

University of
South Wales
Prifysgol
De Cymru

Alumni and Supporter Gala Evening 2018

USW Alumni

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Get involved

Your relationship with USW doesn't end at graduation

Many of our former students play an active role within the University community.

Providing invaluable support; volunteering your time and expertise is the perfect way to keep yourself connected to the University. Help build a dynamic alumni network, meet new people and share your University experience with others. Whether organising a reunion, mentoring a student or inspiring the next generation - and depending on the time you have available and your interests - there are plenty of ways you can get involved with the University of South Wales.

In the last year or so our alumni volunteers and event organisers have helped connect guests to a wide range of events and initiatives - from a BBQ social in Dubai to dinner and networking in Kuala Lumpur, to a Polytechnic of Wales Football Club reunion weekend in Pontypridd to a 'Big Weekend' in Athens.

Why not make this year the year you get involved

To find out more visit: southwales.ac.uk/alumni/get-involved



USW Alumni

Introduction

We are delighted to welcome you here tonight to our evening of celebration and thanks.

Volunteers, donors and corporate partners mean so much to the University. You all help us deliver a first-class student experience and ensure that the University retains its position as the University for careers and the employer's partner. Thank you.

Our Alumni Awards help us celebrate the excellence and achievement of individuals within our global network - many of whom directly support our current students. We hope the stories you hear and the connections you make tonight will inspire you to continue your support of the University of South Wales.

Tonight we are also raising money for our 2018/19 Student Experience Fund – an annual grant initiative helping students enhance the opportunities they have whilst studying at the University. Where you can, please do show your generosity to this appeal.

We hope you have an enjoyable evening.



Rachael Barker
Head of Alumni Relations and Development

This evening's proceedings

Drinks Reception – 7.00pm



Vice-Chancellor's address



Dining



Alumni Awards presentation



Live entertainment



Carriages – Midnight

Graduate of the Last Decade

To celebrate a young alumnus/a who has graduated within the last 10 years and who has demonstrated exceptional achievement and leadership potential in their chosen profession.

James Button

Film maker, James Button Films

BA (Hons) Film and Video, 2013



Since graduating, James has written/directed/edited/produced twelve short films, collectively nabbing 39 awards at international film festivals and competitions. He has over a hundred nominations to date and his

work is a consistent hit with global audiences, even being shortlisted in Sundance competition and being nominated for the IMDB New Filmmaker award. He has had viral success with 'The Goat' and 'The Corpse Series' - the latter gaining notoriety at major genre festivals, where critics have likened the comedy to Shaun Of The Dead. The film has picked up 5 awards and two BAFTA Cymru Nominations for Best Short Film and Writer at the 2017 Awards.

James frequently returns to USW to share his insight with current students.

Dan Da Rocha

Games Designer and Producer

BA (Hons) Computer Games Design, 2010



An active member of the international games circuit – and regular alumni volunteer with USW Games - Dan initially co-founded Toxic Games having won funding from the US Based Indie Fund totaling \$90k. This final year

student project 'Q.U.B.E.' was released in 2012 and the game was such a success that the original investment was paid back in only 4 days! Dan went on to form Mudvark Games with fellow graduates Henry Hoffman and Rhys Thomas and their most notable success was Mortar Melon in 2013. Seven years on from graduation, Dan has produced more games including the multi-award winning, Hue and the upcoming Q.U.B.E. 2. Dan has been nominated for over 30 awards and was listed in Develop's 30 Under 30. He has also served as a BAFTA Games judge.

Gemma Hallett

Founder, MiFuture

Postgraduate Certificate of Education, 2008



Gemma Hallett is on a mission to mobilise 100,000 young people into prosperity and employability. Following graduation she launched miFuture - an online digital solution to connect young people with career and

employment opportunities. With no investment or knowledge of technology she has driven the concept to increasing heights and is really starting to disrupt the edtech space. However it's not always been about gaining achievement in this field, as Gemma has always been an inspirational female on the more traditional field of rugby. Gem started her international rugby career in 2006 and represented Wales for 7 years, achieving a phenomenal 35 caps and 45 appearances, representing Wales at Six Nations, World Cup, and European Championships.

Joseph Powell

Director, All Wales People First

BA (Hons) English and Creative Writing, 2014



Joe found re-entering education daunting after having a challenging school experience and it was only in his early 20s that he was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome and many of the difficulties he faced 'clicked.'

Taking an active part in developing a film about the condition, Jo was inspired to take up his course at Caerleon where he worked closely with the University's Student Services Team who supported him as he transitioned into uni life. Having transferred his studies to English and Creative Writing, Joe excelled and graduated with a 2:1. Building on his own personal experiences Joe is now Director for All Wales People First - an organisation for, and led by men and women with a learning disability in Wales.

Inspiring The Next Generation

Recognising a graduate who has volunteered their support to the University of South Wales, providing inspiration to current and prospective students.

Julie Jones

Author

BA (Hons) Creative and Professional Writing, 2015



The Daily Mirror's 'Woman of the Year' in 2010, single mum Julie Jones was inspired to go to university through encouragement from Sarah Brown, wife of the former Prime Minister Gordon Brown, having met her at an

International Women's Day event at Downing Street. A route she never thought she would take as a mature student and with wider family commitments, Julie is an advocate of how USW has transformed her life both personally and professionally. Julie's route to graduation has been an inspiration for classmates around her and has been a real time example of what can be achieved through hard work and persistence. Julie will be publishing her first book this year.

Elaine Phillips

Healthcare

BSc (Hons) Health and Social Care Management, 2017



A mature student who started her studies in her mid 40s, Elaine has been an inspirational figure to others around her despite being diagnosed with dyslexia and a life-changing brain condition. Graduating with

first class honours in 2017, Elaine showed tenacity and personal drive to succeed throughout her studies and as her course leader commented, 'she is a great role model for other students who think they will not succeed.' Elaine feels passionately that no-one should be deterred from further education because of a disability or learning difficulty. "I wish I had done it when I was younger but I didn't have the confidence." Elaine's story is certainly one to inspire those who may be considering leaving education when times are tough.

Sophie Simmonds

Medical student

BSc (Hons) Medical Sciences, 2017



A coursemate and colleague held in high regard by others, Sophie founded and initially ran the USW Medical Prep Society, helping classmates from all year groups, navigate their own personal journey into postgraduate medicine.

Sophie is now a Medical Student at Cardiff University, although is a familiar face back on campus putting on workshops for clinical examination technique, giving talks to final year Medical Science students about medicine applications and being a point of contact for students seeking support with interview techniques. As an alumna, Sophie continues to support social media content for the USW Medical Sciences accounts and recently had an article published with the BMA.

Helen Walbey

MD, Recycle Scooters

PG Dip Entrepreneurship Practice, 2015 and Professional Certificate in Education (PcET), 2016



As said in her own words, Helen 'is a passionate believer in seizing opportunities, allowing women to cut their own path in any field they choose'. Helen herself is a positive example of this as MD of Recycle Scooters, a

company specialising in selling second-hand motorcycles & scooters - a company she has run since 2004. Helen is also UK Policy Portfolio Chair for Diversity and Health at the Federation of Small Businesses, her role being to champion the diversity and needs of small businesses across the UK and lobby for effective policy. Helen is also Chair of the Welsh Government expert advisory group developing a national framework for women's Enterprise.

Accomplished Entrepreneur

To recognise and celebrates alumni - either an individual or a collective - who are creating successful entrepreneurial value and whose activities are making a mark in their respective industry.

Toby Cameron

On Par Productions

BA (Hons) Documentary Film & Television, 2008



Based in Cardiff, On Par Productions pride themselves on producing high quality creative and thought provoking content - for commercials, music videos and broadcast documentaries. As a result,

the company has an impressive client list including M & C Saatchi, Virgin Trains, Save the Children and British Gas. The company has a history of nurturing the talent of recent graduates and young professionals - the majority of whom have been scouted from the University's creative courses - and has worked with initiatives such as Erasmus and jobs Growth Wales. As company director and having attained prominence in the industry, Toby has secured a position on the new BBC Wales Documentary New Directors initiative, so exciting times ahead.

onparproductions.co.uk

Dan Da Rocha

Games Designer and Producer

BA (Hons) Computer Games Design, 2010



An active member of the international games circuit - and regular alumni volunteer - Dan might also be termed a prolific entrepreneur! Having initially formed Toxic Games with a number of classmates and having achieved

significant success since 2012, Dan also went on to form Mudvark Games with fellow graduates Henry Hoffman and Rhys Thomas, their most notable success being Mortar Melon in 2013. This was an award winning game for windows phone which racked up 800k+ downloads. Debuting their 'Fiddlesticks' Hue game in 2015, their work once again won multiple awards and is noted for its accessible games design. Dan's latest work is with Advect Productions who hold a vision to build a world-class team of creatives striving for story-driven game experiences.

toxicgames.co.uk

Georgina Harris, Anthony Rimola and Justin Cliffe

Tin Shed Theatre Co.

All: BA (Hons) Performing Arts, 2008



Based out of Newport and 'inspired by the strange and the wonderful', Tin Shed Theatre Co aka Georgina, Justin and Antonio, seek to make theatre and

storytelling accessible in one of the region's most culturally deprived cities. Using alternative spaces as well as standard theatres, the company has grown to develop associate artists and key partners such as First Campus, Arts Council of Wales and the Riverfront Theatre. The company's ethos is to bring together art, community, education and local heritage in a unique and inspiring way. Established for over 8 years, the company has flourished in both its financial sustainability but also its public impact. The company now boasts its own youth theatre and community engagement programmes.

tinshedtheatrecompany.com

Michael Parfitt

Team Metalogic

BSc (Hons) Multimedia Computing, 2002



Providing outsourced IT services to SME's across the UK, TeamMetalogic has grown from one man with a determined vision and his laptop, to a company employing 7 by 2017 with its own premises in Caerphilly Business Park. Early growth capitalised on opportunities presented during the 2007 recession and this trajectory has continued through adopting 6 key principles that make up 'The Metalogic Way'. In the early years, Mike benefitted from mentor support from the University and this continues today. With ambitious plans for accelerated growth, Team metalogic has recently been accepted onto the Welsh Government Accelerated Growth Programme. With a strong emphasis on staff retention and flexible working practices, the company has recently been re-awarded the Chwarae Teg Exemplar Employer Status.

teammetalogic.com

Emerging Entrepreneur

To recognise an individual or team of student, or graduate, entrepreneurs who are on the road to achieving success through a business or social enterprise. To have been operating for less than four years.

Laura Wells, Liam Jones, Kevin Ho, Steven Sparkes and Thomas Woodward

Mochi Mode

BA (Hons) Computer Games Enterprise 2017
BA (Hons) Computer Games Enterprise 2016
BA (Hons) Computer Games Enterprise 2016
MComp Computer Games Development 2022
BA (Hons) Game Art 2016



Mochi Mode was launched in 2017 and entered the marketplace with their breakthrough game Moo Moo Move, developed as part of the prestigious Tranzfuser

graduate talent competition. So was their talent, they won the competition, receiving a £25,000 development grant and joining the portfolio of professional games development studios within with the UK Games Fund community. Mochi Mode have subsequently secured office space in Cardiff as part of Natwest's Entrepreneurial Spark Programme and are currently focused on further developing Moo Moo Move, as well as a new game called Hustle Heros, plus other exciting projects.

mochimode.com

Gary Kings

National Insecurities

BA (Hons) Computer Games Design, 2015



Having spent his first few years after university networking across the sector and taking part in Game Jams allowing him to cut his teeth on making short-form games, Gary broke through with his innovative game

'Disorient on the Murder Express'. With funding secured from the USW Bright Ideas Den, Gary was able to attend Nottingham's GameCity where his work was spotted by the national press. With a subsequent and enduring commercial deal struck with respected games publisher Humble, Gary and his team's work is increasingly viewed in the mainstream and fosters wildly positive acclaim. Gary would look to build on momentum gathered to date and invest in promoting the company at all-important international games conventions should he be successful in winning the category.

@NIPresents

£1,000 FUNDING

for the category winner kindly supported by Kier Construction



Dean Richards and Jordan Day Williams

Steelhouse Productions

BSc (Hons) Sound Engineering 2018 CertHE Creative Sound & Music 2016 and BSc (Hons) Sound Engineering 2018 & CertHE Sound Engineering 2016



A business with a dual focus – one being on-location choral, orchestral and brass ensemble recording, the other, sound production technical enrichment

workshops in schools – Steelhouse Productions serves ensemble and school clients across South Wales and the border counties. Initially conceived during their studies, officially founded in 2017 and going from strength to strength with a primary aim of being Wales' premier recording company; the duo aim to meet the needs of schools given the imminent revision to the national curriculum in Wales by 2022. Dean and Jordan would invest in equipment and improved marketing should they be successful in winning the category.

steelhouseproductions.co.uk

Karina Sudenyte and Maciek Kacprzyk

Wonky Drinks

BA HRM, 2018 and LLM Law 2016



With a passion for food sustainability and an awareness around the growing problem of food waste and inefficiency in food and drink production, Wonky

Drinks was born. Through rescuing and using misshapen fruit and veg to deliver first-rate juices, Wonky Drinks has secured significant and widening distribution across the UK. With plans to secure leading supermarket contracts and having won accolades including the Shell LiveWIRE Smarter Future Award 2017, Wonky Drinks also donates its drinks to leading hunger and food waste charities such as Fareshare. Having started the business with only £800 and having proven that making a big impact doesn't necessarily have to mean having vast resources, Karina and Maciek would look to invest in saving further unloved produce should they be successful in winning the category.

getwonky.co

Contribution to Welsh Life and Culture

Awarded to a current student or graduate in, or from Wales, who has contributed to Welsh life, language and culture.

Meghan Bentley

Boutique fashion retail

BA (Hons) Fashion Design, 2017



Fashion student at the time and with a chance to represent the nation, Meghan beat off stiff competition in her third year, to win the opportunity to design the sportswear leggings worn by Team Wales

at the recent 2018 Commonwealth Games in Australia. With a strong response to the judging criteria to reflect national pride, passion, togetherness and belief, Meghan commented that: "...the design was inspired by the pride and passion of Wales merged together with the colours and vibrancy of the Gold Coast. I always lean more towards colourful designs as with sportswear I feel like you can get away with wearing the boldest colours and prints on clothing that gets you noticed." Meghan's passion for sportswear design continued in her final University collection, creating sportswear for people with disabilities.

Elan Evans

Welsh music champion and DJ, Clwb Ifor Bach

BA (Hons) Drama a Theatr, 2015



Elan works as a Welsh language music champion for Clwb Ifor Bach in Chester, organizing live events and gigs for bands popular in Wales. With a DJ background and with a number of festivals under her belt -

Greenman, Field B at the National Eisteddfod, Tafwyl and Festival No.6 - Elan is a passionate advocate for all things 'Cymraeg'. In partnership with her former classmate, Mari Elen, Elan started a Welsh language program for Cardiff students and continues this passion to the present day as she presents occasionally for Radio Cymru, and each year on Radio Greenman spins the tunes created by artists and bands reflecting the diverse musical scene of Wales.

Leanne Wood AM

Leader, Plaid Cymru

BA (Hons) Public Administration, 1994



As Leader of Plaid Cymru since 2012, Leanne Wood perhaps needs little introduction, although maybe less is known about her involvement in the USW Women's Leadership programme and her passion

for championing equality. With a background as both a probation worker and support worker for Women's Aid, Leanne brings a gravitas to assorted public administration and diversity programming across the University portfolio, and has done so for a number of years. More widely Leanne has been heavily involved in the trade union movement and was previously chair of the all-party Public and Commercial Services (PCS) Union group in the Assembly. During her tenure as AM, she has been responsible for the Sustainability, environment, Social Justice and Housing portfolios for Plaid Cymru.

Excellence in Service

Recognising a current student or graduate who has shown outstanding commitment to enhancing the connectivity of the alumni and/or student community, and supporting its activities.

Hannah Dowell

BSc Medical Sciences, 2018



Nominated by a classmate, Hannah is being recognised for her commitment to and compassion for fellow Medical Science students. Whether providing study hints and tips to year one scholars, or forming revision

groups to make sure less confident classmates are supported through their time on the course; Hannah has been described as selfless by her peers and a beacon of positive course citizenship. Alongside her volunteering with the St John Cymru Wales, Hannah is also an active member of the Medical Prep Society.

Paul Gibson

BA (Hons) Business Studies, 1983



Paul, with support given by others from his cohort, has been instrumental in ensuring that the Business Studies class of 1983 remain connected to each other as well as the University. Paul's work started in 2012 when he

was successful in reconnecting with almost 50 classmates, 39 of them returning to Cardiff the following year for the group's 30th anniversary. At the time of writing Paul is on track for a repeated success for the group's 35th year this autumn. Paul's work is important in helping the University reconnect with its heritage through storytelling and volunteership.

Brian Jones

HND Business Studies, 1970



Through strong leadership by Brian, Glamorgan College of Technology's 1967-1970 HND Business Studies group – nicknamed 'the Dead Parrots' in reference to the institution's name change to Glamorgan Polytechnic in

1970 - remain connected to this day. Quite the achievement given time passed and that members live as far away as Barbados and the US; the group recently returned to campus to celebrate 50 years almost to the day since they first arrived. Through Brian's long term commitment to ensuring that group ties remain strong and his enduring connection with the Alumni Office, the 'Dead Parrots' represent vitally important graduate supporters for the University.

Distinguished Alumni

Awarded to a former student to acknowledge their achievements and success, be this through personal accomplishment, professional achievement, or humanitarian service.

Moawia Bin-Sufyan BCA

Community Champion and volunteer

PG Cert in Management and Professional Practice, 2011



Moawia has frequently been described as inspirational for his unpaid services to the voluntary sector and his tireless public work over the last two decades, and earlier this year he was awarded a British Citizen Award at the

House of Lords for his services to the community. Through working with organisations such as the Muslim Welfare Association and the Council on Welsh Islamic Relations, his impactful work stretches across issues relating to policing, counter terrorism, extremism, Islam, international charity, health, international development, diversity and community cohesion. His past roles include being an Independent Member of the Police Authority as well as Vice Chair of the South Wales Police Accountability Panel. Moawia will be inducted as a Member of The Order of St. John - a charity supporting community based first aid, healthcare and support services around the world - later this month.

Antonella Commatteo

Fashion Designer

BA (Hons) Fashion Design, 2012



Former business administrator turned decorated fashion designer, Antonella Commatteo has had a trajectory few of us could only dream of. Upon graduating in fashion design she was tipped as 'one to

watch' by the industry, won a Best of Welsh Design Graduate Award, was asked to show her collection at London's Graduate Fashion Week - and moved to New York! We still find her States side today, where her success continues. Antonella's work has been seen in films, music videos and on the red carpets of Hollywood. A supporter of anti-bullying, she's currently creating designer lines under new projects called The Fashion Affect. This project will include runway shows to raise proceeds for the Homeless, Human Trafficking and Bullying campaigns and are in partnership with organisations such as the United Nations. A documentary about her life is scheduled for release this autumn.

Dr Kevin Fernando

General Practitioner, NHS

MSc Diabetes, 2014



Kevin Fernando is a part-time GP Partner working at the coalface in North Berwick Health Centre, near Edinburgh. Kevin is a Primary Care Diabetes Society committee member and also Scottish lead. Other roles

include RCGP Clinical Advisor for diabetes & multi-morbidity and also writer and presenter for the NB Medical Education Hot Topics GP Update courses. Kevin is an alumnus of the Diabetes UK Clinical Champion programme. Kevin graduated from Edinburgh University in 2000 and holds both MRCGP and MRCP(UK) qualifications and has completed a Master's degree in diabetes which he passed with distinction. Kevin has been elected to Fellowship of the Royal College of General Practitioners, the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh and also the Academy of Medical Educators for his work in diabetes and medical education.

Christina Harray

Interim CEO, Caerphilly County Borough Council

BSc (Hons) Civil Engineering, 1999



As her nominator outlines, Christina embodies what would be expected of an exemplary graduate in engineering. She has shown dedication and commitment to public service throughout her career and has held a

number of senior positions within local government across Wales. In 2015, she was appointed to a short-term role as Director of Environment at Carmarthenshire County Borough Council, before joining Caerphilly County Borough Council as Corporate Director for Communities. In January of 2018, Christina was appointed as Interim Chief Executive; an appointment reflecting the confidence others have in her to bring the Council to a more secure and sustainable position. A Chartered Engineer and a Fellow of both the Institution of Civil Engineers and the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation, Christina is a champion for raising the profile of female engineers and STEM graduates.

Dan McNeill

Serving Military Officer

BSc (Hons) Electron Systems Engineering, 2013



As a member of the British Army's Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME), Warrant Officer McNeill's nominator describes him as an exceptional example of a professional engineer,

instructor and military leader. Having obtained his first class degree at Glamorgan, Daniel has excelled

and in recognition of his technical knowledge was awarded the prestigious Clark Prize as REME Artificer Selection Military Best Commander in 2012. He also went on to receive the 2012 Army Technical Instructor of the Year Award and a prestigious Worshipful Company of Engineers Services Training Award from The Engineers Trust. He has journey through a number of prestigious posts most recently in Germany, Canada and Estonia all recognising him as one of the military's best engineering commanders. He's passionate about promoting L&D amongst his soldiers and as a manager he leads by example, having obtained Chartered Manager (CMgr) status. Away from the military, his active charity work has seen him shortlisted for a Pride of Reading Award.

#USWThanksU

Bobby Briers, Technical Demonstrator

Dr Louise Bright, Research and Business Engagement

Prof Brendan Cropley, Prof of Sport Coaching

Martyn Edwards | Jane Finucane, Lecturer, History

Emma Forouzan, USW Enterprise | Geraint John, Torfaen Council

Gareth Jones, Town Square Spaces | Dr Gwawr Jones, University Secretary's Office

Osian Roberts, Assistant Manager of Wales' National Football Team & Technical Director

Steve Savage, Sports & Business Development Manager | Caroline Thompson, Be The Spark

Dr Tudor Williams, Director of Sport and Director of Campus Services



Kier Construction | USW Print and Design

USW Corporate Communications

USW Careers and Employability



All our 2018 Award nominees and nominators

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Astudiaethau Ôl-raddedig Postgraduate Study at USW

**Cynllunio am fywyd ar ôl
graddio? Ydych chi wedi
ystyried parhau gyda'ch
astudiaethau yn PDC?**

Gall dewis cymhwyster ôl-radd gyda ni roi hwb ychwanegol i'ch CV a'ch helpu i sefyll allan mewn marchnad waith gystadleuol. Mae arian a benthyciadau ar gael hefyd i gynnig cymorth i'ch astudiaethau.

Dewch i siarad â ni ar 5 Medi i ddarganfod beth sy'n bosibl drwy astudiaeth ôl-radd:
decymru.ac.uk/olradd

**If you're making plans for life
after your degree, have you
thought about continuing
your studies at USW?**

Choosing a postgraduate qualification with us could further boost your CV and help you stand out in a competitive job market. Plus, funding and loans are available to support your studies.

Come to our event on 5 September to find out what postgraduate study has to offer you: southwales.ac.uk/postgrad

Why not make this year the year you get involved

To find out more visit: southwales.ac.uk/alumni/get-involved

Alumni Relations and Development Office
University of South Wales
The Lodge
Treforest
Pontypridd CF37 1DL UK

E-mail: alumni@southwales.ac.uk

Call: +44 (0)1443 482 400

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