

2014 - ELEANOR PEACOCK

“I am working for Sixt, a car rental company, using my languages on a daily basis, and have recently taken a course in Dutch at Edinburgh University.”

2013 - NATALIE MACKAY

“In May I began working as an in-house German to English translator at STAR UK in Woking, where I can use the translation skills I acquired at Heriot-Watt University.”

2012 - COLLEEN TAIT

“I continue to work at the Royal Society of Edinburgh as part of the research awards team, and recently took over the administration of internal grants.”

2011 - CLAIRE GRANT

“I continue to work in education, having returned to Glasgow after a year of teaching English in Italy. I am currently a Learning Mentor for ICS Learn.”

2010 - KATE ROUGVIE

“I was awarded a Rotary International Peace Fellowship and have almost completed a Masters in Peace and Conflict at the University of Queensland, Australia.”

2009 - LORNA KERR

“I’m currently based in the north of Spain working as a Cambridge Speaking Examiner for the Upper Suite Exams, as well as continuing to work with York Idiomias.”

2008 - RHONA AMOS

“I am still in Geneva, where I combine my freelance work as a conference interpreter with a part-time role at the University of Geneva, a perfect balance for me.”

2007 - RICHARD CARBERRY

“I am a Manager in the Forensic Investigations team at KPMG in London. For most of the past year I have been working on a large investigation based in Paris.”

2006 - STUART KIRKBY

“I’m still working at Bentley in Cheshire and will shortly be moving to a new role in Finance which will focus on financial planning and forecasting.”

2005 - DAVID HENDERSON

“My partner and I took the holiday of a lifetime, travelling all the way around the world by land and sea over nine months, covering around 70,000 kilometres.”

2004 - GEMMA TRACEY

“I continue to work as a Senior Policy Adviser at Equality Challenge Unit, supporting Universities around the UK with their work advancing equality and diversity.”

Fiona Watson, Political Adviser to the Special Representative of the Secretary General, Sergio Viera de Mello, was one of the 22 peacekeepers killed in the terrorist attack on the UN headquarters in Baghdad on Tuesday 19th August 2003.

It was clear from the many moving tributes to Fiona that she was an outstanding young woman, with a rare combination of intellectual brilliance, vitality, compassion and humour. She was a high flyer who was destined for great things in her career, but her drive was well tempered by her close friendships and her strong connection to her family in Fife, Scotland. A marvellous ambassador for Scotland and a person who evoked respect and affection in equal measure wherever she went, Fiona is deeply mourned by all who knew her.

To perpetuate Fiona’s memory and redress the sense of waste at her loss, the family, together with Heriot-Watt University where she completed a first class honours degree in languages, have established a memorial fund. Every year the fund will send a final year student from the University to take up an internship with the UN or an internship with a similar international organisation.

The winning student is an ambassador for their country and benefits personally and professionally from their experience of working in such an organisation with humanitarian interests.

Donations will contribute to The Fiona Watson Memorial Fund, an endowed fund which generates income on an annual basis. The Fund meets the annual award winner’s travel and accommodation costs during the internship, as well as supporting annual humanitarian grants specifically for students wishing to take part in humanitarian volunteering projects. The Fund is also supporting the Watson-Currie PhD over a three year period from 2015.

Registered as a UK charity, the Fiona Watson Memorial Fund can accept gifts from UK taxpayers made via Gift Aid.

Gifts can be made online at www.alumni.hw.ac.uk/FionaWatsonMemorial or by making your cheque payable to ‘The Fiona Watson Memorial Fund’ and mailing it to the address below.

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THE FIONA WATSON MEMORIAL FUND

Newsletter 12 2016



Marianna McLauchlan



“Perhaps the most valuable and cherished outcome from my experience are the many relationships I now have with people of all ages, from many disciplines and from all over the world. I am incredibly thankful for the kindness and generosity of spirit shown to me by my UN colleagues and the many, many ‘New Yorkers’ I have met throughout my time here.

In a professional capacity, I have gained valuable insight into a variety of new subject areas whilst learning first-hand the value of transferrable skills. I pro-actively sourced and became involved in projects which were of interest to me and would be useful in my future career. More specifically, I have gained relevant work experience in finance and budget analysis, which should serve me well as I pursue a career in Accountancy. Additionally, I sought opportunities to practice my language skills and gained a new appreciation for the versatility of applying language learning; something which was greatly encouraged at Heriot-Watt. My knowledge of operations within the UN has deepened throughout my internship, as has my admiration for the inspirational staff who work tirelessly to make the world a safer, more harmonious place to live.

I will be forever grateful to the Watson family, the generous donors to the fund and everyone who has contributed to making this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and unforgettable experience possible for me.”

Reports can be read at <https://www.alumni.hw.ac.uk/FionaWatsonMemorial>



The Watson-Currie PhD on detection of waterborne pathogens has been made possible with funding support from the Fiona Watson Memorial Fund and a generous legacy from Miss Oonagh Currie. The PhD is being funded over a three year period from October 2015.

Mr Ameya Vaidya was appointed to the position and is working on two projects at the moment. Both projects target the parasite Cryptosporidium, which caused hundreds of thousands of residents in Lancashire to have to boil their water for over 6 weeks in the summer. Ameya’s work hopes to reduce incidences of water contamination.

One project is a method to separate and concentrate waterborne pathogens on the basis of infectivity, and therefore risk to human health. The system that Ameya is working on is a small lab-on-a-chip device, with channels the width of one human hair, and integrated electronics. Live and dead pathogens behave in a different way in the electric field in this device and by exploiting this difference we can separate them with almost 100% efficiency. At present water companies cannot distinguish pathogens in this way so it would be a great benefit to their detection processes.

The other project uses molecular methods, i.e. checking the DNA, to distinguish between different species, which also have a different infectivity and health risk to humans. The novelty here is in developing an easy to use method to get the DNA out of the cells for analysis. At present the best method to get the DNA out is ten cycles of freezing and thawing the sample which is time-consuming and, if liquid nitrogen is used for the freezing, potentially dangerous! Perhaps eventually the new DNA extraction approach will enable incorporation of this detection method into another lab-on-a-chip device.

The overall aim of the work is to develop new tools that are easy to use and will help water companies perform more efficient analysis of samples.

Robyn Adams, 3rd year Biological Sciences Projects Abroad: HIV/AIDS prevention/ education in Ghana	Johanna Eriksson, 2nd year Psychology SLV: Clinical Psychology Mental Illness in Sri Lanka
Amy Greenhill, 3rd year Chemical Engineering Projects Abroad: Nursery volunteer in Costa Rica	Chamithri Greru, Phd in Design Mehera Shaw Foundation Trust: Design in India, providing people with equitable employment opportunities
Mina Kostova, 2nd year Business and Finance European Parliament: Internship- Humanitarian Issues in Belgium Policy Adviser Trainee	Michaela Mayo, 3rd year Biological Sciences Projects Abroad: Nutrition in Fiji. Education on healthy and nutritious lifestyles
Emma Nicolson, 3rd year Biological Sciences Projects Abroad: Nutrition in Fiji. Education on healthy and nutritious lifestyles	Liam O’Donnell, 3rd year Physics VSO: School in Nepal Health education
Fionnuala Shakespeare, 2nd year Interpreting and Translation First Aid Africa in Kenya Teaching First Aid skills	Samo Varsik, 4th year Economics and Finance IVS: Orphanage in Uganda Health education

