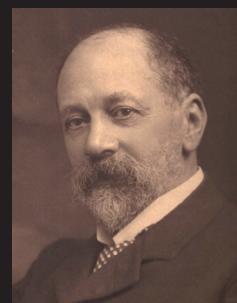




The Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust

NEWSLETTER 2010



From the Chairman

In one respect, 2010 has been a year of stability for the Stapley Trust. We have had no changes of personnel. But economically, for the first time, the current recession hit our disburseable funds, and Council was disappointed to be able to award only 168 grants, compared with 274 in 2009, while the numbers of applications were only slightly reduced. Although not our first ever setback, the drop is against the trend of our general ability to increase student support year-on-year. We hope that the recovery in the stock market is sustained, allowing us again to help more students.

In May, we were sorry to hear that George Brownlee, twice chairman of the Trust, had died at the age of 98. An appreciation of his many contributions to the Trust appears elsewhere in this newsletter. His passing has stimulated a generous gift in his memory from a donor who has chosen to remain anonymous, which will go towards a scholarship in his name. Having regard for his particular interests, this will probably be for a student of pharmacology or medicine.

Mary Wheeler



Obituary: Professor George Brownlee

On the tenth of May 2010 one of the most influential figures in the history of the Trust died, aged 98. Professor George Brownlee, PhD., DSc, Professor of Pharmacology at King's College, University of London, served the Trust with commitment and untiring energy from 1950, when he first became a member of Council, until he retired in 1993.

He was Chairman from 1969 to 1977, and again from 1983 to 1988, and was instrumental in improving the financial development of the Trust. During the latter period, he and the then secretary, Ronald Groves, undertook a review of the leases on London property held by the Trust. These had become increasingly uneconomic and were terminated. In the role of honorary treasurer between 1985 and 1991, he reorganised the finances to produce maximum funds for grants, and also saw the need to increase capital by means of an appeal, which he and the Chairman at the time launched in 1993. To accompany the launch, he wrote a history of the Trust.



Professor Brownlee shared Sir Richard Stapley's passionate belief in education, and, when he retired in 1995 he left the Trust in a strong position to fulfil its stated aim of 'working to support excellence in the education of mature students'.

Over the years his colleagues on Council were inspired by his enthusiasm and wisdom, and many hundreds of students have cause to be grateful to George Brownlee for all he did for the Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust.

Professor Michael Marsh

Current Grant Holders

Dr. Harriet Ball, currently a second-year medical student at Green Templeton College, University of Oxford, tells us about her work:



I began my academic career studying Human Sciences, which encouraged me to take an interdisciplinary approach to understanding health and behaviour. This sparked my interest to undertake a PhD at the Institute of Psychiatry (King's College London). My PhD research examined genetic and environmental contributions to mental disorders, both in the UK and in Sri Lanka. This is an important field because mental disorders make a very large contribution to

worldwide morbidity, but there has been a lack of research (and treatment) outside of Western, high-income countries.

The typical presentation of psychiatric conditions, as well as the prevalence, varies across cultural contexts, which can make it hard to identify the important predisposing factors. In Sri Lanka I worked with twin studies, which allow the examination of genetic factors, but also the role of environmental factors (such as poverty and stressful life events) once the effects of genes have been controlled for. The results have highlighted cross-cultural similarity of disorders such as depression, although the precise nature of environmental risk factors may vary.

I also investigated some links between depression and other disorders (including migraine, fatigue and medically unexplained symptoms), and I became interested in the overlap between psychiatric and general medical conditions.

During my PhD I had the opportunity to get involved in charity work, and translating research to the public. I enjoyed the challenge of promoting scientific thinking to people who might otherwise not see the point. My experiences made me realise I wanted to be involved in the clinical management of patients, and that such involvement could help me focus on the most important research questions. So in 2009 I began the graduate-entry medicine course at Oxford University.

I'm incredibly grateful for the support of the Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust, because a medical degree is a huge financial undertaking, especially on top of mounting student loans from a first degree. In the future I plan to combine clinical medicine with research, although I'm still working out the details!

Dr. Ball's grant for 2010-11 has been funded by GlaxoSmithKline.

Trustees

Dr. Mary Weater
MA, PhD, MRCP (Chairman)

Prof. Henry Arnstein
PhD, DSC, FIBiol

Mr. Jeremy Jackman
BMus (Hons)

Prof. Michael Marsh
DPhil, DM, DSc, FRCP

Prof. Ralph Penny
MA, PhD (hon Treasurer)

Prof. Colin Seymour-Ure
MA, DPhil

Prof. Keith Smith
BSc, PhD

Brian Saccente Kennedy, currently a second-year Masters' student in the Division of Psychology and Language Sciences, University College London, writes:

After ten years as a professional Actor/Singer in the West End, and some successes there, I decided to embark on a change of career that would see me use more of my brain, and perhaps do some measurable good in the lives of others. In the past, it could be argued, my acting and dancing did only measurable harm.

With a first degree in Linguistics, a Masters in Irish Gaelic (with larger implications for bilingualism and minority language communities) and a PGDip in Professional Voice, perhaps the natural professional evolution was to Speech and Language Therapy. This is a field in much need of new professionals, particularly those with interest in communication, linguistics and the voice. With the help of the Stapley Trust and the NHS, I was accepted to a very demanding and very fulfilling MSc programme at University College London.

I have just completed my first of two years, having now covered the theory and practical application of therapy for those with developmental (i.e. genetic) communication needs. It has been an extraordinarily full and challenging course, requiring hard work not only in theoretical and academic endeavours, but in the practical hands-on experience of the clinical placement. My placements have taken me to Special Secondary Schools for those with Learning Disabilities, to a Child Development Centre dealing with under-5s with complex needs (i.e. autism spectrum disorders, global delay, other syndromes) and to an inner-city Health Centre where I helped to run two weeks of Language Therapy groups for mainstream primary school children.

The second, and final year of my MSc will involve the acquired side of communication disorders, enabling me to work with head and neck cancer



patients, stroke victims and other people with aphasias, the elderly and those who suffer from dysphagia (swallowing difficulties) and those with voice disorders. My MSc research will, in fact, deal with that last topic - voice disorders. I have been fortunate enough to gain an MSc project

with a leading light in paediatric voice disorders at Great Ormond Street Hospital. My research will deal with children who, as a result of early or long-term intubation, have had to undergo laryngotracheal reconstruction (LTR) surgery. These children, due to scarring or other surgical alterations to the vocal tract, can no longer achieve normal phonation at the vocal folds, and use other structures in their larynx to achieve voice, however abnormal. GOSH is unique in having such a large population of such children with 'supraglottic voice'. We will aim to extract a developmental profile of this type of phonation so that surgeons can better inform parents and patients what the expected outcomes of their LTR surgery may be and how this abnormal voice type may change over time.

The Stapley Trust has been key in my career change and has enabled the foundation of my future career ambitions. I am forever grateful of being given the chance to go back to study and come out the other end with a new set of skills and expert knowledge in an amazingly varied field of clinical practice.

From the Administrator:

It gives me great pleasure to announce that GlaxoSmithKline has extended its funding of £25,000 to the Trust for an additional year. This money is dedicated to supporting students of medicine and healthcare, and enables us to make grants to approximately thirty students in these fields each year. A big thank you to GlaxoSmithKline, and to the alumni and current holders of GSK grants for supporting our interim report, which was submitted this past summer.

Regarding the grant application cycle, 2010 was a busy year for the Trust. With the number of applications that we could consider being limited to 300, competition for funding was incredibly competitive, the limit being reached by the second week of February. I anticipate that the situation will be equally competitive next year, so if you plan on making an application for funding for 2011/12, please be sure to get your application form in quickly to avoid disappointment. Packs will be available as of the 3rd of January 2011 from admin@stapleytrust.org. Please note that application packs are not available before that date. As in previous years, the application process will be conducted electronically, but paper application forms are available upon request.

Nancy Jachec

Letters of thanks:

The Trust has received a number of letters from this year's grant recipients. Here are some excerpts below:

Masters student, Museum Studies, University of Salford, 18th July 2010:

'I wanted to let you know that the bursary I received last year contributed to my ability to concentrate fully on my MA work. After being unsuccessful with funding elsewhere, The Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust also gave me confidence that there was faith in the advancement of my academic career'.

The student is now a doctoral candidate.

2nd year medical student, University of Oxford, 2nd July 2010:

'Thank you once again for your continued support. It really is invaluable and has facilitated my change of career'.

This student has just finished the year with a distinction for her exams, and has published a first-author research paper in the July 2010 edition of the *Journal of Parasite Immunology*.

3rd year veterinary student, University of Edinburgh, 20th May 2010:

'I would just like to say a huge thank you for deciding to support me again as I move into fourth year and for your help so far in general. You have really made a difference to my current situation as financial support like yours takes some of the pressure off my shoulders a little, and allows me to really focus on learning how to be a vet'.

Final year medical student, Lancaster University, 12th July 2010:

'I have passed my final examinations, gaining three top quartiles and two second quartiles for my examination results. I am on track to graduating in the top quartile. I have since gained a further distinction, totalling four distinctions and one merit for my special study modules...Thank you to the Sir Richard Stapley Trust for the help that I received for this academic year. The support meant I didn't have to take on a part-time job to help with living costs and this in turn meant I could dedicate my time fully to my studies...your support has enabled me to engage wholeheartedly with my studies'.

Final year medical student, Edinburgh, 2nd August 2010:

'Sincerest thanks to the Trustees for continued financial support during my medical degree, through four grants from the Richard Stapley Trust...This support has been fundamental in enabling me to pursue my degree without significant financial difficulties, and ultimately to achieve my ambition of becoming a doctor'.

Alumni News:

During the year, several former grant-holders have been in touch with the Trust about their current professional activities:

Grant recipient 2006-07, Music, 9th May 2010:

'After I finished my Masters of Opera, I went on to work as a free lance opera singer. I am currently working for Scottish Opera...I am also a featured artist of the Making Music Foundation, and a young Concert Artists with Pollok House Arts Society...I am so grateful for the Trust's assistance, it was a massive help to me during my studies at the RSAMD. Thank you!'

Grant recipient, 2008-09, Masters in Geology, Cardiff University, 1st March 2010:

'I completed my Masters in Hydrogeology at Cardiff University in September 2009 and achieved a distinction. From the industrial placement with WSP, undertaken as part of the course, I was offered a permanent role as a graduate Hydrogeologist. I am now working towards becoming a chartered Geologist...thank you for your financial support, your grant has helped me to achieve my career goal and change my future. I hope the Trust will continue to help others like me in achieving their goals in the face of financial pressures'.

We hope that alumni will continue to keep in touch.

Supporting the Trust

Donations are vitally important in enabling us to support the work of hundreds of students from Britain, and of those that come to the UK to pursue degrees in medicine, veterinary studies, and higher degrees in all other subjects.

So far this year, the Trust has received £3,450 through private donations, and extends its sincere thanks to all of its donors.

If you would like to support our work through regular, occasional, or a one-off donation, please contact the administrator via e-mail at: admin@stapleytrust.org

or write to us at:

The Stapley Trust
PO Box 839
Richmond,
Surrey TW9 3AL

Gift Aid forms are available from the administrator and from our website www.stapleytrust.org