

Alumni News

Winter 2015

Introduction

Joanne Conaghan, Head of School



On behalf of all in the University of Bristol Law School I am delighted to introduce you to our new alumni newsletter. This is part of a wave of initiatives currently in train to foster communication and strengthen relations between the School and its alumni. In this newsletter I want to share with you the many ways our alumni are helping the Law School to achieve its objective of nurturing and developing the exceptional talent of our students.

In recent years you have helped us raise over £3.1million to e-upgrade and refurbish the [Wills Memorial Library](#), giving us a study environment fit for purpose in the 21st century. There have been many **widening participation schemes** made possible by alumni to address the financial challenges faced by many students and ensure we are able to attract the very best talent, wherever it may reside. And the growth of our **Law Clinic**, a fantastic initiative that enables students to take on pro-bono legal advice work in the community and gain essential employability skills, has been made possible, in part, because of your support.

As a **Top 10 UK Law school**, we acknowledge the ongoing generosity of our thriving alumni community. This has played a huge part in us realising our ambition to provide the very richest experience and grounding for our students. This year alone we have twenty-five senior judges, barristers and partners in leading law firms coming to give guest lectures as part of our [Distinguished Alumni Lecture Programme](#). A number of you are also participating in our **Law School Professional Mentoring Scheme**, thus ensuring our students benefit from the advice and experience of those in whose footsteps they now walk.

And it goes beyond what you can provide to those studying today. You're part of an inspirational, global network of more than 116,000 former Bristol students. In this newsletter we bring you the thoughts of Maxime Claude Nersès (LLM 2013) on the devastation he felt after the **Paris terrorist attacks**—and the comfort he gained from fellow alumni reaching out when he most needed support.

As we move towards Christmas and a new year, we hope you are inspired by the sentiment of **giving and receiving** which underpins the news we are bringing to you today.

NEWS



Michael Ford QC: 'Employment Silk of the Year'. The Law School congratulates alumnus Professor Michael Ford QC (LLB 1986) on receiving this prestigious award at the Chambers UK Bar Awards last month.

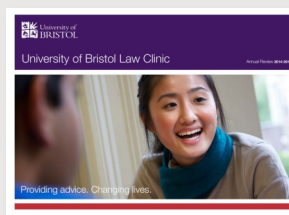
"I hope the work I've been involved with will help teaching students employment law, giving them a flavour of some of the issues which arise in practice."

[Law students receive legacy scholarships.](#)

Five law students were awarded a £9,000 scholarship earlier this month thanks to a legacy from Alumna Sheila Anderson (LLB 1956).



"The thought behind helping those from more modest backgrounds to take the opportunity of a world-education is one that I will be forever thankful for."



[Law Clinic Annual Review: Providing advice. Changing lives.](#)

The first annual review from the University of Bristol's Law Clinic outlines its provision of pro-bono legal advice to those that most need it - whilst students gain solid clinical legal education.

"We are hugely grateful to colleagues, students and alumni donors for helping us turn our vision for the Law Clinic into a reality."

[First Maitland Chambers Speed Mooting Competition for Bristol Law Students](#)

November saw the first Speed Mooting competition hosted by the Bar Society. The judges, Alan Johns from Maitland Chambers, and Nkumbe Ekaney QC from Albion Chambers, and Bristol alumnus, both commented on the ability of all competitors to think on their feet.



Reigniting the Passion



Alumni Dinner

Under the banner 'Reigniting the Passion' and in the presence of distinguished guest the Chancellor, Baroness Hale, law graduates stretching from the 1960s to the present day, together with current Law School staff and student representatives met for a convivial, sell-out, dinner at the Athenaeum Club, London on Thursday 5 November. Head of School, Professor Joanne Conaghan, spoke about the Law School's successes and how alumni have contributed to that. Mr Justice Mostyn (LLB 1979) gave a very witty after-dinner speech and will be 'performing' again on 9 March 2016 when he will sit with fellow alumni Lady Justice Sharp and retired High court judge Sir Richard Field to judge the Second Year Mooting Competition final. The event will be held in court 34 of the Royal Courts of Justice. [Full reunion story](#)

Law School Advisory Board

The recently retired Vice Chancellor, Sir Eric Thomas, encouraged the idea of a board of alumni to assist the Law School. The Law School Advisory board was born. It sees one of its roles as working with the School to strengthen still further alumni engagement with students and the School.

Current members comprise an Upper Tribunal Judge (Tim Herrington LLB 1975), former head of the office of the Parliamentary Counsel (Sir Stephen Laws LLB 1972), award winning TV and radio presenter Aasmah Mir (LLB 1993), barrister Katrina Yates (MA 2004), co-founder of bet365 John Coates (LLB 1992), law firm partner Jonathan Bower (LLB 1998) and the board's chair Dan Schaffer (LLB 1986).

The Advisory Board is keen to expand the channels for advice and support to students on their employability. If you are willing and able to be part of a team offering ad hoc guidance to students on their CVs and on-line applications, their interview technique, their career path (whether within or outside the law) then we want you! In an increasingly competitive market place Bristol law students are asking for this. You will make a difference.

If you would like to help, in particular with an interview practice day, contact [Dan Schaffer](#) or [Dr Oliver Quick](#).



Inspiring Aspiration

Sam Unsworth, President of the Law Club (UBLIC), attended the November 5th reunion to provide insight into the role the Alumni Network plays in providing students with the skills and knowledge that employers are looking for;

"The support from graduates is making a huge difference to law students' prospects."
[Full story](#)



Young Alumni Reunion 2016

Next summer we will be celebrating our most recent graduates (2011 – 2015, inclusive) who will be invited to a reunion dinner in Bristol on Saturday 9 July 2016 to coincide with the university's alumni weekend.

Details will be published on the website shortly.
If you are interested in attending, please contact alumni@bristol.ac.uk to get on the mailing list.

A supportive network



A view from Paris

Maxime Claude Nersès FRANCOIS (LLM 2013) is currently working as Legal counsel in litigation and arbitration for Thalès in Paris. He knew three of the victims of the recent events in Paris. Here he writes that whilst the attacks were an assault on his country, it's people and their values, they also prompted unprecedented solidarity. For Maxime this meant support from Alumni around the globe

No one can pretend to ignore what happened in Paris on this sweet evening of November 2015. As a former Bristol University student (LLM 2012-2013) and a French national living in Paris, I was a witness to one of the darkest moments of French history which triggered many reactions around the world and I wanted to write about it since writing is part of the healing process.

Liberté – Freedom

The terrorist attacks which took place in Paris deeply affected multiple freedoms cherished by many Parisians. Going to the stadium to see a soccer match, to restaurant and cafes to enjoy some Friday drinks or to concert halls to listen to music became dangerous actions which lead to the deaths of more than a hundred lives.

When terrorism hit Paris in January of this year, the targets were identified: they were caricaturists from the French satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo, they were policemen, and they were people from the Jewish community. But this time no one was specifically targeted as the aim was to mass murder a huge number of Parisian people. No designated religion, no designated job or cultural affiliations were put forward by the terrorists, just the plain idea of killing.

This was an attempt to kill the idea of freedom, the freedom of living.

Egalité – Equality

These attacks are also epitomizing the breach towards the principle of equality which feeds the French tradition. In a country where since 1789 every human should be treated as equal without any discrimination and difference, the act of some are meant to dictate the reactions of others.

Even if we are not equal towards death, some people, in the name of an interpretation of their religion, just decided to end lives sooner than they should last. If no specific gender, religion was targeted, youth was mostly hit by the Paris attacks. Equality, along with freedom, means that you have some choices in your lives: some people are religious, some are not, some drink alcohol and some decide not to, and there is an infinite list of examples such as those.

This was an attempt to kill the idea that everyone is equal towards making their own choices, and unfortunately the aim was reached.

Fraternité – Brotherhood

If my message started on a pessimist mood, it will end with a brighter one. Brotherhood was represented through all the reactions post-attacks in Paris. It was symbolized by the people from Paris who spontaneously opened their doors for the wounded and those who could not get back home to safety, by the people on social networks and media encouraging Paris to become strong again through the terror and through the international reaction in general.

I personally received messages from my LLM friends from all around the world, whether they come from the USA, Cyprus, Greece, India, Kenya, St Vincent and Grenadines, Malaysia, Thailand, Germany... All were showing both support and kindness and, believe me, in harsh times like those I lived it makes a huge difference.

This was an attempt to kill the idea of brotherhood, it did not succeed.

More international news

The Law school is a very diverse community drawing students and staff from around the world. This is something of which we are rightly proud and we are keen to reach out to our alumni around the globe and to continue to attract outstanding international students.

Hong Kong: Congratulations to Celeste Lo (MA 2012) and Steve Cheng (LLB 2009) for creating '[Bristol Young Lawyers](#)', as a networking group for Bristol law graduates working in Hong Kong. The first few events have been well attended and the group has attracted a large Facebook following.

Malaysia: The School is grateful to Azim, Tunku Farik & Wong Advocate and Solicitors for being the first Malaysian sponsor of our successful [International Internship Scholar Scheme](#).

Singapore: Dr Oliver Quick has hosted two alumni dinners for Singaporean Bristolians over the past two years. The next event is planned for April 2016.

Law School update

Human Rights

Human Rights Day is observed by the international community every year on 10 December. It commemorates the day in 1948 when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This year's theme is "Our Rights. Our Freedoms. Always." In this section we explore how the university is contributing to the associated debates, particularly in light of proposals by the government to replace the Human Rights Act with a British Bill of Rights.



Research: Study reveals flaws in Bill of Rights

The British Bill of Rights raises fundamental issues according to new study by Professor Steven Greer and researcher Rosie Slowe. Its findings were published in the *European Human Rights Law Review*, Sept 2015.



Blog: The right to strike is a human right.

In a [Policy Bristol blog](#) Professors Tonia Novitz (pictured) and Michael Ford QC argue that the Trade Union Bill will reduce protection for workers, their organisations and their civil liberties.



Opinion: A right to education for every child

Professor Devyani Prabhat, [discusses](#) how children should be central to the legal analysis of any decision that affects their lives – particularly in regards to citizenship and access to education.



News: Inaction on torture protocol is 'embarrassing'

Irish Times: As chair of the UN's subcommittee on the prevention of torture, Professor Malcolm Evans [expressed frustration](#) at Ireland's failure to adequately implement the UN Torture Protocol.

You're part of an inspirational, global network of more than 119,000 former Bristol students. Keep in touch online or in person at one of our events.

www.bristol.ac.uk/alumni/reconnect