

THE IMPACT OF YOUR SUPPORT



Now more than ever, we are incredibly grateful for the generous support of our alumni and donors. Each and every donation has a very real impact on our work, developing people and research which are focussed on improving society. The generous gifts of our alumni offer students the opportunity to fulfil their potential, regardless of their background or personal circumstances. They ensure that we can deliver more support to our students facing hardship as the challenges caused by Covid-19 have increased demand for

emergency funding. We have also been able to respond to the increasing demand for mental health and wellbeing provision, providing flexible online support to all of our students. Through donations like yours, we are able to give our students the best possible chance of personal and professional success, as well as progressing vital research that will improve the health of communities locally and globally.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

Thank you so much
for your generosity.



At St George's, we are inspiring and shaping the future generation of healthcare professionals, and your kind donations allow us to help them thrive here, whatever their background or personal circumstances.

As we enter a new academic year, the generous donations of our alumni, friends and supporters allow us to provide the best academic and emotional support to our students, despite the new challenges they face through the Covid-19 pandemic. We are also able to ensure that financial hardship is not a barrier to our students' success as the impact of the last few months is felt across our community.

We are proud to be at the forefront of vital healthcare research, and the launch of the Coronavirus Action Fund has helped us equip our facilities to tackle the Covid-19 outbreak. Your donations have supported our researchers to inform national and international discussions around the treatment, diagnostics and a vaccine for the disease, while continuing to improve health and transform lives.

We recently had an overwhelming response from alumni willing to provide careers and wellbeing advice to students and recent graduates – it is so helpful to have your personal stories. Others

have helped interview prospective students or have appeared on a careers panel. Thank you for sharing your knowledge and experience of life after graduation with our students – the gift of your time is really appreciated.

Thank you once again from all of us at St George's. I will keep you informed of developments across the University over the coming months, and would love to hear from you about why you support St George's. Please keep in touch and I hope we will soon be in a position to welcome those of you who would like to come back to the University and express our gratitude in person.

Warmest Wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Jenny Higham'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Professor Jenny Higham
Principal

CORONAVIRUS ACTION FUND

Our St George's Coronavirus Action Fund was launched in May this year to develop our specialist research environment to equip our experts to respond to the current emergency.

The Coronavirus Action Fund provides funding to help develop our facilities so that our scientists can carry out essential research into the immunology, virology and genetics of coronavirus and to inform advances in new diagnostics, new treatments and a vaccine.

Funding will allow us to support a number of teams delivering research across our portfolio of Covid-19 activity.

Through the Coronavirus Action Fund, we are helping our scientists to make vital progress in understanding and responding to coronavirus. Donations like yours allow us to broaden and accelerate the important work underway at St George's.

Our researchers are also influencing public health policy and providing evidence-based information and advice to front-line healthcare practitioners. Online courses developed by our experts are providing key guidance to healthcare professionals worldwide on treating patients with coronavirus.

It is thanks to your help that we are able to carry out groundbreaking research to tackle this devastating disease and shape a healthier future when we emerge from the pandemic.

"I think the fund is a fantastic cause. It's really important to make sure that we can make the right adjustments to our facilities so that they are ready and equipped to expand our Covid research."

Dr Elisabetta Gropelli, virologist and lecturer in Global Health (non-clinical)

"The Coronavirus Action Fund is a great way of supporting smaller projects as it gives the researchers a chance to receive essential funding."

Dr Kai Hilpert, Associate Professor (Reader) of Infection and Immunity



Visit sgul.ac.uk/caf/thankyou to hear what Dr Elisabetta Gropelli, Professor Sanjeev Krishna and Professor Julian Ma had to say to donors about the impact of funding on their research.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS FACING HARDSHIP

At St George's, we recognise that there is a rising need to support the many students who experience financial difficulty. In the current climate, many of our students are no longer able to rely on a part-time job to fund their studies, and our students face the additional challenge of the increased expense of studying at a London university.

The Access to Learning Fund exists to support students' essential living costs when they are faced with unexpected or emergency financial burdens, so that the cost of living need not be a barrier to their learning. You will see from our student testimonials how significant the impact of alumni support has been for three of our students.

The Hardship Fund
(known by students as the
Access to Learning fund)

A total of
£10,000
was donated towards student hardship

Alumni support allowed us
to provide funding to
43 students



HARDSHIP FUND - STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

“Even after saving for years to attend the course, I was left with very little to live off after tuition fees were paid. I budgeted carefully and was cutting every corner I could to keep up with rent and other essential payments. I had planned to get a job over the summer to help pay for living costs for the next three years. The Covid-19 outbreak has put these plans on hold. The fund was a huge help in allowing me to continue with my studies without the worry of being unable to pay bills.

“Thank you for all your help in supporting the fund, you are making a huge difference in allowing social mobility and ensuring that even the poorest students have the opportunity to study medicine.”

James, 1st year student

“I had to leave my family household due to being a victim of emotional and physical abuse. I had put up with it for a long time for personal and financial reasons, until it reached a critical point. I applied to the Access to Learning Fund to pay for a few months of accommodation so that I could focus on my studies.

“Thank you for contributing to this fund. As medical students, we find ourselves in a situation where we are in limbo for a protracted time between being youths and being adults. This presents unique financial struggles and the fund allowed me to continue studying and made day-to-day life a bit easier.”

Nadine, 1st year student

“I applied for support from the Access to Learning fund as I was struggling financially after my Mum was made homeless during the academic year. This meant that I had nowhere to go during the summer break and had to either cover the cost of accommodation or run the risk of living in my car.

“To every person who has contributed to the fund, there are no words that can truly express the magnitude of my gratitude. The fund has allowed me to live in a safe place instead of sleeping in my car over the summer, waiting for the next academic year to start.”

“Thank you for allowing me to have one less source of stress during these unprecedented times. Thank you for your generosity and your kindness to help others who are struggling.”

Aysha, 2nd year student

Thanks to your donations, we are increasing our contributions to the hardship fund for 2020-21.

*Names have been changed for privacy.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SUPPORT

Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund

The generous gifts of our alumni have allowed us to continue increasing mental health and wellbeing support across the university, funding a new Welfare Officer role last year. Thanks to the ongoing support of our alumni, we have been able to help fund the role for another year.

The Welfare Officer, Lon Teija, provides support on academic procedures and on welfare issues, including helping students deal with mental health issues and major life changes. This flexible and unlimited service has played a key role in providing remote support as our students adjust to a new way of living and studying, or experience social isolation, during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Alumni donations have also helped give our students access to Togetherall, a 24-hour online support service offering support, guidance and self-guided support courses available on a range of topics, from coping with grief to stress management. Fifty users have registered for the service since the beginning of the last academic year, with 24 self-guided support courses published on the platform since last year.

Since Lon joined the team over


300 sessions

have been held supporting

100 students

“It is so valuable to be able to spend enough time with students to really help them get back on their feet and feeling well again.”

Lon Teija, Student Welfare Officer



Since the beginning of lockdown in March, Lon has supported

40

new students and over

100

online support sessions have been held by video call and email

“I don’t think I would have carried on at University without this service. The accessibility and reliability of the service makes such a difference”

Charlotte had found the transition from taking a gap year to studying a busy healthcare degree challenging and had suffered from depression in the past. She had previously used the University’s counselling service, which allows students to access eight free sessions. She explains, “I found these sessions helpful, but then last year after I was raped, I found it really difficult to speak to anyone.

She decided to access the Education and Welfare support drop-in sessions provided by the Students’ Union and says, “Speaking to Lon completely changed my life - she was really easy to open up to. No other service is so reliable, and the fact that support is unlimited and flexible is really helpful. I don’t think I would have carried on at University without this service. She adds, “Since using the service, I feel more

comfortable within myself and more confident in my own abilities, which will hopefully help me in my future career as a doctor.”

Charlotte, also uses the service to talk through different career paths and tells us, “It really helps to explore different options available to me after I graduate. She strongly recommends the service to other students, saying “The accessibility really makes a difference and it’s a calm, open environment.” Speaking about St George’s, Charlotte adds, “Studying here feels really integrated. It’s a small, close community and I feel better knowing there’s always somewhere to go and someone to turn to.”

Charlotte* Medicine student

*Names have been changed for privacy.

PRIZES AND BURSARIES

Our prizes and bursaries are a vital way to allow all students an equal opportunity to thrive at St George's, whatever their background, specialism or area of interest. They allow our students the chance to gain valuable experience outside the classroom and develop their knowledge both within, and outside of, their course subject. Philanthropic support continues to allow us to support our students in broadening their horizons beyond the curriculum at St George's.



NOEL GOWING PATHOLOGY PRIZE

Organised by the Pathology Museum and funded by philanthropic support, the annual Pathology Exhibition prize is held in memory of Professor Noel Gowing, a Founding Fellow of The Royal College of Pathologists and, for many years, one of the most respected diagnostic histopathologists in the UK. This year's competition took the form of a Pathology Poster Award to encourage a broad range of students from across the University to enter.

First Prize was awarded to Emily Sapsed for her poster on Tuberculosis in the 20th Century. Final year medic, Emily, joined St George's on the graduate entry medical course. Prior to choosing medicine she studied Biology and worked in a clinical laboratory. She comments, "Having a scientific foundation prior to studying medicine has meant that the fields of pathology and microbiology have always been of particular interest to me."

"I am incredibly grateful to receive the prize and cannot thank you enough for putting together this competition. I intend to use the money to buy some postgraduate medical books which are very expensive but will hopefully aid me in preparing for postgraduate exams. I really enjoyed researching my poster, and it provided a real motivation to continue being productive in the awkward period between finals and results."

Emily is now looking forward to starting her first-year placement as a doctor in renal medicine at Charing Cross and Hammersmith adding, "I have not had the chance to have any renal placements at University – so there should be lots of new things to learn."

ALISTAIR HUNTER SPORTS BURSARY

At St George's, many of our students have a passion for sport, representing teams at local, national and international level.

The cost of competing, combined with the high cost of living and studying in London, can act as a barrier to some students taking part. The Alistair Hunter Fund exists to help students fulfil their potential and achieve their ambitions outside of the classroom, by helping them meet the financial demands of competing. Biomedical Science student and Alistair Hunter Fund recipient, Fiona McIntosh spoke to us about how the Alistair Hunter Fund has helped her continue her rugby training remotely through lockdown.

"Before the Covid-19 outbreak, we were training for a summer destinations tour in America along with the Canadian team. Unfortunately, given the circumstances, this has been postponed and we

have had to find new ways to continue training. This includes home weights sessions, home skills sessions and lots of running sessions!

"Receiving the Alistair Hunter Sports Bursary has made this transition a lot easier. It has allowed me to buy some basic home gym equipment so I can continue with my weight training. It has also allowed me to buy equipment to help me track my workouts and send the details to my strength and conditioning coach to continue receiving personalised guidance and make sure I'm doing the most effective training to be ready to play when we start again.

"In the near future I will start small group training at my new premiership club (Saracens Women) for the coming season. The fund will mean I can buy some new boots that are better suited to the surface that we will be training on."



"The Alistair Hunter Sports Bursary has helped me ensure I'm doing the most effective training to be ready to play when we start again"



VOLUNTEERING

Our alumni volunteers give back something of real value to the University. The knowledge and experience they share makes a real difference, particularly at a challenging time when students are seeking guidance and support. Whether alumni have provided a career profile, spoken at a careers event, shared their story, or interviewed prospective students through our Multiple Mini Interview (MMI) scheme, we really appreciate the time they have given.

50 Alumni volunteers
in 2019-20

31 career profiles
provided in the last year to give valuable
career insight to current students

15 alumni
signed up for MMI assessor training



KEEP IN TOUCH



I ❤️ St George's

Thank you for supporting our students. We really value our alumni's continued donations. If you'd like to find out more about our fundraising, set up regular donations, make a one-off gift or get involved in volunteering, find out more at sgul.ac.uk/for-alumni/support-us or get in touch via the email address below.

We are always keen to hear from our alumni and hope we are able to welcome you back to St George's again soon. In the meantime, if you would like to speak to a member of the team about holding your own event or reunion, you can get in touch by email or connect with us on our alumni Facebook page.

Development and Alumni Office
External Relations, Communications and Marketing
St George's, University of London
London
Cranmer Terrace
SW14 0RE

Telephone: 0207 266 6195

Email: alumni@sgul.ac.uk



@StGeorgesAlumni

