

LINK

*The newsletter for families
of undergraduate students*



University of
St Andrews

600
YEARS



Martinmas
2015



Welcome

Welcome to the Martinmas edition of *Link*, the newsletter for families of undergraduate students. We are delighted, in particular, to welcome new parents to the St Andrews community and hope you enjoy reading *Link*. We also look forward to keeping you up to date with University news and developments throughout the year in our regular e-newsletter, St Andrews in the News.

We are always pleased to receive feedback, or suggestions for stories for future editions of *Link*, via alumni@st-andrews.ac.uk

Robert Fleming, Director of Development

St Andrews Soars

The University has been ranked the top university in Scotland and fourth in the UK in the *Times and Sunday Times University Guide 2016*. Factors considered in the ranking include student satisfaction with teaching quality and their wider university experience, research quality and graduate prospects. This result continues St Andrews strong showing in the national league tables in recent years.

The University has performed well internationally, climbing 25 places in the *Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2015-2016* in the latest ranking that placed the University 86th in the list of 800 universities from 70 countries. The result puts St Andrews inside the top 0.5% of the c.20,000 universities in the world.

St Andrews also reached its highest ever place in a global ranking when it jumped to 68th place in the prestigious *QS World Rankings 2015-2016*. This is the ninth consecutive year that St Andrews has made the world's top 100 universities.



Principal's Medal



Taylor Carey and Katherine Weight each received the Principal's Medal during their graduation ceremonies in June. The award, inaugurated six years ago thanks to the generosity of three anonymous donors, is presented in recognition of exceptional endeavour and achievement during a student's time at St Andrews.

Katherine (left) studied Biology and had central roles in both the Fellowship of St Andrews and On the Rocks student arts festival. Taylor (right) graduated with a degree in Modern History and frequently made the Dean's List, in addition to serving as the senior student for University Hall and Chief Usher in St Salvator's Chapel.



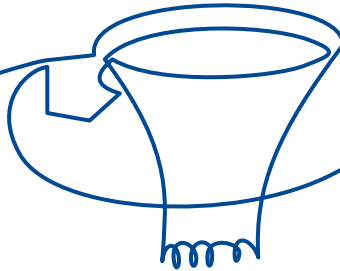
Society Success

St Andrews Students' Association recently ranked first in Scotland and third in the UK in the Best Clubs & Societies Awards 2015. Almost 5,000 students at 125 universities were polled by www.studentcrowd.com for this award. The ranking highlights the unique structure of the Students' Association, which allows students to automatically become members without paying any fees. The recent completion of a multi-year £12 million renovation has further improved the support support for societies and students with a host of new spaces, including the brand new Club 601 and the popular Rector's Café.

In addition to serving as the home of student life, the Union is also where the sabbatical team is based. Each year, four students take a year out of their studies to work at the Association, improving the student experience and providing a voice for students. Pat Mathewson (President), Joe Tantillo (Director of Representation), Kyle Blain (Director of Student Development and Activities) and Chris MacRae (Director of Events and Services) will serve until July 2016. Sarah Thompson serves as AU President and is responsible for student sport at the University. Both Pat and Sarah are in office for a second year and both, as well as their other duties, are busy planning for the Alumni Festival Weekend 15-17 April 2016, where alumni are invited back to join their sports clubs and student societies for a range of activities over the three days.



Kyle, Chris, Pat, Joe and Sarah.



Saints Sport Abroad

In July 2015, a delegation from St Andrews travelled to Zambia to help lead the country's first ever National Sport Development Conference. The event took place on the tenth anniversary of the UK IDEALS project, in which UK students volunteer to coach and develop sports coaching in Zambia. For each of the past 10 years, students from St Andrews have fundraised for the project and then spent six weeks in the capital city of Lusaka, where they have run sessions in football, volleyball, netball and basketball.



Software Crisis Research

The University has secured £3.5 million from the European Union under the Horizon 2020 programme to study advanced computing. Bringing together academic and industry partners across Europe, including the American technology company IBM, the project aims to tackle the question of how to produce effective software for emerging “parallel” computer platforms that promise significantly increased performance with much reduced cost and energy usage. This project, led by St Andrews Professor Kevin Hammond, places St Andrews at the forefront of software technology.

Studying Violence and Independence

New research from Dr Kieran McConaghy, of the Handa Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence at the University, highlighted the connection between independence and violence. The report, *Scotland and Separatism: Reverberations of the Scottish Independence Referendum on Separatist Politics*, examined the changes in politics around Europe following the Scottish independence referendum last year. According to the study, independence is more likely to be successful for countries where the struggle has been peaceful than where violence has been used. Dr McConaghy also found that the non-violent independence movements in Catalonia and Scotland had moved to embrace a broader notion of Catalanian or Scottish identity.



Research Opportunities for Undergraduates

The Laidlaw Undergraduate Internship Programme in Research and Leadership gives students an opportunity to develop the skills and values they need to become leaders in their chosen fields of study and in their future careers. The internship is generously sponsored by Lord Laidlaw of Rothiemay and enables students to work with an academic in their School to design, pursue and report on a research question of their choosing.

During the summer of 2015, the Laidlaw interns worked on a wide array of topics, ranging from theoretical physics and electric currents to the representation of threat and the enemy in presidential speeches and political cartoons.

The Laidlaw Programme gives graduates an invaluable opportunity to gain insight and experience into the research field of their choice. More information can be found at www.st-andrews.ac.uk/students/involve/laidlaw



Cycle the Americas

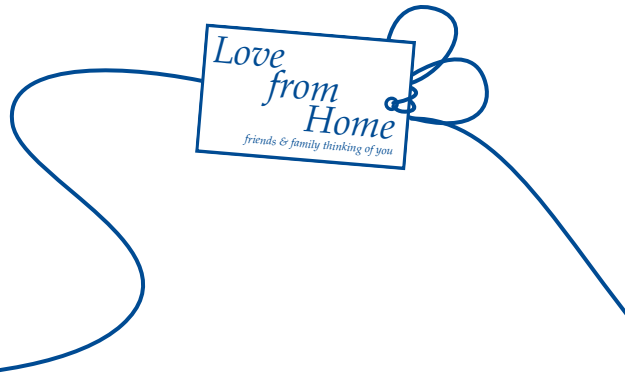
Two recent St Andrews graduates are attempting to break the world record for the fastest time to cycle the Pan-American Highway. Danny Beech and Chris Lally departed Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, on 29 July and followed the spine of the Rocky Mountains through Canada and the United States. With support from the University and the R&A International Scholarship, the cyclists are attempting to ride 14,000 miles in 100 days, with the current world record set at 125 days. You can follow their journey at cycletheamericas.co.uk



Love from Home

Run in cooperation with local baker and confectioner Fisher & Donaldson, our online *Love from Home* service allows you to send loved ones cakes, chocolates and gift baskets on special occasions with a personalised message. Make your order online at: www.st-andrews.ac.uk/lovefromhome

Please note, deliveries are made to addresses in St Andrews during term-time, Monday to Saturday, 8am–6pm. Please allow at least five working days between placing your order and the delivery date to guarantee delivery on the requested date.



Inspiration for All

New scholarships will give more students from different walks of life the opportunity to study at St Andrews. In a new agreement with the China Scholarship Council, up to 30 new full-time PhD scholarships will be available to Chinese students from China's top 200 universities, while a further 10 scholarships will allow for Joint PhD students to undertake research at St Andrews before graduating at their home institution in China.

Additionally, the Robertson Trust has offered £240,000 to expand the University's First Chances programme, which links St Andrews to area secondary schools to raise the aspirations of students who may not have previously considered further or higher education.

The Robertson Scholarship Trust will also provide funding for an extra 20 scholarships each year for students to attend the University. This is part of the University's larger widening-access campaign that has reached 2,000 school pupils per year.



Fundraising at the University

Having access to up-to-date, comprehensive resources is of the utmost importance for current students. The Family Book Fund provides a way for friends of the University to make a direct impact upon the student experience. Donating funds to the Library provides students with access to a richer and wider range of content so that when they are inspired by a topic, they have the scope to explore it in more depth.

“The book fund allows the library to subscribe to online academic journals and buy electronic books so I can access resources remotely!”

Max, fourth year Spanish and International Relations student

Thanks to the generosity and continued support of St Andrews parents and families, the Library has benefitted from over £569,000 in donations which have enabled the purchase of a variety of publications and resources. For further information and to learn how you can contribute, please view the enclosed form or visit <https://sparc.st-andrews.ac.uk/giving/makeyourgift>

The Family Book Fund is one of a large number of projects which the University raises funds in support of. You may already know that the University is currently undertaking a £100 million 600th Anniversary fundraising campaign, which has recently passed the £62 million mark.

This Campaign is helping the University to provide crucial support for students through a range of scholarship programmes, has enabled the Students' Association refurbishment to go ahead, converted Martyrs Kirk on North Street into a dedicated postgraduate study space, and allowed the renovation of the historic St Salvator's Quadrangle. Current projects to improve the music and sports facilities for your students at the University are also underway. To learn more about the 600th Anniversary campaign please visit <https://sparc.st-andrews.ac.uk/giving> or contact donate@st-andrews.ac.uk



Ever to Excel

Four St Andrews undergraduates recently received the top honour as Overall Winners of the Undergraduate Awards 2015. The students excelled in the following categories: Aleksejs Sazonovs in Computer Science, Eilidh Johnston in Maths and Physics, Conor MacDonald in Medical Sciences and Vincent Forster in International Relations.



The Undergraduate Awards is the world's largest academic awards programme and provides top performing students worldwide with the support, network and opportunities they require to further their individual careers. Assessed by panels of international academics, two winners were selected per category and the overall winner will be published in *The Undergraduate Awards Academic Journal*.

Academic Awards

As an international hub of research and scholarship, many St Andrews academics have been awarded honours this year. A selection of these are mentioned below.

Professor Kishan Dholakia (pictured) of the School of Physics & Astronomy has been awarded a Royal Society Leverhulme Trust Senior Fellowship to pursue the area of advanced optical imaging. This fellowship allows Professor Dholakia to focus solely on the development of a new form of light sheet imaging.



Professor Candace Currie from the School of Medicine received a prestigious Wolfson Research Merit Award from the Royal Society that recognises her research into developmental transitions in adolescent health.

Professor Stephen Reicher, Professor of Psychology, has been elected to the British Academy for his work on the relationship between social identities and collective mobilisation. His work on crowd dynamics has impacted public order policing in the UK and across Europe.

Dr Rita Tojeiro, from the University's School of Physics & Astronomy, was announced as one of the winners of the 2015 L'Oréal-UNESCO UK & Ireland For Women In Science Fellowships (FWIS). Dr Tojeiro was one of only five winners out of 350 applicants, winning the award for her studies on the past lives of galaxies and her work on understanding the expanding universe.

Dr Peter Mackay, a lecturer in the Department of English, has been selected by the BBC as one of ten 'broadcasters of the future,' and is the only academic in Scotland to be named one of 2015's New Generation Thinkers.

Professor John Beath, a leading economist from St Andrews, was included in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours list with an OBE for Services to Economics. An expert in the economics of technology and innovation, the applications of game theory and microeconomics, Professor Beath has been recognised for his contribution to academia over four decades.

The University of St Andrews Shop

Our shop has a fantastic range of Official University of St Andrews products. All purchases made in store (144 Market Street, St Andrews) and online help to support teaching and research at the University. We offer a full international shipping service. Products can also be purchased online.

For further information visit our website
<http://standrewsuniversitystore.com/>



We offer all friends of the University a personalised discount code.

Please email us to receive yours at: info@universityofstandrewsretailstore.com

Victory at Murrayfield

In front of a crowd of 10,000 spectators at BT Murrayfield the home of Scotland's national rugby team, the Saints Sports' Men's Rugby team sent St Andrews fans on an emotional rollercoaster during the 80-minute match. The oldest varsity rugby match in the world ended in a last-kick victory for the Men's 1st XV. After taking an early lead over Edinburgh, St Andrews found themselves down 26-20 with two minutes left on the clock. A fantastic try and a nerveless kick from Finn Murphy later, the stadium erupted in cheers from St Andrews supporters at the dramatic 27-26 victory.



Semester Dates 2015-2016

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/semesterdates

Martinmas Semester: Monday 14 September – Friday 18 December 2015

Graduation: Monday 30 November 2015

Revision Period: Week Commencing Monday 30 November 2015

Examinations: Monday 7 December – Friday 18 December 2015

Christmas Vacation: Saturday 19 December – Sunday 24 January 2016

Candlemas Semester: Monday 25 January – Friday 27 May 2016

Spring Vacation: Saturday 12 March – Sunday 27 March 2016

Revision Period: Commences Monday 25 April 2016

Examinations: Monday 9 May 2 – Friday 27 May 2016

Graduation: Week commencing 20 June 2016

Resits: Week commencing 15 August 2016

LINK is published by:

Development
University of St Andrews
Crawford Building
91 North Street
St Andrews, Fife KY16 9AJ

T: +44 (0)1334 467194

F: +44 (0)1334 462590

E: alumni@st-andrews.ac.uk

Further information for families of current students can be found at:

www.st-andrews.ac.uk/parents

A forum for US parents of current students can be accessed on Facebook at:

www.facebook.com/StAUSParents

Latest news and other information about the University can be viewed at:

www.st-andrews.ac.uk

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