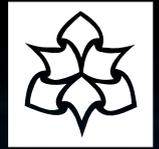


# Success



Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University

Inspiring future  
generations

**Multiple Paralympic  
gold medal winner  
Sarah Storey OBE**



#### Opinion

Sir Howard Bernstein,  
CEO of Manchester  
City Council

#### Working with Business

How the University  
and businesses are  
working together

#### Research & Innovation

Research that could  
affect the future of  
computing

#### Meet Our Alumni

Graduates talk  
about their careers,  
influences and  
inspirations

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## Success

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**T**his issue of *Success* arrives as we reflect upon our first student recruitment period since the raising of university fees.

Across UK universities, we see 54,000 fewer enrolments than last year with many leaving it late to decide not to enter university this time around. Thankfully we have not seen a disproportionate reduction of students from low-income families and this must be in part due to our robust widening participation agenda which includes our offer of more bursaries to more students than any UK university.

Perhaps more importantly, the quality of our students continues to rise, including a record number of A-grade students, and this bodes well for the future.

The economy continues to be in recession and we must do all that we can to stimulate our local economy and to protect employment. Our clear priority is to give our graduates improved choices within an increasingly competitive employment market. In this context, I am proud of our work on

# Meeting the expectations of the free market

employability and our various working with business schemes, which are reported inside this issue.

We continue to invest in our physical estate and I hope that you are as excited as I am about the start of building work at our new Manchester campus at Birley Fields and our soon-to-open new facilities for the Manchester School of Art. By 2014 we will have a truly world-class campus for all of our staff and students.

We also need to continue to challenge and motivate our staff, and we need outstanding role models. In this edition, you can read about Sarah Storey's

huge contribution to the success of the Paralympic Games - a truly 'golden' performance to complement our own Investors in People Gold award.

I hope that you enjoy reading our *Success* magazine, which highlights just some of the exciting achievements of our students, staff and alumni.

**Professor John Brooks**  
Vice-Chancellor  
Manchester Metropolitan University

# City welcomes fantastic Hulme campus

**S**ir Richard Leese, leader of Manchester City Council, says the University's £139m Birley Fields campus is the "final major building block in one of the UK's most successful regeneration projects."

After decades of investment in housing and regeneration, it is hoped the new Manchester Metropolitan University campus will be an active centre piece for the community - a heart for Hulme, he said.

Speaking as the diggers moved in to begin the major two-year project, Sir Richard said: "Where we are now stood was one of the worst housing areas in Europe, it was unliveable.

"Now people have come back to Hulme and it is a place and a story that the people of Manchester can be proud of.

"We've seen what MMU have done with their new Business School and here the city will have another world-class resource, this one for nursing, teacher training, social work and the health professions."



Vice-Chancellor, Professor John Brooks, said the campus which replaces MMU campuses in Didsbury and Rusholme would be environmentally sustainable and highly innovative with electric car 'pumps', novel heat generation and enviro-townhouses for student residences.



Professor John Brooks at the controls with Richard McAlpine, Sir Richard Leese and Sir Howard Bernstein.



**M**anchester Metropolitan University is "world-class" and at the "cutting edge in people management", according to the UK Investors in People organisation.

Chris Jones, head of liP operations North West, was fulsome in his praise of the University as he presented the Gold award at a recent celebration event. Mr Jones said MMU was the largest university to achieve the standard and

placed us in the top one-and-a-half per cent of organisations in the UK for developing its employees.

Around 600 colleagues from all five campuses gathered at the Business School and Student Hub to celebrate the award with champagne and a huge team cake.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor John Brooks, said: "I didn't honestly think that we would achieve the Gold, and to do so was a wonderful surprise. It is an enormous achievement and one of my proudest moments as Vice-Chancellor."

Together, he said, we were creating a new MMU; putting service to students at the top of the agenda, academically and with new campuses and facilities.

"Continuous change will be the norm from now on; the market for higher education has changed forever and we are rising to new challenges.

"liP has been immensely helpful because you cannot be successful unless your people understand change and buy into its benefits."

## Goldman Sachs SME growth scheme

Cheshire entrepreneur David Forrest is realising his dream of the big time after being part of the Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses* growth scheme at Manchester Metropolitan University's Business School.

David's company, Compliance Control Ltd, specialises in quality and compliance consultancy and software solutions in the pharmaceutical and medical sector, and he has been quick to credit the scheme for helping to turn his product into a real money-spinner.

David and his funders believe his latest software could be a game-changer for SMEs, reducing the risk and cost of non-compliance and allowing them to focus on R&D and sales.

With backing of £350,000 from the NW Fund for Biomedical, and the Technology Strategy Board, the Northwich-based firm can fully scale-up the software and pursue a strong marketing and sales campaign.

"I would not even have considered speaking to venture capitalists if I had not done the course," says David.

"The financiers and entrepreneurs invited gave me the idea about applying for grants, while the course gave me the knowledge of finance to understand the best choices for my business."

*10,000 Small Businesses* is a free programme of support for companies with high growth potential, offering management training, workplace coaching and peer networking.

Programme director Jonathan Lawson said: "David's story shows that with the right knowledge, and a little support any great business can get the funding it needs to really grow."

MMU is the provider for the Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses* programme for the North West. To be considered for the scheme, visit [www.10ksbnw.co.uk](http://www.10ksbnw.co.uk) or email [10ksb@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:10ksb@mmu.ac.uk) (Lucy Edgar) at [10ksb@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:10ksb@mmu.ac.uk)



## Business and Law combine

**P**rofessionals from all over the North West gave the new Business School and Student Hub their seal of approval at a special event in September.

Around 200 business people came to see the new building and celebrate the newly formed Faculty of Business and Law.

Representatives attended from dozens of professional partners, from multinationals to SMEs, along with organisations such as the Chartered Institute of Marketing and the Federation of Small Businesses, with many saying how impressed they were with the facilities: "It's an absolutely stunning building," said Eamonn Bell of Campanile Hotels.

"I'm a cynical person," said John Buckley from the Federation of Small Businesses, "but I'd struggle to find anything wrong with it. It's fantastic for MMU and is miles ahead of anything any other universities in the area have got."

Others commented on the significance of the building in terms of the

University's strategic vision: "The facilities for students are mind-blowing," said David Fox of John Smith's Group. "This building is a real statement of intent, a demonstration of confidence in the future."

Drinks and canapés were served giving guests the chance to network before being welcomed by Professor Ruth Ashford, Dean of Business and Law, and then listen to the keynote speech by marketing guru Dr Dave Chaffey.

Ruth said: "I was delighted to welcome so many members of the North-West business community into our new world-class building. It's a significant investment in our aim to be a leading modern business and law school - and working with commercial partners is a vital part of this."

*"This building is a real statement of intent, a demonstration of confidence in the future."*

## Top ten green ranking

**M**anchester Metropolitan University is celebrating after being named in the UK's top ten greenest universities.



The University is now ranked 10th out of 145 universities in the People & Planet Green League 2012.

Ben Atkins, President of MMU Student Union said: "It is great to see the University at the forefront when pushing this agenda on a national scale."

Since 2005, MMU has shrunk its carbon footprint by 18.5% investing heavily in carbon reduction projects: 'green buildings', recycling, travel and solar energy.

The audit of all 145 UK universities saw MMU score maximum marks for environmental policy, environmental management, curriculum, and staff and student engagement.

Louise Hazan, lead researcher for People & Planet, said: "This year's results show how universities are increasingly aware that going green both helps save money and enhances the quality of education they can offer their students.

"The likes of MMU have set a new benchmark for sustainability, shifting away from 'business as usual' to help deliver a skilled low carbon economy for the future."

## Thumbs up from students

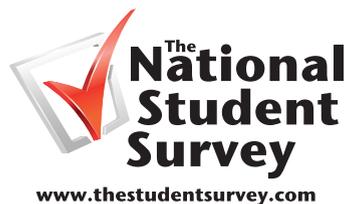
**T**he University has returned one of the biggest improvements in student satisfaction in the UK.

The 2012 National Student Survey showed a 6% jump in students giving MMU the 'thumbs up' for teaching quality, facilities, support, management and other key performance criteria.

Professor Kevin Bonnett, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) said MMU was on the road to even better scores: "We have achieved massive progress in online information and learning resources, and when you bear in mind that key changes, such as in timetabling and the curriculum are yet to have an impact, we are confident that we can score even higher next year."

Overall, 26 departments improved their results and top performers, scoring 90% or more, were: Human Resource and Sport Management (Business & Law) with 100%; English (Humanities, Languages and Social Science) with 94%; Accountancy & Finance (Business & Law) with 92%; and Nursing (Health, Psychology and Social Care) with 90%.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor John Brooks, said: "We have closed the gap on the sector, but enhancing the quality of classroom teaching further will be an absolute priority for the coming year."



And he urged departments to share and learn: "We have many departments where the perceived quality of teaching exceeds the sector average, so we need to learn from our best."

The University also rose 10 places in the 2012 *Sunday Times* university league table.

## Centenary celebrations at Cheshire campus

**A** week-long celebration at the Manchester Metropolitan University campus in Cheshire marked 100 years of education on the Crewe site.

Events included a gala dinner, where record-breaking Paralympian Sarah Storey and her husband, Barney, were guests of honour, and visits from alumni, some of whom studied on the site in the 1950s when it was Crewe College of Education.



Adam Shilton

Students and graduates showcased their work, which included the premiere of former soldier Adam Shilton's piece for brass band, *Through the Pink Mist*, which is based on the life of US Marine, Eugene B Sledge, and influenced by his own time serving on the front line in Basra.

There were also numerous academic debates, including one exploring the PhD novel, and another looking at the importance of imagination in education.

## Investigating youth speak in Manchester

**L**inguistics lecturer Rob Drummond has been awarded a grant to investigate the growth of 'multicultural Manchester English' across the city.

The £3,000 Research Accelerator Grant, awarded by MMU, will help fund the study.

Multicultural Manchester English, like its London counterpart, is the variety of speech adopted by many young people across the city which incorporates several different ethnically marked features.

The dialect was the focus of much media coverage following last summer's

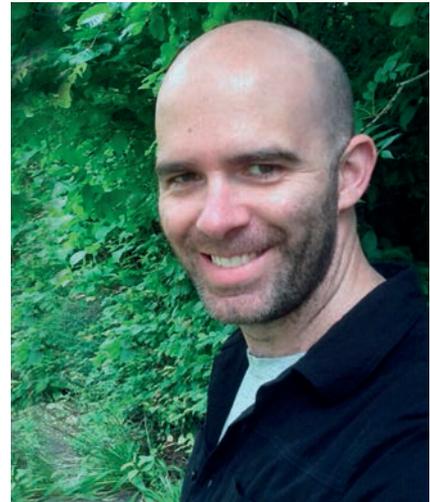
riots, with some newspapers dubbing it 'Jafaican', meaning 'fake Jamaican'. Rob says that this particular variety of the language is often misunderstood, with many adults thinking it is simply being 'put on', while young people are unaware of the effects it can have on the way they are perceived.

Rob said: "Possible barriers include being judged by teachers and police who make the rather dangerous link between the way people speak and criminality.

"The more people know about language variation and language change the better able they are to clear up any misunderstanding and miscommunication."

Rob will be speaking to local school-children and also asking them to record their own conversations for analysis. The research will finish in January.

*Languages, Linguistics & TEFL is one of the departments within the Faculty of Humanities, Languages and Social Science.*  
[www.hlss.mmu.ac.uk/languages](http://www.hlss.mmu.ac.uk/languages)



Rob Drummond

## Art debut for Manchester icon

**L**ast summer, the University hosted the first exhibition by Manchester icon Richard Creme, four years after he suffered a devastating stroke.

Richard, who is credited with bringing designer fashion brands to the city in the Eighties, lost the ability to speak when he suffered a stroke, aged 50. Suffering from depression and unable to continue with his work at his shop, Creme, he turned to painting to express himself.

Arts for Health director Clive Parkinson explained that the exhibition came about through a meeting with the Stroke Association to discuss the arts.

Clive said: "Richard is an extremely elegant man but the stroke has affected the right-hand side of his body and taken away his ability for word-finding and speech, leaving him with a million thoughts and ideas, but unable to



converse in sentences. He passionately wanted his drawings and paintings to be exhibited and talking with the curators of the Link Gallery - Elisa Artesero and Roger Bygott - it quickly became apparent that we had expertise to make it happen sooner rather than later."

In his heyday, Richard dressed celebrities including David Beckham,

Gary Oldman, David Bowie and Prince, as well as most of Manchester United.

*Arts for Health at MMU is the UK's longest established arts and health organisation. With specialism in research, advocacy and development, it works with a range of partners to better understand the impact of creativity, culture and the arts on health and well-being.* [www.artsforhealth.org](http://www.artsforhealth.org)



# Fulfilling potential

Camelot CEO and University Chancellor, Dianne Thompson CBE, explains why a university education can change lives.

**M**y day job is running Camelot, the operator of the National Lottery, but I am also immensely proud of my role as Chancellor of this University.

I'm proud that it has its feet firmly planted in the real world, with its strong bias towards giving graduates the best possible start in the world of work. Each year, 90% of our graduates go straight into work or further study within six months of graduation. That's a fantastic record in recessionary times like these.

I am also incredibly proud of the fact that more than 44 per cent of our students come from low-income backgrounds - and that we give more money in bursaries and scholarship packages to more of them than any other university in the UK.

I see myself in those students: my dad was a butcher and my mum worked in a shoe shop. I had a really happy childhood, but we didn't have much money.

People like me didn't go to college, didn't become university lecturers and certainly didn't go on to lead multi-billion pound turnover companies, but thanks to MMU, I did.

The University - Manchester Polytechnic as it was then - opened so many doors for me. It opened my eyes too.

It made me see what was possible. And that's what I want for every one of our students - whatever their background.

Part of my role as Chancellor is to support the University and make connections that help our students - and to do this, I recently accepted the role of patron of the University's fundraising working group. With higher tuition fees comes a responsibility for all of us to do more to help academically able students to attend universities like MMU and lead successful lives - and there are a number of practical ways in which you can be involved.

We need organisations to offer paid and voluntary, short-term (two to six weeks) and longer-term (three to six month) placements to our students so that they can learn from your experience and expertise.

And with more than 1,850 of our students spending a year on a sandwich placement, we are always looking for more openings.

Then, of course, there are jobs for our graduates. We see ourselves as providers of talent to this region with over 70% of our graduates choosing to make their careers in the North West every year.

So the next time you receive a communication from MMU, or a job application from one of our students or graduates, open it, read it and be prepared to go the extra mile and get involved. We want to help as many able students as we can, from all backgrounds, to fulfil their potential.

*Dianne Thompson CBE graduated from Manchester Polytechnic in French and English, was a Business School Lecturer in the 1980s and was appointed CEO of Camelot in 2000. In 2011 Dianne became the third Chancellor of MMU. To get involved in any of the ways Dianne mentions, please email [alumni@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@mmu.ac.uk).*

# Expansion for a city bucking the trend

**Sir Howard Bernstein, chief executive of Manchester City Council.**

**D**espite the gloomy economic climate in the country at large, there's been much good news for Manchester. In September, I attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Manchester Metropolitan University campus in Hulme.

Under Vice-Chancellor, Professor John Brooks, MMU has firmly established itself as one of the best universities in the UK.

It's a real Manchester success story. Although a 'new' university, MMU traces its roots back to the early 19th century as part of the Mechanics Institute and the Manchester School of Design. As well as being one of the biggest universities in the UK, its teaching standards are amongst the highest in the country. Teaching quality inspections put the University in the top 20 of the UK.

The new campus is the final and largest part of a £350m capital investment programme and will house the Faculty of Education and Faculty of Health, Psychology and Social Care. More than 5,000 students will study on the site, with more than 1,200 making Hulme their home in a combination of traditional halls and town houses.

This is great news for Hulme, as the University has pledged that it will be a campus that will be open to all, with high quality public realm.

MMU has a commitment to become part of Hulme's community, wholly integrated and making a positive difference to the area as well as employing local people. Hulme's transformation has been a long process, but also a successful one - setting the standard for elsewhere in the country.

The campus development will also generate some more immediate benefits.

The Birley Fields campus represents a major boost to construction in Manchester. Valued at £139m, it makes it one of the biggest regeneration projects in the North West.

It represents jobs for hundreds of people. MMU has promised that at least a tenth will be employed from the immediate area. It also sends out the signal that Manchester is committed to ensuring that we have the highest possible standard of academic infrastructure.

One of the keys to our city's success is that we have the largest student population in Europe.

As the students returned to the city after the summer break, you could clearly see that their presence here keeps our city young and vibrant. And our world-class universities also help Manchester maintain its global reputation. Some of the country's, and the world's, brightest come here to study and fall in love with the city, even if they don't stay at the conclusion of their studies. And it gives us a knowledge base that is second to none, allied with a competitive edge that helps ensure that we remain the UK's highest ranked global city outside London.

The Birley Fields campus is an exciting development and exactly the kind of project the city needs.

Find out more about the Birley Fields campus at:  
[www.mmu.ac.uk/birleyfields](http://www.mmu.ac.uk/birleyfields)

*"The Birley Fields campus represents a major boost to construction in Manchester."*



# Honorands 2012



Graduation ceremony at the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester



**E**ight notable names were given honorary degrees from the University this year to recognise their achievements in business, charity and the Arts.

**Sir Rod Aldridge**, the founder of Capita and chairman of The Aldridge Foundation, which encourages young people to create their own social change, became a Doctor of Business Administration from the Faculty of Education.

**Sarah Burton OBE**, who is creative director of the fashion brand Alexander McQueen, studied Art Foundation at Manchester Polytechnic before going on to Central St Martins, in London. She is known as the designer who created the wedding dress for Catherine, HRH the Duchess of Cambridge, and has also created dresses for Michelle Obama, Cate Blanchett, Lady Gaga and Gwyneth Paltrow, and was named Designer of the Year at the 2011 British Fashion Awards.

She said: "This award is incredibly special as the school holds a special place in my heart. Thank you to Manchester Metropolitan University for recognising my achievements and for awarding me with an honorary degree." She was given the title of Doctor of Arts at the graduation ceremony for the Department of Clothing, Design and Technology.

*"Thank you to Manchester Metropolitan University for recognising my achievements and for awarding me with an honorary degree."*

Sarah Burton

**Guy Garvey**, singer with the Mercury Prize-winning band Elbow, became an honorary Doctor of Arts at the graduation ceremony for the Faculty of Art and Design. Garvey, who is also known for presenting a show on BBC Radio 6 Music, met his bandmates while studying in his hometown of Bury.

He said: "I'm one of seven kids and the only one that didn't go to university as I decided to stay in the band. My mum stuck a picture of me singing on the degree wall at home many years ago, but now I can finally join the clan wearing the right outfit."

"The young people that come to Manchester and Salford to be educated, teach or research are the life blood that keeps this city's heart pumping. I know many tutors and students from MMU and know what an amazing university it is. I'm thrilled and very proud to be honoured by them in this way."

**Gethin Jones** best known as a television star, became a Doctor of Science.

Gethin studied Economics and Geography at the University, graduating in 1999. He started his media career presenting children's programmes for Welsh channel S4C, before moving on to join *Blue Peter* in 2005, and has since become one of the most popular faces on television, coming third in the 2007 BBC series of *Strictly Come Dancing*.

He said: "It is an absolute privilege to receive this honorary degree from my university. The time I spent at MMU was one of the best periods of my life and prepared me in the best way for everything that has followed."

**Mike Leigh OBE**, award-winning filmmaker became a Doctor of Arts at the graduation ceremony for the Department of Contemporary Arts, part of the MMU Cheshire Faculty based in Crewe.

Leigh, who was born in Welwyn but spent much of his childhood in Salford where he attended Salford Grammar School, is known for his films including *Vera Drake*, *Life is Sweet* and *Topsy Turvy*.

He won the Best Director award at Cannes for *Naked* in 1993 and the Palme d'Or in 1996 for *Secrets & Lies*.

**Martin Narey**, former Barnardo's chief executive, received a Doctorate of Letters from the Faculty of Education.

Narey, who was born in Middlesbrough and studied at Sheffield Polytechnic, started his career in the NHS before joining the prison service in 1982. He held his position at Barnardo's from 2005 to 2011, and was appointed as the ministerial adviser on adoption last year.

Mr Narey said: "As a graduate of one of the old polytechnics I have watched their growth and success in recent decades with real interest. There are lots of success stories, but none more so than at this University which has grown to be the third biggest university in the UK and with an international reputation. So it is an immense privilege for me to be recognised with an honorary doctorate."

**Lord Smith** of Leigh, who has been the leader of Wigan Council since 1991, became a Doctor of Laws at the ceremony for the Faculty of Humanities, Languages and Social Science.

For many years Lord Smith worked to improve life for people living in the North West of England and expanded the role of the Greater Manchester city region by sitting on the board of the North West Regional Assembly, where he was chair from 1999 to 2000, and sat on the Executive Board until the organisation was wound up in 2009.

He was made a Lord in 1999, in recognition of his work in local government, and was awarded Freedom of the Borough of Wigan last year.

**Professor Richard Thorpe** was honoured by the Business School, becoming a Doctor of Business Administration in recognition of his work across the country.

Professor Thorpe spent nearly 20 years working at the University where he led the development of a new MBA and was instrumental in the creation of the doctoral programme for the Faculty of Management and Business, which has now become the Business School.



*"I know many tutors and students from MMU and know what an amazing university it is. I'm thrilled and very proud to be honoured by them in this way."*

Guy Garvey



Professor Richard Thorpe



# Inspiring future generations

**Paralympian Sarah Storey OBE talks to *Success* magazine about her recent successes and how her training regime was boosted by the facilities at MMU Cheshire.**



**S**he has 11 gold medals and is being tipped for a damehood in this year's New Year's Honours List.

But MMU honorary graduate Sarah Storey's achievement is made all the more remarkable because her clean sweep in this year's Paralympic cycling events was in her 'second' sport.

Sarah started her athletic career as a swimmer, and first competed at the Barcelona Paralympic Games in 1992, aged just 14. Despite her tender age,

she won two golds, three silvers and a bronze, and at subsequent Paralympics went on to win a total of five gold medals in the pool.

Following a recurrent ear infection she switched disciplines, and at her first Paralympics as a cyclist, in Beijing in 2008, came away with two gold medals.

While psychologically Sarah says there are several similarities in training for the two sports, physically she says they are very different.

"Cycling sessions tend to vary in length a great deal more than in swimming, and we produce power in a much greater range in cycling, compared to swimming and our energy systems are far more targeted from one session to another."

At the London 2012 Paralympic Games, Sarah won four gold medals - one in every event she took part in - making her among the most successful Paralympians of all time.

And she said that her success would not have been possible without the

support of MMU Cheshire, where she did much of her training in the run-up to the Games.

To achieve peak fitness, Sarah trained three times a week at the Crewe campus in the Department for Exercise and Sport Science altitude chamber, which she said made an “incredible difference” to her athletic performance.

The altitude chamber works by putting the body under stress which in turn improves the aerobic capacity - meaning Sarah could cycle faster and for longer before the effects of fatigue kicked in.

She said: “Being able to access the altitude chamber was a real bonus and gave me such an advantage to my training. It helped me become far more efficient and there is no doubt that the winning margins in all my events would have been less without that altitude exposure.

“Having a facility like that on my doorstep meant that I didn't have to factor in training camps away from my racing season and this also proved to be an added bonus as I didn't have to miss any critical races either.”

Sarah, who along with her husband, fellow cyclist Barney Storey MBE, was given an honorary doctorate by MMU Cheshire in 2009, completed a clean sweep in the C5 Pursuit, the Time Trial C4-5 500m, the Individual Road Time Trial C5 and the Individual Road Race C4-5 and took her tally of gold medals to 11 - putting her equal with sporting legends Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson and Dave Roberts CBE.

And following her historic win, Sarah saved her first glass of champagne to share with the Dean of MMU Cheshire, Dennis Dunn, and the team before flying to St Lucia with Barney for a well-earned rest.

She said: “I'm not sure that life has returned to normal yet, but it has been an amazing time with so many events to go to and people to see! I am very proud that my first engagement after the Games was at MMU Cheshire. It was very fitting.”

Sarah was born without a functioning left hand after her arm became tangled in the umbilical cord in the womb, yet this year she not only obliterated the opposition at the Paralympics, she also only missed out on a place in the able-bodied Olympic team pursuit by a whisker.

But it has not always been plain sailing, and she has in the past spoken about the schoolyard bullies who made her life difficult following her return from her first victorious Games. Happily however, she has put those experiences behind her, and says they made her a stronger person.



*“I am very proud that my first engagement after the Games was at MMU Cheshire. It was very fitting”*

“That really is all in the past,” she said. “I guess that it gives me empathy with other school children who are going through a similar experience and gives me the ability to be able to tell them to be strong and that it won't last forever. I followed the dream I had and ignored the bullies, so it turned out well in the end.”

Her next goal is the World Championships in 2013, at which she will be competing with one eye on Rio 2016. Sarah said: “As defending champion in all four events that I won in

London, I will have a busy period between now and Rio trying to defend those titles, or win them back if I lose them at any point.”

Despite having won so many gold medals, she is not resting on her laurels and says there are plenty of goals which remain for her.

“In time trial events, as so many of my events are, there are always timed goals to aim for,” she said. “Gold medals are the outcome goal at the end of a list of process goals and so by focusing on the things you can control - like the time you ride, or the power you produce - you can always improve your performance.

“I've always measured achievement by how well I have done compared to the last time I raced and would hope to be an international level athlete for as long as that is physically possible. I still have the ambition to make myself faster and stronger.”

And that ambition will hopefully be realised with the continuing support of MMU Cheshire.

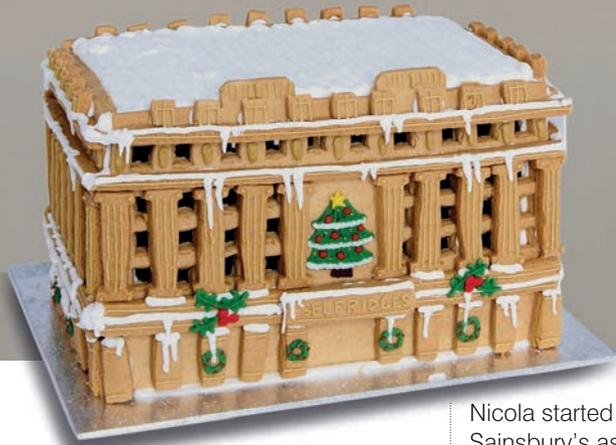
“The University has been incredibly supportive and the links we have here with Dennis Dunn and John Brooks are very special to both Barney and I,” said Sarah. “The facilities are world-class and the altitude chamber has transformed my training.

“I've got to sit down with my coach and work out the plan of attack for 2013 but Rio is the end goal. You work in four-year cycles so we will be putting together a plan for that. The most important thing after such a big year is to make sure you recover sufficiently, so I am not rushing into anything other than light training!”

For those who hope to follow in her footsteps, Sarah has some simple advice: “Always give your best and make sure you enjoy it. There is no shortcut and it won't be easy, so unless you give your best you won't have a hope of being able to enjoy it because you will know you are cheating yourself.”

# Food for thought

Alumni ambassador Nicola Waller talks to *Success* about Tobasco chocolate, gingerbread houses and how she got to be head of food at Selfridges.



**N**icola Waller loves her job. From negotiating the rights to Selfridges' exclusive Olympic Gold Coke bottle to discovering delicious Tobasco chocolate from a tiny supplier in America, no two days are the same when you are running the food operations for the global department store of the year.

"Food retailing is very fast-paced and dynamic," Nicola says. "One minute I can be negotiating with one of the world's biggest brands and the next I'm planning a PR campaign where people can have a model of their house made in gingerbread. I love the variety."

Having worked in the industry since getting a degree in Retail Marketing in 1992, Nicola says barely a day has gone by when she has not used something she learnt on her course: "I used to sit in retail law lectures wondering what I was doing there, but it was so useful."

"My degree set me up for a career in retail. Of all the people I have come across in the industry I really think the degree I studied has been the most relevant."

Nicola started her career with Sainsbury's as a trainee buyer, after a placement in her second year led to the supermarket giant offering her sponsorship through her final year and a guaranteed job on graduation.

She says that getting work experience and networking are vital for graduates that want to get ahead in the job market: "I was lucky, but it just shows how important placements and work experience can be. My advice to any student or graduate out there is to get as much experience as possible and don't be afraid to start at the bottom - any experience is better than none."

After four years with Sainsbury's, Nicola moved to Safeway where she learnt a lot about buying branded products and worked her way up from buying crisps and nuts to being category manager of frozen foods.

From there she moved to Marks and Spencer where she spent ten years working across the British retail giant's food department, something she says was invaluable experience: "I loved every minute. I worked in all sorts of areas from delicatessen to pies and

fish, and from desserts and juice to fresh fruit - I learnt a lot."

*"Of all the people I have come across in the industry I really think the degree I studied has been the most relevant."*

Nicola decided to become an alumni ambassador as she feels passionately that the degree she did was such a good one and wanted to help other students starting out: "I'd tell anyone who thinks they could be an alumni ambassador to just do it."

"It takes so little of your time in comparison to what we got out of our degrees and our time in Manchester and if people out there have the skill set to help graduates starting out, there's no reason not to."

To find out more about becoming an alumni ambassador, please contact the Alumni and Development Office at [alumni@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@mmu.ac.uk).

**A** new scheme from MMU will give recent graduates the opportunity to gain some all-important work experience – and potentially a new job.

And in turn, businesses in the North West will benefit from financial assistance to allow them to take on skilled and educated graduates as interns.

The £100,000 GradMatchMMU project will create 100 paid internships for students who graduated in 2012 but have been unable to find work. They will be placed within small and medium businesses in the North West for a minimum of eight weeks.

Graduates who are no longer studying but have managed to find part-time work will also be eligible for the scheme, as will EU, international and Masters graduates.

It is hoped that the project will lead to longer-term or permanent employment for the participating graduates.

Rita Lewin, Head of Student Employability and Success and Deputy Director of Student Services, said: "We are really excited about our new project, GradMatchMMU, and the positive impact it will have on supporting our recent graduates and businesses within the North West.

"MMU takes the employability of graduates very seriously and giving them support in getting high quality experience of the graduate labour market via a paid internship is one way of doing this."

Current MA Landscape Architecture student, Jake Helm, found work at landscape design consultancy Barnes Walker following a placement, and says the idea of targeting smaller companies helps interns be more successful.

"If you work at a smaller company you are working with decision makers directly - in a big multinational it's not the people in your office who make a decision," he said. "You need experience to get the job nowadays."



# Graduates helped to meet their perfect match

**Success finds out about a new placement scheme at the University for recent graduates - and talks to 2012 graduate, Jake Helm, who found his perfect job following a student placement.**

Colin Barnes, from Barnes Walker, says that the placement system is a popular one at his company which often leads to an offer of permanent employment: "The company likes supporting the course. It's good for the course to have interaction with businesses, and because of that we gain from having good quality students join us, and we then recruit from the university too. The University does a good job of matching students to what we do and the fact we are known at MMU means we will have good students, so we have good symbiosis.

"As we see from Jake, he came to us for a three-month placement and he has now been with us for nine months. He'll be with us for another year and if it works out,

he will stay here. I think two or three of the people here have done placements and carried on and it's a pattern that works well. Almost everybody in the company was a student at MMU and we now have 10 working with us."

He added: "Traditionally people had apprenticeships. If you look back, an architect would become an architect by being an apprentice, learning very basic skills, so this placement model is good."

Anyone interested in taking part should contact Freya Marshall on +44 (0)161 247 6512 or at [f.marshall@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:f.marshall@mmu.ac.uk).

# Business expertise



Mark Ratcliffe

## Manchester Metropolitan University is strengthening its offer to business with a new team dedicated to linking your organisation directly to University expertise.

**T**housands of companies, public bodies, charities and community organisations have already developed innovative solutions by tapping into our specialist research capabilities, consultancy, specialist facilities and cutting-edge training and development programmes.

A team of four key account managers will be your point of contact when you contact the University. You can also check out the new Business website which signposts people outside the University to the right collaborators.

Mark Ratcliffe, head of Knowledge Exchange said: "Many different kinds of organisations are benefiting from the world-class expertise developed at MMU.

"Whatever challenges you face, whether they are driven by commercial concerns, public service or community-based initiatives, our expertise could provide the solutions you seek."

The University has ambitious performance targets, set out in the *Corporate Strategy 2012-17*, which include increasing the number of staff winning enterprise contracts by 50% by 2015 and enterprise income by 10% per year.

To find out more, please contact Mark Ratcliffe at [m.ratcliffe@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:m.ratcliffe@mmu.ac.uk) or on +44 (0)161 247 2186. [www.mmu.ac.uk/business](http://www.mmu.ac.uk/business)

## Funding innovation

**M** MU has a strong history of making a positive impact on growth and success in companies and organisations in the North West.

And potential partnerships have become twice as attractive with the announcement of two types of grant - the Innovation Voucher Scheme and the Knowledge Exchange Innovation Fund (KEIF).

### Innovation Voucher Scheme

An Innovation Voucher is financial support for a particular idea or innovation and is available to any small or medium enterprise which wants to work with external experts.

Vouchers to the value of £5,000 will initially be available to businesses working on new ideas in three areas: agrifood, built environment, and space technology.

Apply online at [www.innovateuk.org/competitions](http://www.innovateuk.org/competitions) or call the helpline for guidance on 0300 321 4357.

### Knowledge Exchange Innovation Fund (KEIF)

Academics can also apply for a slice of £250,000, if they work closer with businesses, public and third sector organisations.

KEIF offers up to £5,000 to 'kickstart' new mutually-beneficial associations and up to £50,000 to develop existing partnerships with external organisations.

Projects may be research, continuing professional development or consultancy with the potential to deliver sustainable revenue and/or other impacts including: economic, social, cultural, health, well-being and more.

Email [knowledgeexchange@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:knowledgeexchange@mmu.ac.uk) or call the team on +44 (0)161 247 2186.

# Knowledge Transfer

**A Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) is helping to ensure that the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce is meeting the needs of local businesses.**

**S**taff at the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce are dedicated to supporting local businesses in Crewe and Nantwich.

The Chamber's membership accounts for 15 per cent of the local business community, twice the national average, but not being satisfied with this, acting chief executive, Paul Colman, knew that he had to find out why the majority of businesses in South Cheshire did not see the Chamber as relevant.

Paul approached the University to discuss a project which he believed would be mutually beneficial.

He said: "We were looking at the future strategy of the Chamber. We had a vision of what we could progress into and we knew it would be in MMU's interests for the local Chamber to be strong and have good relationships with a higher proportion of the local business community.

"We sat down with the University at length to discuss what we wanted the outcomes to be. The project was looking at the reorganisation of the Chamber to make it more relevant to businesses and to improve upon the engagement with our members."

Following their discussions, the KTP project was conceived and approved and MSc Strategic Leadership and Change student, Nadeem Ahmad, was taken on to research the new vision which included integrating a Social Media Web Portal at its heart. This would allow the Chamber to interact with local businesses and for member companies to interact better amongst themselves.

The Chamber acts as an independent voice for business, representing and

promoting the interests of the local business community and helping its members grow and develop. Nadeem saw that the best way to do this was to incorporate the most modern technology and communications methods, using the model that has made social media platforms so successful.

Paul said that the project has given the Chamber confidence that they are heading in the right direction.

He said: "It became clear as the project went on that developing the portal was a sizeable task, but I personally enjoyed the in-depth look at our Chamber in relation to businesses through Nadeem's eyes and his research."

Nadeem, who has since been taken on full-time by the Chamber as business community co-ordinator, added: "I think it's going well and there is a lot of potential to expand further beyond what was originally conceived, which we want to explore."

Trevor Brown, MMU Cheshire's enterprise manager, said: "The KTP with South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry Limited was a complex project as it revisited the role and function of the Chamber to enable it to truly represent the business community.

"The project reinforced the close working relationship between the Chamber and MMU Cheshire and enabled the Business and Management Department to more fully understand and explore issues within the sector. Both organisations benefited from the partnership and the Chamber now acts as an enthusiastic advocate for KTP in the region."



Paul Colman

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships offer innovative solutions to help organisations develop and improve products, processes and competitiveness through the best use of technology and skills. The scheme places graduates (KTP associates) in the host organisation, supported by an academic supervisor.

# Are we looking at the future of computing?

A “simple invention” by Manchester Metropolitan University scientists holds the prospect of a paradigm shift in computing.

**T**wo mathematicians, Jon Borresen and Stephen Lynch believe it is possible to design superfast microprocessors which mimic the configurations in the human brain.

If their models are correct, the circuitry would produce world-record computing speeds at a fraction of the power input.

Their ‘binary half adder’ circuit, which is protected by three patents, UK, Taiwan and international, is already attracting interest from leading figures in the supercomputing industry.

But the pair, who work in the Novel Computation Group in the Science & Engineering Faculty, admit the potential breakthrough in microprocessing didn’t come from research into computing at all: “We were modelling the behaviour of neurones in the brain, just observing really, when it struck us that certain configurations could perform binary computations,” said Jon.

“We thought, if these binary interactions could be replicated in electronic circuits, it had the potential to revolutionise silicon chips,” said Steve.

The new circuit is brilliantly simple: two oscillators connected in such a way that the addition of each extra oscillator results in a doubling of processing

power, such that  $(2 + n)$  components  $\sim 2^n$  processing power, resulting in massive savings in power and components.

Following a series of theoretical tests, Jon and Stephen pitched their theories at Daresbury Science & Technology Facilities Council and at the Rutherford-Appleton Laboratories in Oxford, where they were encouraged to obtain patent protection for their ideas.

*“We thought, if these binary interactions could be replicated in electronic circuits, it had the potential to revolutionise silicon chips.”*

But it was a recent trip to the New York offices of high-tech firm HYPRES<sup>inc</sup> which provided the real breakthrough.

“We had been researching how we could build one of these computers using biological neurones, CMOS, optical resonators or Josephson Junctions (JJs). HYPRES have been using JJs since 1983 in commercial circuitry and we now see these as being the key,” added Steve.

Independently, HYPRES had been researching JJ Arithmetic Logic Units (ALUs) and, after the New York meeting, announced they had built the world’s fastest (20GHz) hybrid ALU, using 8,000 oscillators. The MMU team calculate they could produce the same processing power with just 50.

The team, who are being supported by the University’s Research and Knowledge Exchange team, are now planning a prototype to simulate a 64-bit adder and are seeking potential commercialisation of the technology.

Added Jon: “We started this as an abstract exercise in mathematics, and we’ve ended up on the brink of theoretically building the world’s first neuron computer.”

Their paper, ‘Oscillatory Threshold Logic’, is published on *PLUS ONE*. According to Stephen: “Recent results show that both the binary oscillator logic and memory are sound and remarkably robust.”

The work may also have applications in neural biology, providing a much needed assay test for neural degradation - having particular implications for the design and test of new drugs.

# Knowledge Exchange

**A joint project between Hollings Faculty and New Britain Palm Oil has helped to make the nation's favourite pastries and cakes more sustainable.**

**N**ew Britain Palm Oil contacted the University to find someone to carry out research into the baking performance of sustainable fats versus that of their unsustainable alternatives.

Dr Valentina Stojceska, of the University's Manchester Food Research Centre, passed the details of the project on to a graduate with whom she had been in touch, Caroline Noble, who successfully won the position working on the year-long project.

Caroline, who graduated in 2010 with a first class BSc (Hons) in Food and Nutrition, worked with the research centre to test the products and also looked in a more general sense at the sustainability of palm oil and its importance as a key ingredient to the UK food manufacturing industry.

Caroline said: "I was given the opportunity to present my findings to customers helping them to make informed decisions about making the switch to sustainable products.

"I was quite intrigued because I didn't really know anything about palm oil apart from what I had read on the internet, and if you Google it then everything that comes up is negative. But New Britain Palm Oil's company values and integrity are very different - I think everyone wants to work for a company like that."

As part of the project, Caroline presented her findings to several companies, to support New Britain Palm Oil's efforts.

She said: "I think people had their reservations about sustainable fats, so my research did reassure people.

"I was given the opportunity to present my findings to customers, helping them to make informed decisions about making the switch to sustainable products."

For Caroline, who had struggled to find a job that she found fulfilling despite her excellent degree, the opportunity to work on the project had another benefit - it led to a full-time position as a technical support technician with New Britain Palm Oil.

She said: "I am really excited about my new position and to be given the chance to work for a leading UK company. They have invested a lot of time and money in me.

"My recommendation to other graduates would be that it is definitely

worth staying in touch. My lecturers have all been so supportive. I already had a good relationship with them and that continued when I left. Without their help and support things could have been very different."

*The Manchester Food Research Centre, in the Hollings Faculty, is one of the University's specialist centres. With a wealth of expertise to share, MMU has created a number of dedicated centres which focus on access to specialist services for organisations and the community. Whether it is arts and entertainment, environmental impact, industry sector-specific or public policy support, each of these centres is committed to ease of access to cutting-edge knowledge and creative talent.*

[www.mmu.ac.uk/business/specialist-centres](http://www.mmu.ac.uk/business/specialist-centres)

## Expertise for your business - talk to us

Many different kinds of organisations are benefiting from the world-class expertise developed at MMU. Whatever the challenges you face, whether they

are driven by commercial concerns, public service or community-based initiatives, our expertise could provide the solutions you seek.

To find out more, please contact Mark Ratcliffe at [m.ratcliffe@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:m.ratcliffe@mmu.ac.uk) or on +44 (0)161 247 2186. [www.mmu.ac.uk/business](http://www.mmu.ac.uk/business)

# Advancing your career

**Manchester Metropolitan University offers the highest concentration of postgraduate taught courses in the North West of England, many recognised by professional bodies and associations. We hear from current and recent students about the benefits of investing in postgraduate study at MMU.**

## Mike Halley

MBA

Business School  
Faculty of Business & Law

**M**ike Halley is vice-president (sales) Europe, Middle East and Africa at TOA Technologies. After building up his career experience for many years, he decided that completing an MBA would allow him to 'fast track' his progression into general management, which began at Hewlett Packard. He was head hunted by TOA after completing his MBA, and believes it was the main reason for his career success.

"I'd always wondered if people with an MBA really felt more enabled to progress at work, or whether it was merely a box-ticking exercise to show that they had reached a higher level of competency in management."

His curiosity got the better of him and he completed his MBA in 2010: "I wanted to discover more about the constructs of business and understand aspects I'd never fully comprehended, and the MBA was a way for me to do this, and to demonstrate my ability to compete at the highest level.

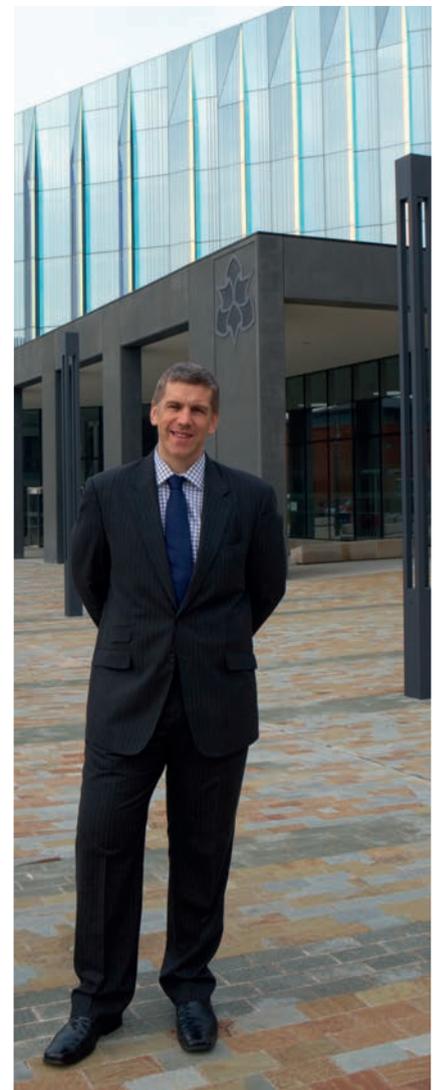
"General management demands more than a working knowledge of the key

areas of a business, and rather than spend ten years working my way through the key areas I wanted to 'fast track' my progress. After researching my options I decided to complete my MBA at MMU; it has a great reputation for delivering MBAs that progress into world-leading companies, and I felt so comfortable after meeting some of the key staff so knew I'd made the right choice."

Completing the MBA has given Mike a whole new approach to working, and the strategy he learnt has underpinned this new way of working.

"I honestly use every aspect of my MBA learning. Business strategy was a key element of the MBA and I was keen to deepen my knowledge. It's furthered my understanding of the importance of building clear strategies in every aspect of a business. The MBA had given me the confidence to hold my own with senior staff within finance, HR, marketing - the list goes on, because I can now underpin my decisions with knowledge."

Mike was head hunted, and puts this down to his AMBA-accredited MBA qualification: "As soon as you add MBA to your CV it puts you in another league. I didn't know at the time but a prerequisite for my current role was an MBA, so I wouldn't be where I am today without it."



*The next enrolment date for our part-time, Executive MBA is February 2013. For more information about the course and our range of MBA scholarships, please contact **Daniel Sheratte**, MBA Programme Manager, on +44 (0) 7717 860 343, or at [d.sheratte@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:d.sheratte@mmu.ac.uk).*

## Ibrahim Sheikh

### Graduate Diploma in Law Bar Professional Training Course

Manchester Law School  
Faculty of Business & Law

**E**arlier this year, Ibrahim Sheikh completed the Graduate Diploma in Law, which is designed for non-law graduates and equips students with the legal knowledge required to train as a lawyer. He is currently studying on the Bar Professional Training Course.

"I began my career working for a merchant bank in the City before setting up and running my own management consultancy for 15 years. I had always wanted to study law and knew that my

commercial business experience would be a valuable asset for studying law at postgraduate level.

"Returning to study can be a daunting prospect, but I knew my experience would come in useful. In fact my maturity has been a real bonus and led to my election as student representative for the course.

"I chose to study at Manchester Law School because of the friendliness of the staff and their excellent links with local law firms and chambers. This professional network has been invaluable to me. I've been able to combine my studies with pro bono work placements and voluntary work, and that combination of academic excellence and work experience has placed me in a great position to further my career."

To find out about all our postgraduate law courses, go to:  
[www.law.mmu.ac.uk](http://www.law.mmu.ac.uk)



## Dr Nadia Ali

### MSc Biomedical Science PhD

School of Healthcare Science  
Faculty of Science & Engineering

**N**adia Ali came to Manchester from Jordan to study for an MSc in Biomedical Science. After graduating in 2006, she went on to study towards a PhD, which she completed in 2012.

"I combined my research in the area of diabetes with my passion for teaching, which gives me the perfect balance.

"I was born in Iraq, and moved to Jordan to complete my school and

undergraduate education. I then travelled to the UK with my husband and settled in Manchester to continue my study at MMU.

"The core subject of my study was about the effect of the drug simvastatin - an inhibitor of cholesterol - on advanced glycation, the main culprit of diabetes. Having completed my PhD, I am now working at the university as a part-time assistant lecturer supporting first year healthcare science students. I have always wanted to work in academic and research fields. It is an exciting job with many opportunities to learn new skills."

To find out more about postgraduate research degrees, go to:

[www.mmu.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/research](http://www.mmu.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/research)



## The benefits of postgraduate study at Manchester Metropolitan University

- opportunities to meet like-minded students with the highest concentration of postgraduate taught courses in the North West
- flexible programmes with full-time and part-time options in most course areas
- courses that have close links with business and employers helping you get industry relevant experience

- award-winning staff at the forefront of their fields giving you the chance to share the latest academic thinking in many areas
- more than 200 postgraduate taught programmes and dozens of postgraduate research areas

### Visit us

Postgraduate Courses Fairs are held four times a year in September, November, March and May.

To check dates and book your place:  
[www.mmu.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/visit](http://www.mmu.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/visit)

### Find out more

For all postgraduate information:  
[www.mmu.ac.uk/study/postgraduate](http://www.mmu.ac.uk/study/postgraduate)

# Hollings student wins design award

**A** student from Hollings Faculty won an award for a highly classified Top Gun-style design project.

Melissa Barker, who has recently completed a Masters in Clothing Product Development at Manchester Metropolitan University, designed a jacket for fighter pilots which could deal with both extremely hot and cold weather, such as that found in Afghanistan.

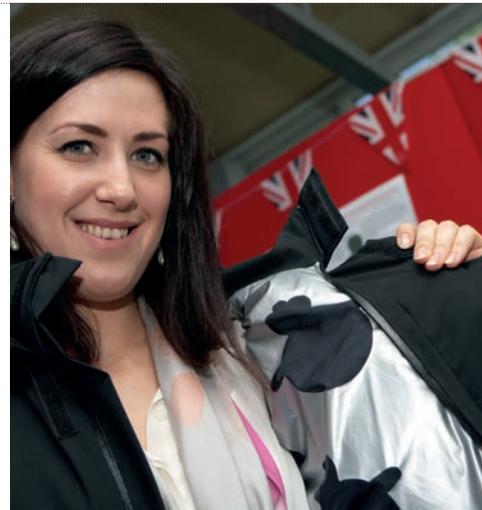
She was presented with a cheque for £1,000 and the award for Innovation in Functional Clothing Design by representatives of military clothing manufacturer RFD Beaufort. The awards ceremony was part of the annual

showcase day at the University's Hollings Faculty, where the most outstanding students were rewarded for their work.

Melissa worked with top secret materials and used research into chimney flue design to create the jacket.

"The main problem was that it had to function in hot conditions and extreme cold because pilots are in their aircraft for up to eight hours, so ventilation is important, but could be ejected into very cold conditions," she said.

The back of the jacket features a panel filled with top secret spacer material to lift the layers, with an opening collar to facilitate ventilation.



Melissa had to sign a non-disclosure form which means she cannot reveal the material used to anyone. In addition, she used a reflective lining to utilise the pilot's own body energy to keep them warm. And in a nod to fashion, the lining features a graphic print of the RAF logo.

# Miriam's prize-winning jewellery

**I**t isn't often that a prize-winning jewellery collection will have its roots in a conversation about cows - but that's exactly what happened to Miriam Jones.

The winner of this year's *Success* prize, Three Dimensional Design graduate Miriam was inspired to create her collection by a chat about farming with a guide on Mount Kilimanjaro.

Miriam said: "We were discussing farming, and discovered cultural differences, especially in the way we valued cattle. He thought I was rich with 20 cows, and I thought that was absurd, as in Wales it's the quality of cattle not the quantity that gives you wealth, where as Africans value the quantity of cattle they have, as it means a greater chance of survival.

"I found it hard to forget the conversation, so I researched owning cattle and the impact it has on people's status and wealth within society."

Some of the designs use the patterns created by cows' noses, each one of which is unique, like a fingerprint.

Miriam first became interested in art and design at school, and says she not only enjoys experimenting with wood, metal and plastics, but also researching the history which inspires her designs and gives them meaning.

She names the jeweller Robert Lee Morris as another inspiration.

"When I read his book I found I could identify with his work," she said. "He is inspired by similar things to me, but has a different approach. He focuses on form to create statement wearables, while I focus on the symbolism and the meanings behind my work."

Miriam is continuing her studies at MMU with an MA in Design.



# Art graduates make the final cut

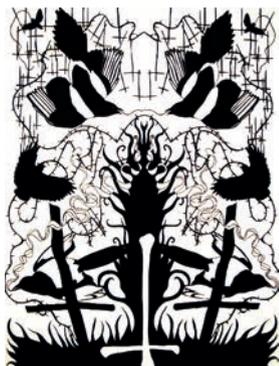
Three Manchester School of Art graduates feature in the stunning new exhibition at Manchester Art Gallery, *The First Cut*. *Success* magazine takes a look and finds out what inspires them.

**A**ndrew Singleton, James Aldridge and Nicola Dale were all commissioned to make pieces for the new exhibition, which showcases the intricate art of paper cutting.

Curator Fiona Corridan said: "In an age where so much is digital we wanted to focus on artists who had gone back to basics."

James Aldridge's huge monochrome creation, *As Above, So Below*, features Edgar Allen Poe-esque ravens combined with spider webs, owls and trees inspired by the forests surrounding his home in Småland, southern Sweden. He works by eliminating the unwanted spaces, slowly revealing the final image.

James, who graduated with a degree in Fine Art in 1993, said: "When I start working on each piece I don't know what it will look like, so for me it is very much about having a mental image of the piece as it evolves - there's no preparatory drawing or a mock-up, it comes about by itself."



James Aldridge's *As Above, So Below*

He said that despite the logistical challenges it presented he wanted the piece to be large so it would be "like entering an environment and becoming part of the landscape." Because of its size, James had to create the work in panels, and it took him a "nerve-wracking" week to assemble in the gallery.

Since graduating with a degree in Animation with Illustration in 2006, Andrew Singleton has worked on a number of prestigious commissions for names such as Liberty, Hermès and Kensington Palace.

But he says his Manchester Art Gallery commission, *Stellar Spire in the Eagle Nebula*, is possibly his favourite.

Andrew says: "My course was very experimental, and in my final year I started to work with paper - cutting into illustrations that I was doing. I found that the things I wanted to express worked better."

Inspired by natural forms, Andrew looked to pictures from the Hubble Deep Space Telescope for this commission.

"The nebula are these massive sculptural forms hanging in space made from dust which look really still but in actual fact have so much energy going on," he said.

Nicola Dale's poignant piece *Sequel* has its roots in an acorn planted by her friend.

When the resultant oak tree grew too big for the garden, Nicola offered to turn it into a work of art.



Nicola Dale's *Downed*



Andrew Singleton

Nicola, who graduated in Interactive Arts in 2000 and followed it up with an MA in Visual Culture in 2005, used leaves cut from reference books to create a literal "tree of knowledge" with each branch having leaves from a different facet of learning.

"Because we are moving into a digital age, books are suffering - particularly reference books," she said. "At least I have rescued these things and turned them into something beautiful."

Another work by Nicola, *Downed*, featuring hundreds of feathers cut from Ordnance Survey maps, is also on display at the gallery.

*The First Cut* runs until 27 January 2013. For more information, visit [www.manchestergalleries.org](http://www.manchestergalleries.org)

## Meet Our Alumni



# Teachers' calling

L to R: Christian, George, Lisa, Sarah

**Success visits four alumni working as teachers in the same primary school and gains an insight into their hugely rewarding profession.**

**P**rimary school is the age when children can gain the building blocks that will set them up for a successful life, and so the training of primary school teachers is of utmost importance.

At Queen's Road Primary School, in Cheadle Hulme, four of the staff are graduates of MMU's BA (Hons) Primary Education - Christian Park, Sarah Clifton, George Pew and Lisa Quin.

Despite the "ridiculously early starts", all four know they are making a difference to the lives of hundreds of children.

And they credit the structure of their degree with preparing them to become successful teachers.

Christian, who graduated in 2006, said: "It was a very steep learning curve. I was still in regular contact with my link tutor, Brenda Judge, which definitely helped - that gave me the guidance that a lot of newly qualified teachers miss out on."

Christian started at Queen's Road in September this year, having begun his career at St Paul's Primary School, in Withington. St Paul's was the school where Christian had his final year placement, and he says that being offered the post was down to having that placement opportunity.

He said: "I was supported well by the University - we were given guidance about how to look for primary education teaching jobs. It was daunting - especially because there were so many applicants - but I got a job fairly easily. Coming from MMU meant something to the schools."

Christian describes the job as "full on", but said: "Every day is different - nothing is the same and you can never get bored."

*"Every day is different - nothing is the same and you can never get bored."*

Fellow MMU graduate, Sarah Clifton, who graduated in 2008, agrees. She said: "No day is the same."

Now in her fifth year at Queen's Road, Sarah completed her third year teaching practise at the school, and when a job came up after graduation jumped at the chance.

"Having had some good placements at some really lovely schools helped when it came to standing in front of a class on your own that first day," she said.

"Queen's Road is so supportive, it's a nice school, the children are lovely and you get great opportunities for professional development."

That professional development includes a return to MMU for Sarah, who is the maths co-ordinator at the school.

"I am really interested in how children learn maths, and so when the school offered me the opportunity to go back to university and take the MAST course, the Mathematics Specialist Teacher programme at MMU, I jumped at the chance."

She has some simple advice for any wannabe teachers currently enrolled at MMU or considering signing up for a course.

"Make sure you have lots of experience so you can decide it's what you really want," she said. "It's not an easy 9 till 3, there's a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes. But it is incredibly fulfilling."

The Faculty of Education runs an Alumni Support Programme for all Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs). To find out more, go to: [www.ioe.mmu.ac.uk/nqt](http://www.ioe.mmu.ac.uk/nqt).

# Writing talent

**In just a few short months, James Harker has gone from student to professional playwright.**

**J**ames, who graduated this year with a BA (Hons) in Creative Writing from MMU Cheshire, won a coveted place as writer on attachment at the Liverpool Playhouse.

He is currently working on two plays in his "cupboard" at the theatre - a drama about the prison system, based on an award-winning piece of student journalism which James wrote while at University, and a jazz musical, which he describes as "a big experiment."

A man of many talents, James has also just been announced as the winner of the first Edge Hill Crime Writing Prize - for which he took home a £1,000 prize.

"I didn't have particularly good qualifications, but I convinced MMU to let me on the course. It was really good, and they encouraged me to go for absolutely everything - that's the reason I'm at the Playhouse now," said James.

"I think if you want to write for a living you've just got to get on and do it; you have to sit down, keep at it and keep sending your work off - no matter how many rejection letters you get."

Creative Writing programme leader Robert Graham said: "It was clear as soon as he set his suitcase down on our campus that James had talent to burn.

"I've been teaching undergraduate Creative Writing since 1994, and I've never seen a student do so well so quickly.

"All of us at MMU Cheshire are immensely proud of him and look forward to following what will surely be a starry career."

## Ashley keeps his eye on the ball

**Ashley James tells *Success* how he came to be a physiotherapist at the Welsh Rugby Union.**



**A**s a sport-mad teenager, Ashley James knew that he wanted to pursue a career on the pitch. But despite being selected for the Wales under-18 rugby union squad, it was Ashley's experience watching the physiotherapists who helped his granddad recover from a heart condition that really inspired him.

Now North Wales physiotherapist for the Welsh Rugby Union, Ashley studied for a BSc (Hons) in Physiotherapy at MMU.

After graduating and finding the NHS career route limited, Ashley set up his own practice working in a gym and treating high-level athletes including pole vaulters, gymnasts and footballers. After a year he returned to his first love of rugby, where he worked with the younger teams before being offered the position of Rygbi Gogledd Cymru (RGC) Senior and Academy Physiotherapist.

Ashley said: "My job involves the medical care for all regional players from

senior level down to under-16. I have developed injury prevention programmes to be disseminated throughout the region as low as under-14.

"And to aid the development of the region and future physiotherapists, I recently set up a link with MMU to provide two recently qualified physiotherapists to cover the under-16 and under-18 teams through their regional age grade campaign against all the other regions in Wales."

For those wishing to follow in his footsteps, Ashley says hard work and the determination to stay continually up-to-date with new ideas are key.

"The beginning of a career in sport can be extremely challenging as you're expected to do a lot of work for very little or no money, so be prepared to persevere!"

# Events at MMU to attract thousands of visitors

box office

**A** postcard from Damien Hirst is just one of the creations by world-class artists to go on display at MMU this season.

The *Artists' Postcard Show* will also feature work by Gilbert and George, Gillian Wearing and John Cage and will run at the Holden Gallery from 7 December to 24 January.

The show will follow an exhibition of work by two Chinese photographers, Chi Peng and Wang Fu Chun, which runs from 19 October to 22 November, and precedes an exploration of cities and the people who live there, *Archive City*, which runs from 3 February to 15 March.

The current exhibition of paintings by Anthony Ratcliffe, *Shoreline and Watershed*, runs until December, and will be followed by an exhibition on the theme of Art Nouveau, featuring items from across the collections.

Thousands of visitors have already flocked to MMU this year, to see the work of renowned graphic designer Malcolm Garrett, meet top authors at the Manchester Children's Book Festival, or watch one of the excellent productions put on at the Capitol Theatre and the Axis Arts Centre.

The spring season at the Capitol Theatre and the Axis Art Centre will be announced in December.

Tutor and director at the Capitol Theatre, David Shirley, said: "Following the success of the autumn season, we are currently finalising the productions for

next term. As always, we can promise a genuinely exciting and highly entertaining programme that will appeal to a broad range of tastes. Check out the Capitol Theatre website for further details and book early to avoid disappointment!"

For more information about arts events at MMU, visit:

[www.axisartscenter.org.uk](http://www.axisartscenter.org.uk)

[www.capitoltheatre.mmu.ac.uk](http://www.capitoltheatre.mmu.ac.uk)

[www.holdengallery.mmu.ac.uk](http://www.holdengallery.mmu.ac.uk)

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Business graduate, Steven Clarke,  
Sales Executive at  
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*Manchester Metropolitan University values its relationships with companies, organisations and alumni, and is keen to make new connections. To find out more about any of the schemes or stories in this issue, please contact us.*

## Contact us

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