



# THE SIR RICHARD STAPLEY EDUCATIONAL TRUST

## ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2020

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Educational Trust

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Dr Jane Dancer, Chair

## Greetings from our Chair, Dr Jane Dancer

On behalf of all of us here at the Trust I hope that you are staying safe and well in these difficult times.

We are acutely aware of the challenges that students are facing because of Covid-19. Our annual survey of recent grant holders highlighted the impact not only on their studies but also their finances (see page 4). Many of our students rely on part-time work to fund their courses, particularly within the hospitality sector, and such employment opportunities are now either restricted or no longer available. Also lack of access to facilities has meant that some courses have been extended leading to unforeseen expenses for those students. The need for the financial support provided by the Trust is now greater than ever.

## Messages of Thanks

*'It's hard to convey just how welcome this news is, as things have got even more difficult for me since the nationwide lockdown. It's such a boost and I can't thank you enough for your kindness. The grant will help enormously, lessening the worry and enabling me to focus more on my writing up next year. My very sincere gratitude to the Trust'.*  
Helen

*'This couldn't have come at a better time. I'm currently not able to access my office at the University at all due to Covid-19, and as a purely computational PhD student this is really hard for me. Combined with the loss of work opportunities from lockdown this has made the start of the academic year very stressful, so this grant will make a massive difference for me. You've really made my day with this news, thank you so much.'*

*'I would like to say the biggest thank you for this incredible grant. I am so appreciative of your continued support of my studies. It has made all the difference to me being able to pursue my dream of veterinary medicine. It is hard to put into words how much it means to have people believing in me, especially at the moment when everything seems particularly strained.'* Henrietta

*'As the effects of Covid19 have hit my household extremely hard, this grant has been the difference between being able to further my education and future employment opportunities and sacrificing my career. Thank you is not a strong enough sentiment.'*

## 2020 funding round

I am pleased to report therefore that the Trust has been able to continue its work throughout the pandemic. Our annual grant round went ahead as usual and we awarded 127 grants. These grants will support students studying a broad range of subjects and representing 30 different nationalities. The total amount awarded this year was £129,900.

## Covid-19 Impact

Many of our alumni and current grant holders have been adversely affected by the pandemic. While a number of successful applicants have unfortunately been unable to take up their grants, it is encouraging that the vast majority are still able to progress with their studies as planned.

While the demand for our grants remains as high as ever, we have seen a decrease in our financial resources due to Covid-19 because our investments, which provide the bulk of the Trust's income, have suffered through the downturn in the markets. We are therefore particularly grateful for the generosity of our donors; thanks to you the Trust has been able to help deserving students who we would otherwise have had to turn away. If you are thinking of supporting the Trust I would encourage you to read the article about Wills by my trustee colleague Dr Sarah Otner (on page 15) and to visit our website to see the other ways in which you can contribute.

## Strategy

This year, in addition to our grant funding activities, the trustees have carried out a wide-ranging review of the Trust's activities and have set out a Strategic Plan which will maximise the benefits that the Trust can deliver with its available resources (see page 9).

There have been further changes in the Trustee body. Keith Smith left us in May after many years' service to the Trust; his significant contribution is much appreciated. Keith's retirement creates a vacancy for a new Trustee which we are seeking to fill (see page 3). During the year, we also learned that two of the extraordinary figures in our recent history had passed away. We include two short appreciations of the contributions made by Michael Bushby and Professor Henry Arnstein on page 12-14.

While 2020 has been a difficult year I am delighted that the Trust has been able to make a real difference to the lives of many students and recognise the contribution of Colin (our Clerk), my fellow Trustees, the Trust's benefactors and all those who have supported us in making this possible.

Our thanks to you all!

*'I always promised one day to assist the Trust, as many years ago it supported me with a £50 grant, which was a lot of money then, to take a master's degree at the LSE. I was a person who left a secondary modern with CSE grade 4 English qualification, who struggled hard to get his first degree and by some miracle had an offer from the LSE to take a MSc. With the Stapley grant and night work, I managed to complete and pass the master's. The MSc became a key to many years of employment as a College Lecturer. The grant from the Trust was a boost and key turning point in my life and employment career. Something I could never forget.'*  
Lawrence

*'Thank you all so much for the amazing work you do. This grant will enable me to complete my final year without worrying how to make ends meet, and for that I am truly thankful. I cannot tell you how much this grant means to me, my family and my circumstances. In these presently challenging times, to know that I will have this vitally appreciated financial assistance means so much for me as I approach my dissertation year. It has been a challenging time even before the Covid-19 outbreak, but to have the peace of mind to know that my education is firmly protected means everything as we navigate out of this difficult period.'*

*'I am struggling to put into words what a positive impact this scholarship will have on my life - perhaps after completing my MA in Creative Writing I will be able to properly express my thanks. Until then I will just say thank you all.'*  
Frances

# Do you want to help improve access to postgraduate education?

## *We are seeking a new trustee*

The Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust helps academically gifted, mature students overcome financial and other barriers to postgraduate education. We are a registered charity working across the UK. We welcome applications for the trustee position from all members of the community, including younger people and those from BAME communities.

## *The role*

- To contribute actively to giving firm strategic direction to the Trust, setting overall policy, defining goals and evaluating performance
- Scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance
- Scoring grant applications once a year
- Networking, acting as an ambassador and winning support externally.

## *The person*

- Committed to the Trust and its mission to improve access to postgraduate education
- Extensive experience of postgraduate education in the UK
- Strategic vision and experience of strategic planning
- Ideally, experience as a trustee
- Ideally, academic or professional expertise in law, music, arts or education.

We recently celebrated our trust's centenary. The new trustee will help to steer the charity through an exciting period of development.

Our trustees are unpaid but we pay travel and other out of pocket expenses and provide an induction into the Trust's work. For further details about the Trust, please see our website: [www.stapleytrust.org](http://www.stapleytrust.org)

Please download the Trustee Information Pack [here](#).

The closing date for application letters is 12 noon on Friday 29 January 2021, with interviews for shortlisted applicants being held shortly afterwards.

*'The Sir Richard Stapley Trust has been invaluable in supporting me in achieving my goals. It has enabled me to overcome the difficulties that come from being from a low socioeconomic background combined with several personal hardships. Without it, I would not have been able to complete my graduate entry medical degree at King's College London and become a doctor. For that, I am eternally grateful to the trust and to the wonderful people who donate to support people like myself achieve their potential.'*

*'By awarding me the grant, you have lightened my financial burden, which allows me to focus more on the most crucial aspect of university - learning.'*

*'Please pass on my unreserved thanks to the trustees. I have spent the first three years of my degree worrying about my finances and this grant has provided me with a level of assurance that is enabling me to engage better with my studies.'*  
Jemma

*'From the bottom of my heart, thank you very much for my award. It will go a long way in helping me complete my medical course. Becoming a doctor and improving the health and wellbeing of others has been my ambition for years. Your help means I can focus more on developing my skill set to become the best I can. Words can't describe how truly grateful I am.'*

*'This award means so much to me. Now I can complete my final year of study. I am incredibly grateful to the Trust.'* Cate

## Impact Survey 2020

This year, our fourth annual survey, we again had a 70% reply rate from recipients of grants, this time for the 2019/20 study period. Students completing the survey came from 45 universities. The highest number of respondents were from Oxbridge, the Royal Academy of Music, Aberdeen, Southampton, and Birmingham universities. Forty-eight percent were studying for a PhD. The majority of respondents were studying science related subjects, including 25% studying medicine. The remainder were studying a diverse range of subjects with a notable number studying the Arts including music, textiles and fine art. Recipients were from all years of study, but the majority were 2nd or 3rd years.

### *How our grants helped*

Seventy-four percent of respondents had a financial shortfall of between £750 and £5,000. Ninety-two percent said our grant funding was essential for their studies; 76% said financial concerns did not impact on their study this year because of our grant. However, at least six PhD students had changed their plans, deferring their studies or reducing to part-time mainly as a result of Covid-19 and its impact on study or finances. Our grants cannot cover a student's total shortfall, so students still had to apply for more grants (59%) and take on more work (69%). Forty-eight percent reduced living expenses and 32% borrowed from family or took on larger loans.

Major benefits gained as a result of the grants received included being able to focus more on their subjects (87%) and a reduction in stress levels (91%). Reducing extra jobs required to finance study (45%) and reductions in borrowing (39%) were also noted. Thirty-two percent were able to enjoy extra curricula activities, and 56% spent time sharing their talents by teaching and mentoring other students.

### *Achievements*

Achievements this year have been many. Sixty percent gained exam or qualification success which is laudable. Several students passed with distinction, gaining coveted places at renowned institutions, scholarships or grant funding for further study. Others presented at national and international conferences, published research papers, created exhibitions, or performed on stage and so gained recognition or employment. One student performed with the BBC Concert Orchestra in the London Jazz Festival; another had several pieces of music performed in public concerts, and another edited films which are now receiving awards. Others advised on policies.



Demi LeNette-Dawson

*'I'm very grateful for being awarded a grant for this year, which will be invaluable especially as I am starting clinical rotations this year, leaving little time for part-time work.*

*The clinical placements bring lots of additional costs from equipment and PPE, to travel and accommodation but thanks to the Trust, I am now less worried about the finances and more excited about developing my clinical skills. The Trust has hugely helped me reduce the financial burden that self-funding the course fees causes, therefore allowing me time to focus on my studies and get closer towards graduating as a veterinary surgeon.'* Demi LeNette-Dawson

Students had successfully completed the year's studies and progressed to the next year in their courses (66%) or to higher levels of qualifications (8%) or new, additional or part-time employment (33%). Congratulations go out to all!

### *Shadow cast by Covid-19*

Sadly, 81% of respondents had their study impacted by Covid-19 this year. Most students found courses went online, and practical studies such as medicine, health, music, art and theatre were even more severely affected. Such students reported that they did not know how they would gain the practical skills needed to work and perform. PhD students lost access to libraries, university buildings, study populations, research records, archives and laboratory and testing facilities. Fieldwork including travel abroad, performances and conferences were cancelled. In effect studies had been put on hold for most of our grant recipients. This produced several problems which the students commented on.

Extending courses has meant increased unforeseen study and living expenses. Twenty-six students reported work issues such as losing their part-time jobs, or needing extra finance to overcome financial shortfalls, or having to gain extra jobs thus reducing their study time, to be financially more secure for next year. Several students had moved home to save money. This meant, for some, postponing study due to distance from the university. Others missed placements to protect older family members who were shielding. Many in the Arts said networking possibilities essential for future study and employment were lost. For others, the home situations made study more challenging due to physical space or childcare issues. Other students reported a sense of isolation, being unable to socialise, or unable to travel home to see loved ones. All these situations had increased stress levels and impacted on mental health.

Those students continuing studies next year also reported being financially unstable, especially as part-time work was more difficult to obtain. Some grant providers especially in the Arts were suspending donations or altering criteria for next year. Students voiced uncertainty about study as most feared it would be just online. There was concern over training by those with practical courses as well as limited access to resources for those studying for PhDs.

Of those who left or were aiming to leave university this year, 34% reported that they felt coronavirus would affect their future. Many of these reported the lack of available work within their fields of expertise or continuing difficulty completing their study to obtain their qualifications.

A minority of students reported an upside. Nineteen

## Alumni Updates



Dr Beth Murton: recent graduate now foundation trainee doctor

*My journey to become a doctor has been challenging yet immensely rewarding. I started my first degree in physiology eight years ago. I soon realised that despite enjoying the subject immensely, I was in search of a more practical and human application to the theory I was learning. I was accepted on to the MBBS Medicine course at the University of East Anglia three years later to pursue my aspiration of becoming a doctor. Due to the integrative nature of the course, I found myself continually exposed to the clinical environment. I enjoyed each opportunity that was given, knowing that this career was something I was passionate about.*

*The conclusion to the MBBS degree this year was unconventional due to the current climate. The University graduated our cohort early due to the pandemic, following the completion of our final examinations in March. I started working at local hospitals in the Norfolk area to assist with the Covid-19 crisis. First, working at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital in a senior medical student capacity and then at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Kings Lynn as a doctor*

percent of students said coronavirus had not affected their study. Students who had collected their data pre-lockdown reported completing their assessments and coursework faster due to undistracted study. Others reduced outgoings and saved money due to reduced travel and social spending during lockdown. Those studying for work in the NHS were high demand for bank and flexible work.

### *Helping other students in future*

Prudent investment and strategic planning have enabled the Trust to remain in a good position to support postgraduate students. It is hoped that in the coming years the Trust may help develop a community of alumni who could help support each other. It is therefore exciting to see the offers of support for the Trust. Eighty-seven percent of respondents said they were likely to donate to the Trust fund in the future; 70% would help with fundraising and 67% might consider filling a future vacancy on our Board of Trustees.

Thank you to all those who completed our survey, which validates the Trust's ambition to support postgraduate education for people from all backgrounds who have a financial need. The next year may well be challenging and we wish all students all the best in their desires to complete their education and gain work.



Dr Debbie Marsden, Trustee

following my registration with the General Medical Council.

*In August I started my first of two years at the Leicester Royal Infirmary as a foundation trainee doctor, beginning work in the care of older people department. I'm thrilled to put into practice the skills I've learnt over the last five years. Despite the pressures the NHS currently faces, it is fulfilling to be surrounded by enthusiastic and skilled colleagues from whom I hope to continue the learn. My ultimate plan will be to commence GP training in the local area following these two years of training.*

*I wish to express my sincerest gratitude for the financial help The Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust has provided during the past five years of my MBBS course. I truly would not have been able to complete the degree without your financial assistance. Thank you for your ongoing faith in me. I hope you will feel it has been well placed.*

## Changing landscape of postgraduate study

*In preparing our new strategic plan for 2022-26 we spent some time updating our knowledge of the postgraduate education sector. Here, our trustee, Dr James Jones, summarises some of the findings. You can read more about the new strategy on page 9.*

Postgraduate provision has changed much in recent years, not only in terms of the number of courses being offered by a growing number of institutions, but also in the increase in fees for master's and PhDs. The popularity of continuing study beyond undergraduate level means that students need to be both creative and realistic in their ambitions.

### *Postgraduate study today: facts and figures*

In 2018/2019, there were approximately 590,000 postgraduate students studying either full-time or part-time in the UK. The majority of postgraduates study part-time, and the full-time market is predominantly made up of international students.

As a recent report for the Higher Education Policy Institute by Dr Ginevra House highlights, in terms of course, “almost two-thirds of research postgraduates (64%) study STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects; the opposite is true for taught postgraduates, where 68% study non-STEM subjects”. This report offers a perceptive overview of postgraduate study in the UK today, and is available to read [here](#).

The number of under-30s beginning a postgraduate course has increased since the recent introduction of postgraduate loans. These loans have been both praised and criticised: it has been suggested that they have widened participation by improving access to postgraduate study for those from a disadvantaged background; conversely, tuition fees for master's courses rose by 10% when loans were introduced, and the loan often does not cover the full cost of study.

### *The Benefits of Postgraduate Study*

Many argue that the better-educated a population, the better for society more widely, and that education for education's sake is a worthy ambition. However, given the significant financial and personal commitment which postgraduate study demands, the value to students of pursuing courses such as master's and doctorates is often measured in more tangible ways. Postgraduates have been found to, on average, earn more than their graduate



Ellie Wyatt: recent MA graduate now practicing as an artist and arts educator

*I was introduced to printmaking in the second year of my BA at Kingston University, and I was lucky enough to have a technician who, as a practicing artist himself, invested his time in teaching me not only hands-on techniques, but also the rich histories of print and its role in contemporary culture. Print quickly became crucial to my work, and I was already imagining myself on the Print MA at the RCA, a course that pushes the boundaries of print in concept and method.*

*After graduating, I found myself part of a fantastic community of young graduates putting on shows in living rooms, hosting dinners in galleries and leading exploration projects. Gaining relevant experience and saving towards a master's in the art industry was not without its challenges, but after two years of working, saving and applying for funding I was able to take up my place on the course at the RCA.*

*My MA was a truly fantastic experience. I made incredible friends, built my technical knowledge, experimented with novel techniques, had conversations with prominent artists, and was awarded a distinction for my dissertation. I was extremely happy with my degree show work, which gave me an important opportunity to*

counterparts who did not pursue postgraduate study.

Further, as competition for jobs has increased in recent years, many students are choosing to undertake postgraduate degrees to differentiate themselves from others when applying for jobs.

For international students, postgraduate study in the UK is attractive. Prestigious institutions, internationally recognised and world-leading research, and often shorter courses (when compared with study in other countries), mean that the UK is able to attract many international students (although, the fallout from Covid-19 may affect this).

### *Successfully Completing Postgraduate Study*

Self-funded postgraduates may seek to use a patchwork of strategies to complete their studies. For example, securing a government loan on top of their existing undergraduate student loan, working part-time at weekends in casual jobs, and relying on parental or other forms of support. For PhDs especially, which are longer than a year, this familial support may extend even further (for example, moving back home to save on rental costs). Less conventional support from institutions and charities are also important in helping postgraduates to bridge gaps in funding.

Despite the undoubted challenges which face the postgraduate student of today, many successfully complete their studies and go on to obtain fulfilling and worthwhile careers.

Dr James Jones, Trustee

*showcase my developed practice to a new audience.*

*Since leaving the RCA, I have continued to build on my experience of teaching, and for the last year have worked as a lecturer and a freelance arts educator with galleries and universities. I am currently making new work for an upcoming online exhibition, preparing for the new academic year, volunteering with a local community arts organisation, and I am about to move into a new studio with fellow RCA graduates.*



© Ellie Wyatt

*I would not be where I am now without having attended the RCA. The people I met, progression of my practice, investment in research and the qualification itself have been crucial to my development as an artist and educator. I am incredibly grateful to the Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust for choosing to support me, thank you.*

*I would also like to take this opportunity to express my support for students, staff and workers at cultural institutions in the current climate. I consider myself privileged to work in the arts as an educator and want to emphasise that anyone who loves the arts must value the people who make it happen at all levels of cultural work.*

[www.elliwyatt.com](http://www.elliwyatt.com)



## Planning for 2022 and beyond

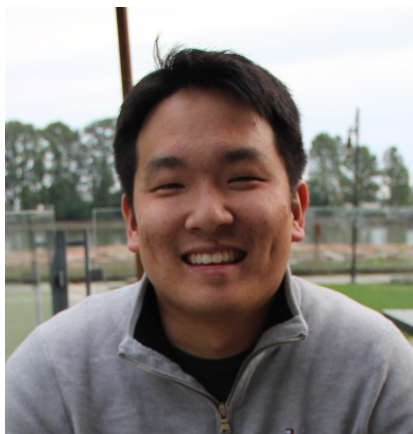
We have recently agreed our forward strategy for the period 2022-26.

### *Key points:*

- No changes in 2021 for grant applications for the 2021/22 academic year. Current eligibility rules and application procedure remain.
- From January 2022 (grant applications for academic year 2022/23) we will:
  - be much more explicit about what a strong application looks like
  - no longer require applicants to be 24 years old or over
  - accept applications from those taking postgraduate diplomas and certificates.
- No categories of student eligible under current rules will lose eligibility from January 2022, but the pool of applicants will increase so competition for our grants will be fiercer.

In November 2019 we marked our centenary, celebrating the fact that our Trust is a recognised source of funding for postgraduate students. To remain an effective and relevant grant funder, we need to plan for the future to keep pace with changes in the environment in which we operate. To that end, our trustees have undertaken research and taken stock of what we do well, and how we could change to maximise the impact of our relatively modest resources. While our new strategy touches on all aspects of the Trust's purpose, governance and resources, its primary focus is our grant making. By allowing a year's lead in, we will use 2021 to run one last annual grant round in line with existing practice and prepare to implement the changes from January 2022 onwards.

Like many charitable trusts and foundations, our Trust's financial position took a knock in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We were unable to award quite as much in grants this year as we have previously. As and when market confidence returns, we will look to return to previous levels of grant funding. We will also be aiming to bring in further income for grant making from individual donations, legacies, and corporate and charitable fundraising. The Trust's overall financial policy is to preserve our capital, maximise our income, and keep our



John Moon: PhD student in New Testament at Durham University

*Having grown up in the Christian tradition, I have always been interested in the simultaneously organic yet startling ways in which the early Jesus movement grew out of its Jewish roots. My PhD is on the Apostle Paul's ninth chapter in his letter to the church in Rome, where he deals with this very topic.*

*For centuries, this chapter was read in a way that disinherited the Jewish people and 'replaced' them with Christians, despite statements elsewhere by Paul to the contrary, so that instead of becoming a beacon against antisemitism, this chapter became one of its supporting voices. In my research, I have attempted to understand how exactly Paul derives Christian identity from its Jewish roots, while at the same time preserving a special place for those roots. This has involved a careful analysis of how Paul uses the same Jewish stories he uses in Romans 9 to define Christian identity elsewhere in his letters; the aim is to see if we can discern a pattern that helps illuminate what exactly Paul is doing in Romans 9.*

*At Durham, I am currently in the third year of my PhD, hoping to finish in my fourth continuation year. I came to Durham to study under Professor John Barclay, a world-renowned scholar on Paul. Yet as an international student*

running costs as low as we can in order to maximise the amount of grant funding we can award. We will always strive to award the maximum amount consistent with financial prudence.

### *Changing landscape*

Postgraduate education can bring great benefits to students in achieving what for many is a lifelong ambition. Much more than this, it brings enormous benefits to society as a whole. The landscape of postgraduate education has evolved and expanded over recent decades, and the prospect of continuing higher education after an undergraduate degree is becoming more attractive (and in some cases, necessary) for many students. The medium-term impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on postgraduate education trends remain to be seen and, as with all educational sectors, uncertainty and volatility are anticipated.

### *Strategic choices we have made*

From January 2022 onwards, our geographical remit will remain the UK. While maintaining our focus on UK universities, we will continue to support postgraduate students of all nationalities studying at those institutions.

We will continue to focus exclusively on grant-making to individuals, as opposed to grant making to organisations or commissioning research. Those individuals will be postgraduate students. Disadvantaged students fall away at every stage 'up' in educational attainment. Charities remain a significant alternative source of funding but very few explicitly target postgraduates. We know that there is unmet need; we have evidence of the Trust's impact, and we are recognised as an established source of support for postgraduates. Supporting postgraduates remains the most appropriate way for us to achieve impact in advancing education.

To maintain our focus on those showing high academic ability we will continue to require grant applicants to have achieved a 1st class or upper-2nd class honours degree, or a master's or doctoral degree.

One important change is that we will be more explicit about the qualities we are looking for in those seeking our support. Assuming they meet our basic eligibility criteria, the attributes listed below will be used to gauge whether an applicant fits the desired profile. They will not be required to meet each one separately; rather the whole 'package' will be assessed overall:

- The student is undertaking a course to better achieve their ambition regarding career path or personal development

*with two young children, finances were a major obstacle for pursuing this course. Through the help of bodies like the Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust, I have been helped along in my ability to pursue my research. I am currently working on an article for publication and am scheduled to present a paper at Durham's New Testament Seminar in March 2021. Afterwards, I would like to teach Biblical Studies in a university or college. It has been a pleasure being able to live, work, and study at Durham, and I would like to thank the Trust for supporting my family and I on this journey.*



Prema Ghasemi: recent BDS graduate now practicing dentistry

*I have always had a passion for dentistry from a very young age. Witnessing the transformation to patient's oral health with a very limited dental care facility in a war-torn country, Afghanistan, instilled in me the intense desire to pursue a career in this prestigious field.*

*In 2005, along with the rest of my family, I arrived in the UK to be reunited with my father. He had made the perilous journey a few years before to flee a war-torn country in the hope of finding a better life. I was unsuccessful in obtaining a place at the dental school during the first few attempts. Having recently arrived in the UK and been placed in*

- has the potential to make a contribution to wider society
- may have had to overcome - or is facing - particular challenges such as disability or family, social or economic barriers
- demonstrates real passion and commitment to the chosen area of study
- is in real financial need but has a strategy for addressing this and has made an effort to access other sources of funding
- has shown evidence of academic ability, taking into account their background when assessing past performance
- has the support of an informed and competent referee.

In the second significant change, we will remove the requirement for students to be 24 years or over. This is in light of the fact that the median age of full-time, first year postgraduate students is 22 – 23.

The third key change relates to the types of courses that we are prepared to support students to take. We will link our eligibility rules to levels 8 and 7 of the Quality Assurance Agency's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, or FHEQ (the Scottish equivalent is levels 12 and 11 of the Framework for Qualification of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland, or FQHEIS). Grounding our eligibility rules on this externally recognised quality framework will provide greater clarity and legitimacy. However, we need to adapt it somewhat, for example by continuing to exclude those undertaking first degrees in medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine since we have agreed to continue funding only postgraduates. This change means that we will be allowing those taking PGCEs and many other postgraduate diplomas and certificates including professional qualifications to apply to the Trust for the first time.

No categories of student eligible under current rules will lose eligibility from January 2022, but as the pool of eligible applicants will increase competition for our grants will be fiercer.

Our Trust has helped countless students over the last hundred years. We hope that the changes we are making will ensure it remains for many years to come an expression of Sir Richard Stapley's lifelong concern to advance educational and philanthropic causes.

Colin Nee, Clerk to the Trustees

*academic year 10 (beginning of GCSE years) with almost no ability to read, write or comprehend English, I not only found studies very challenging, but also had to adjust and adapt to the new life, new culture, and new country.*

*After several applications to the dental school, and being disappointed twice, I took a step back, reflected on everything, and embraced the opportunity to study for a Medicinal Chemistry degree as a stepping-stone to gain entry into dentistry. In 2015, I graduated with a 1st class honours degree from the University of Leeds. While studying for this degree I completed a one-year placement at GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), during which time I was able to identify a synthetic tissue for an important pre-clinical compound, resulting in a route which surpassed the existing main route, an accomplishment that earned me a formal recognition by GSK and the University-wide Student Placement of the Year award.*

*Remaining determined as ever in chasing my dream course, I gave it one more shot and submitted my application during my final year of chemistry degree, and I was finally successful. However, now finance was a massive barrier because studying for dentistry as a graduate meant I did not qualify for any tuition fee loan and was compelled to self-fund everything. I managed to complete the tuition fee payment for the 1st and 2nd BDS years with funds I had saved. The Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust has supported me with my 3rd - 5th BDS years.*

*The funds I received from the Trust allowed me to be more proactive and participate in variety of university-wide and dental school activities. I have been an active member of the University of Sheffield Dental School Society, and an*

## In memoriam

### *Michael Bushby*

Michael Bushby, who died in February 2020, brought exceptional personal qualities to his service as Secretary to the Stapley Trust, which remained close to his heart after his retirement in 2001.

Michael had a great social conscience and a strong sense of fair play. He was a Samaritan, and during his holidays also helped at a home for severely disabled people. His sympathy with and interest in his fellow man also meant that he took enormous trouble with applicants for Stapley scholarships. He was particularly proud of being able to support prisoners in their studies. He followed the careers of scholars with interest, attended their exhibitions and concerts whenever he could, and was delighted during a hospital admission to discover that one of his doctors had been a scholar. He was largely responsible for running the 75th anniversary appeal, and he updated the history of the Stapley Trust in 2004.



Michael Bushby, former Trust Secretary

Michael had been a History master at Tonbridge school, where he also ran the Cricket team with great distinction for many years, and was a housemaster. It was typical of his modesty and self-effacement that even during a visit to Lord's, where we watched a county game and then walked

*ambassador of the University for the duration of my course. This allowed me to be a positive role model to prospective students. I have participated in a range of initiatives connected to recruitment or widening participation, such as acting as a campus tour guide, contributing to outreach and recruitment events, and supporting or mentoring individuals who participate in our outreach programmes. As a final year BDS student, I was privileged to be on the panel interviewing perspective dental students for the 2020/2021 UCAS application cycle.*

*I am extremely grateful for every single penny I have received from the Trust over the past three years. Your support has enabled me successfully to complete my journey through the dental school and even though the class of 2020 had the most unusual ending due to Covid-19, I am grateful that despite the uncertainties, setbacks and challenging times, I was able to finally make it to the finish line. What my journey has taught me is resilience, picking ourselves up when we fall.*

*I am very excited to be starting as a dentist in September 2020 at a practice in Harrogate, North Yorkshire. Thank you, more than words can say. You have not only been the source of financial support for me but also a massive inspiration to walk in the footsteps of the Trust in the future, helping individuals in similar financial circumstances to my own when studying. Thank you!*

on the hallowed turf in the tea interval, he failed to mention his own first class cricket career which was impressive enough to form a major theme of his obituary in The Times. He used to refer to himself self-deprecatingly as a woolly historian (the historian bit was true), and as a luddite because of his distrust of computers. It was possible to communicate with him by email, but only because his wife, Judy, operated the infernal machine. He much preferred to write letters longhand.

Michael was a true gentleman and a wonderful friend and colleague. He delighted in long friendships with a wide variety of people and had a great skill and passion in keeping people in touch with one another. He ensured that retired members of Tonbridge staff continued to be involved and included in school events and carried forward this skill to the Stapley Trust - former members of Council being invited regularly to join him for jolly lunches in London. He will be very greatly missed.

Dr Mary Wheeler, Trust Chairman from 2009-2018

### *Professor Henry Arnstein*

Professor H R V Arnstein PhD DIC DSc FIBiol FKC, former Chair of the Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust, died on 2 November 2020.

Professor Arnstein, a distinguished biochemist, joined the Trust's Council in November 1983 and served with great dedication until 2004. As Chairman from 1988 to 2004, he was responsible for steering the Trust through challenging times. Dr Mary Wheeler, our previous Chair, remembers him as 'a thoughtful academic with a warm heart'. We understand from Mary that he overcame a number of considerable obstacles in life after coming to the UK at the age of 14. As well as being Chairman of the Trust, in retirement he volunteered as a Special Constable. The summary overleaf is based on an article from our 2005 Newsletter written by former Secretary, Michael Bushby who himself passed away in February 2020.



Professor Henry Arnstein, Trust Chairman 1988 – 2004



Dr Amber Roy: Archaeology Researcher

*In December 2019 I graduated with a PhD in archaeology from Newcastle University and I have since published my research in leading archaeological journals. My doctoral research addressed the uses and significance of Early Bronze Age stone battle-axes and axe-hammers from Northern Britain and the Isle of Man, objects which are central to debates about prestige, status, and ritual. Previous scholars assumed that battle-axes were purely ceremonial, while the rougher axe-hammers were neither functional nor prestigious, being too large and crude to be prestige items.*

*My research determined the main uses and significance of these implements through use-wear analysis, experimental archaeology, and a theoretical contextual assessment. It was the first to apply use-wear analysis, optical and metallographic, to a large sample of British Early Bronze Age battle-axes and axe-hammers, providing an opportunity to reassess the role and significance of these objects and contributing crucial use data to the traceological research on groundstone, which has thus far received less attention than knapped (flint) industries.*

*My research has challenged the received wisdom of both object types. They were both functional*

During his tenure as Chairman of the Trust, Professor Arnstein was responsible for several important initiatives. He oversaw the decision to focus the Trust's resources on supporting postgraduate students in financial need, the launch of three appeals for funds raising over £57,000 and revision of the governance structure of the Trust to provide for greater continuity and a broader range of academic experience within Council. These initiatives were achieved by his wise and patient Chairmanship of Council. There has, throughout his connection with the Trust, been a less obvious aspect of his contributions. As Professor of Biochemistry and Dean of Life Sciences at King's in the 1980s he had had several years of experiencing the aspirations and anxieties of students, and he brought this sensitivity to the consideration of all applications. He loved reading letters from alumni and rejoiced in their academic successes and career developments. Applicants and alumni were not mere names to him, and it gave him great pleasure that three alumni – representatives of the thousands of students whom the Trust had assisted during his time – were able to attend a lunch to mark his retirement in November 2004. Henry Arnstein served the Trust with tireless and unselfish devotion.

*and symbolic, being used for woodworking, land clearance and animal slaughter, with the potential for prolonged use by multiple users. Those implements placed in burials drew on relational links which developed through the lives of these objects. Use and treatment were similar across all types of battle-axe and axe-hammer, with some regional variation in axe-hammer deposition in south-west Scotland.*

*I am forever grateful to the Trust for the grant they awarded me. The Trust enabled me to carry out extensive research trips to British museums to analyse stone battle-axes and axe-hammers for my doctorate. In doing so, I gleaned crucial information which changed the knowledge of these implements and contributed essential data to Bronze Age research.*



Dr Sarah Other, Trustee

## Remembering the Trust in your Will

Hello! I'm Sarah Other, one of the trustees of the Trust. I joined the Board last year.

I have remembered the Trust in my own Will to repay a debt of gratitude. I would not have been able to achieve my professional successes without my highest qualifications - which the Trust supported financially back when I was a student. Including the Trust in my Will means I can support the Trust but without the anxiety about affording the commitment within my lifetime.

I hope that you too will consider whether to leave a legacy to help support future postgraduates. We can do so much more with your support!

If you decide to include the Trust in your Will, you can ask your solicitor or professional adviser to do this by giving them the following details (overleaf):

The Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust

**Registered charity number: 313812**

PO Box 76132, London E8 9HE

### *What to leave?*

You could choose to leave the Trust a specific cash sum or alternatively a percentage of your estate. Depending on your circumstances it is possible that your estate will save on inheritance tax if you leave charitable gifts in your Will.

### *What to tell us:*

It is entirely up to you whether you tell us that you are remembering the Trust in your Will. We will never ask you to share information about the value or type of gift you have chosen to leave to the Trust. That is a private matter for you. You simply have to tell your solicitor or professional adviser how much, or alternatively what percentage of your estate, you would like to leave to the Trust.

### *Your Gift, Our Promise:*

We recognise that when you prepare your Will, your family and close ones must come first. We know that personal circumstances change and there might be a time when you decide you need to take the Trust out of your Will.

If you want the Trust to dedicate your gift to an area of our work that's special to you, we are happy to discuss this with you.

Finally, if you do choose to remember the Trust with a gift in your Will: thank you - we will use it wisely!

### *Any queries?*

If you have any questions about making a donation or remembering the Trust in your Will, please contact our Clerk at [admin@stapleytrust.org](mailto:admin@stapleytrust.org)

## More Alumni updates



Dr Christopher Tubb: recently graduated Doctor in Film Studies

At the end of last year, I was able to complete my PhD in Film Studies at the University of Southampton with the support of a grant from the Trust. My research looked into the representation of the WWI Western Front on-screen in British, Canadian, and Australian films. It was a comparative analysis examining the similarities and differences in the depiction of Western Front in these three nations to discover how each nation remembers the Great War. Studying the cultural memory of the Great War at the time I did aligned with the latter half of the centenary commemorations. The field was alive with new research and being a small part of this was a privilege.

Self-financing a PhD can be a challenge. One of my main sources of income was teaching, including two summers at the University's international summer school. However, I knew that in the final year I would have to reduce my hours so that I could focus on completing my thesis. This is where the grant from the Trust came to help. With this grant I was able ensure that I could balance work and finish my PhD knowing that the funding was secured.

Since graduating I have begun work on adapting my research into a book. Once again, the topic will revolve around the Great War and cinema. Other than the academic side of film, I have also been working with some collaborators in Norway on a feature film project that engages with the nation's folklore. Although 2020 has not gone entirely as one might have expected, I have progressed with these projects and it is wonderful to see each move forward, step by step, every day.

I am extremely grateful for the support the Trust gave to me in my final year of study, which enabled me to complete my thesis with peace of mind. Thank you.



Dr Luke Blaxill: PhD in British political history and co-author of the Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding

Nearly a decade ago, I was funded for three years by the Stapley Trust to support my PhD in British political history. I researched the culture of election speeches and political persuasion techniques during the years 1880-1914 when public speeches in front of huge audiences, thoroughly reported in newspapers, were the principal means for politicians to communicate with a rapidly expanding electorate in the age of democratisation. These were the very years Sir Richard Stapley himself stood for Parliament, for Brixton and Holborn, making his own public speeches.

The Trust's support was instrumental in helping me complete the project and meet the challenge of unfunded postgraduate study. In those days, the Arts and Humanities Research Council was operating a 'two strikes and out' system and so I literally had no other choice than voluntary sector sponsorship. As it transpired, eighteen other charities joined the Stapley Trust in generously supporting me to make my lifelong dream come true.

I have gone on to teach British history at Oxford, Cambridge, and Anglia Ruskin and have published seventeen book chapters or journal articles, mostly about politics, and a recent book with the Royal Historical Society titled *The War of Words: the Language of British Elections, 1880-1914*.

I realised towards the end of my PhD that there were many students in similar positions to me who would never think of educational charities as a route to potential funding. This was when I co-wrote the *Alternative Guide to Postgraduate Funding* with another student supported by the Stapley Trust, Shuzhi Zhou. The Guide is designed to help students find and apply to charitable bodies. Some of these, like the Trust, have a long history of supporting the university sector, but many others have seldom funded

postgraduate study before. The Alternative Guide has been going for eleven years, has nearly 100 university subscribers, and has been featured in most national newspapers and on TV. It gives me great pleasure to read of students winning awards from the often-underappreciated voluntary sector: whether it is just a single bursary or someone, like me, whose list of debts to charities and trusts is rather longer.

Having now worked with hundreds of postgraduates, I think one of the most important things an award from the Trust can bring to a student is a sense of recognition. Many have missed out on a university scholarship and can feel a sense of 'imposter syndrome' because they do not have funding while others around them do. An award from a notable educational charity like the Stapley Trust – even if modest in comparison to a full scholarship – can give their confidence an enormous boost. It can also encourage them to look at what other charities and trusts might be able to offer.

In my case, it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the Trust's awards helped change my life. I hope I've been able to use that experience to help others too.

[www.postgraduate-funding.com/](http://www.postgraduate-funding.com/) (The Alternative Guide)  
[www.lukeblaxill.com](http://www.lukeblaxill.com)

