

# THE ULSTER GRADUATE

The magazine for alumni and friends of the University of Ulster

Issue 30 SPRING 2009

**Major Strategic  
Development Plans**

**Ulster Research  
Highly Rated**

**University  
News**

**Events and  
Reunions**

**People**



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## THE ULSTER GRADUATE

ISSUE 30 | SPRING 2009

### A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to issue 30 of *The Ulster Graduate*.

On page 2 you can read about Ulster's major development plans for each of its four campuses, designed to spearhead higher education in Northern Ireland and to position the University over the next 25 years.

The University has just recorded its best ever achievement in the UK-wide Research Assessment Exercise. More details are on page 4.

We announced in the last issue that we are reviewing *The Ulster Graduate* to ensure that the service we are offering meets the needs of our graduates. As reported on page 12 the review is well underway and we look forward to developing a 'new look' *Ulster Graduate*. Many thanks for all your feedback.

Finally you can find out about future events and reunions on pages 16 to 18, and I look forward to meeting many of you during the coming months.

#### Best wishes

*Sue Rees*

**Alumni Relations Manager**

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The Alumni Relations Office, University of Ulster, Newtownabbey, Co Antrim, BT37 0QB.

Tel: **08 700 400 700** (Switchboard), or  
**028 9036 8350** (Direct Line) Fax: **028 9036 6085**  
Email: [alumni@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ulster.ac.uk)  
Web: <http://alumni.ulster.ac.uk>

**Editors:** Sue Rees, Wayne Robinson

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#### Cover Story

A major new development is planned for the Belfast campus. See page 2.



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# University Unveils Major Strategic Development Plans



Artist's impression of the Belfast campus redevelopment. (Image supplied by Todd Architects).

**The University has unveiled major strategic development plans for each of its four campuses designed to spearhead higher education in Northern Ireland and to position the University over the next 25 years.**

Under the plans, the University proposes to invest a total of £250m in its Greater Belfast campuses, including the construction of a landmark building adjacent to its existing Belfast campus.

Representing the largest investment in the University's history, the scheme will rebalance student numbers in Greater Belfast between Jordanstown and the city centre campus. Jordanstown will be retained and will continue as a vibrant campus with a focus on sports and related activities.

The master plan also involves the implementation of the first phase of an expansion of student numbers on the Magee campus from 3,800 to 5,500 - 6,000. The proposed expansion builds on existing strengths in health and wellbeing, in creative arts and technologies and in business and professional services and extends activity into sustainable technologies.

At the Coleraine campus, the University plans to consolidate student numbers, including the development of a new programme in pharmacy, and to diversify its activities by facilitating the

"The University of Ulster is a primary force in delivering the skills base, driving social and economic regeneration and contributing to the cultural vitality of Northern Ireland, and it is now renewing itself to serve the region's needs in the 21st century.

"The University is rooted in the region and serves the region through its engagement with stakeholders across all aspects of its work, the quality of which is recognised internationally."

Progress on these exciting developments will be featured in future issues.

establishment of a business park on University land.

The University has a sound financial strategy, within which funds are earmarked for the development of the physical estate and over the coming years half of those funds will be allocated to developments in Greater Belfast and half to developments in the North West.

In launching the plans, Vice-Chancellor, Professor Richard Barnett said:



Professor Richard Barnett with Martin McGuinness MP MLA, deputy First Minister, at the announcement at the Magee campus.



Professor Richard Barnett, Minister for the Environment Sammy Wilson MP, MLA, and The Lord Mayor of Belfast Councillor Tom Hartley at the launch at York Street, Belfast.

## Ministerial Opening for Coleraine LRC

**The new £3.5m Learning Resource Centre (LRC) at the Coleraine campus was officially opened last September by Mr Gregory Campbell, Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure, and Member of Parliament for East Londonderry. The Coleraine LRC is part of a multi-million pound investment that has created state-of-the-art library and learning centres at each of Ulster's four campuses during the past five years.**

The Coleraine facility includes:

- A soft seating area.
- More than 680 study spaces including: 190 student PC workstations; five group study rooms which students may book for group activity; one bookable study room with assistive technology software and a 40-seat IT suite;
- 24-hour access to the IT area;
- Wireless networking (Wi-Fi) throughout the facility;
- Library/IT information and helpdesk;
- Reprographics room with self-service photocopying available outside opening hours;
- Self-service book issue facilities to provide speedy service;

■ A soft seating area.

The new facility will also house 253,000 books and 1,000 current journal titles to aid student research. There is a Special Collections Room containing the

Hedlam-Morley, Henry Morris and Irish collections and a Rare Book Room and display area for the University's most significant and valuable books and collections including the Henry Davis Gift.



Professor Alan Sharp, Provost, Coleraine campus; Professor Richard Barnett, Vice-Chancellor; Gregory Campbell MP MLA; Nigel Macartney, former Director of Information Services and Andrew Trimble, Director of Information Services.

## VICE-CHANCELLOR TO CHAIR NI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY REVIEW PANEL

**Vice-Chancellor, Professor Richard Barnett, is chairing a high-powered review panel examining economic development policy in Northern Ireland.**

He is supported by four high calibre individuals, drawn from the worlds of academia and business. In a statement to the Northern Ireland Assembly in December 2008, Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Arlene Foster said:

"I am launching an independent review of economic development policy, as

it relates to my department and Invest Northern Ireland.

"This will be, strategically, a very important exercise, and it also comes at a time when the Northern Ireland Executive has made the economy its top priority in the Programme for Government.

"The Executive is already taking measures to help businesses cope with the significant short-term pressures stemming from the global downturn. However, we also need to keep focused on the medium to longer term priorities for the economy that are set out in the

Programme for Government."

Professor Barnett said:

"A strong, vibrant private sector is vital for the future success of the Northern Ireland economy. Quite rightly, the Executive has placed this matter at the centre of its Programme for Government. It is important that we have the best, evidence-based policies to ensure that the Executive's ambitious targets can be met."

The review is expected to be concluded by summer 2009.



# RESEARCH QUALITY ASSURED

**The 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) was the sixth of a series of exercises conducted nationally to assess the quality of UK research and to inform the selective distribution of public funds for research by the four UK higher education funding bodies.**

In RAE 2008, Ulster presented the highest ever number of staff across 25 research areas (Units of Assessment) with the work of 496 members of staff being submitted. The outcome of the RAE 2008 confirms the breadth of research of an international standard across our six faculties and four campuses.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Richard Barnett, said:

"Ulster's international reputation for research excellence has received UK-wide recognition by the Research Assessment Exercise 2008, with 86% of its research activity judged to be of international quality, and 20% of this judged to be world-leading. These results overall reflect the quality, commitment and dedication of staff at all levels in the University."

In the most respected RAE 2008 league table published by *the Times Higher Education*, Ulster recorded its best ever position at joint 45th out of the 132 universities. This represents a jump of 18 places for the University since the 2001 RAE and highlights a significant improvement in research quality at Ulster.

At the subject level, Ulster has achieved top three positions in the areas of Biomedical Sciences, Celtic Studies, and Nursing. A further seven subjects rank among the top 20 namely: Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science; Architecture and the Built Environment; Communication, Cultural and Media Studies; Law; Linguistics; Metallurgy and Materials and Sports Related Studies.

In terms of the overall UK ranking Ulster is now ahead of many traditional research-led universities.

Full details of Ulster's RAE 2008 results are available at: <http://research.ulster.ac.uk/rae/rae2008.html>

## Biomedical Sciences

"The Biomedical Sciences Research Institute submitted 61 staff in the RAE 2008 and was ranked in second place out of 70 university submissions across the UK (Times Higher Education GPA League Tables) – with a quarter of our research ranked as world leading.

"I am really delighted by this result and it is a pleasure to work with such talented individuals. This reflects the dedication, discipline, high standards and hard work of all our staff."



**Professor Tony Bjorson**  
Director, Biomedical Sciences Research Institute

## Irish and Celtic Studies

"Irish and Celtic Studies at Ulster is one of the largest Celtic departments in the world. Research ranges from cutting edge work into Irish, Scottish Gaelic, Welsh and Breton language and literature, to textual scholarship, lexicography, place-name research, religion and magic, folklore, language policy and planning, film and TV production, and the relationship of Celtic to other traditions such as Scandinavian, Slavic and Indian. Creative writing in Modern Irish and Scottish Gaelic, and translation studies, are also very well-represented in the work of the department.

"The excellent results achieved in the RAE will ensure that Irish and Celtic Studies continue to flourish at Ulster and will enable the department to fulfil its mission of producing research work, research students, and Irish courses of the highest

quality which are both relevant and important to the transmission of Irish and Celtic languages and heritage."



**Professor Séamus Mac Mathúna**  
Director, Research Institute for Irish and Celtic Studies

## Nursing

"These outstanding results for nursing at Ulster confirm our position as a key contributor to the research enterprise within the University. Nationally and internationally these results are a recognition by our peers, of the quality and relevance of our research towards improving nursing and health policy and practice. We are currently ranked third in nursing among UK universities.

"We will continue to carry out research which is relevant to the health and wellbeing of people in Northern Ireland and beyond. Our aspiration is to be among the best in the world."



**Professor Kader Parahoo**  
Director, Institute of Nursing Research

## Cross-Border Research Funding

**Five research teams have been awarded a total of £7.7m to pursue vital research projects into advanced healthcare technologies, osteoporosis and energy efficiency.**

Funded by the Department for Employment and Learning under its Cross Border R&D Funding Programme, the research projects will be undertaken in partnership with universities in the Republic of Ireland.

The objective of the programme is to support Northern Ireland universities in building additional, sustainable research capacity and capability that will contribute to the development of an all-island research infrastructure through meaningful, targeted

collaboration with leading research teams in the Republic of Ireland.

The projects are:

**Energy Storage Research** (£1.5m): partnering with DIT and NUI Maynooth

**Cross-Border Centre for Intelligent Point of Care Sensors**: (£1,991,280): partnering with DCU

**Functional Biomaterials Research** (£1,389,140): partnering with NUIG

**Computational Neuroscience Research** (£1,535,807): partnering with TCD

**Nutrition and Bone Health Research** (£1,242,392): partnering with TCD, UCD and UCC

## Brain Power

**Nobel Prize-winning scientist Professor Bert Sakmann has praised the University's role in international research into one of the most complex aspects of human activity - how the brain works.**

The German academic delivered a special lecture at the Coleraine campus in October 2008 to mark his tenure as Professor of Biomedical Sciences.

Professor Sakmann's appointment last year was hailed as a coup for the University and further recognition of its continued emphasis and commitment to research excellence. He is the second Nobel Prize-

winner to accept a part-time professorship at Ulster, joining Nobel Laureate Professor John Hume.



Professor Bert Sakmann.

## Gene Tests Get Thumbs Up

More than two-thirds of Europeans would be happy to undergo genetic tests to establish the likelihood of developing illnesses like coronary heart disease and Type-2 diabetes in later life, according to Dr Barbara Stewart-Knox, from the Northern Ireland Centre for Food and Health (NICHE), based at Coleraine.

The unique study carried out by Ulster

and the University of Porto, Portugal, also reveals that more than a quarter of participants in the European-wide survey said they would be willing to undergo a personalised diet in order to reduce or reverse the effects of their pre-disposition.

For further information about NICHE visit: <http://www.science.ulster.ac.uk/niche/>

## Research Brings a Tear to the Eye

Increasing numbers of people are attending eye clinics for treatment due to working on computers for prolonged periods of time. One of the common complaints is dry eye, which can affect large numbers of people but particularly those who work at computers indoors in air-conditioned environments.

Researchers at Ulster are currently undertaking a Phase III clinical trial for a new drug for dry eye treatment. Ulster is one of 30 centres across Europe involved in the research. Interested participants are required to visit the Mater Hospital Belfast or Cathedral Eye Clinic at the Belfast campus.

For information on research on dry eye at Ulster visit: [www.dryeyeni.com](http://www.dryeyeni.com)

## No Sun Is No Fun For Your Health

The dull Irish summer may have stopped many people getting enough vitamin D – and that could have long-term health implications, according to Dr Maria Barnes of the School of Biomedical Sciences. She said that because we have had so little sunshine, which is the main source of the vitamin, we should consider boosting our vitamin D intake through another source – our diet.

"There is currently no recommendation on how much vitamin D adults should be getting from their diet to maintain a level optimal for health. Our research aims to address this question." she said.

"We have collected a lot of data from the volunteers and we will use this to determine how much extra vitamin D is required in the diet to reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and inflammatory conditions."

The research is continuing and further analysis of the data is expected to yield interesting results.



## ULSTER WELCOMES ISEA 2009

The University has been successful in its bid to host the 15th International Symposium on Electronic Art (ISEA) from 23 August – 1 September 2009.

ISEA is an international non-profit organisation that promotes the relationship between arts, science and digital technologies. Since 1988 ISEA has overseen major symposia in various prestigious institutions across the globe.

The main theme for ISEA2009 is Engaged Creativity in Mobile Environments and aims to address key issues concerning the interface of creativity, digital technologies, digital literacies and skills development that lie at the heart of building a knowledge-based society and empowered citizenship.

The Symposium will attract a range of representatives from the creative industries sector, artists, designers, technologists and scientists, all at the cutting edge of developments in digital technologies. Delivered in a dispersed and mobile mode it has a strong community focus offering workshops, master classes, roundtables and open spaces that explore the multi-faceted dimensions of Engaged Creativity in Mobile Environments.

To date ISEA2009 has attracted 800 submissions for projects and presentations from over 100 countries. A range of exciting and prestigious keynote speakers have been confirmed to headline at various hubs throughout Ireland.

For more information and updates visit: [www.isea2009.org](http://www.isea2009.org) or contact Professor Kerstin Mey, Director of Art and Design Research Institute on Tel: 028 9026 7258 or email: [k.mey@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:k.mey@ulster.ac.uk)



## Tip O'Neill Peace Lectures

Robert Fisk, the acclaimed journalist and Middle East analyst, delivered the first of this year's Tip O'Neill Peace Lectures at the Magee campus in January 2009.

Fisk's reportage and trenchant commentary from war zones have established him as one of the outstanding foreign correspondents of his generation. He has won a string of awards for journalism, including the British Press Awards 'International Journalist of the Year' seven times and 'Reporter of the Year' twice. He has written several books examining contemporary political conflicts in the Middle East and Ireland.

Basque President Juan José Ibarretxe Markuartu delivered a further

lecture in the series in February 2009.

He gave a lecture entitled 'Peace and Dialogue in the Land of the Basques'.

A leading member of the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV), he has been President of Spain's Basque Country autonomous community since 1999.

Both speakers were invited to give the address by Professor John Hume, Nobel Laureate and holder of the Tip O'Neill Chair in Peace Studies at Ulster.

The Tip O'Neill Chair, funded by the Ireland Funds, commemorates the former Speaker of the US House of Representatives, who was widely respected for his support of the peace process in Northern Ireland.



## Student Marketing International is looking to recruit current students and alumni to become Student Ambassadors for the University of Ulster.

So, if you are enthusiastic about your time spent at Ulster and would like to share your experience with potential international students, why not become a Student Ambassador and help recruit international students to full time courses?

Many of our prospective international students say that they learn as much from alumni or current students as they do from University staff or agents. If after referral from you, a prospective international student successfully gains entry onto any of our taught undergraduate or postgraduate courses, we will pay you commission at a rate of 2.5% of their first year's tuition fees.

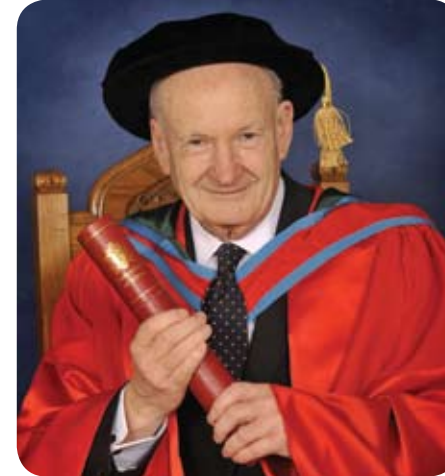
If you would like more information please contact:  
Email: [ambassador@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:ambassador@ulster.ac.uk)

Claire Kane,  
Business Manager,  
Student Marketing International,  
University of Ulster,  
Cromore Road,  
COLERAINE BT52 1SA  
Tel: +44 (0) 28 7032 4701

## Winter Graduations

The winter graduations of 2008 celebrated the endeavours of Ulster students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

The honorary degree of Doctor of the University was conferred on George Harkness, former Honorary Treasurer of the University, and on distinguished sportsman Richard Dunwoody MBE, in recognition of his services to equine sport.



George Harkness, Doctor of the University.



Richard Dunwoody MBE, Doctor of the University.

## CHINESE DIVERSITY AWARDS

The contribution of Chinese workers to the Northern Ireland economy and community was recognised at an event supported by the Equality Commission in November 2008.

The Chinese Welfare Association's 'Celebration of the Changing Faces of the Chinese Community in the Workplace' was held to mark Anti-Racist Workplace Week. The event aimed to highlight examples of good practice and inclusivity in workplaces.

The celebration – developed as a partnership between the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and supported by the Equality Commission and the PSNI – included an awards ceremony for the Best Employer and Best Employees of the Year in the Chinese Diversity Business Awards of Excellence 2008. A panel of experts judged the nominations and prizes were awarded to those who have excelled in employing members of the Chinese community and Chinese employees who have contributed significantly to their organisation.

The University was awarded 'Employer of the Year' and two staff – Jiemin Tomita, Country Manager: China and Hong Kong and Dr Huiru Zheng, lecturer, School of Computing and Mathematics, received prizes as best employees. Jiemin accepted the award on behalf of the University and also addressed delegates to share her experiences of working at Ulster.



From left Dr Huiru Zheng and Jiemin Tomita receive their award from Li Libei, Chief of Staff and Consul of the Consulate General of The People's Republic of China in Edinburgh.

## Ulster Builds Links with Venezuela

Undergraduates will have an opportunity to spend up to one academic year as exchange students in South America, thanks to an exchange agreement between Ulster and the Simon Bolivar University in Caracas - a prestigious Venezuelan state university with an international reputation for academic excellence.

The exchange agreement - the first between Ulster and a South American university - will also facilitate the sourcing of funds for bilateral teaching and research staff exchange.

Since the initial contacts were made, ten Venezuelan PhD students have successfully graduated from Ulster, eight of whom were from Simon Bolivar University.



The Simon Bolivar University, Caracas, Venezuela.

The exchange students will be recruited during this academic year with a view to them starting their visiting year/semester in September 2009.

For further information on the exchange programme contact Professor Escalona at: [oj.escalona@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:oj.escalona@ulster.ac.uk) or Professor James McLaughlin, Director of the Nanotechnology and Advanced Materials Research Institute at: [jad.mclaughlin@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:jad.mclaughlin@ulster.ac.uk)



## The University of Ulster: Genesis and Growth

To mark the 25th anniversary of the merger of the New University of Ulster and the Ulster Polytechnic, to form the University of Ulster, a volume of essays has been published charting the history of the University.

*The University of Ulster, Genesis and Growth* is edited by Gerard O'Brien, Reader in History at the Magee campus, and Peter Roebuck, Emeritus Professor and former Provost of the Coleraine campus. The book was launched at the Belfast campus on 11 February 2009. Book launches were also held at the Society of Antiquaries, London and the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin during March.

Sir George Quigley, DUniv 1998, Chairman of Bombardier Aerospace Shorts, has kindly reviewed the book for our readers:

This fine volume not only traces the first quarter century of the University of Ulster but also shows how it represents the confluence of a number of institutions, the oldest, the College of Art, dating from 1849. One can only admire the superb organisational skills which enabled these institutions – with their different traditions, loyalties and missions – to group and regroup in a variety of configurations in the twenty years after the Lockwood Committee Report into higher education in Northern Ireland was published in 1965. A mere four years after the final move, which merged the New University of Ulster (NUU) and the Ulster Polytechnic to form the University of Ulster, the University Grants Committee was able to describe the achievement of this founding period as 'heroic'.

Sir Derek Birley, Rector of the very successful Polytechnic and then the University's first Vice-Chancellor, caught the spirit which informed the development of both institutions when, in his former capacity, he said: 'The visionary gleam is still in our eyes, never long dimmed by mishap or discouragement, and our horizons are therefore still as far away as ever'. And, as Vice-Chancellor, he declared that if the University lost its 'reforming zeal, then it might as well never have been created'. It was, he wrote on another occasion, to be a university 'with a difference'.

This volume tells how that spirit has translated into a constantly enterprising



Dr Gerard O'Brien with Professor Peter Roebuck CBE.

approach to structure and provision. It is seen in the steady emphasis on interdisciplinary and inter professional perspectives, on creativity and problem-solving, and on a system of multi level programmes which enable students to locate themselves appropriately according to ability and aspiration. The University has exploited to the full the potential for work-based learning. It was to the fore in the development of the semester system and in introducing a period of teaching and assessment during the summer months for those who wished to accelerate towards graduation. It has majored on pedagogical innovation and has been at the leading edge in programmes for developing the proficiency of University staff as teachers and in inaugurating Awards for Distinguished Teaching.

The University has always attached importance to developing a significant research profile, which the book describes as 'one of the trickiest tasks of the post-merger years'. Its ability to deliver on its aspirations is amply illustrated by the outstanding success achieved in the most recent Research Assessment Exercise.

The book is crowded with instances of the excellence achieved in particular areas. The capabilities developed around the theme of the Built Environment are recognised as world class. In Informatics, the University by the early 1990s was

making the largest single institutional contribution to the education and training of computer scientists in Ireland. Ten years ago it became host to the Funding Councils' Computers in Teaching Centre and it later became, along with Loughborough University, the Higher Education Academy's Subject Centre for Information and Computer Sciences. It has been a mould breaker in e-learning and one of only two UK universities to participate in a project funded by the European Commission to foster innovative e-learning strategies in higher education.

Professor Gerry McKenna's Vice-Chancellorship saw an ambitious building programme to create specialist research facilities, including the Centre for Molecular Biosciences at Coleraine. The University can justly pride itself on being a leader in the widening of access to higher education. This thrust goes back to the days of the NUU, when the Certificate in Foundation Studies for Mature Students was started in 1973 in the Institute of Continuing Education at Magee. It is good to see the sympathetic treatment which the volume gives to this and the many other innovations which were the NUU's legacy to the University of Ulster.

Lord Smith, the University's second Vice-Chancellor, said that it should seek to be 'of our time' and take its direction from the needs of the time. A hallmark of the University has been the way it has engaged

with its hinterland and discharged what (alongside teaching and traditional research) should surely be regarded as the third mission of any university. The volume provides many examples, not least what is now known as the Knowledge Transfer Partnership programme but had its origins in a scheme started by the Polytechnic in 1978 which was designed to attract able graduates into careers in manufacturing. Little wonder that, having regard to its range of engagement with the region's economic players, the Treasury's Lambert Review of 2003 praised the University for 'demonstrating excellence in driving forward regional economic regeneration'.

The University is sensitive to its responsibilities in a divided society. This volume is fittingly rounded off with a chapter on how the University has brought its expertise to bear on the issues posed by the conflict in Northern Ireland and on how lessons can be shared with other parts of the world with similar problems.

A key challenge for the future is how, in a world where the Higher Education system is increasingly perceived as simply

an instrument of economic purpose, its traditional role as the home of scholarship and learning in what are becoming minority subjects is also safeguarded. It is therefore good to be reminded in this book of the talents of those who lead these areas of the University's work.

This story of the genesis and growth of the University is presented very skilfully in seven chapters, each the responsibility of one or more of its eight contributors. Its alumni and those of the antecedent institutions will find it fascinating to peruse such a comprehensive overview. But it deserves to be read by anyone who wants to know how one part of the higher education system flourished amidst the turbulence which has characterised that environment for much of the University's existence. It is also a compelling narrative of how organisations are shaped by a process of challenge and response, provided they are determined, in the words of the legend of the Grant of Arms for both NUU and the University, 'To build anew'.

The book is a typically stylish Four Courts Press production, with very interesting

illustrations and some fine colour plates. Northern Ireland can take great pride in the fact that such a disturbed period in our history, when violence intruded even into the University's own precincts, saw the gestation and delivery of one of our great institutions – the largest university in Ireland, with 25,000 students and 132,000 alumni in 116 countries worldwide.

The recent announcements of the University's ambitious plans for Belfast and Derry show that it is still pushing out the horizons. Under Vice-Chancellor Richard Barnett, Ulster's vision is 'to be a university with a national and international reputation for excellence, innovation and regional engagement' – to serve, indeed, in the words of this volume, as 'a powerhouse contributing to the advancement of every aspect of human capability in Northern Ireland'. Its record gives it every right to aspire to such heights.

Published by Four Courts Press, Dublin, copies are available to purchase at: <http://alumni.ulster.ac.uk> or by contacting 028 9036 8350 / [alumni@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ulster.ac.uk)



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## ULSTER TRIO RECEIVE PAN-EUROPEAN ENTERPRISE AWARD



From left: Professor Finbarr O'Harte, Dr Neville McClenaghan and Professor Peter Flatt.

**Ulster academic researchers have scooped a top prize in a pan-European enterprise competition that rewards experts who turn research into tangible technologies and products.**

Academic entrepreneurs Dr Neville McClenaghan, Professor Peter Flatt and Professor Finbarr O'Harte, who established University spin-out company Diabetica Ltd in 2004, have won the inaugural ACES Academic Enterprise Award 2008 for innovation in Life Sciences.

The trio, based at the Coleraine campus, were conferred with this award in recognition of their success in translating their research advances in tackling diabetes, obesity and related metabolic conditions into high-value commercial opportunities through Diabetica.

Five ACES awards were conferred by the Science|Business Innovation Board, a panel of leaders in industry, academia and policy at a ceremony in Sweden's Royal Academy of Engineering.

Dr McClenaghan, who is Chief Operating Officer of Diabetica and Head of the School of Biomedical Sciences, said:

"This ACES award is a remarkable

achievement given the extremely high standard of entrepreneurs and businesses that were short-listed in each category.

"The wide scope of the Life Sciences category together with the diversity in expertise, focus, and achievements of the short-listed businesses illustrates the high level of excellence in academic enterprise across Europe and makes winning this award particularly special."

A selection committee comprising representatives from 27 European universities and research institutes chose the finalists, who spoke on their activities, innovations and spin-out businesses at an Academic Enterprise Conference held at the Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm – home of the Nobel Prize for Physiology and Medicine.

Dr McClenaghan added:

"This award is also particularly gratifying as it helps put the University of Ulster, Coleraine, and Northern Ireland on the map for entrepreneurship and academic enterprise. I also hope that it will help raise the profile and public awareness of diabetes research in Europe and the great efforts to find creative new solutions to tackle the emerging 'diabesity' epidemic."

## Innovation Vouchers

**If you are a small registered business in Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland there has never been a better time to access innovation expertise and support from the University of Ulster.**

In 2008 Invest NI launched its three year Innovation Voucher Initiative with a budget of £900,000.

Small businesses can apply for "Innovation Vouchers" up to a maximum value of £4,000 (€5000 for companies from the Republic of Ireland through the Enterprise Ireland Scheme of the same name). Vouchers can then be redeemed against the cost of practical advice and expertise on specific operational projects from a range of specialist 'knowledge providers' across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The Initiative was launched in June 2008. Already over 60 businesses, including a number from the Republic of Ireland have been matched up to academics within the University to work on innovation projects. The University has a wealth of expertise and experience in supporting business development and is delighted with the level of interest to date.

## Case Study

**CIGA Healthcare** is a young and dynamic company in Ballymena that specialises in the Rapid Self Test Health Diagnostics sector and is leading developments in this rapidly emerging new OTC market. Since it was established in 2005 the company has grown rapidly and now supplies tests to retailers in the UK including ASDA, Tesco and Sainsbury's.

### The Issue

CIGA Healthcare is about to proliferate its SURESIGN® product range throughout Europe and the Middle East. The challenge was to create a unified package

design for each of its 14 products that accommodated content translation into multiple languages and facilitated cultural issues.

### The Solution

CIGA worked closely with Terry Quigley (School of Creative Arts) to prepare its product range for introduction into non-English speaking European and Middle Eastern countries.

As products become increasingly targeted towards multi-cultural populations, it is ever more important to deliver information in a clear and consistent manner that will appeal to a variety of consumers.

In order to incorporate multiple languages and cultures the company required a rethink of the existing SURESIGN® packaging design as well as identity redesign of the brand. The University helped to create a packaging that lived within the footprint of the original packaging design to maintain product consistency and keep costs down.

### The Feedback

*"The final package and branding design was innovative, fresh and consistent with the quality of our products."*

*"This project has given us added confidence that our brand and products are ready to engage with foreign markets, unique cultures and a new customer base. We have already started to use these designs within several new countries around Europe and the Middle East."*

**Irwin Armstrong  
CEO, CIGA Healthcare**

**Details of the scheme can be found at the Invest NI Innovation Vouchers website – [www.innovationvouchers.com](http://www.innovationvouchers.com) or through Enterprise Ireland's site at [www.innovationvouchers.ie/](http://www.innovationvouchers.ie/)**

**For further details on accessing the University's expertise through the Innovation Voucher Initiative, contact Kerry Thompson, Business Liaison Office, email: [k.thompson@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:k.thompson@ulster.ac.uk)**

## Best Emerging Company Accolade

**A go-ahead young company with close ties to the University has won a €50,000 Ireland-wide award for innovation and entrepreneurship.**

Software firm Media Lightbox, led by Ulster graduate Shane Meehan, picked up the Best Emerging Company Award in the InterTradelreland All-Island Seedcorn Business Competition.

The first Northern Ireland firm to win the prize, Media Lightbox has benefited from an Ulster and Southern Regional College business development scheme for fledgling companies which is delivered through an "innovation partner", Greenshoots-Newry Ltd.

Media Lightbox won the award for developing an innovative web-based media asset management solution for storing and sharing media files. These may take the form of images, video, audio, PDF print marketing collateral, vector files, presentations, documents, fonts or 3D models.

Chief Executive Shane Meehan graduated from the Jordanstown campus in 1997

with a BA Hons Consumer Studies. His firm has already built an impressive client list ranging from leading marketing and PR agencies such as Cybercom and Spirit Marketing Group, to communications giant Vodafone.

Eddie Friel, Head of Business Liaison and Academic Enterprise at Ulster's Office of Innovation, said:

"The University has been a partner of Greenshoots-Newry Ltd since its inception in 2004 and is proud of the work that it has been doing with small and medium-sized enterprises. The fact that a company based in Greenshoots is now picking up an all-island award is testament to the innovative business development support available there."

Greenshoots-Newry Ltd is an incubation and innovation centre based at the Greenbank Campus of Southern Regional College. It provides facilities and services to help take forward new business ideas – as well as assisting local firms to develop their existing businesses through technology and knowledge transfer links with the College and Ulster.



From left: Media Lightbox Directors Cecil Hetherington and Shane Meehan; Anthony Kieran, Chairman, EquityNetwork; Dr Gerard O'Hare; and Irish Minister for Trade and Commerce, John McGuinness TD.



## Conserving the Derry and Raphoe Library

**The University and the Church of Ireland Diocese of Derry and Raphoe are working in partnership to preserve the historic Derry and Raphoe Diocesan Library collection.**

The collection boasts over 5,000 volumes ranging in date from around 1480 and covering an impressive range of subjects from theology to science and civil law. The project has been established to conserve the library collection enabling its contents to be made available to the public as an educational and heritage resource.

Conservation work commenced in late 2008 at the Shantallow Library, Derry and is being conducted by a team expertly led by Project Director and Chief Conservator Jenny Jarvis. Jenny's main role is to co-ordinate the conservation work and to strategically lead the project team. Mary Delargy's role is to develop the schools outreach programme, bringing together schools from both sides of the community to benefit from the educational aspects of this conservation project. There are also three Conservation Assistants, Jennifer Murray, Alessandro Scola and Tony Upton who are working on preserving the collection.

The unique conservation and outreach initiative has been funded by a grant of £500,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund. It is anticipated that it will take three and a half years to complete. The Heritage Lottery Fund grant builds upon many

other generous donations received from individual supporters across the world and a number of charitable organisations including the Inner City Trust, the Honourable The Irish Society, the Garfield Weston Trust and The Heritage Council, in the Republic of Ireland.

To date a total of around £700,000 has been secured for the project and fundraising efforts are continuing in order to raise the outstanding target of £40,000.

To keep up-to-date with developments please visit the website at: [www.derryraphoelibrary.org](http://www.derryraphoelibrary.org)

To make a donation to the project and for other fundraising enquiries please contact the University on **028 7032 3208** or email [de.caulfield@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:de.caulfield@ulster.ac.uk)

For enquiries regarding access to the collection, please contact Joe McLaughlin on **028 7032 4671** or email [jfe.mclaughlin@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:jfe.mclaughlin@ulster.ac.uk)



Jenny Jarvis

## Review of *The Ulster Graduate*



**In issue 29 we announced our plans to undertake a review of *The Ulster Graduate* to ensure that the service we are offering meets the needs of our graduates.**

As part of the review process we invited you to complete our online survey and would like to thank everyone for their contribution. There were over 2,000 responses which will be really helpful for shaping future issues of the magazine. The lucky winner of the prize draw was Angela Montgomery, BSc Science with Management, 1999.

In February 2009 a number of focus groups took place to allow a more in-depth analysis of what our readers would like to see in the future. These took place across all four campuses and the results will be assessed over the coming months so that future issues of *The Ulster Graduate* will reflect your preferences.

We would like to thank everyone for their participation.

## Alumni Fund donations facilitate study visits to Ulster

**Two students from the developing world, Rondon Tosta Ramalho and Peter Namphande, undertook study visits to Ulster last semester thanks to grants from the Alumni Fund.**

Rondon Tosta Ramalho (MSc student at the Universidade Católica de Don Bosco, Campogrande, Brazil) was able to spend a fortnight working in the laboratories of the Northern Ireland Centre for Food and Health (NICHE) at the Coleraine campus.



Rondon's visit was to undertake methodology-development work in the area of cyanogen assay in cassava.

Cassava (*Manihot esculenta Crantz*) is a staple food crop in many tropical countries of the world, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where its ability to withstand drought makes it a vital food-security crop. However, some varieties of cassava (the so-called 'bitter varieties') naturally have toxic levels of cyanide-producing compounds ('cyanogens'). Therefore, the existence of cheap and reliable assay methods to measure these compounds is very important.

Rondon's work is aimed at making the assay method cheaper, by replacing a costly, hard-to-obtain enzyme with a much cheaper one that is used in routine food processing.

## If you would like to help more students such as these....

You can donate by the following methods:

### By Cheque -

made payable to the 'University of Ulster Foundation'. (USA Donors - cheques should be made payable to 'The American Friends of the University of Ulster').

### By Credit Card -

donations can be made over the telephone by calling the Alumni Relations Office on **028 9036 8350** or through our web pages at <http://alumni.ulster.ac.uk>

### By Direct Debit -

we can send you a form or you can download one from: <http://alumni.ulster.ac.uk>. Just £10.83 a month for three years, with Gift Aid, is worth £500 to us.

By using Gift Aid, your gift will be increased by the Inland Revenue by 28p for every £1 you give. If you are a higher rate taxpayer you can also claim back 20p in every £1. This means that a donation of £100 from you is worth £128 to us, and if you are a higher rate tax payer only costs you £75. All you need to do is tick the Gift Aid box on the Donation Form. Further details of Gift Aid are on our website. (USA Donors - Donations to the American Friends are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law).

We welcome every gift, regardless of size. When put together all gifts will make a huge difference to our students now and in the future.



## Team Changes

### Wayne Robinson

**MSc Computing and Information Systems 2002**

After almost eleven years working in the Alumni Relations Office, Wayne Robinson is moving on to take up a new post in the University. We wish Wayne every success in his new role.

### Brid Hill

**BA Hons Applied Languages 2000**

Brid Hill, previously worked at Marie Curie Cancer Care in Edinburgh, joined the team last October as Alumni Relations Assistant. Brid's main responsibilities will be managing the Alumni Fund and organising events.





# STUDY CHINA

Three students were awarded grants from the Alumni Fund to allow them to participate in the Study China Programme last year. The three-week programme gives UK university students the opportunity to go to China to learn about its history, culture and language. Students also develop an awareness of the global economy and the importance in maintaining a good East-West relationship especially in terms of the role China plays in this relationship and how it affects Western Europe.

You can read about their experiences here.

**Shane Kelly**  
Final year BSc Hons ICT, Jordanstown



The Study China Programme was the experience of a lifetime. I met so many new people and discovered many new things both about China and myself. When I reached Shanghai I was greeted at the airport by Chinese students and met some fellow peers who were on the programme and we were taken to our campus of Zhejiang University, Hangzhou. The campus and city as a whole was really interesting, from the Tai Chi, the Chinese Lessons, Calligraphy and the various excursions in which we participated. Of course the people made the whole experience really interesting, whether it was the other 119 people in the cohort, the student volunteers and teachers or the Chinese population as a whole. They all played their part with their positive attitudes and open mindedness to make the Study Programme the enjoyable and life changing experience that it was, opening my eyes to a bigger world. A big thanks to the Alumni Fund!

**Caithlin Corrigan**  
Final year BSc Hons Communication, Advertising and Marketing, Jordanstown

The programme was a once in a lifetime experience. It was incredible to see the 'real' China first hand and to be able to immerse myself in its unique culture, language, history, politics, food and way of living that is so very different from our own. It was a learning experience from beginning to end. With my course being in Communication, Advertising and Marketing, and China being an emerging market for international trade, having a background in Chinese and knowing about the culture differences between our two countries could really prove beneficial to me in future business negotiations, ventures and partnerships.

Through this experience I was not only able to learn, but I was able to make some great friends, that I hope to keep in touch with. Some are already planning their trips to Ireland. I was also able to travel - the programme took us on trips to see great cities not normally visited by tourists. We got to climb one of the seven scared mountains of China as well as visit Confucius' Grave, make kites, see the Peking Opera, attend a tea-ceremony.... the list is endless. Not many students my age have had the chance to see so much of China. I was lucky enough to stay in Beijing for a few days and was able to get tickets to see the Olympic Track and Field event in the Birds Nest and even Congolined down the Great Wall of China for a Channel 4 Programme!



From left to right: Aoife McAteer, Alan DingKun, Caithlin Corrigan and Sunny.

This experience has helped me in every aspect of life, from my studies to my social networks and future employment and business opportunities. A truly beneficial and life-changing experience. I would not have been able to enter this programme without the help of the Alumni Fund for which I extend a warm and sincere thank you.

**Aoife McAteer**  
Final year BA Hons International Politics, Magee

In 2008 I participated in the Study China Programme in Jinan, the capital of Shandong Province. Shandong was the home of Confucius, whose teachings and philosophy have deeply influenced many different thoughts and ways of life. This made our trip extra special as we were afforded the opportunity to attend lectures on topics such as Confucianism and Qilu. We also visited world cultural heritage sites such as Qufu, the Confucius temple, and Confucius' hometown. We also went on an excursion to climb the beautiful Mount Tai, which was an incredible experience.

Other activities included a visit to the Peking Opera where we witnessed some of the world's finest acrobatics and a visit to archaeological sites. We were also immersed in Chinese culture and attended over 40 hours of language training, learned calligraphy and the art of Chinese tea ceremonies. Besides the incredible Chinese cultural experience we also made many friends. This included not only other students on the programme but students at Shandong University whose hospitality was fantastic. It was a life changing experience and I feel I benefited immensely from it, and am very grateful to the Alumni Fund.

## Delta Packaging support for Hospitality and Tourism

Ulster graduate, Terry Cross (HNC Business Studies 1977), Chairman of the Board of Delta Packaging and First Trust Bank/University of Ulster Distinguished Graduate 2007, has pledged £10,000 over a five-year period to support the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

Delta is a strategic packaging supplier

to the global branded food and 'food on the go' sectors and a specialist 'one stop shop' turnkey service partner for the mobile telecoms industry. Delta is also substantially active in the electronics, confectionery, healthcare, sport and household goods industries.

This generous donation from Delta Packaging is an asset to the Department and will be used to promote Hospitality



Terry Cross with Noreen Taggart, Director of Communication and Development.

and Tourism courses on the Belfast campus, encouraging new enrolments and promoting the dynamic state of the art facilities available to students.

## Ulster Alumni Online

<http://alumni.ulster.ac.uk>

Ulster Alumni Online, launched last Spring, now has several thousand members! We hope you have found it useful and would encourage more of you to register.

The service allows you to:

- Search for classmates
- View and update address details
- Participate in discussion boards
- Book and pay for alumni events
- Purchase memorabilia
- Make a donation to the alumni fund

It's easy to register. Simply logon to <http://alumni.ulster.ac.uk> and enter the requested details including the ID Number which is printed on the carrier sheet of this magazine.

We hope to introduce more functionality over the coming months.



## Alumni Excellence Awards

Six students were presented with Alumni Fund Academic Excellence Awards at a ceremony on the Coleraine campus in November 2008. The awards are made to the undergraduate student with the highest average mark in each Faculty at the end of their first year.

The awards are for £500 (half of which is in the form of book tokens).

The students who received the awards were:

**Irfan Alam**, BSc Hons Optometry

**Emma Cullen**, BSc Hons Property Investment and Development

**Jill Hendron**, BSc Hons Communications with Counselling

**Zara Hopkins**, BSc Hons Business with Accounting

**Eleanor Kerrigan**, BA Hons French and Spanish

**Jason Mitchell**, BSc Hons Computing

These awards are funded by the Alumni Fund, which is supported by alumni, staff and friends of the University.



From left (standing) Jason Mitchell, Zara Hopkins, Eleanor Kerrigan, Irfan Alam, Seated: Jill Hendron, Professor Richard Barnett, Emma Cullen.



## Visit to Áras an Uachtaráin

Alumni and their guests were welcomed to Áras an Uachtaráin by President Mary McAleese in September 2008. Professor Alastair Adair, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Communication and External Affairs, presented President McAleese with a

Belleek Plate on behalf of the University as a token of thanks.

After an opportunity to meet the President, the group were given an enjoyable and informative tour of the house.



Information on all our events and reunions, both past and future, in Northern Ireland or elsewhere, is listed on <http://alumni.ulster.ac.uk> or from the Alumni Relations Office on (028) 9036 8350, email [alumni@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ulster.ac.uk)

## Sixth University of Ulster Alumni Golf Challenge

Thursday 18 June 2009

The sixth annual University of Ulster Alumni Golf Challenge will be held on Thursday 18 June 2009 at Galgorm Castle Golf and Country Club. This popular event is organised by the University of Ulster Alumni Association, supported by the University's Golf Bursars, and is open to graduates, students, staff and friends of the University.

The entry fees are: Alumni/staff: £32; Student and Golf Club member: £30; Galgorm member: £15; and Individual non alumnus/a: £35

This includes a BBQ on the 9th green as well as a meal and prize presentation in the clubhouse in the evening.

The competition is an individual and a team event (Stableford format), in which all participants will compete for the magnificent Tyrone Crystal trophy. There will also be a number of other prizes.



## CELEBRATING ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

To commemorate 50 years of Environmental Health, the University of Ulster along with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Northern Ireland (CIEH NI) are organising a celebration for practising, retired and student Environmental Health Practitioners to be held at the Jordanstown campus later this year.

The original idea for this celebration has been further developed; however this means we need more time to arrange it. More information will be available soon.

If you have any photographs that capture the life of Environmental Health over the years such as graduation year groups, photographs from field trips, formal or conferences please save them in jpeg format or scan them and email:

[jackie.barr@colerainebc.gov.uk](mailto:jackie.barr@colerainebc.gov.uk) or [clement.kennedy@omagh.gov.uk](mailto:clement.kennedy@omagh.gov.uk)

To find out more about the event please visit [www.cieh-nireland.org](http://www.cieh-nireland.org) or email [alumni@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ulster.ac.uk) to register your interest in attending.



## MAGEE REUNION FOR THE CLASSES OF 1986 – 1989

Former students of Magee who graduated between 1986 and 1989 are warmly invited to a reunion being held at the Magee campus on Saturday 25 April 2009. The event will include a presentation on recent and future developments at Magee and a campus tour, as well as a three-course dinner. Tickets for the reunion are £30 per person (including wine).

This is a great opportunity to revisit old memories and create new ones.

If you or someone you know is interested in attending the reunion, please contact the Alumni Office on 028 9036 8350 or [alumni@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ulster.ac.uk)



## Table Quiz at the Errigle Inn

Wednesday 13 May 2009

Come and join us for a quiz at the Errigle Inn in Belfast on 13 May 2009. Show off your general knowledge and (maybe) win a prize! Doors open at 7pm. Entry is £10 per team of up to five people, and all proceeds go to the Alumni Fund.

## Boat trip around Rathlin Island

Saturday 8 August 2009

Rathlin Island is home to Northern Ireland's largest seabird colony and seals live in caves around the coast, and it is possible, if you're lucky, to see more unusual wildlife. We will be travelling along the North coast and around Rathlin Island to see some of the best scenery and wildlife that Northern Ireland has to offer. Tickets are £25 per person.

## Reunion for Alumni living in Bavaria

Thursday 28 May 2009

There will be a reunion for all University of Ulster alumni living in Bavaria, to be held at the Fachhochschule in Augsburg on Thursday 28 May 2009.

Over 250 alumni live in Bavaria, due in part to the existing links between the Faculty of Computing and Engineering and educational establishments in Augsburg, Kempten and Gießen, as well as business and humanities graduates.



## Tour of Sports Facilities / Question and Answer Session with local Sporting Heroes

Thursday 10 September 2009

Alumni are invited to come and see the wonderful sports facilities that are available to them at the Jordanstown campus on Thursday 10 September 2009. The

evening will include facility tours and an opportunity to meet local sporting heroes. Some light refreshments, free entry into a prize draw for a year's unlimited access to the fitness suite and a complimentary health suite voucher will also be provided.

## House of Lords Dinner

Friday 22 May 2009

A gala dinner for alumni and friends of the University is being held at the House of Lords on 22 May 2009. Hosted by Lord Ballyedmond OBE, the event will take place in the magnificent Cholmondeley Room and Terrace. There will be a drinks reception followed by dinner. The tickets are priced at a very reasonable £50 each (including wine). Space is limited and tickets will be allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis.



## COLERAINE REUNION FOR CLASSES OF 1985 - 1989

A reunion is being organised for alumni who graduated from the Coleraine campus from 1985 to 1989, to be held on 14-15 August 2009. Invitations will be sent out to all relevant alumni for whom we have an address, but please put the date in your diary now.

Why not contact your classmates and arrange to come as a group.

### Provisional Programme:

#### Friday 14 August

**7.00pm** Drinks Reception & Buffet

#### Saturday 15 August

**9.45am** Coffee  
**10.00am** Talk about developments on campus  
**11.00am** Tour of campus  
**1.00pm** Lunch  
**2.30pm** Optional activities  
**8.00pm** Reunion Dinner

This is a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and to make new ones.



Information on all our events and reunions, both past and future, in Northern Ireland or elsewhere, is listed on <http://alumni.ulster.ac.uk> or from the Alumni Relations Office on (028) 9036 8350, email [alumni@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@ulster.ac.uk)

## Irish Alumni New Year's Party, London

A number of Ulster graduates attended the fourth Irish Alumni New Year's Party at the Porterhouse, Covent Garden on 27 January 2009. The event is held annually and is open to former students from colleges and universities across the island of Ireland.



From left: Brendan Gormley, BSc Hons Psychology 1980, Brid Hill, Alumni Relations Assistant, Michael Conlon, MA Marketing 1994.

## Physio Class of 1998 Reunion

The Physio Class of 1998 had a successful ten year reunion in Belfast in October 2008. It was an international affair with old classmates flying in from Norway, Greece, Guernsey and various UK locations. Some relived college memories with the train from Cork to Belfast! Twenty-three attended in total making it sufficient for a good party night.....Ten years on we haven't lost

the ability to party! It was a wonderful night of catch up and many old friendships renewed. We plan to keep in touch and perhaps meet in Dublin next time. For anyone who we didn't hear from and wants to keep in touch or even just see the photos of the night, email [physiiclass1998@gmail.com](mailto:physiiclass1998@gmail.com).

Alison Wellwood, Sheila Horan



## CONVOCATION AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the University's Convocation will take place on Thursday, 23rd April at 7pm in Room B82D23 at the Belfast campus.

Ms Sylvia Alexander, Director of Access and Distributed Learning will speak on the University's Lifelong Learning Strategy and the growth and development of Campus One. All graduates and members of academic and academic-related staff are welcome to attend.

## Home Economics 1977 Reunion

Fifteen Home Economics graduates from the class of 1977 met up in October 2008 for the first time in 31 years for what can only be described as a great trip down memory lane.

The Belfast Castle was the setting for this wonderful and exciting evening. Although 'strangers' seemed to appear at the door of the Haslem Room where the dinner was to be held, once a name was given, the face of yesterday was easily recognised. It didn't take long for the memories of our time both at Garnerville and at Jordanstown campus to come to life, and we were all enthralled by the different memories that each of us had held on to as well as the diverse paths we had tread since then.

Photographs that had been sent to the organisers, Bernadette Cunningham and Fidelma O'Reilly, were displayed and surprisingly no one commented on the

'fashion' of the day but on how none of us had really changed.....

Of the 39 graduates, almost all had been contacted and had responded with lovely letters and cards. Some unfortunately were unable to attend but were eager to be informed of how the evening went and when our next reunion would be. It was

also exciting a few days after the event to receive an email from one of our class, whose name had been on everyone's lips, who had just received the autumn issue of *The Ulster Graduate* in Ontario, Canada, and was responding to the article advising of the forthcoming event.

We all look forward to our next reunion, earmarked for our 35th anniversary in 2012.

Bernadette Cunningham



Are you a member of an association or institute that holds conferences or meetings?  
 If so, we can help.

Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau offer a dedicated support package to assist Ambassadors in securing conferences for Belfast.

For further information Tel: **028 9023 9026**  
 Email: [ambassador@belfastconventionbureau.com](mailto:ambassador@belfastconventionbureau.com)  
[www.belfastconventionbureau.com/ambassadors](http://www.belfastconventionbureau.com/ambassadors)

Belfast Visitor & Convention Bureau **BVCB** supported by **DIAGEO** NORTHERN IRELAND





**OBE for University Council Member**

University of Ulster Council member **Rosemary Kelly** has received an OBE in the New Year Honours list for 2009. The honour recognises her services to the arts in Northern Ireland.

In addition to her role on the University's Council, she is currently a Governor of the *Irish Times*, a member of the British Council NI Advisory Committee, and a member of the Ireland Chair of Poetry Board.

Ms Kelly is a former Head of Public Affairs and Company Secretary for BBC Northern Ireland, and former Chairman of the Ormeau Baths Gallery, Deputy Chair of the Ulster Orchestra, and a founding member of the Irish Film and Television Academy. She was also Chairman of Help the Aged in Northern Ireland and a Trustee of its International Board in London for many years.



activist, involved in welfare and community work on behalf of the Peace People and co-ordinating the Peace Train organisation.

In 1996 she was elected to the Northern Ireland Forum for Political Dialogue, and from 1997 attended the talks leading up to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement of April 1998. In the ensuing elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly she was elected to represent North Down, where she had also been serving as an elected Councillor since 1993.

She stepped down from local government in 2001 to concentrate on her role as an Assembly Member. In the same year she was appointed as Deputy Leader of the Alliance Party, a position from which she resigned in 2006.



**Eileen Bell  
BA Hons Combined  
Humanities 1984**

**Eileen Bell**, former Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, received a CBE for public service in the 2008 New Year Honours list. Mrs Bell worked in both the public and private sectors from 1960 to 1982, and then returned to full-time education at Jordanstown, graduating with an honours degree in History and Politics in 1984.

She then entered full-time politics, serving four years as General Secretary of the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland. From 1990 to 1994 she worked as a full-time peace

**First Trust Bank/University of Ulster Distinguished Graduate Award**

**The First Trust Bank/University of Ulster Distinguished Graduate Award 2008/09 has been awarded to Professor Anthony G Gallagher, BSc Hons Psychology 1988.**

Anthony Gallagher (Tony) left school at the age of 17. He has since progressed from being a general labourer on a building site in Castleberg to Professor of Human Factors at the National Surgical Training Centre at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. In doing so, he has become one of the leading experts in the world on the new training paradigm in procedural medicine disciplines such as surgery and interventional cardiology. He started his professional career as a nursing assistant and then was accepted into nurse training (RMN) in 1977 which he completed successfully before going to London to work.

On returning to Northern Ireland he was accepted at Ulster as a mature student

for a full-time BSc Hons in Psychology, graduating in 1988. He completed his PhD at Trinity College in Dublin in 1992 and subsequently went to work in the School of Psychology at QUB where he pioneered a new way of training surgeons using virtual reality (VR) simulation. In 2000, he was the first academic in Ireland to be awarded the UK Fulbright Distinguished Scholarship which he used to continue his VR simulation work in the Department of Surgery at Yale University.

The trophy was designed and crafted by Anthony Gregory, BA Hons Fine and Applied Arts 2008.

Nominations are now being sought for the First Trust Bank/University of Ulster Distinguished Graduate award for 2009/10. The award is made each year to an alumnus/alumna of the University 'in recognition of outstanding achievement in their chosen field'. Nominees may have graduated in any year and from any course, from the University of Ulster or any of its predecessor institutions. Nominations should be made on the official nomination form and must be received no later than 1 July 2009.

A copy of the nomination form is available at <http://alumni.ulster.ac.uk>



Peri Mullan, First Trust Bank; Professor Richard Barnett; Professor Gallagher; Anthony Gregory.

**John Stafford Carson  
BSc Hons Education 1973  
MA Education 1978**

**Rev John Stafford Carson**, Minister of First Portadown Presbyterian Church will be the next Moderator of the Presbyterian Church.

The Reverend Carson said:

"I am very surprised but greatly honoured

by the way in which the Church has chosen me for this important task. I hope I can be a real encourager to the Church and help it through what are really difficult times, but yet, in the midst of all this, to remain confident and be confident in the gospel, and continue to speak and live the gospel in a way which is real and relevant."



He taught biology while studying at Coleraine, then theological studies took him to Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, where he graduated with a Masters in Arts and Ministry in 1980. He completed his ministerial training at Union Theological College in Belfast. He served in Antrim, Kells and Eskylane and Carnmoney before taking up the post of Academic Dean at Westminster Theological Seminary in 2000. In 2005 he returned to Northern Ireland and became Minister of First Portadown.

He takes up the office of Moderator at the opening session of the 2009 General Assembly in June 2009.

**Jonathan Doonan, BSc Hons  
Computing Science 2001**

**Cherith Maxwell, BSc Hons  
Speech and Language  
Therapy 2004**

**Jonathan Doonan** chose an unusual place to propose to fellow Ulster graduate **Cherith Maxwell** - 10 metres under the North Atlantic. Both keen divers, Cherith and Jonathan met at the Christian Union,

Jordanstown when they were in the same Bible study group. Cherith is now a Clinical Specialist Speech and Language Therapist specialising in children with moderate or severe learning difficulties. Jonathan is a manager with PriceWaterhouseCoopers Belfast offering data solutions to clients worldwide.

In their spare time Jonathan and Cherith are wedding photographers and have a real passion to capture unique wedding images: [www.jonathanandcherith.co.uk](http://www.jonathanandcherith.co.uk)



Jonathan proposes to Cherith in July 2008.

**Geoff Wilson  
MA Marketing 2000**

At the Chartered Institute of Marketing gala awards ceremony in the Europa Hotel last October, the Irish FA's Head of Marketing and Communications, **Geoff Wilson**, picked up the prestigious 'Marketing Director of the Year Award 2008'. The annual event focuses on awarding 'best practice' to businesses who have implemented a number of initiatives in the field of marketing.

"This is a very proud moment for the Association and myself. This award is not about one person, but rather the Marketing team at the Association; a team of professional and dedicated 'Marketing and PR' individuals," said Geoff.



Charles Fulton presents the Marketing Director of the Year Award 2008 to Geoff Wilson (left).

**Anthony Hanna, BSc Hons  
Construction Engineering  
and Management 2008**

**Anthony Hanna**, was presented with Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) Annual prize for Best Overall Performance in his final year of BSc Honours in Construction Engineering and Management at the CIOB 2009 Annual Lecture.

Over 100 CIOB members and guests from across the province attended the 2009 Annual CIOB Lecture, sponsored by CITB.

Anthony is currently employed by Mivan Construction Ltd.



Martin Cushnahan, CITB, Anthony Hanna and Robert Craig Chair of CIOB Northern Centre.

**Seamus Gillan, PG Diploma  
Marketing 1991**

**Seamus Gillan** has been appointed to head up Bayer MaterialScience for the UK and Ireland region. Seamus joined the Bayer Group in 1987 as a sales representative for Northern Ireland, before being seconded into the chemical division's Dublin office in 1990. He took over as manager of this division in 1997 and has been with the company through its transition to Bayer Polymers, and finally, Bayer MaterialScience in 2004.





**Stephen Ryan, BSc Hons Biological Sciences 1998, MSc Computing and Information Systems 2000**

**Sandra Ryan (née Moberg) Erasmus Student from Uppsala University in Sweden.**

Sandra and Stephen Ryan had triplet boys on 1 June 2008. They were born two months early in the Rotunda Hospital in Dublin. Joar weighed 3lb 1oz, James also 3lb 1oz and Jack 3lb 8oz. They were cared for in the hospital's Neonatal unit for five weeks. They are now three healthy little boys who keep their mum and dad very busy!

Sandra and Stephen met at the Coleraine campus in 1997 and got married in 2006. Sandra was an Erasmus student from Uppsala University in Sweden. Sandra, Stephen and their sons live in Swords, County Dublin.



Sandra and Stephen with their boys.

**David Lyttle BMus Hons Music 2005**

Jazz drummer and composer **David Lyttle**, known for his passionate and driving approach to jazz that swings hard, has performed professionally all over the world with a wide variety of acclaimed artists. His debut album 'True Story' was released in 2007 to much acclaim. Last autumn David performed with the David Lyttle Three Play at the Down Arts Centre.

David's earliest musical experiences were as a child in his family band, performing on cello, bodhrán and lambeg drum. Self-taught on the drum kit since the age of eight, he also received classical

training on cello but began to focus his efforts towards drums in his late teens after taking a serious interest in jazz. He has also studied under scholarship at the Banff Centre (Canada) and Skidmore Jazz Institute (New York).



Photograph by John McCune

"...a rapidly maturing talent, who is already highly accomplished both as a musician and as a composer." - *The Irish News*. [www.davidlyttle.com](http://www.davidlyttle.com)

**Karla Munoz-Esquivel MSc Computing and Intelligent Systems 2008**

**Karla Munoz-Esquivel**, from Mexico, has developed an advanced software hybrid learning environment, called Olympia, for teaching Physics.

Karla received an EU funded Alban Programme scholarship to study for an MSc in Computing and Intelligent Systems at the Magee campus. Karla's MSc



project entitled, "Investigation of a hybrid learning environment for teaching Physics using the Olympia architecture" resulted in a detailed statistical comparison of student performance using variations of the Olympia software for teaching Physics where serious games, artificial intelligence and virtual learning environments are integrated. Olympia can be accessed over the web and provides alternative views for Students, Lecturers, Heads of Department and Software Administrators.

Karla obtained The 8over8 Award for best overall performing Masters student in the School of Computing and Intelligent Systems for the 2007/08 academic year and has also obtained a Vice Chancellor's Research Scholarship award from the Faculty of Computing and Engineering's Research Graduate School to support her PhD studies.

**Dr Seán O'Halloran MA Linguistics 1980**



**Seán O'Halloran** was a part-time student at Ulster while Head of English in Cross and Passion College, Ballycastle. Subsequently he and his family moved to Singapore and Hong Kong where he was engaged in English Language teaching and teacher training. In Hong Kong he was involved in the reform of teacher education through the establishment of the Hong Kong Institution of Education, being particularly involved in the development of new models of teaching practice.

On returning from Hong Kong he did part-time teaching on the TESOL MA programme and in CELT at the University of Ulster. At present he lives with his wife on Rathlin Island where she is school principal and he is school caretaker.

His thesis was on the symmetry of interaction in Alcoholics Anonymous, which he then expanded and developed into a more comprehensive study entitled *Talking Oneself Sober: the discourse of Alcoholics Anonymous*, which has been published through Cambria Press.

**Vivimarie Vanderpoorten MA Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages 2001**

**Vivimarie Vanderpoorten** has won the Gratiaen Prize, Sri Lanka's highest literary award for writing in English, for her first book of poems '*nothing prepares you*' (Zeus Paperbacks, Colombo).

The Gratiaen Prize was set up in 1992 by Sri Lankan born Michael Ondaatje, with the money he won from the Booker Prize for '*The English Patient*' which was later made into an award winning film, starring Ralph Fiennes and Kristin Scot-Thomas.



When Vivimarie won the prize, it was the first time it was awarded for a book of poetry. She has presented her writing at the British Council Literature Seminar in Cambridge, at the Sri Lankan High Commission in London, and at the Galle Literary Festival in Sri Lanka. Her poetry has been published internationally, in the online journal *Postcolonial Text*, and in Spanish translation in a literary magazine in Mexico. Currently her book is being translated into Swedish. Her second collection of poems, titled *stitch your eyelids shut* is to be published later this year.

**Fergal Barr, DIP HE Community Youth Work 1995, ADVDIP Management Practice 2004**

**Fergal Barr**, a proud father of three children, has been involved in Youth Work full-time since leaving school. He has worked for a vast array of organisations across both statutory and voluntary sectors in diverse areas such as Education Welfare, Volunteering, Reconciliation, Conflict Management and Resolution, Community Relations, Mentoring, Street Work, Research, Participation and Rural Work.



Despite his busy work schedule, he has found the time to write his first book. Published last summer, *The Things People Say: Political Quotations from the Northern Ireland Peace Process* draws together quotations from various sources and offers an insight into how peace evolved in Northern Ireland in the 1990s and challenges faced by those engaged in the process. The book is available at: [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

**Lee Tedstone HND Engineering 1997, BEng Electronics and Computing 2000**

Letterkenny entrepreneur **Lee Tedstone** of Nvolve Limited won the Export Potential Award in the Shell Livewire all Ireland finals in Dublin in October 2008.

Nvolve specialises in talent management solutions that co-ordinate recruitment, training and performance management. Lee began his career as a semi-conductor engineer but after being promoted to project manager within his division in



London, he realised the need to co-ordinate recruitment, training and development of staff in order to meet goals set by the company. Nvolve now has clients across all industry sectors including financial, pharmaceutical, medical devices and foods and drinks.

The Livewire programme celebrates the spirit of enterprise that is alive and kicking in young people aged 16-30. It has been developed in over twenty countries worldwide and is promoted across the island of Ireland by Shell Exploration & Production in partnership with Invest NI and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in the Republic of Ireland.

**The following awards were made at the Winter Graduation ceremonies in December 2008:**

**Distinguished Learning Support Fellowship (Individual Award)**  
Elaine Urquhart, Assistant Director of Information Services (Library)

**Distinguished Learning Support Fellowship (Team Award)**  
Dr Colin Turner, Team Leader, Ronald Laird, Faculty of Computing and Engineering; Damian McGivern, Dr Gordon Crawford, Philip Houston, Seamus McConomy, Career Development Centre.

**Distinguished Teaching Fellowship (Team Award)**  
Dr Rosemary Moreland, Team Leader, Isobel Hawthorne-Steele, Eilish Rooney, Faculty of Social Sciences.



**Highly Commended Distinguished Learning Support Fellowship (Team Award)**

Professor Brian Rushton, Team Leader, Dr Tony Cook, Faculty of Life and Health Sciences; Dr Clare Carter, Staff Development Unit.

**Distinguished Teaching Fellowship (Team Award)**

Dr Anne Campbell, Team Leader, Susannah McCall, Mary McColgan, Emma McGinnis, Faculty of Social Sciences.

**Senior Distinguished Research Fellowship (Individuals)**

Professor Christine Bell, Associate Director of the Transitional Justice Institute Professor Andrew Cooper, Environmental Sciences Research Institute

**Distinguished Research Fellowship (Individual)**

Dr Eilís McCaughan, Nursing Research Institute

**Distinguished Business Fellowship:**

Professor Dolores O'Reilly, Head of Department, International Business

**Distinguished Community Fellowship:**

Suzanne Martin, School of Health Sciences

**Staff News**

**Professor Brendan McCormack**, School of Nursing has been appointed as chairman of a new charity to help older people.

The new independent charity will be an amalgamation of existing charities Age Concern Northern Ireland and Help the Aged in Northern Ireland.

**Professor Joan Ballantine** and **Professor Anne Marie Ward** have joined the Department of Accounting in the Ulster Business School.

Both are Ulster graduates and hold first class honours degrees in Accountancy. They make a welcome return to their alma mater having worked both in academia and the private sector.

**Professor Vladimir Molkov** has been appointed Director of Hydrogen Safety. Professor Molkov joined Ulster in 1999 as a Professor of Fire Safety Science in the School of the Built Environment.

He previously headed up the Department of Fire Safety at the All-Russian Research Institution for Fire Protection and was a Fellow of the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science at the University of Tokyo.

**Dr Venkat Iyer** has been appointed to the Law Commission of Northern Ireland.

The newly-established Commission is an independent statutory body charged with the task of reviewing and systematically developing the law of Northern Ireland. It is headed by a sitting High Court Justice, the Honorable Mr Justice Morgan.

**Professor Fionnuala Ní Aolain**, School of Law, has been appointed as an expert on the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force's working group, Protecting Human Rights While Countering Terrorism.

Two Ulster Business School academics – **Lyn Fawcett** and **Dr Trevor Morrow** - have been appointed to the board of the Labour Relations Agency.

Amongst a number of new professors is **Professor Chris Nugent** who has been appointed Professor of Biomedical Engineering.

An engineer with a key role in developing Ulster research expertise in improving quality of life for elderly and disabled people through the innovative use of technology, Chris joined Ulster's staff in 2000, having previously studied there at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. (BEng Electronic Systems and PhD Biomedical Engineering.)



Professor Chris Nugent at work.

**Goodbye**

**Isobel McComb** After 38 years' service, Isobel McComb has retired from the University.

Isobel joined the then Northern Ireland Polytechnic in the General Office of the Registrar of the College of Art in 1971. In 1975 she was appointed as Faculty Administrative Officer for the then Faculty of Social and Health Sciences. In 2004 she took up the post of Administrative Officer Student Support, and since 2006 she has been the Adviser on Academic Practice, Communication and Institutional Development.



Professor Jim Allen, PVC Information and Student Services presents Isobel with a retirement gift.

**Professor Jennifer Boore** Professor Jennifer Boore has retired from the University following a career spanning 24 years. Colleagues and friends hosted a farewell event to mark her outstanding contribution. When she became Head of Department in 1984, nursing at Ulster was embryonic – when she retired there were 100 staff, and teaching and research were judged externally of the highest quality.

Professor Boore's expertise in curriculum innovations is lauded but she also enhanced research and strengthened NHS collaborations. For Jenny the raison d'être for all this work was to improve patient care – a fitting coda to a distinguished academic career in nursing.

**Mary McCullough** Mary McCullough has taken early retirement after over 30 years of service. She was a familiar figure to many students and staff at the Jordanstown campus and her name has become synonymous with the Jordanstown Learning Resource Centre.

**Professor Elisabeth Lillie** Professor Elisabeth Lillie retired from the University at the end of September 2008 after 38 years in higher education. Lis was appointed to the Ulster Polytechnic in 1972, and moved to Coleraine campus in 1986.

**Joan Reilly** Many of our former international students will have known Joan Reilly, Head of the International Office. Joan has left the University to take up a new role at QUB.

**Social Uptake of Earthquake and Tsunami Threat in Western Sumatra**



**Rachel Shannon BSc Hons Geography 2005**

Environmental Science and PhD graduate student Rachel Shannon travelled to Sumatra last summer for her PhD field campaign. The research expedition extended over a five month period whereby Rachel embarked upon a social survey assessing the uptake and awareness of earthquake and tsunami threat in the coastal cities of Padang and Bengkulu.

In recent years the Sumatran forearc, situated on the western edge of the Indonesian archipelago, has acquired a notorious reputation for producing tsunamigenic earthquakes. Since the 2004 Boxing Day event collaboration between seismologists, geophysicists and geologists

has granted unrivalled advances towards understanding the forearc. Approximately two million people inhabit this region, prompting widespread concern that the forecasted rupture could mirror the losses incurred in the wake of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami.

As scientific understanding has developed public consciousness has been punctuated by numerous magnitude 7+ earthquakes. Non-scientific sources frequently prevail in influencing social consciousness at different levels and intensities, signifying fundamental downfalls in the dissemination of scientific knowledge to the public. The findings of a pilot study conducted by Rachel, in Bengkulu November 2007, epitomised a common notion that more is required to reach the "last mile" in mitigation strategies. This facilitated the design of Rachel's central campaign whereby a bottom-up approach was applied to engage with and acquire information from the general public inhabiting the western Sumatran coastline.

Throughout her campaign Rachel employed qualitative and quantitative methodological techniques, assessing

a holistic array of factors influencing risk perception and behavioural change amongst communities at risk to earthquake and tsunami threat. Closed ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used to acquire data from approximately 280 respondents in Padang and 80 in Bengkulu. Additionally 90 questionnaires were distributed amongst students in six schools, and interviews held with teachers and class-representatives in each city. Engagement with groups and organisations responsible for utilising and disseminating scientific information effectively also comprised an important component of the investigation. Subsequently semi-structured interviews were conducted with government representatives, scientists and community leaders in each city. These interviews were devised to collect data pertaining to the utility of science in hazard preparedness and furthermore establish how risk communication decisions, objectives, mediums and implementation strategies have developed.

Funding for Rachel's fieldwork was secured from the Royal Geographical Society, the Royal Society, The UNESCO Centre and the Alumni Travel Fund. Rachel returned to the Coleraine Campus in October 2008 and is currently analysing her extensive data set with dissemination of results planned for 2009.

**Maxie Swain**

**BA Hons Modern Studies in the Humanities 2001 PG DIP Newspaper Journalism 2006**

Maxie Swain is dipping his toe into the waters of publishing with a new sports newspaper.

Since September 2008, the *Northern Ireland Soccer Post* has been giving football fans around the country the latest news on local clubs.

With sales figures far exceeding early predictions, the weekly publication features action from a selection of more than 1,500 football clubs and is focused on delivering professional coverage of grassroots soccer.

"The *Northern Ireland Soccer Post* is the country's only grassroots football

newspaper. There was a gap in the market for such a publication and I went about putting the wheels in motion to get the paper up and running," said Maxie.

"Grassroots soccer is, if you like, real soccer. The Soccer Post gives a valued insight into the world of local football and allows players and managers the chance to shine the limelight on their club's ambitions or achievements.

"We cover football from the very top level of the game here, the Irish League, down through the intermediate and junior ranks to school-age football, with leagues and divisions spanning the length and breadth of the country."

The contribution from former Ulster students doesn't end with Maxie as Editor, with fellow postgraduate journalism graduates and classmates of Maxie's, Barry Caldwell and Chris Barnes writing regular contributions.

The publication also features women's soccer and a weekly pullout of youth football, alongside school's football and junior internationals.

The *Northern Ireland Soccer Post* is published every Thursday.







# Cousteau Award Winner

**Laura Gargan**  
**AB Environmental Studies 2006,**  
**BSc Hons Marine Science 2008**

Laura Gargan is the 2008 winner of the prestigious Cousteau Society annual award for best academic achievement in Marine Sciences at Ulster.

Her final year dissertation examined marine fouling, which can be a major problem in coastal engineering and shipping. Laura identified it as an interesting research topic and an important issue that is poorly documented in scientific literature.

Founded by Jacques Cousteau in 1973, the society is the world's best-known non-profit organisation dedicated to exploring and preserving Earth's ocean environment. Clark Lee Merriam, from the Cousteau Society said: "Captain Jacques Cousteau retained a 'stainless faith' in the young people of today and the generations of tomorrow to find ways to understand and protect the planet we all share.

"Scientific research, such as that undertaken by Laura is the basis of the understanding that will lead to better decision-making for the conservation of marine resources."

## Dr RPK Clark 1927-2009

**Former colleagues and students will be sad to learn of the death in January of Dick Clark, who was Senior Lecturer in Education at NUU before retiring early at the formation of the University of Ulster in 1984.**

Born in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, Dick was educated locally and at Sheffield University, where he took a first-class degree in Geography at the age of nineteen. His father had nurtured in him an early love of gardening, the landscape and the great outdoors which was to last a lifetime, and which led to an unusually varied career before he joined academe. His first job was with the Forestry Commission in the Yorkshire Pennines. He went on to farm work, in Wales, in the Dumfriesshire uplands, and then on the island of Shona, south of Oban. In the 1950s he taught at a grammar school in the Potteries before being seconded to the British Antarctic Survey on Deception Island, travelling there via the Falkland Islands, a place of consuming interest to him which he visited on two other occasions later in life. On returning to England he joined the staff at Ford Castle where an enlightened Director of Education for Northumberland had established the country's first local authority residential field study centre. He met Liz, who also worked there, and they married in 1963. Together they developed a number of other centres in the county before Dick moved into teacher training at Northumberland College of Education in 1964.

Joining NUU in 1969 as the first undergraduates were entering their second year, Dick headed the Environmental Studies curriculum area in the Education Centre at Coleraine and played a key role in designing and delivering the Centre's very successful courses: particularly the four-year concurrent programmes in Geography and Education (42EO) and in History and Education (69EO); and the Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Studies in Education and its associated Masters' programmes. At a time of sweeping changes in school curricula these innovative courses were very popular with

both undergraduates and postgraduates, and involved extensive collaboration between staff in the Centre and in other subject areas. Dick published numerous papers on teacher education and pursued research in geomorphology, graduating DPhil in 1984 with a thesis on 'Landform Development in the Cheviot Hills and Adjacent Parts of north Northumberland'.

Dick and Liz lived in Portstewart for a while, but then took on 25 acres of farm and woodland, and half-a-mile of salmon river, at Aghadowey, where they created a fine house from previously uninhabitable farm and mill buildings.

In 1984 they retired to the beautiful village of Hartsop at the Ullswater end of the Kirkstone Pass in the Lake District. There they developed a fine garden, regularly featured in books and on television. Dick became an Honorary Research Fellow of Lancaster University and continued relentlessly with his research work. Together with Dr Peter Wilson, he co-authored 22 research papers on geomorphological topics. His last, and 90th, publication appeared in the *Falkland Islands Journal* in October 2008, and the papers left on his desk at his death revealed plans for several more.

Tall, rangy and supremely fit, Dick was an intensely private yet affable and engaging man who most enjoyed wild and remote places, and who had visited many of them. He had an ever-ready wit (able to spot a possible pun at 50 yards on a dark night!) and a gift for lasting friendship. For all those who drew on his large fund of knowledge and experience, he was a life-enhancer as well as a fine educator. He is survived by Liz, his daughter Alison, his son Andrew, and four grandchildren.

**Emeritus Professor Peter Roebuck**



Dick Clark with his wife, Liz, in their garden at Hartsop. (Photo by Val Corbett)

# Bass Player Gerard Hits High Note as Mayor

**Gerard Diver**  
**BA Hons Irish History and Politics 1993**  
**Certificate Extra Mural Studies**  
**(Community Development) 1995**



Mayor of Derry, Gerard Diver was elected as member of Derry City Council in 2001.

Wearing his official chain of office, he makes frequent visits to his alma mater to promote 'gown and town' links and demonstrate civic pride and faith in the power of a modern university to be a major driver of economic regeneration.

"It's been a great pleasure for me to return to Magee as Mayor. I believe that the campus represents a vital part of the future of this city and region and that it will be central to providing the necessary knowledge and skills for our future workforce that is required to regenerate this area," he said.

Gerard has had a long association with the University having studied at both Jordanstown and Magee campuses. Alice Diver, his wife and the city's Mayoress, is a lecturer in the School of Law at the Magee campus.

Gerard says: "I really enjoyed my time at university. I made some very good friends there and we still keep in touch." He says that being a student at Ulster helped shape his future career path and consolidated his already strong interest in matters historical and political.

"It helped fuel a continuous desire for further reading on the subjects - it's not difficult to work out from my bookshelves where my interests lie!" Gerard is a member of the SDLP.

One of the highlights of his year as Mayor to date was the opportunity to accompany 44 talented young local performers on a promotional tour to the United States as part of the 'United in Promoting Our City project'.

And he was certainly the right man for the role as he has a long record in upholding the city's vibrant profile as a centre of song and artistry. For, long before he stepped into the world of municipal politics, he was adept at taking to the stage and 'holding' an audience. Gerard lived every teenager's dream - in a successful band, one that oozed real talent and verve: he was bass guitarist and vocalist with 'Tie the Boy' - the band that helped launch Peter 'Things Can Only Get Better' Cunnah of D:ream.

Since being elected Mayor last June, his hectic schedule of civic duties has meant he has had to forfeit his downtime.

But he admits that when time allows, he enjoys tuning up the acoustic guitar and singing - to the amusement and annoyance in equal measure - of Alice and their four teenage children!

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## Greg Maguire, BA Hons Design 1988

**What has a Harry Potter film, a Peter Gabriel music video and the new Terminator film all got in common? They have all had Greg Maguire as one of the driving forces behind their productions.**

Now based in San Francisco, Greg has worked as everything from a Disney animator to computer animations for the Academy Award winning *Happy Feet*, but it all started with his father's Super 8 camera.

"I love movies, plain and simple. I started making movies when I was about 13 or 14 after being inspired by Screen Test, the BBC children's television programme," said Greg.

"I was lucky enough that my dad had a Super 8 camera. The first couple of movies I made involved the neighbours pretending to shoot at each other and of course filming my brother falling off roofs and walls and a bit of animation."

In 2006 he started his own company, Zoogloo. His first project *Happy Feet*, went on to win an Academy Award for best animated feature. Among many other films, Zoogloo was involved in *Spiderman 3* for Sony, *Thundercats* an animated feature and game for Digital Domain, and *Where the Wild Things Are* for Warner Bros.

"Zoogloo is a 3D character engineering service to the digital content creation industry," he said. "We provide a high level of expertise in all aspects of a character pipeline to studios in the feature film, episodic television, commercials and game industries."

"Over my career, I seemed to be building the same set of tools over and over again as I moved from studio to studio and those tools belonged to my employer and not to me. I thought that I could take that experience and recreate those tools again but this time I would own them."

"We decided very early on that we would write tools that could efficiently create characters that are media independent and software agnostic. We developed a higher level language for creating characters enabling us to use the same tools to build a character for a game, or an episodic television series, or a feature animated character or a digital double."

Before getting to this stage in his career, however, Greg had seen and done it all in the animation industry.

"I started as a computer graphics generalist doing commercials in Belfast but soon moved to Dublin to work on integrating computer graphics into traditionally animated features at Don Bluth Films."

"After working on three features, I moved to San Francisco to work on a Peter Gabriel video *Steam* at Colossal Pictures, a mixed media pioneer. I got a call to work on Walt Disney feature animation's first computer generated feature, *Dinosaur*. I was the Technical Animation Supervisor tasked with designing and implementing the animation pipeline."

At night Greg picked up a pencil and studied classical animation at the American Animation Institute:

"I guess I got good enough that I transferred into the animation department and became a Disney animator. I moved back to San Francisco to Industrial Light and Magic to a Creature Supervisor role on *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, *The Clone Wars*, and an ambitious animated feature for George Lucas."

And Greg hasn't lost what he loves about the job – the ability to be creative:

"I always like being at the beginning of things. I feel I can leave more of a mark that way. Most of the creative work is at the beginning of a project and the rest of it is its execution. I also like problem solving and I've gained a skill set over the years that has enabled me to evaluate an idea quickly and take it to its conclusion without having to implement it."

Greg is currently working on the production for the latest film in the *Terminator* franchise, *Terminator 4: Salvation*.



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Fáilte Ireland

## One hundred and sixty years of art and design

**The School of Art and Design is celebrating its 160th anniversary in 2009.**

Founded in 1849 the 'Belfast School of Design' was originally located in the Royal Belfast Academical Institution. In 1870 it was reconfigured as the Government School of Art and in 1900 came under the control of the Municipal Corporation.

In 1907 it was amalgamated with the Technical Institute in new purpose-built premises. Outgrowing these premises it moved to its current site in York Street Belfast in 1968. The School is now located within the Faculty of Art, Design and the Built Environment based in the recently renovated Belfast campus.

A special programme of activity is planned

to mark the anniversary including a retrospective exhibition at the Ormeau Baths Gallery, a touring exhibition drawn from Ulster's art collection and a series of presentations from major figures in art, design and architecture.

The 2009 Ulster Festival of Art, Architecture and Design and the annual Student Show will take place from 8 to 20 June 2009. To mark the 160th anniversary they will benefit from an enhanced programme and 'new look' as acknowledgement of this special year. It will be the first occasion that the new York Street campus will be in full use, with exhibits throughout its entirety.

## SING IT LOUD

**The University of Ulster Choir, based at the Magee campus, continues to garner considerable popular and critical acclaim for its distinctive and dramatic performances across the province and beyond.**

The 70-strong choir, established in 2003, has developed an impressive reputation for delivering distinctive performances of choral music old and new in beautiful ecclesiastical settings. Shaun Ryan, Lecturer in Music and Director of the Choir, has been instrumental in developing the reputation of the Choir over the last four years. He explains;

"At our public concerts we like to present a programme of music that will be attractive to audiences but may also introduce them to something a little unusual or unknown to them. Hence, we will often perform a well-loved 'classic' such as Vivaldi's Gloria or Faure's Requiem, but alongside it present a contemporary work that will be new to the audience. We also feel it is important to perform in a range of settings across the province and to reach out to a wider audience. In recent years we have performed in Belfast, Enniskillen, Donegal, Coleraine and Londonderry and we look forward to expanding both our repertoire and our geographical reach even further over the coming years."

During an incredibly hectic run of pre-Christmas engagements the Choir performed Vivaldi's uplifting Gloria and Morten Lauridsen's expressive Lux Aeterna at two very successful public concerts in Londonderry and Belfast, as well as leading the musical celebrations at two community choral services in and around the Magee campus. They also found time to lend their services to raise funds for The Samaritans with a rousing performance of Christmas songs for busy shoppers in Foyle Shopping Centre.

The Choir were then at the centre of a completely different musical experience when they performed as part of a Queen tribute concert, alongside the Ulster Orchestra and Flash Harry, in the Odyssey Arena, Belfast in January 2009. The choir won rave reviews from a packed audience for their dramatic performance of the thrilling choral parts in songs such as 'Bohemian Rhapsody' and 'Barcelona'.

A further university involvement came via the contribution of Dr Frank Lyons, Lecturer in Music, who was invited by the promoter to produce the choral and orchestral parts for the entire concert, ensuring the Choir's talents were fully exploited in a selection of stunning arrangements.

If you would like to be notified of any future concerts or would like to contribute in some way to the Choir's fundraising activities please contact the Cultural Development Office at Magee on (028) 7137 5456 or [gm.farren@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:gm.farren@ulster.ac.uk)





## Magee Prepares to be 'Sejuiced' (again!)

The Magee campus will host a second visit by the innovative all-female vocal trio 'Juice' at the end of April, as part of their engagement as Ensemble-in-Residence at the Magee campus for 2008/09.

The critically acclaimed trio made a very successful first visit in November 2008 when they presented a packed programme of performances, workshops and outreach. Their visit included two public concerts featuring performances of two works written especially for the group by composers from the School of Creative Arts, Laurence Roman and Adam Melvin. The trio also presented two specially tailored workshops for students with special needs from Belmont House Special School and also 'A' Level music students from St Cecilia's College, Derry.

Juice are at the forefront of the contemporary music scene and are particularly known for their eclectic repertoire which draws on world music, jazz, folk and pop and often combines live



singing with electronics and visuals. They have commissioned countless new works and have performed at the British Film Institute, the Royal Academy of Art, the Purcell Room and the Wigmore Hall.

Adam Melvin, Lecturer in Music and co-ordinator of the project, said:

"This residency provides an amazing opportunity for our students to learn from the experience of these three truly inspirational and engaging young

performers. The nature of the residency also allows us to offer many others in the community the opportunity to enjoy the trio's music and benefit from their education work."

As part of their second visit, Juice will present a lunchtime concert in the Great Hall, Magee on Tuesday 28 April 2009, followed by an evening concert on Wednesday 29 April 2009. For further information on the Juice Residency please log on to: [www.culture.ulster.ac.uk](http://www.culture.ulster.ac.uk)

## Supporting Cultural Development

A diverse programme of eleven arts events and initiatives is taking place across the University during the current academic year, as a result of funding from the Cultural Development Support Scheme. Some of the projects are profiled below.

### Imagine-Create 2009

Imagine-Create 2009 is running at the Magee campus from 2 to 4 April 2009. Greg O'Hanlon and colleagues from the School of Creative Arts have organised this pioneering three-day festival focussing on the creative applications of technology; specifically in the areas of audio, image, games design, web media and digital interactivity.

Presented in collaboration with Derry City Council, Skillset Media Academy, North West Regional College, the Void Gallery and the Nerve Centre, the festival is offering an eclectic programme of performances, exhibitions, seminars, software demonstrations and workshops

presented by leading international figures. The line up ranges from cutting-edge musicians, including electro-pop band Hot Chip and renowned sound artist Scanner, to industry professionals from leading software companies, including Apple, Adobe and Digidesign as well as international figures from the fields of animation, gaming, and film.

Further information can be found at: [www.creativetechnologies.info](http://www.creativetechnologies.info)

### The Big University Dig

Meanwhile at Coleraine pupils from nine local schools are preparing for 'The Big University Dig' on Thursday 28 May 2009. Colin Breen and archaeologists from the School of Environmental Science will lead the children in a series of archaeological excavations to examine the unexplored historic landscape of the Coleraine campus. They can expect to find Stone Age material, a medieval fort, the ruins of a forgotten settlement, linen works and more. The finds from this innovative archaeological project will feature in an



The Big University Dig.

exhibition displayed at various locations around the borough.

### Hello from Belfast!

Johanna Bartley, Lecturer in Multimedia Design, School of Creative Arts, is facilitating two separate outreach projects. One of these, involving a programme of creative interactive design workshops with two schools from the West Belfast and Shankill areas of Belfast, will culminate in the creation of a website - 'Hello from Belfast!' - an online resource that will be exhibited at the Waterfront Hall, Belfast from 1 to 19 June 2009.

For more information go to [www.culture.ulster.ac.uk](http://www.culture.ulster.ac.uk)

## Olympian Coe Opens Ulster Sports Facilities

Double Olympic gold medallist Sebastian Coe KBE officially opened the University's new £20m world-class sports facilities at the Jordanstown campus last November 2008.

Lord Coe, Chair of the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) said:

"Opening the University of Ulster's new sports centre is a hugely exciting opportunity. The range of elite and community services it provides are extensive, and will without a doubt lead the effort in Northern Ireland to encourage sports participation at all levels."

The facility, which is jointly funded by the University of Ulster and Sport Northern Ireland's Lottery Fund, is also home to the Sports Institute Northern Ireland (SINI).

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Richard Barnett said:

"The development of the multi-million pound centre has once again shown the University's commitment to developing its vision of becoming the leading university for sport on the island of Ireland. With the London Olympic Committee already recognising the calibre of our services, by making the centre a training venue for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the University is on its way towards delivering its vision."

During his visit to the university, Lord Coe also received the honorary degree of Doctor of the University, in recognition of his services to sport.

The 6000 sq metre sports facility has already shown its international pedigree as a training venue for Irish Olympic bronze medallist Paddy Barnes, Paralympic gold medallists Michael McKillop and Jason Smyth, and Northern Ireland representative teams at all age levels across all sports.

Eamonn McCartan, Chief Executive of Sport NI, said:

"The completion of this £20 million facility signals a new and exciting phase in the development of the SINI.

"Its state of the art facilities in combination with the expertise of Sports Institute staff, are already delivering a training environment motivating and inspiring our athletes to new levels of success."

The University was delighted also to welcome Gregory Campbell, MP, MLA, Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure, to the campus.

"This world-class facility will be a huge benefit to Northern Ireland athletes in the run-up to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and beyond. For Olympic teams from visiting countries choosing to train in Northern Ireland, it will provide excellent pre-games facilities prior to the 2012 Games," the Minister said.

Facilities include:

- 60m x 40m multi-sport indoor Third Generation synthetic grass training hall
- strength and conditioning suite
- 60m indoor sprint track; 110m outdoor sprint track
- indoor throws area; indoor jumps area
- physiotherapy and sports science area
- health suite, including plunge pool, steam room, jacuzzi and sauna
- floodlit water-based synthetic grass hockey pitch
- floodlit multi-purpose grass pitches
- floodlit grass rugby pitch.

For more information go to: [www.sportsulster.com](http://www.sportsulster.com)



Ulster honorary graduates Lord Coe and Dr Pat Jennings with Professor Richard Barnett.

## Giant Steps Forward for Ulster Sport

The University has unveiled a pioneering international partnership with the Coors Belfast Giants Ice Hockey Club.

Professor Denise McAlister, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, launched the new educational scholarship which aims to bring world-class players to the Giants by offering three international ice hockey players the opportunity to study at Ulster.

The programme is a further step in the Ulster Sports Academy's development of an international strategy for sport and follows on from the successful Ulster Elks Basketball international scholarship programme.

Three Giants stars – Canadians Shane Johnson, Andrew Martin, and Paul Deniset – will be studying Masters degrees in Sports Management, and Business and Management at Ulster.

Professor McAlister said:

"We are pleased to be welcoming the Giants to the University and to support excellence in sport through scholarships of this nature. I would also like to commend the hard work of those staff who have been involved in scholarships in the past which have worked very well and have seen sportsmen and women grow professionally and personally with the University."



## Ricky Simms

**BA Hons Sport and Leisure Studies 1996**  
**PGCE Physical Education 1997**

Ricky Simms is the man behind some of the world's biggest athletic stars, many of whom proved their worth at the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

With triple Olympic gold medallist Usain Bolt and 400 metres Olympic champion Christine Ohuruogu among the superstars under Ricky's management expertise, he remembers how his time at Jordanstown prepared him for one of the most important jobs in the athletics industry.

"I think a combination of things that I studied in my courses as well as what I did with sporting clubs at Ulster benefited me in the path I'm now on," said Ricky.

"I was a member of the University's athletics club, and chairman for a while, and I organised the Irish University Athletics championships too. But I think that being involved in sport throughout my life, it was inevitable that I was going to take a career in that direction."

After teaching physical education for a number of years, Ricky made the move to sports management when in 2000 he went to work with Sonia O'Sullivan's coach Kim McDonald.

"Unfortunately Kim died in 2001. He had introduced me to so many of the

world's athletics stars and leaders in sports management which placed me well to take over the business."

Ricky now runs PACE Sports Management with his partner Marion Steining and said that his job is perfect for him.

"It's a pretty hectic lifestyle but I wouldn't change it. Obviously with Marion and I both jetting off around the world it can get pretty frantic but it's what I love doing and it's very enjoyable despite the heavy workload.

"For me it is very much a case of, I was never talented enough to become a world-class athlete, so this is the next best thing."

Ricky was a talented runner and as well as being captain of Finn Valley Athletic Club, he represented Ireland at under-23 and student level.

In 2003, Ricky recruited a 16-year-old Jamaican sprinter among his athletes. At the 2008 Beijing Olympics, that same sprinter Usain Bolt became a gold medal winner three times and the fastest man in the world in the 100 and 200 metres.

"Beijing was amazing. It really couldn't compare to anything that went before. They really set the standard for the next Games in London.

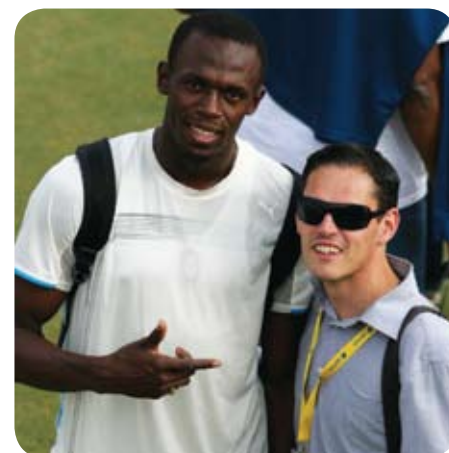
"The Beijing experience was something special. Watching Usain win was great. I must admit that it was a hectic and busy time as well. I don't think I slept much, there's always a lot of running around for me too at these events," laughed Ricky.

"Usain is like a lot of Jamaicans, a typical very laid back Jamaican. Even before the warm-up in the 100 metres he was joking around. It's when you see him being serious that you would start to worry that something is wrong.

"The future for Usain as his reputation grows is just about finding a happy medium between the athlete and the celebrity. He's only 22 and we both know he has a long way to go in the sport."

The Jordanstown campus has already been designated as a pre-Olympics and Paralympics training camp for the 2012 London Games. But Ricky has yet to pay a visit to the new £20 million world-class sports facilities, something he hopes to do soon.

"I haven't been to Jordanstown in years. Everyone has been telling me how great the site and the new sports facilities are so it would be good to pay a visit."



Ricky with Usain at a recent training session.

## SPORTS OUTREACH IS THE REAL THING

**Ulster's Sports Outreach Programme has been given a boost with a grant of \$326,100(US) from The Coca-Cola Foundation.**

The funding will go towards a new 'Sport for LIFE' project which will be delivered over a two-year period in primary schools to encourage children to take part in physical activity. The 12-week programme on health and physical activity will be delivered across 100 primary schools in areas of social and economic disadvantage.

Students from the School of Sports

Studies, Scholarship Athletes and Sports Ambassadors will work as volunteers to carry out two six-week programmes, one in each term, over the two-year period with the aim of educating both pupils and teachers on the health benefits associated with physical activity.

Sports Studies Senior Lecturer Dr Deirdre Brennan, and Director of the Sports Outreach Programme said:

"Obesity is a growing issue in society with research showing an increase in the problem in children and teenagers. The 'Sport for LIFE' project endeavours to

tackle this by encouraging not only active lifestyles but also healthy living among primary school children – something that can stay with them for the rest of their lives."

Dr Marie Murphy, Head of the School of Sports Studies said:

"We hope that such external support from The Coca-Cola Foundation will also strengthen our proposal to appoint a full-time Sports Outreach Manager to support the extensive and expanding current work undertaken within the extremely successful Outreach Programme."

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