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Main Feature



Jack (left) and Luke (right) – IntoUniversity Lambeth

Lambeth mentoring pair excel

Luke is a Year 11 student at a local school which has a longstanding partnership with IntoUniversity Lambeth. Luke has benefitted from IntoUniversity's mentoring scheme and has been working with Jack, his mentor, a History undergraduate from King's College London for over a year. We recently caught up with the pair to talk about what they have achieved so far and their hopes for the future.

Luke came across **IntoUniversity** after his History teacher suggested that he should get involved with our University Mentoring scheme. Luke was keen to get extra support with his school work and to develop his social skills. 'I used to be a very shy person and kept things to myself but since coming to **IntoUniversity** and with the support that my mentor, Jack, has given me I have come out of my shell.'

Currently, Luke is working towards his GCSE exams this summer and his favourite subjects include Biology and Chemistry: 'I especially like the experiments, such as the dissection of a heart, which we have done in school.' Coming along to the centre has helped Luke to visualise a future career in the field, 'I want to study Medicine and work with children and teenagers because I feel they need the most support.'

Luke's mentor, Jack, discovered **IntoUniversity** through his university, King's College London. King's has worked closely with **IntoUniversity Lambeth** since it launched in 2007 and the centre's 10-year anniversary celebration also marked the launch of their official sponsorship of the centre. When asked why he volunteers as a mentor, Jack spoke of his passion for social mobility.

'The support **IntoUniversity** provides to young people by directly challenging the cycle of poverty and deprivation is something I really feel would have benefitted me when I was at school.'

As Luke's exams approach, the support he has received from Jack has been crucial. 'Since working with Jack, my History grade has improved dramatically. I've even been able to get a head start on the next topic we'll be covering in school – all thanks to Jack!' Having one-to-one support from Jack has also helped Luke to explore the type of learner he is. 'We recently discovered that Luke is an auditory learner,' says Jack, 'so we've changed the way we learn and I've been introducing Luke to podcasts and YouTube videos.' It's not long before Luke interjects with, 'since we've done that my grades have improved in almost every subject!'

For Jack, his best memory of working with Luke so far has been seeing the direct impact that his support has had, particularly concerning his handwriting. 'It was at times not legible and I know you can get the worst marks just because the examiners can't read it. So we emailed the school and they made him sit a test to check if he needs extra support and he did. Luke now has a scribe for every exam which is great!'

For Luke, the biggest impact of having Jack as a mentor has been the improvement in his social skills. 'I can be more of a leader now which is being reflected in my school work and my active participation in school. For example, I support the younger students at school and I'm also a Prefect! Having Jack as a role model has helped me to see how you should deal with younger students.'

Jack has also enjoyed seeing Luke progress. 'If you met Luke this time last year he was a different person – he was very shy and it was hard to break that down at first. But now he is much more confident and knows what he wants in life. His body language has improved and he is able to hold conversations for a longer period of time.'

I see him talking to his peers in the centre and he is so much more confident.'

The pair have recently had some good news about Luke's sixth form applications and are eager to talk about it. 'We went through the entire application process together and were really happy when Luke was invited for an interview at the top school of his choices,' Jack says. Luke himself is keen to talk about his excitement, 'I was elated when I found out I got in! Any issue I had, I felt like I could go to Jack or anybody at **IntoUniversity** and I knew they would listen and try to sort it out.'

'The best thing about IntoUniversity is that everyone is so welcoming and the centre has provided me with a support network!'

Luke

Luke and Jack will continue their mentoring relationship into the summer and will be invited to **IntoUniversity's** Mentoring Graduation Ceremony at University College London with students from across **IntoUniversity's** network of centres. **IntoUniversity Lambeth** staff have enjoyed seeing the mentoring pair excel and George Linfield, Senior Cross-Centre Programme Coordinator and Volunteer Officer at the centre, recently said, 'we're all really proud of the progress that both Luke and Jack have made on the mentoring scheme so far. Luke is as ambitious a mentee as Jack is dedicated a mentor; I think that's a perfect mentoring combination!'

If you would like to be invited to one of IntoUniversity's Graduation Ceremonies, please contact Vicky at aspire@intouniversity.org

Volunteering

Civil Service Fast Stream



Team Bestminster (From Left to Right) Amala, Peter, Andy, Anna, Chris, Alice, Katie and Alex

The Civil Service Fast Stream is a 'leadership development programme' run by the Cabinet Office. It gives successful applicants the opportunity to spend four years in different roles across a variety of government departments and secondment placements. Fast Streamers learn useful, transferable skills to help them quickly progress into the Senior Civil Service as future leaders.

During the first six months on the programme, all Fast Streamers are required to take part in something called 'The Fund', where they work with a team of peers and engage with civil society to raise money and volunteer for a chosen charity. It brings together Fast Streamers from all different backgrounds to help develop networks and team building and it also encourages participants to look beyond their 9-5 and at what they can give back to society.

'In September 2017, our 'Fund' group of eight civil servants decided to pair up with IntoUniversity for our six months of charity work. We were attracted not only by the worthy cause of the charity but also by the opportunity to individually partner with local learning centres across the UK as, whilst the majority of us were based in London, we had a colleague posted in Swindon and it gave him a chance to be involved from the outset.

'Whilst our six months is now over, we haven't let that stop our support for the charity.'

From the get-go, we wanted to make sure that what we did for IntoUniversity benefitted them as much as we could. We wanted to give as much time and raise as much money as we could but we also wanted to make the best use of our skills so that our support to IntoUniversity was worthwhile. Therefore, during our six months we not only paired with our local centres to provide academic support and raised money through Santa fun runs, charity gift wrapping, bake sales, and bucket collections, but we also put on two outreach days for the students. We used the fact that we were civil servants with access to interesting government departments and institutions to bring something original to the table. These outreach days included a tour of the Foreign Office and Parliament, workshops on how to build government policy, and Q&A sessions with diverse employees from backgrounds similar to IntoUniversity students who had all come into the civil service through all different avenues; the Fast Stream, the Fast Track Apprenticeship Programme, or direct entries. We received great feedback on these sessions from the IntoUniversity students as well as the other civil servants we'd invited to speak and it proved beneficial for all.

Over the six months, we're proud to say we raised over £1,200 and banked over 130 hours of volunteer time for IntoUniversity. Whilst our six months is now over, we haven't let that stop our support for the charity. Many of us have taken up Corporate Mentoring so we can continue to work with IntoUniversity into the future.'

Data Piece

In 2016/17 over

2,000

volunteers supported IntoUniversity across our network

and when asked whether they would recommend volunteering with us

79%

of volunteers responded saying they would definitely recommend volunteering with IntoUniversity to others.

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IU Partnerships

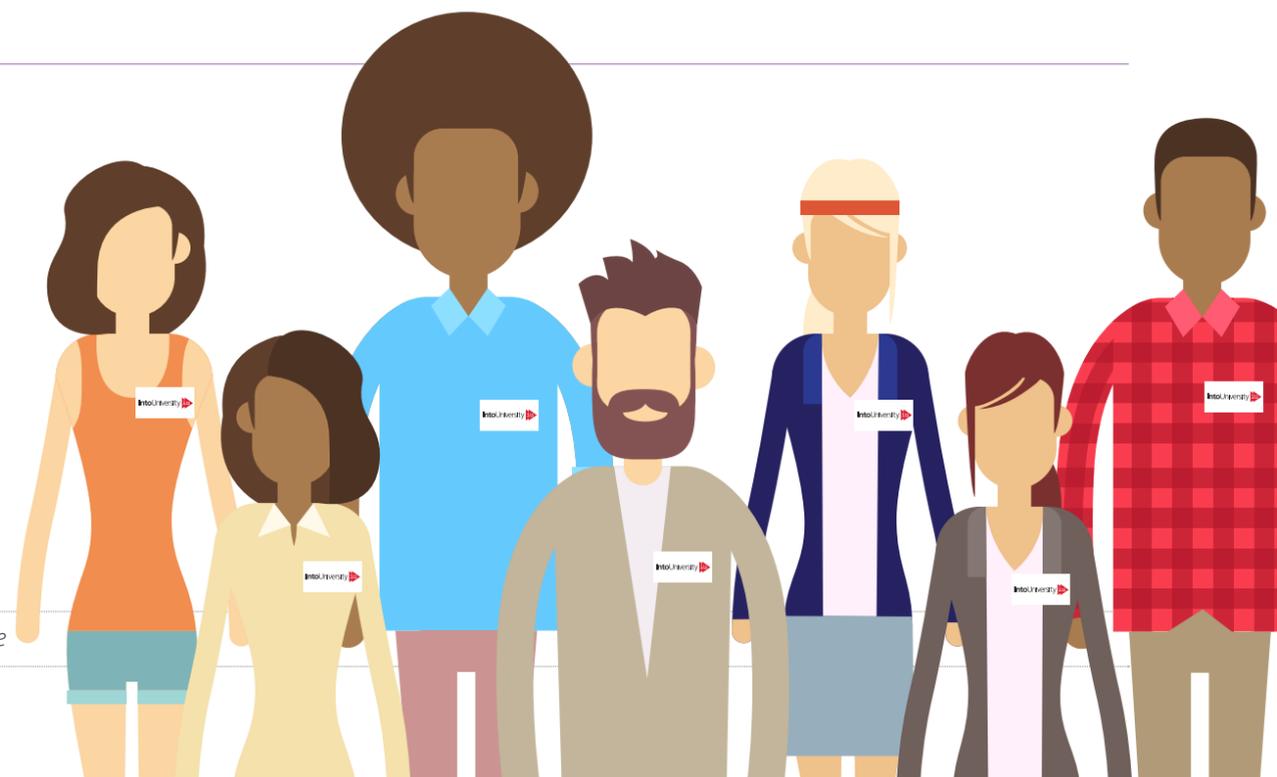
Ashington Gowns makes Primary FOCUS graduation special

As part of the Primary FOCUS programme, IntoUniversity works with local primary schools to deliver a week of workshops and trips for Year 6 students. The week entails a number of engaging activities and interactive workshops focusing on one subject, a trip to a cultural institution, and culminates in a graduation. For the graduation, students travel to one of IntoUniversity's university partners where they have a tour of the campus and present what they have learnt throughout the week. Family, friends and teachers are invited to attend to watch the young people receive certificates and prizes, making the graduation a very special occasion for the students and their families.

One of our corporate partners, Ashington Ceremonial Gowns, a retailer of graduation, choral and legal gowns has worked with us since 2016 to make this graduation even more special by generously donating numerous sets of children's graduation gowns and mortar boards for the students to wear.

Tom Wood, Director of Ashington Ceremonial Gowns, is a key advocate for IntoUniversity, being 'passionate about the need for young learners to have a thirst for achieving' and believes that 'having wonderful young minds focussing on the future and knowing that they can make a difference, will only help to drive society and their own lives forwards'. Often the Primary FOCUS programme is the first introduction to university for the whole family, so the graduation ceremonies are key as they 'provide a clear sense of achievement, membership, and identity, whilst creating a unique and level playing field within peer groups.' Tom is very pleased to be involved in the Primary FOCUS Week graduation, as he helps to produce a 'graduation ceremony where students can stand proudly wearing academic dress in front of their family and peers and feel pride in what they have achieved.'

▶ Read the full article here: <https://bit.ly/2EFQr1t>



Our new centres

IntoUniversity Weston-super-Mare

This year marks the launch of IntoUniversity's newest centre in Weston-super-Mare in partnership with the University of Bath. This will add to our growing network of centres across the UK which now consists of 25 centres and two extension projects in Leeds and Nottingham.

High levels of unemployment and low aspiration for Higher Education mean that young people in Weston-super-Mare, especially those within the South and Central wards, are at a particularly high risk of underachieving. The new staff team has been hard at work setting up the centre for children and young people in the local area to help tackle these issues.



Nikki Charge, Team Leader

Nikki studied History and American Studies at Swansea University. She has a PGCE in Secondary History from Swansea Metropolitan University and a Masters in Educational Practice from Cardiff University. Nikki worked as a History teacher for five years before joining IntoUniversity in January 2018.

'IntoUniversity Weston-super-Mare will initially be working with two partner primary schools and two partner secondary schools as well as Weston College who provide the majority of post-16 education in the area.

The centre itself has a large classroom space and we are looking forward to transforming it into a productive and stimulating environment for students. It is in the heart of the community and very well located; it is only a short walk away from the train station and the beach!

Some of the key challenges in Weston-super-Mare are that aspiration levels among young people are low. Many children that attend our partner schools have little knowledge of universities and the benefits of Higher Education. It is our hope that the IntoUniversity centre will be able to reach these pupils and work closely with the local community to raise aspirations.'



Lauren Parker-Perry, Education Worker

Lauren has a degree in History from the University of the West of England. She has previously worked as an Assistant Cub Leader for the Scouts and as an Activity Instructor for Summer Camps.

'The values of IntoUniversity really resonate with me and the fact that I could potentially make a difference to young people was very appealing about this role. I love that IntoUniversity works with young people over a long period of time, which really facilitates pastoral as well as academic care.

As the Primary FOCUS Coordinator, I am concentrating mainly on primary schools and establishing relationships that aim to have a high impact on the students and community that we serve. I am also thinking of ideas for exciting and interactive workshops for students attending our partner primary schools.

In Weston-super-Mare, I am most looking forward to integrating with the local community and seeing how IntoUniversity can create amazing opportunities for young people.'



James Finn, Education Worker

James has a degree in Outdoor Education from the University of St Mark and St John. James also has a Masters' degree in Transcultural European Outdoor Studies. Before joining IntoUniversity, James previously worked as a Mountain Hut Warden for the Department of Conservation in New Zealand and as an Assistant Teacher.

'Over the next few months, I am most looking forward to building up relationships with the young people we work with. I believe that there is great value in individual educational journeys and seeing the difference IntoUniversity makes to the students a few months down the line.

Each IntoUniversity centre has its own style of classroom or approach to delivering a workshop and our staff team has been imagining which parts of these would work well for our centre. We have had amazing support from the IntoUniversity network and our corporate partners to help us construct our new learning space.'

IntoUniversity North Liverpool

In February, IntoUniversity launched its centre in North Liverpool. The centre runs in partnership with the University of Liverpool and Liverpool Football Club (LFC) Foundation and is the first time IntoUniversity has worked jointly with a university and football club foundation. To mark the occasion, a special ribbon-cutting ceremony took place at the centre with representatives from the partnerships, local students, teachers, parents and Liverpool Football Club's goalkeeper Simon Mignolet.

Professor Dame Janet Beer, Vice-Chancellor, University of Liverpool:

'At the University of Liverpool, we firmly believe that anyone with the talent to pursue study in Higher Education should be given the opportunity and encouragement to do so. We understand that some students may face additional barriers in accessing Higher Education which is why we have partnered with IntoUniversity and LFC Foundation to develop this initiative, which has the potential to deliver life-changing impact.'

Andrea Cooper, Head of LFC Foundation:

'We are thrilled to officially launch this exciting partnership as it wholly supports our mission of creating life-changing opportunities for young people. We know that many young people are passionate about Liverpool Football Club, and we hope that the LFC badge will enhance this project to inspire local youngsters to reach their potential.'

Jill Wright, Head of School, Whitfield Primary School, Liverpool:

'My children have been taking part in the IntoUniversity project this academic year and I can already see the impact that it is having on their aspirations. Having worked in inner city Liverpool, in an area of high deprivation for many years, I believe that this project has the capacity to make a real difference to the life chances of children in this city.'



(Left to right) Andrea Cooper, Simon Mignolet, Dr. Rachel Carr, Dame Janet Beer with students at IntoUniversity North Liverpool launch



Primary Academic Support students greet visitors at the launch

We are also looking forward to the official launch of IntoUniversity Clacton-on-Sea at the end of this month.

IU Spotlight

The Wolfson Foundation

The Wolfson Foundation*

The Wolfson Foundation awards grants to support excellence in the fields of science, health, arts and humanities, and education. It has made a significant difference to the maintenance and development of our work through a large multi-year grant supporting the establishment of the first **IntoUniversity** centre in Southampton, which opened in autumn 2015.



Paul Ramsbottom, Chief Executive of the Wolfson Foundation

Paul Ramsbottom is Chief Executive of the Wolfson Foundation. He has undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in History from the University of Oxford, as well as an honorary doctorate from the University of Bedfordshire which was awarded in 2013.

Could you tell us a little bit about your academic background?

I was born and bred in Luton at a time when the schools in that town were struggling, so I travelled to St Albans School every day. This was only possible because of the 'assisted place scheme' which was run by the government up until 1997 to allow children from more deprived backgrounds to attend independent schools. This helped to set me on my way to studying History at Oxford.

How has that influenced your career so far?

I have no doubt that my education has helped to shape the way that I think. But, in a wider sense, due to the opportunities that were given to me early in life, I am very passionate about access to education and opportunities for all. I hope that this enthusiasm for the importance of education comes through in my job at the Wolfson Foundation, which is a funder of higher and secondary education in the UK. Outside of Wolfson, I chair an international development charity that aims to give educational opportunities to children in rural West Africa.

Could you tell us about the history of the Wolfson Foundation?

The Wolfson Foundation was set up in 1955 by Isaac Wolfson, his wife, Edith, and his son, Lord Wolfson of Marylebone. Our vision, although inevitably adapting to changing circumstances over the years, has been remarkably consistent across six decades. We aim to support and promote excellence in the fields of science, health, education and the arts. All awards are given on the basis of careful, expert review and the large majority of our funding is connected to education. Over £900 million (£1.9 billion in real terms) has been awarded to more than 11,000 projects throughout the UK.

'If nothing else, education gives young people more choices – including of profession and where to live.'

Paul Ramsbottom

Why is involvement in philanthropic activities, in particular those related to education, so important to the Wolfson Foundation?

One of our fundamental aims is promoting the 'civic health of society'. This requires both public support and private funding, through a range of philanthropy. Philanthropic support often allows ideas and projects to flourish that simply would not be possible without private funding. The need for philanthropy is perhaps greater than at any time in recent years – as government struggles to fund the needs of society.

Our funding for education is wide-ranging, and focussed especially on research infrastructure at UK universities. But, among other concerns, we are very mindful of the fact that in the UK, access to education is still limited to a considerable extent by place of birth and family background. Certainly, all of the evidence around social mobility and access to education suggests that the problem has not been solved in the UK.

What appealed to you about working with IntoUniversity?

The application from **IntoUniversity** went through careful review. We liked the way in which the centres provide ongoing and sustained academic support as well as pastoral care and encouragement. **IntoUniversity** works in the most disadvantaged areas, works with children from a relatively young age and works in fruitful partnership with universities. The particular project that we funded, in Redbridge, Southampton, had all of these characteristics and the involvement of the University of Southampton, a funding partner through some of our other programmes, was particularly attractive. Lastly, the organisation stands out as being brilliantly led – with a track record of success, and careful monitoring in place.

What are your hopes for the future of IntoUniversity?

The needs are immense and the great challenge will be to scale-up the work, without losing the elements that have made it successful. I think a particularly attractive feature is the charity's willingness to expand into areas where there are few other initiatives such as Southampton. The strong working relationships with universities will surely be a key to future success.

What do you think is the biggest challenge facing young people in the UK at the moment? What do you see as the key to overcoming this?

I think that young people have a difficult set of circumstances to navigate, and I look at my daughters with some degree of worry. Alongside the challenges of accessing education – and an education that places huge burdens, financially and mentally, on individuals – they have to navigate a world where social media sets high expectations and where the cost of living, at least in parts of the country, is spiralling especially in terms of housing. The political uncertainty, and the fact that the country is withdrawing from the European Union – a step with significant consequences, but opposed by the large majority of people under the age of 25 – only increases the sense of malaise. So, while challenges will vary across individuals and communities, I think – particularly in and around urban areas – I would probably settle on housing as the single greatest challenge.

There is no straightforward solution but getting a high quality education is helpful to almost all of these challenges facing young people. If nothing else, education gives young people more choices – including of profession and where to live.

What is your best piece of advice that you would give to a young person who is starting to think about their career/Higher Education?

Focus on what interests and excites you and don't be scared to follow your enthusiasms – that's the way you are most likely to succeed!



We would love to hear your feedback about aspire.

To get in touch or to find out more about **IntoUniversity** please visit our website www.intouniversity.org, drop Vicky an email at aspire@intouniversity.org or call us on **020 7243 0242**.

You can also follow us on

