

THE FROGNAL

UCS NEWSLETTER — ISSUE DECEMBER 2020

Celebrating the events and achievements of the Autumn Term at UCS Senior School.



Old Gower
Awarded Nobel
Prize

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UCS Unites
Against
Loneliness and
Food Poverty

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UCS Scientists
Compete
Internationally

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Stunning Sixth
Form Centre
Ready for
Opening

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Welcome To The Autumn Edition Of The Frogнал



I doubt there's been such an unusual Autumn Term since the Second World War when, back then, UCS remained open for the business of education throughout a national crisis.

Since that time, the concept of grit and character building has come back in vogue. Until this year of 2020, I had felt, rather, that these were buzz words, something of a fad, and that all good schools were quite normally seeking to develop such qualities in their pupils as part of the daily opportunities offered for personal development. But I do have to submit that these last twelve months really have required, tested and developed everybody's resilience. I cannot stress how proud I have been of the UCS community for more than just surviving what the world has thrown at us.

I do congratulate each and every pupil at the school. They have all been so patient, understanding and philosophical this term. The mask wearing. The one way system. The lunch sat at an individual desk followed by the separation of the remnants into rubbish, compost and recycling.

Year group bubbles preventing the usual vertical mixing that enables Demes, Theatre Productions, Concerts, Clubs and Senior Sports from happening to their full extent. And assemblies! I think the last time I said "Good morning everybody, please sit down" was 275 days ago. I really miss that. That opportunity for us all to be gathered together, in the physical and spiritual heart of the school. To celebrate just being.

Those days will return, I have no doubt. But, in the meantime, the pupils have nonetheless achieved a wondrous amount this term. The restrictions have just required us to be creative, innovative and agile. Careers Talks, Enrichment Weeks, Cultural activities, Drama and Music have still happened. In Sport, we've probably had the largest level of mass participation on Saturday mornings in the modern history of the school. Community Service has still gone ahead in a truly impressive way and Charitable Endeavour has really had an impact, particularly for the North Paddington Food Bank but for a number of national charities too.

Welcome To The Autumn Edition Of The Frogнал



We have also been growing our provision for environmental sustainability, creating action plans for the four key areas of transport, waste, energy and biodiversity. And you may have witnessed Mr Firth taking delivery of some 90 trees to be distributed to the UCS community to help improve biodiversity in the community, air quality and wellbeing.

In celebrating the pupils' progress in and out of the classroom this term, it is important to appreciate those who have enabled the environment that makes such achievements possible. For example, the Caretaking and Cleaning Staff have worked incredibly hard to ensure the campus has been safe and clean. The Caterers have prepared, boxed up and delivered to form rooms fresh lunches daily for 1,200 mouths. The IT department have managed to provide every teacher with a surface pro, along with the software, training and infrastructure needed for success. The School Nurse Barbara Calnan and her team have been utterly committed to pupil health, literally in the frontline of dealing with sickly children on a daily basis and also spending much time advising on covid testing and self-isolation.

There are many other support staff, too, who work tirelessly to ensure that UCS remains operational in a safe way, to enable the core business of teaching and learning to occur so successfully. That also includes managing the extension and refurbishment of the Sixth Form Centre, which has happened seamlessly over the last six months without any interruptions covid-related or otherwise and will be open at the start of next term. And then of course there are the teachers. I cannot thank them enough for their dedication to the pupils over these last many, exhausting and unpredictable months.

It is quite possible that your own bubble-type existence means you are less aware than usual of all these sorts of activities going on. Perhaps more than ever, then, I commend to you this end of term newsletter, The Frogнал, as a means to catch up on and appreciate what UCS pupils have achieved.

— Mark J. Beard, Headmaster

A Spotlight On... Wellbeing



Bimba Kumarasinghe joined UCS as a Mathematics teacher in 2018. Last June, she was appointed to be the first Director of Wellbeing at UCS. We spoke to Miss Kumarasinghe about her thoughts on the new role, mental health and wellbeing.

Congratulations on your appointment. Please can you explain your hopes for it and how your role fits into the pastoral system at UCS.

Thank you, I am extremely grateful to be a part of a school that understands that education is so much more than pure academia, but it is about the pupil as a whole. So with that, I am excited about the direction UCS is going in and to raise awareness and destigmatize some of the constructs around mental health and wellbeing.

There are so many amazing support systems at UCS, made up of many different facets, and part of my role is about liaising between the Heads of various Sections and Deme Wardens, and connecting them

together and raising pupil awareness of the different structures that are in place.

I want wellbeing to be a part of what we are at UCS. My vision is to cultivate a strong sense of wellbeing in our pupils, to enable them to feel confident with new information and empower them to be bold and take on new challenges.

Why is the education of wellbeing so important in the 21st century?

What a question! I think the education of wellbeing has always been important and I think we are in a privileged position now where the conversation about wellbeing in an educational setting has opened up more. Our world is evolving quickly and it is seemingly getting 'more connected' through the internet and social media; however, loneliness is on the rise, and this has been exasperated even more due to the current pandemic.

A Spotlight On... Wellbeing

<p>ou're grateful (thankful) or in your life.</p> <p>GRATITUDE: People who write about gratitude tend to feel more optimistic, experience better sleep and less stress and generally feel happier about their lives.</p>	<p>water throughout the day.</p> 	<p>a family member to find in your house.</p> 	<p>evening and turn off all your devices at least one hour before bed.</p>	<p>fruit or veg today, especially that piece of fruit in your lunch bag.</p>	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 11</p> <p>Write down your 'perfect morning routine' and try following it over the next few days.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 6</p> <p>Do a chore in the house without being asked e.g. cleaning your room or washing the dishes.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 7</p> <p>Go for a walk or run before eating a meal.</p> <p>EXERCISE: Being active is not only great for your physical health, but it can also cause chemical changes in your brain, which helps to improve mood and reduce stress.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 8</p> <p>Try extra hard this week in PE and games.</p> 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 9</p> <p>Spend at least thirty minutes outdoors in the fresh air and nature.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 10</p> <p>Research 'healthy snack recipes' & try to cook them in batch to have throughout the week. Share ideas with your form class</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 12</p> <p>Tell a teacher what you enjoy about their lessons.</p> 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 11</p> <p>Write down your 'perfect morning routine' and try following it over the next few days.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 13</p> <p>Spend some time doing something with a family member, such as playing a game.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 14</p> <p>Plan to do something nice or helpful for someone at school.</p> <p>RELATIONSHIPS: Maintaining good and healthy relationships...</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 15</p> <p>Have a night off from using social media.</p> 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 16</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 17</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 18</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 19</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 20</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 20</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> DAY 20</p>

There is a lot of research evidence showing that education and health are closely linked. Public Health England has found that pupils with better health and wellbeing are likely to achieve more academically and that the culture and environment of a school influences the health and wellbeing of pupils and their readiness to learn.

You have only been in the post for a term but what initiatives have you already started?

In the first two weeks, through our PSHE programme, we put a focus on transitioning back into school for our Lower and Middle School pupils and the impacts on their mental health and wellbeing. After that we had a whole school '25-day Wellbeing Challenge' which included daily tasks linked to the improvement of one's wellbeing. We then celebrated Mental Health Awareness Day through an assembly with a focus on being kind to one another and most recently we put together a selection of 'Lockdown Tips' to give pupils some practical ways they could be proactive about their mental health and wellbeing during the second lockdown we have just come out of.

Around 60% of UCS teachers are qualified coaches. What role does coaching play in education?

Coaching is a communication tool. It is the skill of asking effective questions to allow our pupils to increase their self-awareness, gain clarity and push them towards action. As teachers we want to equip our pupils with as many tools as possible to be able to navigate the world they are in and the world they will step into after they leave the doors of UCS. Coach-like questions allow teachers to encourage pupils to dig for the answer themselves, to be reflective and explore the options before them to spur them on to take action.

What is the best thing about working at UCS?

The people, staff and pupils. There is a brilliant sense of community and camaraderie that is simultaneously challenging and supportive.

— Contributions by B. Kumarasinghe

New Sixth Form Centre To Open In 2021



Slowly but surely, some things really do get better as they get older.

Admittedly, it has gone ‘under the knife’ somewhat but, speaking plainly, the new Sixth Form Centre is absolutely stunning. It’s bigger, better, with faster connectivity and stronger aesthetic appeal.

In consultation with previous pupils, the centre was designed with access in mind, as well as encouraging individual identity with an ethical flavour. It is a Sixth Form Centre designed for Generation Z, the most discerning, demanding, hypercognitive generation; it is biophilic, wifi-saturated, environmentally friendly, suffused with natural light, and all of its workspaces are flexible so that sipping on espresso from the cafe can be enjoyed whilst chatting to friends on a sofa and completing one’s assignments whilst posting about it on social media in a space that needs no Instagram filter.

With the recent success of the AKO Centre in mind, it was decided that the new Sixth Form Centre should carry on where the AKO leaves off – both spaces share a design vision, complementing each other and meaning that each Sixth Form student can traverse their UCS experiences – personal and intellectual – in confidence and comfort.

Years 12 and 13 are also about preparing for life as an undergraduate, so creating a Sixth Form Centre with a more student-union style ethos was crucial. There are formal meeting areas for larger groups, as well as more intimate booths for collaborative learning; there is space for small-scale performances, screenings and community discussion. The cafe will be exclusively for the Sixth Form student body and I know teaching staff will look forward to being able to join them for a tutorial and coffee, overlooking the school and beyond. It is truly a special space.

— Contributions by J. Orchard

New Netball Courts Ready



Netball is at an all-time high at UCS this year as a result of our new courts near the Kantor Centre. These pristine facilities will allow UCS netball to grow to its maximum capability.

These new facilities will lead to more efficient training because while a part of the group may be involved in match play, the other half can be taking part in equally valuable skills training and drills on the neighbouring court. We are particularly delighted as we feel that this is raising the profile and recognition of girls sport within UCS.

Furthermore, additional netball training space at Hocroft has allowed both Transitus and Sixth to continue training separately during the time of Covid-19. As a Sixth Form team we have trained together for a year and a half and in that time we have formed very strong first and second teams who have gone on to win numerous matches (in

2019–20). Having these courts will enable the coaches, in particular Ms Hawes and Ms Holland, to continue developing these squads.

We are now able to train on weekends and sometimes even be coached by renowned and highly competitive international netball players. This can only strengthen our understanding of how to improve our technique and set plays.

We would all like to say a massive thank you to everyone involved in building these new courts and hope to start playing fixtures soon.

— Contributions by Ella Von Hammerstein and Naomi Barrett (Sixth)

Diversity And Equality Steering Group



The murder of George Floyd on 25th May 2020 generated global condemnation, and sparked widespread impassioned pleas for racial justice and equality. The Black Lives Matter movement subsequently found a greater voice and a more engaged and active audience than ever before, which in turn gave rise to a period of reflection at UCS. Pupils – both current and former – came forward to reflect on their time at school relating their experiences and suggesting ways of raising awareness and understanding. From this, the Diversity and Equality Steering Group was formed, with the mandate to investigate aspects of UCS, and start the work towards improving representation and inclusion in our community. Established in June, the group is made up of both staff and pupils, and the first rotation of volunteers have been working throughout this term – to be replaced by the second rotation of members in

January. Over 70 members of staff and pupils are taking part, over the Autumn and Spring Terms, working in three sub-committees.

This term, the Steering Group members started the process by pursuing various avenues of investigation. Their initial task was to gather ‘Student Voice’ from pupils in Remove, Upper Remove, and Sixth. This began with a survey, which went out to all pupils in those year groups, and asked questions about race, gender and sexuality. This survey was followed up by one-to-one interviews with members of the student community, volunteers who have come forward to share their experiences or opinions, and this has added complexity and detail to the findings of the survey.

Diversity And Equality Steering Group



The group have also spoken to the Heads of Department in Science, Art, History of Art, Classics, DT, Psychology, and English, about how to diversify and decolonise their curriculums; to the Library about their provision; to those responsible for PSHE about how to develop the ideas covered in these sessions; and to members of the Support Staff about their perspective of the school community. They've created reading lists, collated glossaries, and sourced resources. Crucially, each of the committees have met weekly, to discuss their findings and propose ideas.

Next term, the second rotation of volunteers will take over. They will be gathering the student perspective from pupils in Entry, Shell, Lower Remove, and Transitus, and talking to pupils who wish to come forward to share their experiences

or ideas. They will also discuss curriculum with the remaining Heads of Department, as well as gathering 'Staff Voice' from the teaching body. The ensuing discussions will contribute to a range of suggestions that will be formalised in the Summer Term, that will offer strategies for development across the school community, from the classroom to the co-curricular provision.

If you would like to join the Steering Group, or if you would like to share your perspective on how race, gender or sexuality are discussed and represented at UCS, please contact Ms Baxter.

— Contributions by R. Baxter

Gleb Shortlisted For International Design Award



A Lower Remove pupil was excited to learn that one of his designs was shortlisted at the Rijksstudio Award 2020, an international design competition run by the famous Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. The competition was entered by over 2,800 designers and Gleb Chalov, who is currently in Lower Remove at UCS, was placed in the Top 10 in the Young Talent category.

Gleb was understandably delighted to learn that his work had received international recognition, saying: “I first heard about the competition through my mother who knows how much I enjoy DT. I love designing new products and then getting to make them in the workshop at school. We have recently made speakers and phone stands but my entry for the competition was a little bit different. We have a lot of candles at home so I designed a

reusable butane candle lighter. The lighter is shaped like a cannon and this was inspired by the Fredelant cannon, which is the oldest known cannon and is displayed at the Rijksmuseum. It took four days to complete the initial work and I was pleased with the prototype which I eventually made. I am very proud, and a little surprised, to finish in the Top 10 for this prestigious award!”

Ben Vliegen, Head of Design & Technology at UCS, commented, “We are pleased Gleb was so successful in this competition. There were thousands of entries so to finish in the Top 10 is a wonderful achievement. His design is terrific. It’s innovative yet is clearly inspired by a medieval cannon. Well done, Gleb.”

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Entry Team Building Day



The boys were lucky that this event, involving a company of professional instructors, went ahead when so many other non-academic events this term have had to be cancelled. Thanks to it being held entirely outdoors, involving a year-group bubble and with the instructors taking extra precautions, we were given the green light.

The Entry Team Building Day follows on from the Entry Learning Values Week held the week before. It tests the boys' resilience, relationships, responsibility and resourcefulness during a range of activities and challenges. They need to work as a team in their half-form groups, using the equipment they have been given to solve problems, overcome setbacks and act upon feedback. The day is also intended to help new boys make friends.

It was initially an overcast, chilly September morning but at about 10:30 the sun made an appearance and the temperature suddenly rose, creating ideal conditions for working outdoors.

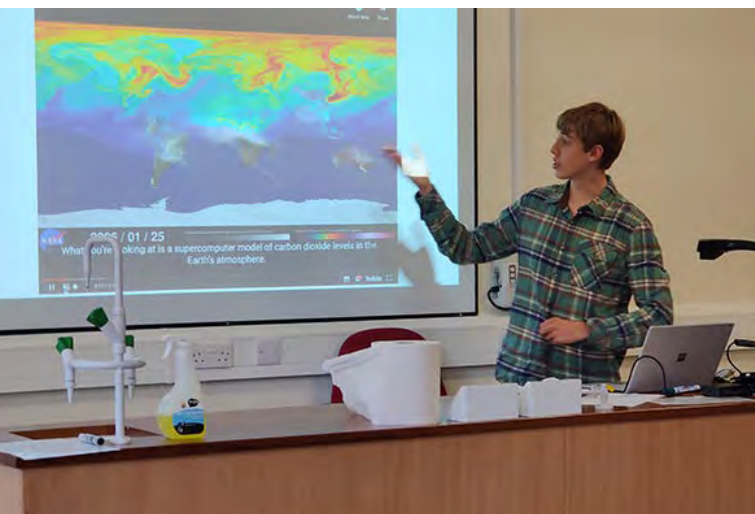
We were impressed with the boys' efforts and their collaborative spirit as they worked diligently through the practical tasks put before them. Each group was given a new task every half-hour to keep the boys on their toes and introduce different types of challenges.

One involved manoeuvring a football onto the top of a cone using ropes, another more strategic one was based on the original Battleship game and in another they had to use their communication skills to recreate a specific configuration of wooden blocks, without being able to see the construction they had been asked to emulate.

In the afternoon the boys played House matches in football and hockey to further develop their engagement with the four Learning Values.

— Contributions by A. Barnish and E. Orlans

Enrichment Weeks



This term's three Enrichment Weeks were hugely successful. Subject teachers have joined together to organise events and activities that go above and beyond the curriculum, all feeding into a shared title to promote cross-curricular links between the subjects. In October, the Classics and Modern Languages departments organised a number of topical sessions with the theme: Post-colonial/colonised Voices. Popular events included Dr Lawrenson's Morris Lecture on 'Using Film Pedagogy in Modern Languages teaching to explore issues of Race, Identity and Culture' and the Lower Remove Latin/Italian linguistic crossover.

In November, it was Global Problems; Tech Solutions – the Geography and Design & Technology and Computer Science Enrichment Week. These departments delivered a range of activities including the amazing screening of the award-winning climate documentary called *2040*, Bebras Challenge – a computational thinking challenge for Lower Remove – and an eye-opening

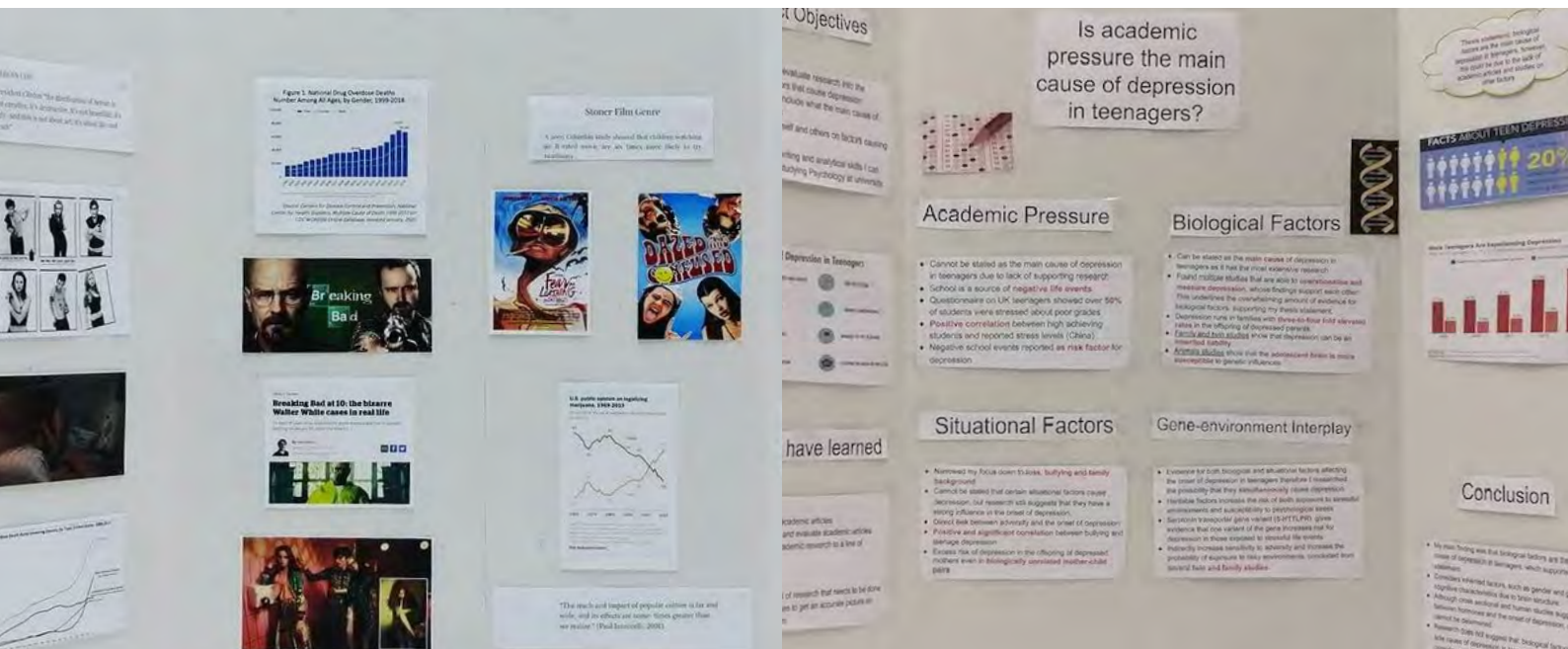
lecture titled 'Artificial Intelligence: How Do We Count Every Tree On Earth?' By Transitus student Cyrus Singer.

At the end of November, early December, it was Narrative and Storytelling Enrichment Week by the Art, English, History of Art and Music departments. This week saw a vast range in virtual visiting speakers such as Sabine Casparie discussing Contemporary Art and Climate Change, and Isabel Hardingham on Ecstatic Colour: Prints of Maxfield Parrish, among a host of guest speakers. One of the highlights from the week was Mr Gibson and Mr Ward's Morris Lecture Recital titled 'Stories in Music in works by Vivaldi and Vaughan Williams' accompanied by the Sixth Form's String Ensemble and Choir.

After so wide and varied a programme of events, we look forward with anticipation to next term's three final Enrichment Weeks.

— Contributions by H. Franks

Academic Enrichment Prepares Sixth Formers For Undergraduate Study



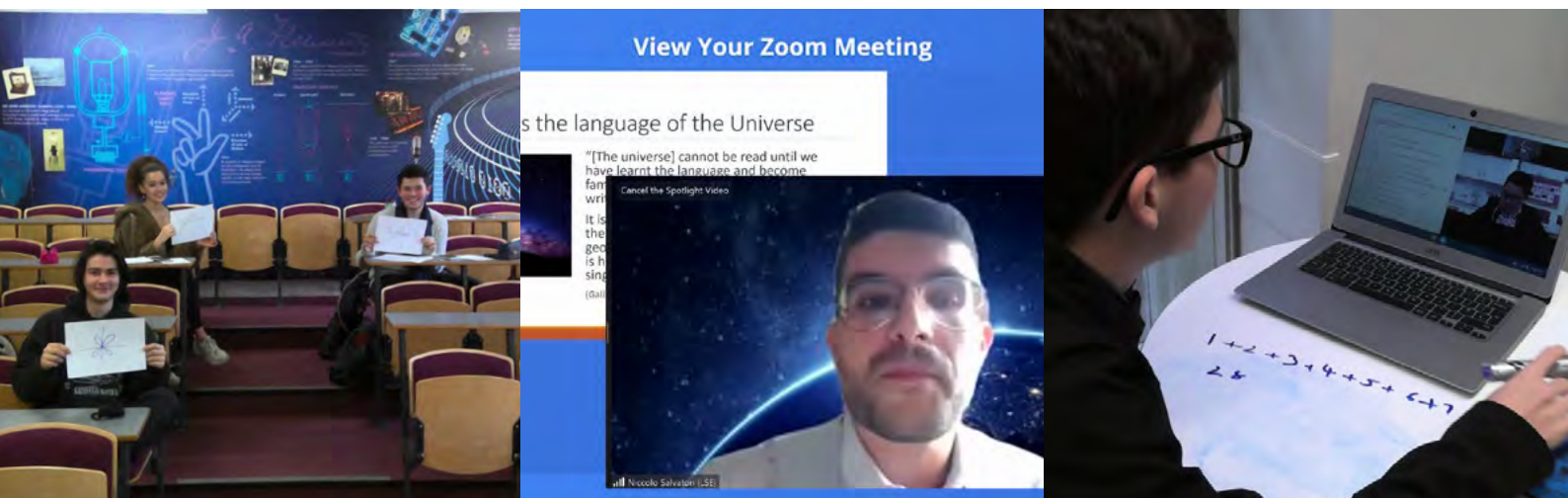
This term the Sixth Form pupils have attended Academic Enrichment sessions every Friday afternoon in disciplines that align with their Higher Education ambitions. This time allows for free flowing discussion, university style seminar sessions and investigations into content beyond the A-Level/Pre-U curriculum. Some subjects have arranged virtual visiting speakers such as the Head of Economics at LSE speaking to our economists along with Dr Mike Jones delivering medical advice for the budding doctors, vets and medical scientists. Sixth Form pupils have their final Academic Enrichment sessions this term before the programme hands over to the Transitus to have their taste in super-curricular lessons in the Spring Term.

“English enrichment taught me how to view texts through a different lens. It was fantastic to do this every Friday afternoon and was great preparation for my university interviews.”

Georgia Krok (Sixth)

— Contributions by H. Franks

Maths Jam And Maths Partnerships Move Online



Maths for Oxbridge

This year, UCS has had over a hundred early UCAS applicants – pupils applying for some of the most competitive university courses in the country, including places at Oxford, Cambridge and for Medicine. A great number of these courses require top level Mathematics, so we were very happy that we could continue running the ‘Maths for Oxbridge’ Friday morning classes this year, inviting aspiring economists, scientists, engineers and medics. Thirty-six pupils have attended the early morning sessions, in order to prime their Mathematics skills, ready for the application process, and we have had great fun seeing how the skills developed in Maths lessons are applied to high-level problems in other subjects. Good luck to all of these students!

Maths online

This term, many of our Mathematics events have moved online in order to bring together pupils across multiple year groups to celebrate Mathematics. Each term, UCS welcomes a guest

Mathematics lecturer and the first speaker of 2020–21 was Dr Salvatori who delivered his talk: ‘Gluing doughnuts to understand the universe’. His lecture over Zoom was a fantastic insight into the intersection of Mathematics and Physics, and well received by over 30 UCS mathematicians. Maths Jams have also moved online. These events invite speakers from any year group to volunteer a five-minute talk on any mathematical topic they find fascinating. Interesting talks this term have included ‘When the Laws of Indices Go Wrong’ and ‘A brief History of Fermat’s Last Theorem’.

Partnerships

The online Mathematics partnership between Upper Remove UCS pupils and Year 6 Holy Trinity children has also had a brilliant start, with buckets of enthusiasm from both sides. UCS pupils have enjoyed guiding their mentees through some particularly challenging Maths problems and great fun has been had by all involved.

— Contributions by D. Armitage

Fascinating Economics Lecture Series



As part of our Friday afternoon Economics Enrichment provision, we had the privilege of inviting several Professors from the LSE and one of our very own Old Gowers. All our external speakers were connected via Zoom which also allowed us to reach out to our Partnership School.

Professor Steve Pischke, the Head of Economics at the LSE, spoke to our pupils about the difficulty in establishing causal relationships in empirical economics. He then went on to explain what a typical Economics lecture looks like and concluded the session by answering questions pertaining to both the lecture and applying to the LSE.

Professor Maitreesh Ghatak, a microeconomic specialist with research interests in economic development, public economics, and the economics of organisations, spoke about Economics beyond markets. His lecture resonated with themes covered in the A-Level course which allowed all our students to follow it carefully, leading to pertinent questions from both our pupils and our partnership school's.

Professor Swati Dhingra, who co-authored *Life after Brexit* which looked at the UK's options outside of the EU, spoke about global economics and the impact it has on the UK. A timely lecture which certainly prompted a myriad of questions from all our students.

Our very own recent Old Gower, Nadir Rahman, who left UCS last summer and was recently awarded a Stelios Scholarship, shared his current experience at the LSE and how he went about applying for and receiving the scholarship. He even proceeded to explain an econometric question to assist our Pure Economics students currently preparing for their Oxbridge interviews.

We are fortunate to have such kind speakers who have generously volunteered their time to enrich our pupils' education and thank them unreservedly from the whole UCS community.

— Contributions by P. Fernando

Former UCS Pupil Wins Stelios Scholarship At LSE

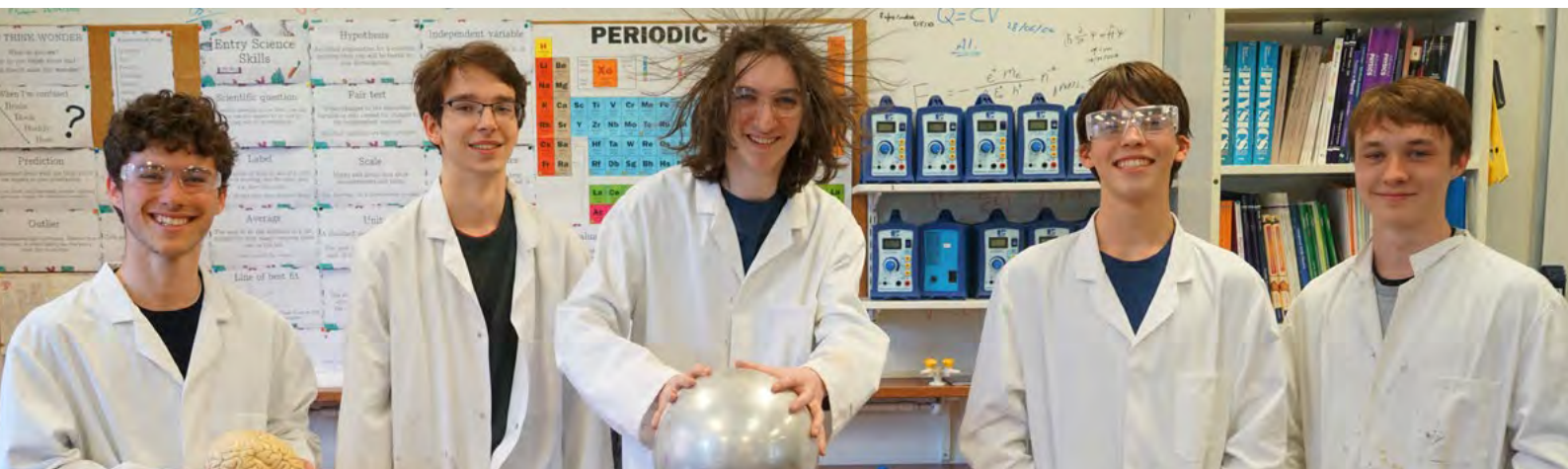


Nadir Rahman, a former UCS pupil, has been awarded a Stelios Scholarship at the London School of Economics. The scholarship entitles Nadir to a 100% reduction in tuition fees throughout his undergraduate degree course and a further grant is awarded to support him with purchasing books and other materials. Nadir was understandably delighted: “I am overjoyed to be a recipient of this award! I applied for the scholarship over the summer. I was at UCS for seven years and I discussed many of my experiences during my time at UCS when putting the application together; I had a wealth of experiences to draw upon thanks to the school’s diverse and inclusive offering of activities. This scholarship will have a huge impact on my academic career going forward.”

Nadir studied at UCS between 2013 and 2020. He added, “I joined the school as a shy 11-year-old but I settled in quickly and I loved every minute of my time there. I played in orchestras, was selected for the 1st XI cricket team and took part in numerous trips, clubs and societies. Being part of the UCS team which made it to the final of the Budget Challenge run by the Institute of Economic Affairs was a determining factor in my decision to study Economics at university. However, the real highlight of UCS for me was the people – teachers and pupils – who I met along the way. I made some truly amazing memories as a student at UCS that I will continue to cherish. Wherever life may take me, I will always be indebted to the school for its generosity and kindness.”

— Contributions by E. Roberts

UCS Scientists Take International Olympiads By Storm



Every year, tens of thousands of pupils across the UK undertake Olympiads which are run by national societies in Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Biology. These Olympiad exams are often sat in the Spring Term and are designed to test the problem solving skills of the most able Sixth Form pupils. Societies usually select the most able pupils (the top 0.005% of candidates) to take part in further challenges and perhaps even compete against pupils overseas. It is extremely rare for a pupil to be picked for these extra events but remarkably, three UCS pupils in a single cohort were selected to compete in these latter challenges. The Covid-19 pandemic prevented international travel but none the less, these three pupils enjoyed the opportunity to push their understanding to the limits and benefit from a wide variety of masterclasses run by societies.

Nik Maslov was chosen to compete in the International Physics Olympiad in July. He sat two five-hour exams online which were sat by physicists from all over the world. Nik finished as the second-highest UK-based physicist and

his impressive performance secured him a bronze medal. The organisers were so impressed they subsequently asked Nik to join the Astronomy and Astrophysics team which also contained a UCS pupil, Sasha Boone. Their International Olympiad was held in late September and Nik was rewarded with a silver medal. Sasha Boone went one stage better and was awarded a gold which is a truly outstanding achievement.

Noah Grodzinski enjoyed similar success after excelling in the Biology Olympiad. From thousands of entries, he was selected to take part in a training camp over the summer and then formed part of a four-strong UK team in the International Biology Olympiad. He was awarded a silver medal having finished in the top 30% of the contestants from around 70 nations.

Congratulations to these former pupils and we wish them well as they embark on the first year of their university courses.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Impressive Languages Journal Launched



December 2020 sees the publication of the inaugural number of the University College School Modern Languages Journal, *Interlingua*.

It is the intention of this new journal to provide a forum on a termly basis for all aspects of language learning, and a space in which pupils from Entry to Sixth can showcase any aspect of their engagement with the languages taught in the department – French, Spanish, German, Italian and Mandarin – or any language they speak at home. *Interlingua* will feature written production and reviews by pupils and staff, interviews with Old Gowers who have excelled in languages, alongside reviews of the latest ICT platforms and language learning skills.

It is the aim of the journal to foster an interest and inquisitiveness on the part of pupils, teachers and parents alike, not just in the importance of language learning *per se*, but also in the myriad

of cultural, historical and social opportunities it presents. *Interlingua* threads elementary and *ab-initio* language studies undertaken in the UCS Lower School with A-Level, Oxbridge and beyond, and hopes to inspire and enthuse in equal measure. The first edition on translation has been inspired by pupils' participation in the recent Queen's College, Oxford Anthea Bell Prize for Young Translators, and explores the intricacies of literature in translation from a range of canonical literature. We also welcome any contributions or suggestions for the Spring Term number, 'The Italian Issue', to be published Easter 2021.

To view the journal click here.

<https://tinyurl.com/yyyyn9j2>

— Contributions by H. Laurenson

Building A Sustainable Future



UCS has seen significant progress in its aim to become one of the leading independent eco-schools. In October, the Foundation pledged its intention to go carbon zero by 2030 as part of the Youth Climate Summit. Pupils in our Green Impact Society have already been heavily involved in moving this ambitious pledge towards becoming a reality: carrying out a full assessment of the school's eco credentials, focusing on biodiversity, energy, waste and travel. Pupils have now created an action plan to achieve becoming an accredited 'Eco-School'. The society has completed all of this over Zoom, to allow students from different year group bubbles to contribute, and has demonstrated incredible determination and tenacity on this important topic.

The new academic year has seen several major sustainability initiatives implemented, including tackling the school's waste. The Senior School has become a zero landfill school and has increased recycling rates to 75% of all school waste (an increase of 25% this term!). UCS has also launched a new partnership with Sustrans and their Bike It programme to promote sustainable travel to school. From informative assemblies to focus groups with

parents and students, the ground has been set for a range of new initiatives to raise the number of students and staff sustainably travelling to work. As part of this endeavour, a group of Remove students have set up a Bike It crew who will learn bike mechanic skills next term so that pupils can get their bicycles serviced if they cycle into school!

On the biodiversity front, over 80 saplings were given new homes as part of Camden Forest's initiative to plant 2,025 trees by 2025. The enthusiasm for this scheme from across the school community demonstrates the interest and support for being more environmentally sustainable in the future. In partnership with London Zoo, Mrs Anthony and the biodiversity group are in the process of installing a 'motion' sensor camera to document the wide range of animals that visit the school!

An extremely busy term on the sustainability front, but lots left to do! Do follow Green Impact Society (@greenimpact_ucs) or email environment@ucs.org.uk

— Contributions by J. Firth

Careers Lunches Proceed Online



The UCS Careers programme has taken a blended approach this term with some elements able to run as normal in year group bubbles, and others moving into digital settings.

Careers from Humanities Afternoon

The year kicked off with the annual Careers from Humanities Afternoon for the Upper Remove, who heard from a range of speakers from backgrounds in journalism, media, law and many others. Pupils were exposed to the breadth of opportunities available to an individual with a Humanities degree and were encouraged to pursue subjects they are passionate about into A-Level and future undergraduate study.

Enterprise

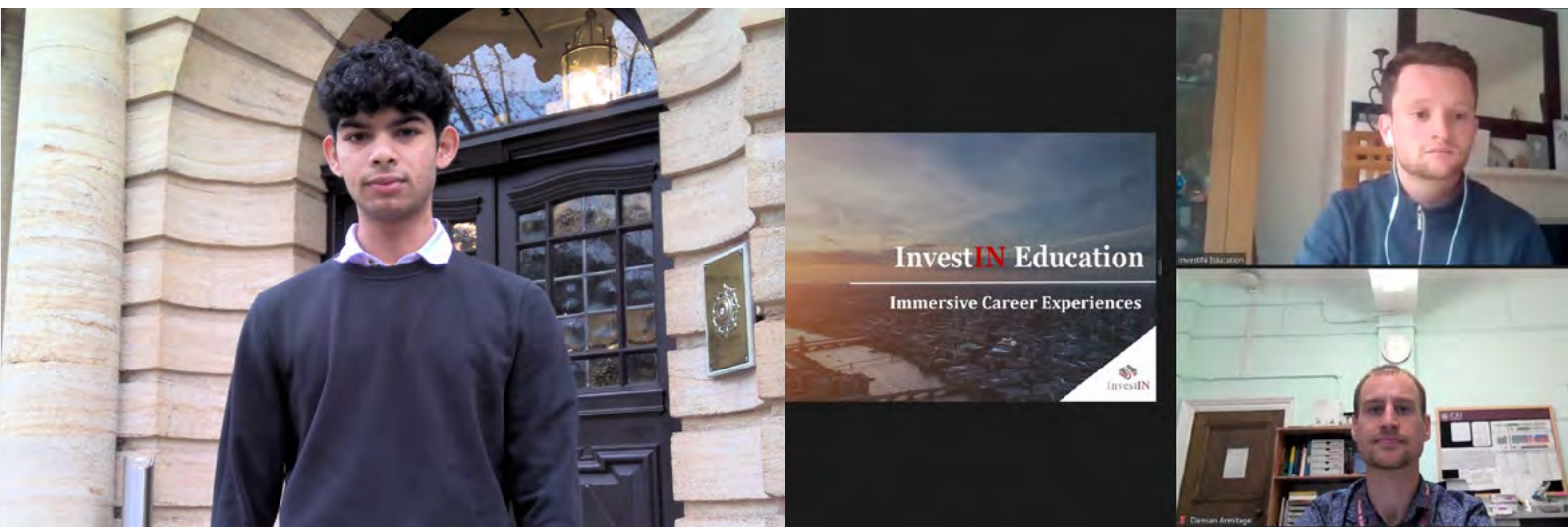
This year, more than 70 Transitus students took part in the UCS Enterprise challenge and the competition was fierce. Teams were tasked with coming up with a business idea and pitching their concept to a panel of judges. Ideas ranged from automated registration systems to smart watches

for the elderly, and the judges were blown away by the quality of ideas and the level of research that went into each pitch. Two teams were selected as the winners: Extrawdinary – distributors of ethically sourced, environmentally-friendly straws – and Cauch, developers of a time management, organisation app. Both teams have now been entered into the National Young Enterprise Competition and we look forward to seeing their companies grow over the coming year.

Careers Online

Over the past few months, Careers Lunches have evolved into Careers Afternoons and pupils from all year groups have been invited to join presentations and conversations with industry professionals to discover more about the range of careers they can look forward to, following their UCS training. This term has welcomed speakers from InvestIN, Cisco and Thermo Fisher Scientific, and it has been brilliant to see students from across the year groups considering their future careers.

Careers



Insight Programmes

Each week, the school bulletin shares interesting Careers opportunities that we recommend students get involved with. They are a brilliant way of getting to know more about careers and seeing if a particular job is something you might be interested in pursuing after education.

Nir Bhattacharjee is a Transitus student who did just that, and he shares his experience of the Lloyds Insight Week:

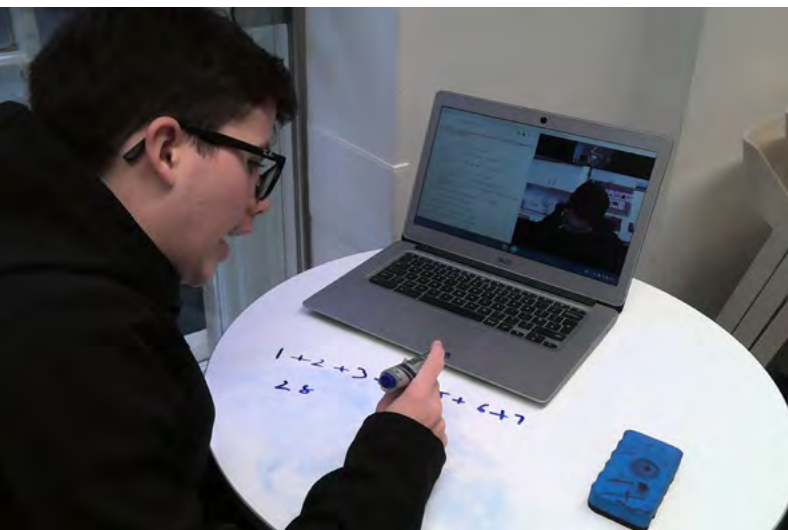
“The Lloyds Insight Week was advertised in the last school bulletin before lockdown. I decided to apply because I am interested in finance and business. The application process was entirely virtual; in addition to submitting a CV and cover letter, there was an online interview. This was the hardest and most nerve-racking part of the application process. During the week, I was exposed to the complexities of the insurance industry, especially the processes

and different fields of insurance. I spoke to an underwriter and a broker on a one-on-one basis, which helped me to understand the purpose of their respective jobs, as well as why they chose this career path. We worked in teams on a project concerning ‘How Covid-19 affects Lloyds and the insurance industry’, presenting our findings at the end of the week.

“I found the opportunity to be extremely worthwhile. The experience allowed me to practise working with teams online, exposed me to the interview processes and to an area of finance that I was previously unaware of.”

— Contributions by D. Armitage

UCS Transitus Community Service And Partnerships Programme



UCS has a longstanding and deep-rooted connection with the local community. It has been a year like no other, but we are pleased to have continued working alongside our partners in the local community, and beyond. The difficult circumstances have created new challenges, but also given rise to new opportunities. This term, Transitus pupils on Friday afternoons have contributed in innovative ways to the Community Service & Partnerships Programme to ensure that, despite these testing times, we continue to have a positive impact on the local community.

Recognising that care homes have been struck particularly hard by Covid-19, Transitus pupils worked in collaboration with Age UK Camden to produce PPE, establish a pen pal scheme between themselves and care home residents, and perform in weekly online, lunchtime concerts.

“My partnership programme was making PPE for care homes. The partnership programme enabled me to learn a new skill by providing PPE to care homes in London. Everyone taking part was keen to get involved and paid close attention to detail when sewing the masks. This experience has taught me to be patient, problem-solve, work as a team and has also improved my hand-eye coordination and focus.”

— Sofia Jimenez (Transitus)

“Your support during these difficult times has been amazing and is so appreciated... the music, the letters and now face masks – a huge thank you from all of us at Age UK Camden.”

— Sophie Smith, Age UK Camden

UCS Transitus Community Service And Partnerships Programme



“I thoroughly enjoyed the partnership programme and overall found it was an extremely rewarding experience. Especially during the tough times of the Covid pandemic, I was very happy to be given the opportunity to play in these remote concerts, when all other ensembles and orchestras had become impossible to run. I found it especially heart-warming to be able to do it for such a great cause.”

— David Verran (Transitus)

“I just wanted to say how fabulous your school has been in keeping all the intergenerational projects going – even in lockdown.”

— Brian O’Connell, Age UK Camden

Other projects included pupils writing and illustrating children’s stories for local primary schools, designing and making Christmas cards for hospital patients, learning British Sign Language and volunteering at The Felix Project’s food bank depot.

“I am really enjoying learning BSL and may even sign up to the year subscription for the dictionary – I am very interested in doing the Signature Level 2 Certificate in British Sign Language, then progressing to Level 3, in the future. I would also like to say I am very proud to be in a school that does so much for the community and beyond.”

— Nerea Lopez (Transitus)

One group of Transitus pupils looked beyond our immediate community here in North London, and took part in a ‘Missing Maps’ project. This is a web-based, open-source, collaborative project which involves mapping areas of the world where humanitarian organisations are trying to meet the needs of vulnerable people. In a year in which so much of our lives has moved online, this exemplified the resourcefulness of UCS pupils to keep the Community Service & Partnerships spirit alive, despite the restrictions in place.

— Contributions by M. Reiderman and C. Rancon

STEMlink Supports Pupils Affected By Lockdown



“Our students have benefited greatly from these sessions. Thank you so much to the UCS teachers.”

Anushka Chakravarty,
Assistant Head at LAE

The effects of the national lockdown will be felt by children across the UK for years to come. Whilst UCS was able to run a full teaching programme during the Spring and Summer Terms, the same was not able to happen in every school across the country.

At the start of the Autumn Term, we discussed how we could support pupils’ learning with representatives from a number of our partner schools. Several schools raised the possibility of supporting pupils who had missed out on vital teaching during the spring and were now making the transition from GCSE to A-Level in STEM subjects – traditionally subjects where there is often a jump in complexity. STEMlink was born and throughout the latter half of the Autumn Term, 60 Year 12 pupils from London Academy of Excellence, Stratford and Michaela Community

School, Wembley, were given online support in Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Biology on a weekly basis. Lessons were conducted on Zoom by Miss Holland, Mr Powell, Ms Cho, Ms Potter, Dr Dell, Mr Reiderman, Mr Roberts, Mr Schumacher and Mr Mace, and the pupils were delighted with the support they received.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

140 Interviewers Help Sixth Formers Prepare For University Admissions



Every year, Year 13 pupils setting their sights on studying Medicine or a STEM subject at Oxford or Cambridge University are put through their paces at several interview evenings conducted in the Great Hall. This year, due to social distancing regulations the interview evenings took place via Zoom. Parents and Old Gowers joined teams of teacher interviewers and truly put the Sixth Formers through their paces. A third evening was added to the repertoire this year which focused on subjects in Humanities and Social Sciences. UCS pupils were joined by students from four partnership schools (Westminster Academy, London Academy of Excellence, UCL Academy and Michaela Community School) and we were hugely grateful to the army of 140 Old Gowers, parents and teachers who carried out almost 200 interviews over the three evenings. Pupils found being interviewed by Zoom to bring an extra

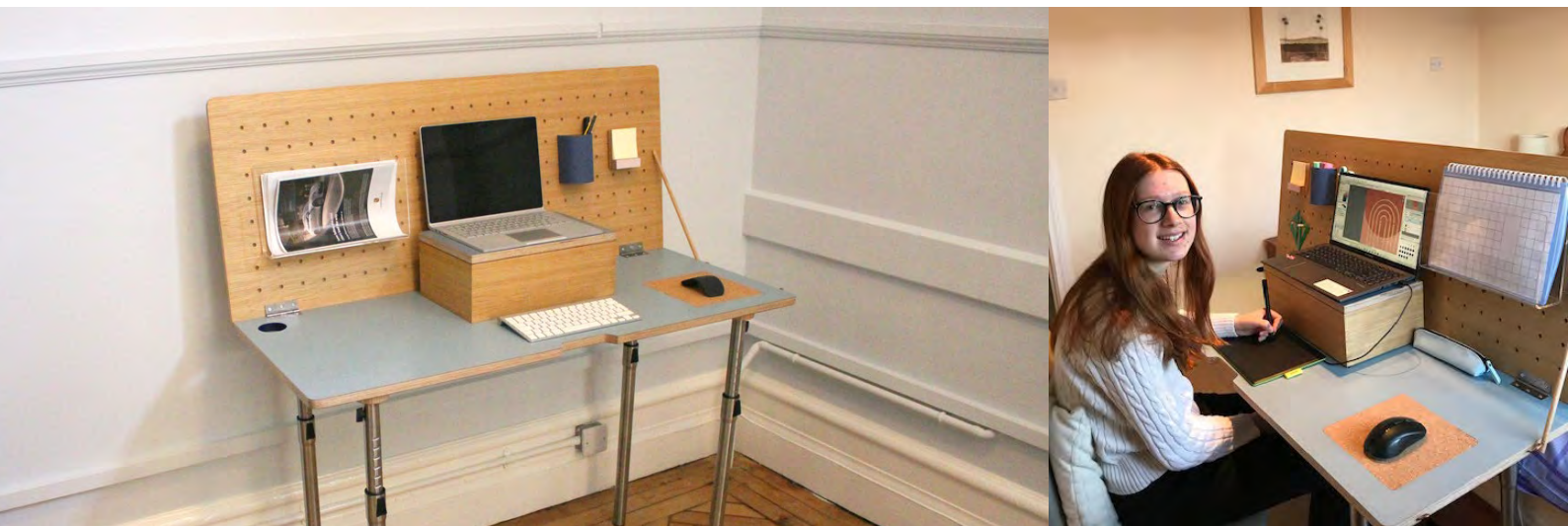
challenge to the already daunting prospect of an interview and we now wish our students, and those from our partner schools, the best of luck with their real interviews. Thank you to Miss Holland, Mr Powell and Mrs Jenkins for organising these hugely successful events.

“THANK YOU!
The interview experiences
were so important for our
students!”

Ms Junker, Teacher at UCL Academy

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Pop-Up Office Scoops Partnership Design Award



During the spring lockdown, Mr Franks organised a design competition for pupils from local state schools. News of this spread across the UK via social media and eventually over 200 inspiring entries were received by Mr Franks who was delighted by the response. “We asked pupils to design a product that would help people in some way during lockdown. The range of submissions was fantastic but it was the level of thought which the budding designers had given their products which really impressed me.” The process of selecting a winner was certainly not straightforward: “We shortlisted the best 10 designs and eventually chose a ‘pop up’ office designed by a pupil from Lichfield. It really was exceptional work.”

The winner in question was Isabel Ainsworth, a Year 10 pupil at The Friary School in Lichfield, and last week her finished product was delivered

to her home fresh from being made in the UCS DT workshop. Isabel commented, “I enjoyed thinking about how the design could work and explaining this through my drawings. I would like to be a designer or architect in the future, so this was great. The most exciting thing was knowing that my design would be made. The finished product translated my design perfectly and all the small details were included.” Isabel’s parents were equally pleased. Carol Ainsworth commented, “We are so impressed with how well made the desk is. It functions just as Isabel intended and can be easily set up in any room. With both of us working at home and Isabel revising, it has already had plenty of use. The competition was a fantastic opportunity that inspired students to use the difficult situation of lockdown to create something useful.”

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Cards Of Care



UCS Acts Against Loneliness

In November, Raquel Menashe (Sixth) asked Mrs Rancon if UCS would be willing to support the work of, Cards of Care, a charity which aims to alleviate elements of loneliness caused by the social distancing regulations required over the last nine months. The answer to Raquel’s question was an emphatic, “Yes” and throughout the final week of term, pupils throughout the Senior School at UCS spent form periods writing and decorating festive greetings cards. Every pupil was assigned a care home resident (the spreadsheet designed to help with this by Mrs Rancon was remarkable!) and pupils embraced the initiative wholeheartedly. On the final day of term, over 1,400 cards were delivered to residents in care homes across London.

“This has been a great idea. In these times, loneliness amongst the elderly is a significant problem and we were all pleased to do something to help alleviate this problem.”

Sandy Mayo (Transitus)

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Phenomenal Collections For North Paddington Food Bank



In October, pupils, parents and staff from UCS donated over three tonnes of groceries to North Paddington Food Bank (NPFB). The school has supported the food bank since 2016 and four years later, the collection now involves pupils from across all three schools in the UCS Foundation. James Quayle, manager of NPFB, was delighted by the response of the UCS community to the appeal, saying: “At this point in 2019, we had supported 8,000 people. Already this year we have supported 20,000 people. So many families are living in extreme hardship and knowing we can rely on the UCS community to provide a sizable donation every October makes a huge difference to our work. Thank you, UCS. The size of this donation is simply staggering.” Mark Beard, Headmaster, was equally pleased, saying: “It was fantastic to see everyone unite for a common cause. The food was packed into 159 boxes and I would like to thank everyone who donated these items.”

In December, NPFB again joined forces with UCS in an effort to provide families supported by the food bank with items to relieve some of the lockdown boredom. Natalie Hayes from NPFB commented, “We are deeply concerned about the mental health of the people we work with. Community facilities have closed and we hope the 600 ‘entertainment’ hampers will provide a little respite from the monotony of lockdown.” The response to this appeal from the UCS community was again remarkable. Thousands of crayons and colouring books were received, not to mention a vast donation of luxury toiletries. “The UCS donation has made a real difference to our appeal and the games and toys in particular will be hugely valued by the recipients. Thank you!” added Natalie.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

UCS Runners Raise Thousands For Charities



UCS runners have been running throughout the term in year group bubbles and the lack of school fixtures has encouraged them to channel their enthusiasm into raising money through sponsored running events. Seventeen staff, pupils and a dog (!) took part in the RBC Race for the Kids 2020 event in October to raise money for Great Ormond Street Hospital. All members of the UCS runners team ran in their local parks/area to complete the 5km race ‘virtually’ with family members cheering on and providing support. The team raised over **£1,360** in support of Great Ormond Street Hospital and as the photographs testify, seemed to have a lot of fun doing it! Tristan Jenkins (Remove) completed his own sponsored run during October. Inspired by the work of Cancer Research UK he pledged to raise **£1,000**. His friends joined him for the actual run and Tristan was delighted that he was able to meet his target and support this remarkable charity.

As the days grew shorter in November, UCS runners then joined thousands of other runners around the world to participate in the Run in the Dark race in aid of the Mark Pollock Trust. Students and staff put on their trainers at 8pm, one cold Thursday evening, and each ran 5km, motivated by the powerful documentary about Mark Pollock. I would thoroughly recommend it to all: watch *Unbreakable*.

It is testament to the attitude and enthusiasm that has been shown by those who run every Thursday/ Friday morning before school, that they have not been disheartened by lockdown and have sought out opportunities to promote good causes through their running.

— Contributions by J. Firth and E. Roberts

Community Action 2020



In a year in which every one of us had to reimagine how we go about our daily lives, Community Action 2020 seemed destined to flounder. In actual fact, UCS pupils rose to the challenge with fresh thinking, ingenuity and renewed determination. The food stalls and performance events that have been the mainstays of the campaign in previous years were replaced by a raft of new activities as each Deme devised imaginative, Covid friendly ways to raise funds. In place of the usual guest speakers in assembly, the Deme Captains gave their own video presentations to introduce the work of their chosen charities.

Baxters ran a netball tournament in aid of the Teenage Cancer Trust. Black Hawkins reinvented the sponsored fitness bike ride ‘Tour de Swains’ for the mental health charity Mind. Olders

marketed UCS hoodies and football shirts in support of the MediOliver Foundation, which gives opportunities to children in Ethiopia. Flocks ran a five-a-side football tournament for Hands of Hope and Underwoods hosted an online quiz for the refugee support charity Salusbury World. Evans were raising funds for the multiple sclerosis charity MS Positive by building an escape room in the old fives courts. Two Year 11 students, Arian Abootalebi and Lukas Horvat, were particularly proactive, organising a collection for a homeless shelter.

The campaign concluded with a mufti day entitled ‘UCS Does History’, during which a cast of famous ghosts were seen to roam the school corridors, with masks on, of course!

— Contributions by B. Albu

Drama



Drama, Dance and social distancing do not conventionally mix well. However, with strict safety measures in place we have managed to achieve a hearty mix of academic success and co-curricular ambition.

Our examined performances went ahead as usual and displayed no evidence of having suffered from a devising process carried out over Zoom. They were ambitious pieces, performed in the style of Verbatim, and featured beautiful, demanding moments of physical theatre. The pupils should be proud of the high marks they all achieved. In November, we were very pleased to be able to offer our Transitus students a socially-distanced puppetry workshop led by Seb Charles (*War Horse*, National Theatre), which will aid their preparations for their practical exam next year.

Our co-curricular provision had the potential to be completely wiped out by the challenges presented to us by coronavirus, and very nearly

was. However, we were determined to provide something for our pupils to embrace, co-curricularly, and so a completely revamped Covid-safe Deme Drama format was launched, alongside an exciting opportunity for other students to make a film of the play *DNA*, using professional camera equipment and shooting on location in the fresh air of Hampstead Heath. This, though, is the year 2020 – so sadly *DNA* was interrupted mid-shoot by the second lockdown; postponed, not cancelled. Deme Drama will happen this term for some year groups, for others it has been postponed until January.

Live performances – whether students create in them, partake in them or analyse them – are at the beating heart of what the Drama department does. It is our *raison d'être*, and we will continue to work tirelessly to provide as many opportunities as we can during these uncertain times, as well as making exciting plans for when normality returns.

— Contributions by C. Bhantoo

Pupils And Staff Shine In Lunchtime Music Events



Despite the constraints on school music this term the Music department has run an ambitious programme of ensembles and concerts. Over 20 different groups have been actively working on chamber music, jazz and rock repertoire, and pupils from all year groups have had an opportunity to engage in ensemble music making with their peers. In addition, there have been 11 Lunchtime Concerts in the newly refurbished (and re-christened) Giles Slaughter Lecture Theatre. These have been open to 'live' socially distanced audiences and also recorded for later broadcast on UCS YouTube; do catch them if you can!

In a term where putting on any concert has required a herculean effort and considerable ingenuity it seems invidious to select highlights,

but two events stand out. First it was an enormous pleasure to welcome such a talented cohort of Entry musicians in two 'New Arrivals' concerts; the long term future of UCS Music certainly appears assured. At the other end of the age spectrum, the Sixth's 'Narrative and Storytelling' concert during Enrichment Week was a tour de force by our senior musicians in their exploration of the contrasting sound worlds of Vivaldi's 'Winter' from *The Four Seasons* and Vaughan Williams' *Songs of Travel*. Particular mention must go to Oscar Ruddick Trentmann, Agnes Sharp and Tim Lee for sharing the solo honours in the Vivaldi, to Alex Sneader, Luca Zucchi and Lucas Wolman for their splendid vocal contributions in the Vaughan Williams, and to Mr Gibson and Mr Ward for curating such an imaginative and rewarding event.

— Contributions by C. Dawe

Former Music Scholar Wins Scholarship At Birmingham University



In September, Daniel Kohn, fresh from achieving impressive grades in his A-Levels this summer, was awarded a Music Scholarship at the University of Birmingham. Daniel was also a Music scholar at UCS and was delighted to receive this award which entitles him to £3,000 of instrument tuition at the University or Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. Daniel commented, “At UCS I took advantage of the Endangered Instrument Scheme run by the Music department. I was already a violinist but, through this scheme run by the school, I had free lessons on the oboe. By Upper Remove, I had progressed to leading the oboe section in the school’s orchestras and ensembles and latterly I played with the English Schools’ Orchestra at Cadogan Hall. This was a real highlight for me.” Daniel starred at UCS’ Spring Concert where he played Stephen Frost’s

Oboe Concerto accompanied by the school’s Chamber Orchestra. He added, “Playing Stephen’s concerto was an incredible opportunity to showcase contemporary oboe work. It was fantastic to play the piece in the iconic Great Hall and I was delighted when Stephen told me how moved he was when he heard me play it.”

Daniel will undoubtedly return to UCS at some point to support younger pupils with their musical pursuits but he is now looking forward to embracing the challenges posed by studying Medicine whilst furthering his musical education.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Saturday Sport Before Half-Term



Before lockdown Mk2 we were delighted that we were able to offer an action packed Games programme throughout the week and, in particular, at weekends. The highlights of the Saturday sessions are detailed here:

Rugby

Being unable to play contact rugby has been incredibly frustrating; however, being able to focus on other core fundamental skills has been incredibly useful. The RFU produced a Ready 4 Rugby game and UCS pupils seemed to really enjoy this. Pupils were taught the skills and part of the game during their usual Games lessons, which then left us the time to play competitive internal matches amongst the year group on Saturdays. One highlight for me was seeing the Upper Remove's first tournament, where Zac Robinson's team just managed to beat the other three teams. All games were incredibly close and we could visibly see the pupils working out how to beat the opposition using numerous tactics. A rotation

system was set up to allow all year groups to play in this tournament scenario twice throughout the first part of half-term. A logistical nightmare, but one we all made work!

Football

Each Saturday throughout September and October, Mr Sousa (more commonly known as 'Rodrigo' to the pupils) and Mr Bienias, ran football training sessions for pupils of all ages from the Senior School. Sessions varied between technical, tactical and game-based drills, but all activities had a strong emphasis on developing pupils to play in the UCS way; keeping possession and for players to be comfortable on the ball. Sessions concluded with match type scenarios, with players having to adapt to different size pitches and implementing different strategies and tactics, such as counter-attacking, or winning possession back with a high press, all intended to get pupils as prepared as possible for any potential fixtures in January.

Saturday Sport Before Half-Term



Hockey

This term at UCS we ran an intra-bubble hockey league for each year group in the Lower and Middle Schools. The pupils took up the opportunity to play competitively against one another with great enthusiasm, with many pupils who ordinarily would not be afforded the chance, playing hockey matches. There were an incredible 51 goal scorers across the leagues, with 148 pupils taking part. The team captains showed great responsibility and resourcefulness in organising their teams with minimal staff involvement. The hockey played was of a high standard across all year groups, pointing to a bright future for UCS hockey upon the recommencement of inter-school fixtures in 2021.

Cricket

With a summer of school cricket missed, I was delighted to be able to offer our cricketers a chance to dust off the pads and train on Saturday mornings at the start of the new school year. The September weather was kind and we managed to offer sessions to all the year groups over the course of four weekends. There's no doubt the pupils enjoyed a good hit out and I'm sure all the players who took part appreciated the chance to get outdoors and burn off some energy while improving their skill. Particularly pleasing was the number of new Entry boys who took part and the quality of cricket on show.

— Contributions by E. Sawtell

The UCS Inaugural Games



During the second half of the Autumn Term the PE department initiated an internal Games competition for the Lower and Middle School pupils. Due to the pandemic, external fixtures were unable to go ahead so this was an opportunity for pupils to hone some of the skills they had been working on during the first half term, alongside the opportunity to focus on the important aspect of teamwork in a competitive setting.

Initially the events were scheduled to take place on Saturday mornings; however, this was curtailed due to the national lockdown, so the decision was made to move the competition to the pupils' Games days.

Each year group was split into eight even teams, with each team having a balance of hockey, rugby and football players who led their teams when their specific sport was being played. A fourth event was also included, Team Games, where the pupils competed in the classic 'tug of war' and

a team run. The latter required the entire team to complete two laps of the playing fields while connected to each other by a very large elastic band. The Team Games were an excellent chance to apply the School's Learning Values, particularly resilience and relationships!

It was pleasing to see all the students participate with real enthusiasm and vigour in all the events, embracing the challenge of trying different sports, in a competitive environment, that they may not normally participate in.

The captains of the winning teams, Mark Doubinsky (Entry), Leon Velay (Shell), Charlie Wheeler (Lower Remove) and Itay Greenbaum (Remove), were presented with trophies in the final week and the winners also received a UCS bobble hat which will be useful for training during the winter!

— Contributions by A. van der Looy

Old Gowers: Online Reunions And A Nobel Prize Winner



© Nobel Prize Outreach. Photo: Fergus Kennedy



Who would have thought that a global pandemic would result in a proliferation of events for the Alumni Office? Not I. And yet, since March, we have helped to coordinate as many as eight virtual reunions for Old Gowers, when during the same period during ‘normal’ times, we would typically host two year group reunions.

I have also been really heartened by the willingness of the Old Gower community to get involved with school and OG life – in June, we asked for OGs to send a short video to welcome all 2020 leavers into the Old Gowers’ Club. We also had a strong, grassroots response from the OG community to the Black Lives Matter movement, in an open letter asking the School to take action. This has resulted in the new Diversity and Equality Steering Group, where the OG community is being represented by a variety of OGs who have experiences that they want to share.

In October, we were delighted to congratulate Professor Sir Roger Penrose (OG) on being jointly awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics. The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences awarded the prize to the Old Gower for “the discovery that black hole formation is a robust prediction of the general theory of relativity”. The academy credits Sir Roger with using “ingenious mathematical methods in his proof that black holes are a direct consequence of Albert Einstein’s general theory of relativity”. In 1965, Sir Roger proved that black holes can form and his ground-breaking article is still regarded by many as the most important contribution to the general theory of relativity since Einstein. Professor Sir Roger Penrose studied at UCS between 1945 and 1949. He was awarded a knighthood in 1994 and shared the Wolf Prize for Physics in 1988 with Stephen Hawking.

Old Gowers: Online Reunions And A Nobel Prize Winner



In November, instead of being able to invite Old Gowers to the school for our annual Act of Remembrance, we were able to livestream the event on our YouTube channel with the help of our colleagues in the IT and Digital Media teams. It was very moving to be able to share this special service with the wider community, as it normally happens during a weekday when many are unable to attend. We plan to livestream this in the future, regardless of Covid.

This month, we have been preparing and packing the 2020 Leavers' Gifts, which would normally be sent in May. And, when it is safe to do so, we look forward to welcoming our 2020 leavers back to UCS for a reunion event in the near future.

Our plan for 2021 took some time to coalesce, but we are nearly there. It will be nigh on impossible to safely host in-person events, so any eligible events will be made virtual – primarily our reunions. We will invite our 1970, 1971, 1996, 2010 and 2011 leavers to sign up for their Zoom reunions with a twist – we will be sending them a Reunion in a Box as a nod to the drinks and nibbles that we enjoy at an in-person reunion. While we are unable to do the same for all events, rest assured that we have some exciting announcements in the pipeline for next year.

On behalf of the Development and Alumni Relations Office, and the Old Gowers' Club, I want to wish you a happy and healthy holiday season and all the very best for 2021.

— Contributions by E. Dwek

Old Gower At The Helm For Imperial In University Challenge



Former UCS pupils of late are starting to enjoy success on BBC2's iconic quiz, *University Challenge*. Last year, OG Zara Elstein captained the team from the London School of Economics and the latest series has seen Michael Kohn captain the side from Imperial College, London. The Imperial team were pipped in their first round match by Strathclyde but their valiant performance was rewarded with a place in round two as one of the highest scoring losers. The Imperial team then triumphed against Exeter University and after beating St Andrews by 180 points to 90, now look forward to a tie in the quarter-finals. The progress of this team has been followed in earnest by staff and pupils at UCS. Michael is the team's expert in literature and

fine arts but his knowledge of Chemistry, not to mention his leadership skills as the team captain, also captured attention in the latest match. The team practised hard in preparation for the contest by watching old episodes of the programme and seeing if they could answer the questions before the contestants. The practice certainly paid off and we now eagerly await the next screening.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

