THANK YOU
COVID-19 Student Emergency Fund

Thanks to donations from hundreds of Newcastle University alumni, staff and friends, the COVID-19 Student Emergency Fund has been able to support so many of our students directly impacted by the pandemic.

One such student who received a bursary was Eleojo (pictured right), a PhD scholar whose thesis is concerned with geographies of primary healthcare services in Nigeria and is aiming to make evidence based recommendations with a view to informing policy and practice for improving the health and wellbeing of disadvantaged population subgroups.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has had great effect on my personal finances. There has been a drastic reduction in part-time employment opportunities with which to financially support my studies at Newcastle University.

The financial support I received from the University has been invaluable in securing both my personal wellbeing and ensuring the timely completion of my thesis. Without this, it would have been impossible to meet my basic needs at the peak of the COVID-19 lockdown and focus fully on my studies at a vital time. Due my personal circumstances, I was unable to seek financial help from family back home. The funds I received from the bursary were my only source of financial support during the COVID-19 outbreak. They greatly alleviated the potential negative effects of the pandemic and facilitated the timely submission of my thesis.

I thank donors for their invaluable financial support for effected students like myself. From my personal experience, I can assure you that your donations make positive impacts on the wellbeing of recipients. Without these donations, students like me, with genuine financial difficulties, would not have been able to meet their basic needs during lockdown.”
COVID-19 Student Emergency Fund

Sidharth (pictured inset), studying Electronics Engineering, was another who received a bursary made possible by your donations. Sidharth is also working to help the healthcare industry. His work is interdisciplinary and borrows a problem statement from genomics. He is working to produce a novel solution that allows the processing of massive amounts of genomic data produced in an energy-efficient manner. Thus assisting bioinformaticians and geneticists by allowing cost effective processing and analysis of data.

"The COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown measures hampered my studies significantly. Due to the laboratory facilities closing, my work stopped at a critical stage. As a result, I had to extend my submission deadlines. This was an extremely stressful situation and was not something I had been anticipating.

Thankfully, I received financial support from the COVID-19 Emergency Fund set-up by the University to help students facing immediate financial difficulties. This helped cover my living costs and the shortfall of losing work.

I had been working as an academic support worker assisting disabled students with note-taking and other general university work, this also came to an end. Due to lockdown I did not have other sources of income. It was a big weight on my shoulders.

I would like to sincerely present my gratitude and thanks to the donors who supported me, and my fellow students, in this time of need. The financial support has greatly helped me. Thank you."
Sanctuary Scholarship - A Thank You Letter from Joe

*I always wanted to study at University, but everyone told me that I can’t because I am an asylum seeker. When I learned that Newcastle University was offering a scholarship for asylum seekers and refugees, I was so excited. Even though my chances to get it were low, I was inspired and I didn’t give up.*

*I immediately went to the University and got all the information I needed so that I could apply the very next day. I was amazed how big and beautiful the University is, I loved it.*

*It was an amazing surprise when I got the scholarship acceptance email. I was overjoyed. I was so excited! I can’t thank you enough, every single individual who helped make this happen. This is a one in a lifetime chance for me and it will change my life for the better.*

*I will be studying Chemical Engineering with a Foundation Year. My interest in the subject started at a career event in my school when I was still in Lebanon. I already had an interest in chemistry and engineering and after speaking to someone who was in the field, I decided that this would be the perfect course for me.*

*I am still deciding which part of Chemical Engineering I would like to get involved with when I have finished my studies but I have a lot of options open to me. From petrol to medical or even working in the food industry. Hopefully, I will be able to work and make a life in the UK and continue to make the most of the opportunity I have received.*

*Thank you again for giving me this opportunity. It means so much.*
Undergraduate Opportunity Scholarships

With the help of our donors, Newcastle University awards every student in need an annual scholarship of £1,000 or £2,000. This is the equivalent of 10-20% of their living expenses and makes a huge difference to a student struggling to find the money to pay for rent, food, transport and vital course materials.

Grace (pictured above), is an Opportunity Scholarship recipient and English Literature student at Newcastle University. The financial support has made a real difference to her:

"The Opportunity Scholarship has made a difference to me especially in my first year. If I didn’t have that extra money I would have to work in a job a lot more, which means I would have less time for my studies. It means I can be a lot more self-reliant. I’ve used a bit of the scholarship to give me an extra boost for my weekly budget; food and bills and the like. The rest I’ve put in my savings to use in case I have any unexpected costs later in the year, say if my laptop broke or I needed to invest in something for university. It means I don’t have to worry as much.

A little can definitely go a long way to someone who doesn’t have much. It’s made a big impact on my life and I’m sure it does for the others who get this funding, as it affects our quality of living at university in a very positive way. Thank you to those who support students like me."
Undergraduate Opportunity Scholarships

Support from alumni and donors helped us award means tested scholarships to 1,331 new students from low income households in 2019-20. With your ongoing support, we are able to honour our ongoing commitment to social mobility.

Mollie (pictured below), is an Opportunity Scholarship recipient and Mechanical Engineering student who has plans to join the RAF, and become an Aero Systems Engineer, after finishing her degree at Newcastle University. She has just completed her first year of study and this is her message of how the financial support she has received has made a difference:

"The scholarship is a huge reassurance for both me and my family, knowing that I’m going to be able to survive and make the most of my time at Newcastle. It’s made such a difference and means I’m not constantly worrying about budgeting and any unexpected payments that I might struggle with, even simple things like needing to go home for an emergency. It makes a huge difference. My family haven’t got the money to provide what other families might be able to, so it’s been really good to know I’m not going to struggle as a result. It also means I’m not missing out on anything, as well as knowing I’m not going to make my Mum uncomfortable by asking for money that she might not have or stress about. I don’t need to worry about money for stationary, equipment and food shops."

With your support we can empower even more students in need, like Mollie.
Students Sumaiya Aziz and Hooman Valizadeh are the first Newcastle University students to be awarded Stephen Lawrence (pictured inset) bursaries. The 19-year-olds will have their fees and a contribution to living expenses paid for the duration of their three year degree, under a collaboration between the University and the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust. The bursaries are part of the Trust’s Building Futures programme, which supports students from under-represented backgrounds to study and qualify as architects.

“I feel so lucky to have been awarded this scholarship,” says Sumaiya, from Burnley, who has wanted to be an architect since she was a child. “I used to tell my uncle I wanted to be an architect even before I really understood what an architect was. Then as I got older and learned more about it, I realised it really was what I wanted to be.” Sumaiya knew she wanted to study at Newcastle University after visiting the institution.

Hooman, from Essex, says: “I feel very honoured to have been awarded this scholarship. I feel very grateful for this support, especially as most of my family is many miles away. I knew it was a good university and a good place to study architecture and that’s why I wanted to study here,” Hooman joins his older brother in Newcastle where he is currently studying at the Dental School.

Dr Juliet Odgers, Director of Architecture at Newcastle University’s school of Architecture, Planning and Landscape said: “We are delighted to welcome Sumaiya and Hooman into the first year of our BA in Architecture. It is a privilege to be working with the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust to support young people from underrepresented backgrounds in this demanding and exciting area of professional study.”
Professor Jimmy Steele Memorial Fund

In setting up this appeal in his name and memory, it was hoped that the legacy of Professor Jimmy Steele MBE (pictured below) would live on, not only to offer opportunity to future students of dental sciences but to inspire them, too.

"Taking the step to start to study Dentistry can be very daunting for prospective students from less privileged backgrounds. Embarking on a five-year degree with all the financial burdens that this involves can be too much when families and young people are already struggling. This kind of problem should never be the barrier to talented people who have a passion to study to be a dentist and fulfil their dreams."
Professor Katie Bushby MD FRCP
Jimmy’s wife.

Thanks to your generous donations it will be possible to support more students from disadvantaged backgrounds follow a career in the Dental Sciences here at Newcastle University.

"Thank you for supporting this appeal. We will be using the monies donated to the Jimmy Steele Memorial Fund to assist those from less privileged and or under-represented groups with their ongoing studies at Newcastle. In the current academic year there will be a focus on any students who are facing challenging circumstances because of the ongoing pandemic or come from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds."
Professor Justin Durham
Head of School of Dental Sciences
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