

Distinguished Achievement Awards

29 June 2012

Undergraduate Students of the Year 2012

The criteria against which nominations for the Undergraduate of the Year are judged state that:

“The nominee should have made an exceptional contribution to the life of the University, contributed significantly to the development of the curriculum or enhanced other students’ experience at University through activities such as peer support, student societies, or work with central services such as Recruitment and Admissions. Alternatively he or she should have coupled excellent academic achievement with either major external activity (top level sport or music) or have overcome major difficulties.”

Richard Wild, School of Dentistry, Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences

Richard Wild, who is studying Dentistry in the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences, is described as a highly driven student, always striving to improve himself. He is considered approachable and sociable and his willingness to volunteer whenever needed has earned him the respect of his peers, staff and his patients.

Richard’s pride in his School has led him to represent Dentistry at several open days in addition to volunteering himself to give tours of the School to prospective students. He is passionate about his chosen discipline and will jump at any chance to use this passion to inspire others.

Richard has dedicated himself to his role as a student representative, often going out of his way to pre-empt problems and resolve them before they become an issue. He is always willing to be innovative and enhance students’ experiences as well as making significant contributions to Programme and Student Committees. Most recently he was pivotal in the development of a new ‘Peer Assisted Study Scheme’.

Lauren Thompson, School of Law, Faculty of Humanities

Lauren Thompson graduated in December 2011 with a BA (Hons) in Criminology from the Faculty of Humanities.

In 2006 Lauren was seriously injured in a car accident and her recovery is still ongoing. In September 2010 Lauren returned to University to complete her degree. This took determination and courage. Studying was more time consuming for her than for other students as she was not able to read more than 15 pages of text without a break, she found it physically demanding moving around the University as she uses crutches to aid her walking and finds a distance of more than 50 yards tiring. Lauren rose to meet the physical and intellectual challenges of returning to University which is remarkable enough in itself. However, what makes Lauren’s achievement more distinguished is that she had the courage

to return to University and subject her intellectual abilities to scrutiny and demand of herself the highest of standards.

She completed this work successfully at the 2:1 level and graduated to much applause from students and a standing ovation from staff on the platform.

Michael Harris, Faculty of Life Sciences

Michael Harris has just finished his Genetics programme in the Faculty of Life Science. Michael is described as having being not only an excellent student but also someone who cares about the experiences and welfare of his peers. As one of our coordinators for the Peer Assisted Study Scheme, he helped develop a mentoring scheme for placement students and he was also a Language Placement Mentor. In his role as Student Ambassador, Michael was an outstanding team member - completely reliable and with excellent communication skills, including the confidence to address large groups of applicants and parents visiting the Faculty.

Vanessa Suinggi, School of Chemical Engineering and Analytical Science, Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences

Vanessa Suinggi, from the School of Chemical Engineering and Analytical Science within the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences, is described as having been an extraordinary student who has excelled academically and has demonstrated a strong sense of social responsibility, towards her fellow students, the University community and society at large.

She is a first class student who has obtained various recognitions, including the prestigious McNab-Lacey price awarded by the Institute of Chemical Engineers. She has also been year representative and worked with the members of the Undergraduate Board and fellow students to improve the delivery of the Chemical Engineering course and increase student satisfaction. She is a role model for our students and has all the qualities needed for a leader.