres. It also featured on BBC Radio Solent and *The Daily Telegraph, Daily Express* and *The Mirror* newspapers.

Our academics continue to comment, provide expert opinion and give interviews to regional and national television and radio programmes to raise the profile of their work and that of the University.

To read about the stories featuring University of Southampton staf and students that have been making the news, please visit: **www.soton.ac.uk/mediacentre/news/in_the_news/current.shtml**

Your University

A balanced life



A dental plan is now available as a benefit to staff

New dental plan for staf

Pay and reward explained

The University has launched a new employee benefit to allow you to get cash back for your dental check-ups and treatments. Bridget Wilkinson, Reward Manager, answers some questions on the new dental plan.

Q *How does the Dental Plan work?*

A You choose the level and cover you need and pay for the premiums via your salary, as a salary deduction. When you have check-ups or treatments, you pay for the work as normal but then send the receipt and claim form (which the dentist fills in for you) to BUPA who send you a cheque to reimburse you.

Q *Do I need to change my dentist?*

A No, you stay with your own dentist

Q *I haven't joined the scheme yet but need some work done. Would they cover me for this?*

A You are covered for pre-existing conditions (excluding dental injuries). You do not need to undertake a pre-enrolment health check and you can get the full levels of cover from the day your cover starts.

Q *Is it possible to include my partner and children?*

A You can add your partner and children to your policy. You can cover your children up to the age of 24 even if they are not living at home (provided they are of single status i.e. not married).

For further information on the scheme, visit **www.southampton.ac.uk/dental**

New online toolkit provides development resources for managers

HR is pleased to announce the launch of an exciting new toolkit providing University staff with immediate access to a wealth of leadership, management and personal development materials.

The site, accessible via SUSSED, offers world-class content, regularly updated and based on solid, fully-referenced academic research, leading thinking and best practice. Through the 'University of Southampton Knowledge Bank', managers, team leaders and non-managerial staff now have immediately-available, easily-accessible information to help them in their day to day work.

Generic content is offered in the form of articles, case studies and practical toolkits, providing useful background and contextual information on specific people related issues. The site has been further customised to link particular content to local University information, for example our Diversity and Health and Safety information and resources.

Colleagues are encouraged to make full use of this resource. HR would also welcome your feedback as you and your teams start to use it. We are particularly interested in hearing about how you have used the resource and the impact it has had. Please email sdu@soton.ac.uk with your comments or any questions that you may have.

The path to the site is as follows:

- Log in to the SUSSED homepage
- Click on the 'Services' tab
- Scroll down to Human Resources and click on 'Staff Development (resources)'.
- This will take you straight to the site, where you click on 'Toolkit for leaders' to start exploring the materials available.

A competitive edge

Adrian Newey (Aeronautics and Astronautics, 1981), Chief Technical Officer, Red Bull Racing.



German's Red Bull's driver Sebastian Vettel (front) is chased by his teamate, Australian Mark Webber, during the Korean F1 Grand-Prix on October 21, 2010 in Yeongam, South Korea.

Editorial Credit: 3777190317 / Shutterstock.com

Adrian Newey, the world's most successful Formula One car designer, tells *the Voice* about his experiences as a Southampton student and life after Southampton.

Q *What made you choose Southampton?*

A At six years old, I knew that I wanted to be a motor racing engineer. I chose Southampton because I f gured that a degree in aeronautical engineering would give me the skills I needed to learn about racing cars and I was aware that Southampton had a long affiliation and direct contact with racing teams.

Q *What were your f rst impressions?*

A I loved the practical elements of the degree course. Southampton has good laboratories and the experiments were fascinating to me.

My f rst year was difficult because I struggled with maths; around Christmas I had contemplated quitting. A lecturer in my department, Ken Bergin, encouraged me to stay. He was an inspiration throughout my degree; and as I progressed through the course, I enjoyed it more and more. In the third year students do design projects, but the University only allowed one motor-oriented project at the time. Ken made sure I got that project, which really helped to cement my desire to work in motor sports.

Q *How did your time at Southampton influence your life and your career?*

A My degree from Southampton gave me a competitive edge. It also f lled a critical skills gap because I had just done a f nal project on ground-effect aerodynamics on racing cars, in which not many people in F1 had had training at that time.

At the time, motor racing was not a recognised industry and job opportunities were scarce. F1 teams only employed a handful of engineers. I did the milk round, applied to all the teams and, just when I thought I would have to consider other options, I was offered a job.

Q *Is there anything that you have found out about the University recently that has surprised you?*

A I've been impressed by Southampton's sensible and structured growth over the years. I'm proud that it is seen as a top UK university. Many of the graduates we recruit to Red Bull are from Southampton. This is not because of any loyalty on my part, but because Southampton graduates consistently produce better CVs, interview well and bring the right skills to the table.

Q *What do you enjoy most about your work?*

A I love the immediacy of our f eld. In our job what we are working on now we will see realised within a matter of months or hours, whether that is good or bad, or for all the world to see. In other f elds it could take years to see your work come to fruition.

We are constantly trying to marry fresh, creative ideas that will stand the test of physics. In previous positions I have come into a more mature team and provided the design-based expertise. At Red Bull we worked to build the infrastructure and the research-oriented side of the engineering from the ground up before we had the tools to design a car.

Q *What motivates you?*

A The opportunity to focus on designing the car. I delegate as much as I can so that 50 per cent of my time can be at my drawing board sketching and developing ideas.

Q *What are you most proud of?*

A The championships we have won at Red Bull. It has always been a dream to win, but often our dreams are not fulf lled. To be able to win with Red Bull has been fantastic.

Q *Do you have any tips for new graduates?*

A I realise this is a difficult time to be a graduate and it's also a tough job market. If you are not fortunate enough to get your dream job, then accept a position that is close and will put you in the job market and keep striving towards your goal. I'm not a big fan of endless gap years – I think you need to get out and get on with it to decide what your next step is going to be.

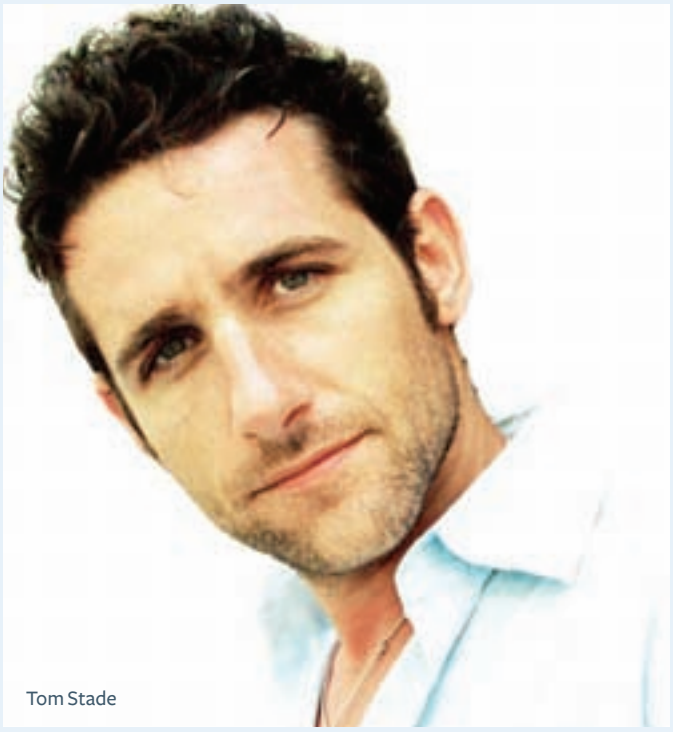
Q *Can you sum up your Southampton experience in three words?*

A Key formative years.



Arts and Events

What's going on around the campuses?



Tom Stade



Andy Parsons

The Nuf eld Theatre

The new autumn season of comedy

The Nuf eld Theatre's comedy season kicks of in September. If you'd like to fill your Sunday nights with comedy, then a visit to The Nuf eld Theatre on Highfield Campus may be just what you're looking for.

Tom Stade, co-star and co-writer of Frankie Boyle's *Tramadol Nights* (Ch4) and as seen on *Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow* (BBC1), will bring his eagerly awaited debut nationwide tour to the main stage of The Nuf eld Theatre on 25 September.

On 30 October, Craig Campbell will take to the main stage. Last year, Craig supported Frankie Boyle on a massive 120 date national tour, playing to over 300,000 people, as well as performing on *Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow* and *Russell Howard's Good News*.

Grumbling funny man and star of BBC2's *Mock the Week*, Andy Parsons, takes of on his third tour of the country, bringing his new show, *Gruntled*, to The Nuf eld's main stage on 6 November.

The Nuf eld also plays host to three Comedy Bar events held in the intimate and friendly Studio space. The Comedy Bar has built a reputation as a great place to see the most exciting performers on the circuit - from big TV headliners to the very best in new talent - and each Comedy Bar event this season includes two of the best new acts on the scene alongside a top class headliner and support act.

Tony Law will headline the first of this autumn's Comedy Bar evenings on 18 September. A regular face at the UK's biggest comedy clubs, and known from *Russell Howard's Good News* and *Stewart Lee's Comedy Vehicle*, Law's hugely entertaining and infectious comedy has endeared him to audiences both here and abroad. Meryl O'Rourke will be the support act. Meryl is currently in huge demand at major comedy clubs across the country having recently supported Frankie Boyle at The Hammersmith Apollo.

Carey Marx brings his cheeky charm to The Comedy Bar stage on 23 October. Carey is a regular at the top UK comedy clubs. David Morgan, one of the most exciting breakthrough acts on the circuit, will be the support act.

American country and western singer-songwriter Loretta Maine, alter ego of the comedian and actress Pippa Evans, brings the very best in dark musical comedy to The Comedy Bar on 20 November. The support act is still to be confirmed, look out for updates on the website.

For more information visit **www.nuffieldtheatre.co.uk**

John Hansard Gallery

Jane and Louise Wilson

16 July - 10 September 2011

Internationally acclaimed artists Jane and Louise Wilson make works that examine or expose the psychology and architecture of places, typically exploring relationships between people and architectural space - particularly spaces that are concealed, secret, inaccessible or somehow forgotten. Their practice is sympathetic to location and history yet draws on cinematic conventions and allusions to conjure a heightened, often uncanny atmosphere.

The Wilsons are creating a new body of artwork to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

The first public presentation of this work will take place at John Hansard Gallery and will include a series of large-scale photographic prints of the abandoned, and now almost entirely uninhabited town of Pripyat, situated within the 30km wide Exclusion Zone around the site of the disaster.

Alumni Class Reunion 2011

Every year, the Office of Development and Alumni Relations invites graduates celebrating their 30th, 40th and 50th anniversaries back to campus for a reunion to remember. Around 200 alumni take the opportunity to spend the weekend reminiscing about their time at the University and learning why we are a connection to be proud of, through talks and tours by our academic colleagues.

Many guests also demonstrate their passion for supporting the continued success of the University of Southampton and our students by contributing to a Class Gift, which last year raised over £7,000 for Postgraduate Research Scholarships.

Are you a member of staf who graduated in 1961, 1971 or 1981, or are you still in touch with your former students from those years? If you would like to find out more about attending the reunion or supporting the Class Gift, all of the details are online: **http://www.soton.ac.uk/alumni/alumnievents/classreunion.html**



Kora player Toumani Diabaté

Turner Sims

Preview of the Autumn season

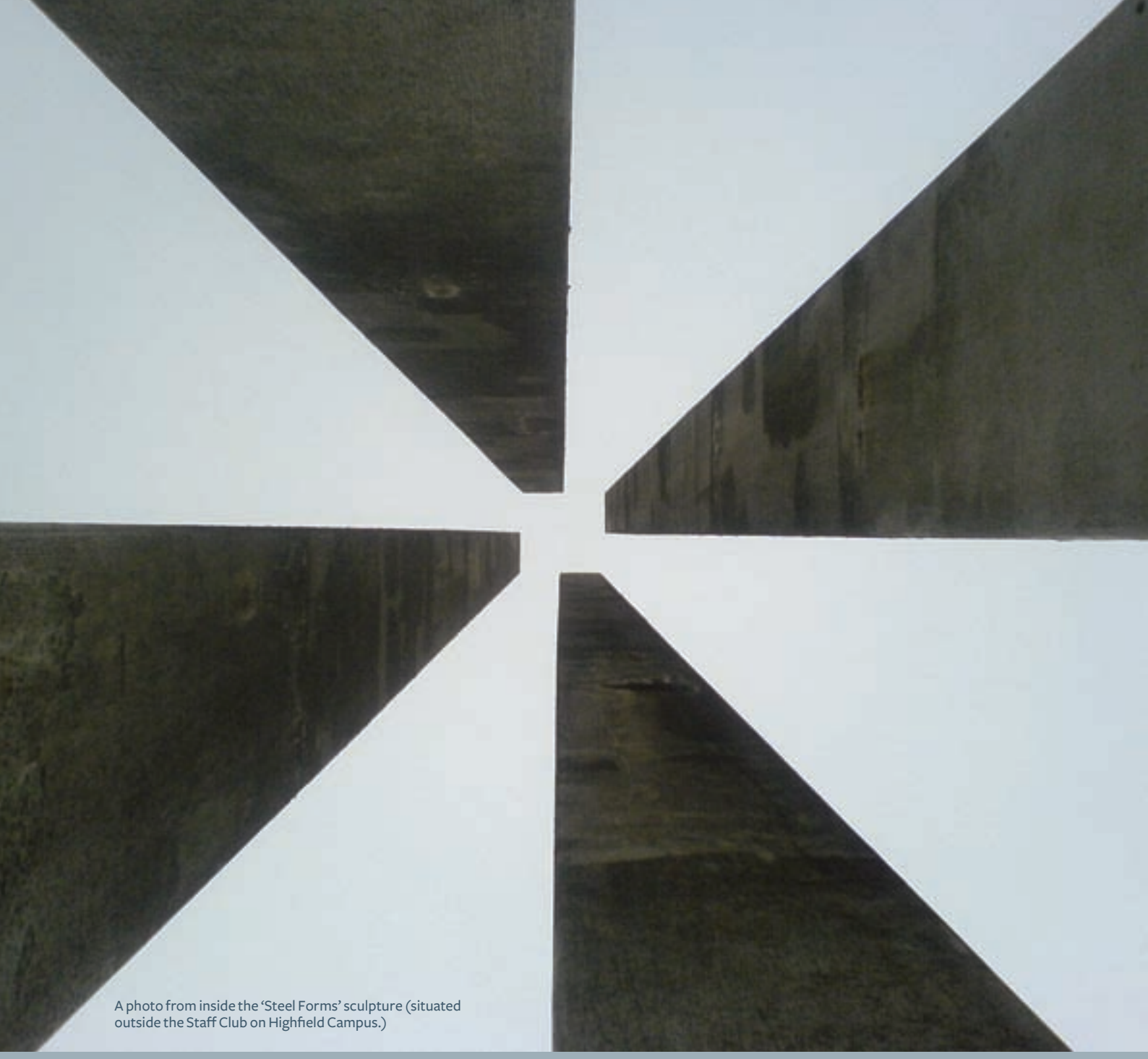
A season of notable firsts beckons at Turner Sims this Autumn. Across the season and into 2012 you will find performance premieres, appearances by musical pioneers, and debuts from artists new to Turner Sims, both established names and rising stars.

The most notable first of the Autumn is the British premiere of a work which Benjamin Britten wrote in 1927 at the age of 14 . It features in the final concert of the Bridge Quartets series with the Maggini Quartet. Another UK premiere comes from pianist Mikhail Rudy who brings his extraordinary marriage of Kandinsky watercolours and Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* to us, following its first performance in Paris last year.

For musical pioneers look no further than Steve Coleman, saxophonist and one of the creative forces behind M-Base, which he describes as 'a way of thinking rather than a musical style'. Another pioneer is kora player Toumani Diabaté – a wonderful opportunity to enjoy this inf uential African artist in the intimate surroundings of Turner Sims as part of the Global Voyages strand.

Kathryn Tickell, foremost exponent of the Northumbrian pipes, and virtuoso violinist Viktoria Mullova, explore their roots in brand new projects, whilst first appearances include that of distinguished pianist Pierre-Laurent Aimard. And the orchestral series includes an unusual first for most audiences as horror writer Peter Straub joins the Aurora Orchestra for a night of spine-tingling music and words.

Finally, Turner Sims will be responding to the demand for increasingly sophisticated ways to engage with, experience and understand the music it of ers by introducing some exciting new initiatives. Keep up to date via the website, **www.turnersims.co.uk**



A photo from inside the 'Steel Forms' sculpture (situated outside the Staff Club on Highfield Campus.)

Photography competition

the Voice thanks everyone who submitted photos of the campus for the photography competition. Congratulations to the winner, Stephen Alsford, who works in Estates and Facilities.



By Sue Bradbury



By Diggory Steele-Perkins



By Gary Fisher



By Annette Stoll

Stephen Alsford of Estates and Facilities explained why he took his winning photo: "It wasn't until I had to replace the uplighter for this sculpture (Steel Forms by Justin Knowles, situated in front of the Staf Club), which entailed actually getting inside it, did I fully appreciate it in all its forms. This particular view is skywards from its centre."

Sue Bradbury, Administrator (Wolfson Unit M.T.I.A), who sent in photos of flowers in the campus grounds commented: "My favourite part of the campus is the gardens. Whatever the weather and your mood, the gardens will always brighten your day with the colourful displays."

Gary Fisher, Deputy Technical Superintendent (Ocean and Earth Science), explains why his photo is significant: "'Conway to Falmouth', taken from the University's research ship RV Callista, shows what might not normally be considered part of the University campus but is a great illustration of the wide reach of University activity and the attraction of oceanography during the summer months."

Diggory Steele-Perkins, from the Reward Team, took a photo on his iPhone of the sky next to the sports centre on Highfield Campus: "Being high up you get some really nice skies in the spring," he commented.

Annette Stoll, Systems Support Assistant (HESA) in Human Resources, submitted photos that she captured during her lunch break: "I was sitting on a bench eating my lunch, and noticed these beautiful daf odils by the University Health Centre," she explained.

We look forward to seeing how the summer months inspire you to capture the campus on your cameras. See p.35 for more about the next photography competition.

Coffee **Break**

Quizzes and competitions

Spot the difference

Can you identify the 10 differences between these two photos from Winter Graduation 2008? Answers are at the bottom of the page.





Answers: The following have been removed: one hat, the straps on a pair of shoes, a watch, a leg, the colour part of a gown on the right shoulder of one of the graduates. The following have been changed: The pattern of a dress, the colour of a top, the length of a sleeve, the colour of a pair of shoes, bangles have been added to a wrist.



Win tickets to The Nuf eld Theatre

The Nuf eld Theatre's comedy season kicks of in September. For a chance to win free tickets to Craig Campbell at The Nuf eld Theatre, as part of their Autumn season of comedy (see p.30-31 for more information), then email your answer to the following question to thevoice@soton.ac.uk.

Q Which campus is Nick Gates based at?

The winner will be selected on 19 August 2011 and contacted directly by the theatre.



The photography competition

Email photos you have taken of your favourite part of the campus with a 1-2 sentence explanation of why your photo should be the winner to **thevoice@southampton.ac.uk** by 2 September 2011.

Fifty pounds' worth of Waterstones vouchers will go to the winner and at least two other entries will be printed in the magazine.

Find your voice

You are invited to:

Send your ideas for articles and news items for the next edition of *the Voice* or for the monthly e-*Voice*

Submit letters for publication in the magazine

Tell us what you think of *the Voice*

Editor – *the Voice*

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