



University of
St Andrews

600
YEARS

LINK

*The newsletter for families
of undergraduate students*

2017, Issue 2

The next generation: the University has opened a new nursery which has been heralded by the Principal, Professor Sally Mapstone, as a “hugely important milestone on our journey towards becoming a more open and diverse community”.



Welcome

Welcome to *Link*, the newsletter for the families of undergraduate students. As I write to you we are preparing to celebrate the success of our students at graduation in St Andrews. I would like to thank all of our parents of graduating students for your support during your Family Programme Membership – we will be delighted to stay in touch with you as a part of our St Andrews community.

We hope that you enjoy reading *Link* and look forward to keeping you up-to-date with University news and developments throughout the summer in our regular e-newsletter, *St Andrews in the News*. Please do not hesitate to contact us via alumni@st-andrews.ac.uk should you have any comments about this, or future editions of *Link*.

Robert Fleming, Director of Development

Podium place for St Andrews

Two excellent results for the University in national league tables were announced recently with St Andrews claiming third place, and first in Scotland, in *The Guardian University Guide 2018* and *The Complete University Guide 2018*.

The results represent the highest ever ranking in *The Complete University Guide* for St Andrews on the back of high scores for student satisfaction and high quality academic programmes, while *The Guardian's* results saw St Andrews as the only Scottish university in the top 20 of the 119 universities ranked.

English & Creative Writing, Philosophy, Physics and International Relations were all placed top in the UK, with a further six (Biosciences, Business, Management and Marketing, Computer Science & Information Systems, Modern Languages and Linguistics, Psychology and Divinity) placed second by *The Guardian* according to spending per student, the student / staff ratio and student satisfaction.

The University has also announced that it is to be the first Scottish university and second in the UK to join the Europaeum, an 'international university without walls', which encourages scholars and future European leaders to collaborate on learning and problem-solving.

St Andrews will join the current universities in the group: Oxford, Helsinki, Leiden, Munich (Ludwig-Maximilian), Paris I and Prague (Charles). Professor Sally Mapstone said, "St Andrews is, and will remain, a highly connected global university. When governments disagree, diverge or disconnect, academia has an even more important role to play in communication and the maintenance of relationships."



Serving up a treat

Work has begun to create a new four-court indoor tennis centre at the University to provide year-round access to the sport for talented players. The state-of-the-art centre will encourage increased participation in tennis at all levels and is the latest phase in a £14 million project to improve the University's sporting facilities.



The £3 million tennis centre is being funded by the University, sportscotland, Tennis Scotland, the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), a private donor and St Andrews alumni. It will provide local community access as well as support to the student Tennis Club.

St Andrews Director of Tennis, Mike Aitken, says the project is “hugely exciting for the whole tennis community... we hope to run a programme that will get more people playing more tennis... and provide a great experience for those using the facility.”

Stephen Stewart, Director of Sport, explained the need for the new courts: “The Tennis Club enjoys one of the highest participation rates of any sport at the University and has over 200 members. Whilst the existing outdoor courts are hugely popular, their use is wholly weather dependent...[and with the centre] we will now be able to offer our students, local schools and the community the opportunity to train and play in a quality, fit purpose facility all year round.”

Work on the centre is expected to be completed in September. If you would like to hear more about supporting sport at St Andrews, please contact Alex Hayes. E: afh6@st-andrews.ac.uk

Making music

An exciting £8 million project to build a new Music Centre in the heart of St Andrews has been unveiled by the University. The purpose-built facility will offer practice, rehearsal and teaching spaces needed by student musicians and will incorporate a dedicated rehearsal studio, a music technology and recording suite and a library.

Music plays a huge part in student life through the many orchestras, ensembles and choirs that are a cornerstone of extracurricular activities in St Andrews.

The existing Music Centre within the Younger Hall is often at capacity with rehearsals, private practice and lessons and has to cope with limited soundproofing – something that the new Centre will have at its core.



The University aims to fund the project entirely through philanthropy and has already raised more than £5 million thanks to the generosity of several lead donors. If you would like to find out more about the project and how you can help, please contact Alex Hayes. E: afh6@st-andrews.ac.uk

SWiM

Researchers from the School of Computer Science have developed a new tilt-based gesture keyboard text entry technique to help people to use larger phones and tablets ('phablets') one-handed.



SWiM – or Shape Writing in Motion – interprets the wrist motion of the dominant hand to trace an input. The tilting motion controls a pointer ball, which traces a path for the gesture keyboard with one word resulting from each gesture.

A pilot study showed that first time users could achieve 15 words per minute (wpm) after minimal practice and 32 wpm after 90 minutes of practice. It is anticipated that the technique could also be used with wearable technology such as smart watches.

St Andrews Prize for the Environment



A global programme to help smallholder farmers across the world to maximise yields and reduce their pesticide usage has won this year's St Andrews Prize for the Environment.

The Prize, now in its nineteenth year, is a collaborative project between the University and ConocoPhillips which seeks to recognise the very best projects combining science, economic realism and sustainability.

This year's winners, Plantwise, have done just that by increasing the environmental sustainability of food production across the globe, working with over 9.8 million farmers in 34 countries to date.

Arclight: small device, huge potential

A team led from St Andrews has launched the Arclight – a low-cost, solar-powered ophthalmoscope aimed at helping health workers in low-income countries detect signs of blindness. A study led from the International Centre for Eye Health in London showed that it performs as well as traditional devices costing up to 100 times as much.

This revolutionary device can also be used as an otoscope to look into the ears and help prevent deafness.

It could completely change healthcare in poorer countries, where few hospital-based doctors have these essential instruments, let alone at the community level.



Sales of units to medical students and doctors in wealthier nations is helping to subsidise the distribution of thousands of units to countries including Malawi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana, Fiji and Indonesia.

Helping Hands

Third-year Zoology student Emily Brunton (pictured centre with the judging panel) was recently presented with the 2017 Frotscher Medal for Helping Hands. The award, open to all students and staff who have gone above and beyond in order to help and care for others, was presented to Emily by the Proctor, Professor Lorna Milne.



Emily was awarded the prize because of her efforts to promote wellbeing in her hall of residence, creating the position of 'Welfare Rep' on the hall committee and always being available to help any of her fellow students.

Santander support

A partnership between Santander and the University has celebrated ten years of success, surpassing the £1 million landmark. Santander Universities UK specialises in financing and supporting education and St Andrews has benefited with a range of scholarships for both undergraduate and postgraduate students, travel scholarships for research and entrepreneurship programmes.

Santander also lends its support to the Careers Centre's internship programme with 57 internship opportunities offered to date. These opportunities are hugely beneficial to students as they enhance the skills necessary to prepare them for their post-university life.

Our students also gain valuable and unique insights into their potential future careers via the Summer Work Shadowing programme, led by the Careers Centre. The 2017 programme has provided more than 200 opportunities for students to shadow alumni and parents in their places of work. If you can support work shadowing in the future, please contact: workshad@st-andrews.ac.uk

Success on the course

Saints Golf, the University's performance golf programme, enjoyed two reasons to celebrate at the end of the season. Second-year Physics student Matthew Myers emerged victorious at the British Universities Stroke Play Championship, a result that also secured him first place in the year's Order of Merit, before the Men's team saw off the University of Bournemouth to win the National Championship for the first time in 19 years.

These results are a fitting reward for the developments made by Saints Golf in the last few years, and the culmination

of a lot of hard work by our student golfers who dedicate time to their golf game while still excelling academically. A platform for the team to build on has now been set ahead of the European Championships in September.



St Andrews reaches a Campaign milestone

The generosity of parents and alumni at St Andrews has raised more than £90 million since the launch of the 600th Anniversary Campaign in 2011. Funds have supported a wide range of projects across the University, including completed projects at St Salvator's Quadrangle, the Students' Association, and the Richardson Research Library at Martyrs Kirk.

Thanks to the generosity of parents, alumni and friends of the University we can continue to provide a world-class educational experience for our students and attract the very best academics to St Andrews. Current priority fundraising projects include the Music Centre and Sports Centre redevelopments, an extension to MUSA – the University Museum – which will provide enhanced exhibition space for our Museum and Gallery Studies students, and the creation of a new state-of-the-art building for the Scottish Oceans Institute at East Sands.

The fundraising success at St Andrews is mirrored across the UK higher education sector where philanthropic giving to universities has now passed the £1 billion mark for the first time, according to the recent Ross-CASE survey. Philanthropic income to UK academic institutions year-on-year has surged by 23% across the 110 participating universities.

Make Your Mark!

If you would like to support the University's fundraising efforts, there are a range of projects for you to get involved with, including seat naming opportunities in the new sports hall, the Family Book Fund at the University Library and our Wardlaw Scholarship programme. To learn more, please visit www.st-andrews.ac.uk/development or contact Lynsey Kerr, Annual Giving Officer on lk20@st-andrews.ac.uk



Love from Home

Want to send a little 'good luck' treat? Maybe you want to make sure your student receives a cake on their birthday? Or perhaps you just want to remind them to give you a call every now and then!

We have joined up with local baker and confectioner Fisher & Donaldson to enable Family Programme members to send their loved ones cakes, chocolates, and gift baskets with a personalised message for that special occasion. Order online with our Love from Home service at: <http://bit.ly/sta-cake>



Please see online for terms and conditions.

Academic awards

Professor Eric Priest (pictured right) of the School of Mathematics & Statistics has been awarded the prestigious Hannes Alfvén Medal for his work investigating the magnetic reconnection and coupling of the convection zone within the solar atmosphere.



The School of History's Professor Robert Bartlett has been awarded the Sir Walter Scott Prize by the Royal Society of Edinburgh for his "outstanding work as one of the world's leading historians".



Professor Ian Boyd (pictured left), previously Director of the University's Sea Mammal Research Unit, has been awarded the Polar Medal – an award given by Her Majesty the Queen to acknowledge valued service in the Polar Regions – in recognition of his research on the ecology of seals around South Georgia.

Ms Zinnie Harris, Senior Lecturer in Playwriting in the School of English has been shortlisted in the Best Director category in this year's Critics' Awards for Theatre in Scotland.

The University Teaching Awards (nominated by Heads of Schools) and Students' Association Teaching Awards (nominated by students) for 2017 have been announced. Professor Will Cresswell (Biology), Dr Clare Gill (English), Dr Antje Kohnle (Physics & Astronomy) and Dr David Evans, Dr Elodie Laugt, Dr Elise Hugueny-Leger and Odile Rimber (all Modern Languages) were recognised in the University awards.

The Students' Association Awards were won by Dr Sandra Romenska (Management), Dr Maggie Ellis (Psychology & Neuroscience), Dr Kristen Harkness (International Relations), Ms Cat Wilson (CAPOD), Dr Rona Ramsay (Biology), postgraduate student Lawrence Taylor, Professor John Hudson (History) and Dr Sharon Leahy (Geography & Sustainable Development).



Cycle friendly St Andrews



Cycling Scotland recently awarded St Andrews the Cycle Friendly Campus Award – with distinction – in recognition of efforts made to encourage cycling at the University. 'Bike to Work' breakfasts, cycling maintenance sessions, a bike loan scheme and bike lights awareness campaigns (which increased bike light usage from 59% in October 2016 to 75% in February 2017), have all been offered to encourage cycling as an accessible travel choice.

Paul Wright, Cycling Scotland's Behaviour Change Manager, who presented the award said "the University has shown great commitment to getting more people cycling ... I look forward to working with the University in the future to ensure staff and students can continue to travel confidently and conveniently."

Forthcoming Semester dates 2017-2018

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/semesterdates

Graduation: Week commencing Monday 19 June 2017

Resits: Week commencing Monday 14 August 2017

Orientation: Week commencing Monday 11 September 2017

Martinmas Semester: Monday 18 September 2017 – Friday 22 December 2017

Revision Period: Commences Monday 4 December 2017

Graduation: Thursday 7 December 2017 and Friday 8 December 2017

Examinations: Monday 11 December 2017 – Friday 22 December 2017

Christmas Vacation: Saturday 23 December 2017 – Sunday 28 January 2018

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Further information for families of current students can be found at:
www.st-andrews.ac.uk/parents

A forum for US parents of current students can be accessed on Facebook at:
www.facebook.com/StAUSParents

Latest news and other information about the University can be viewed at:
www.st-andrews.ac.uk

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