Scholarship Impact Report
‘OUR SCHOLARS ARE BURSTING WITH ENERGY, TALENT AND ENTHUSIASM’

LUKE TAYLOR ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Social mobility is a significant issue in the UK, and it’s a bigger problem here than in any other developed country in the west. For the first time since the Second World War, younger generations are starting their careers with lower incomes than their parents, and the Social Mobility Commission say that “the rungs on the social mobility ladder are growing further apart” (State of the Nation 2016: Social Mobility in Great Britain).

The pinnacle of many professions continues to be dominated by a small section of the population – 74% of judges, 71% of barristers and 51% of journalists went to schools that educate only 7% of the population; a fact that I know many of you are acutely aware of and are keen to address. Even though more students from disadvantaged backgrounds are going to university than ever before, only 30% of those on graduate schemes at the country’s top employers went to a non-selective state school.

Warwick is acutely aware of this challenge, and it is why our scholarship programmes are so important to us. Because of you, and your generous support, we have been able to support close to 200 students with a philanthropically funded scholarship over the past year. You’ve provided more cash bursaries than ever before, and have also helped us to introduce a series of additional bursaries to support scholars who are undertaking internships, vacation schemes, charity work or international student exchanges. It’s all down to you.

We were also able to deliver a series of tailored events and workshops to support the scholars’ career progression. The highlight of the year was the Professional Development Day, held in our new teaching and learning building The Oculus, which saw alumni return to talk about topics such as leadership, resilience, entrepreneurship and personal branding. We also returned to The Shard for our annual networking event, taking almost 70 current scholars to London to meet with the benefactors who make these programmes possible. All of these events help scholars to develop the skills sets that will help them reach their career aspirations.

In this report you will read the impact of this work from the scholars themselves, how your support has helped them to develop, and get the most out of their time at Warwick. Above all else, the scholarship programmes provide opportunities and experiences that will stay with them throughout their lives and careers.

Everyone here at Warwick is thankful and proud that our community is coming together to help the next generation of students. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you.

Luke Taylor
Associate Director of Development

INTRODUCTION

Ellie Henderson
FIRST YEAR, SOCIOLOGY

“My first year has been amazing, teaching me not only academic skills but also valuable life skills, like how not to burn everything I put into the oven! I was solely responsible for my own learning, which was both scary and exciting.

The financial assistance given by the scholarship has been phenomenal. The events were great, like the budgeting workshop which helped me think about saving, and the networking event which showed how important a LinkedIn profile could be. I’m grateful for the guidance and instructions I personally feel I lacked and sought when starting university.

My experiences this year have greatly humbled me. I’ve had the chance to meet so many new people, all of whom have inspired me to craft my life into one I will be happy to live. From business owners to fellow students, I feel like at this point, compared to the person I was at the beginning of the academic year, I’m so much more focused, and looking forward to next year!

Donating to someone you don’t know is such a selfless act, and I’d like to assure you that I’m not wasting this opportunity and I’m grateful. Thank you.”

Ellie Henderson
FIRST YEAR, SOCIOLOGY

Warwick Scholars’ Programme
SUET AU
FIRST YEAR, MANAGEMENT

“You’ve eased my financial burden, and enabled me to build a network of fellow scholars at the wonderful scholarship event. You’ve let me try experiences like learning to code, speak Mandarin, and join the executive team of the student magazine. Thank you for helping to give me a complete university experience.”

SUET AU
FIRST YEAR, MANAGEMENT

People often say that their university years were some of the best years of their life. I’m already grateful for the memories that the scholarship has created.

Networking with professionals at the scholar event in the Shard made me realise how big a factor knowing the right people plays in life. I’m the first person in my family to go to university and have few relatives in professional fields. I’ve been optimistic, thinking that I was on a level playing field, that hard work gets you anywhere; and whilst I still believe in hard work, I’ve realised that it isn’t an even playing field. If your dad’s a doctor, you’ll get medical work experience more easily and will appear a better candidate on UCAS for Medicine. Social mobility is a real issue and from some perspectives, is only getting worse. That’s why support like yours is invaluable.

I found the Personal and Professional Development Day invaluable. It helped me identify strengths and weaknesses for the interview and assessment centre stages of many applications. It cleared some of the myths about the skills employers look for in a candidate, and how best to display them.

I was one of the lucky few to be given the extra Warwick Scholars Vacation Scheme award. I volunteered in Marrakesh, Morocco, for two weeks teaching English at secondary school level, working with young of fenders, and at an orphanage.

Thank you kindly for your donations. They’ve made a world of difference.

Sameem Nazari
Warwick Scholars’ Programme
EMILY FLACK
SECOND YEAR, ENGLISH LITERATURE

“iT’s clichéd but so far university has been the best experience of my life. I’m extremely happy and I’ve grown in confidence, and that’s thanks to the scholarship – whether it’s the people I’ve met, the fun events or the financial support and consequential opportunities that it has offered me. This year I’ve successfully applied for internships and became the Publicity Officer for the Warwick Tap Society. Thank you so much for the opportunities you have given me. I never expected this help, and I’m very grateful.”

EDWARD GRIFFIN
SECOND YEAR, PHYSICS

“I’ve just finished my second year - the most challenging one to date, in particular the tidal wave of quantum mechanics! I grew up in a rural village, and neither of my parents went to university. You have eased my financial burden so that I have been able to focus on learning. The scholarship has opened the door to an array of resources and events that have enriched my experience. You’ve given me skills to develop personally and as a future professional in the competitive world of work. I’ve even started to network – something I didn’t know had a name or existed before the programme. Personally, I’ve enjoyed taking part in Warwick Mountains, the hillwalking and mountaineering society, and becoming a walk leader. I trained in Snowdonia in how to lead others. Afterwards the toughest but most rewarding expedition I did was with 12 other students on the Yorkshire Three-Peaks challenge: a 24-mile walk over Yorkshire’s highest peaks in under 12 hours. Thank you for your support. In future I hope I can help others achieve their goals just as you are doing.”

ALEX HOLLAND
SECOND YEAR, LAW

“My university experience would not have been the same without your support – you have helped me fund my maintenance costs, undertake work placements, and even travel across the country to return home and see my family, which is something that many take for granted. Working class students are underrepresented at UK universities and I hope that you take pride knowing that you are responsible for improving this statistic. You’re eliminating many of the obstacles that we face in accessing higher education. Your financial assistance lifted many of the concerns I once had about accepting my place here, and I’m so thankful for your overwhelming generosity. You’ve set a humble example for us students.”

The scholarship has helped me so much; I mainly relied on your financial help to get through this year. The Scholars’ Welcome Reception taught me to network and see how amazing this programme was, because it helps so many people from so many different backgrounds to achieve what they want. After I graduate, I want to get a PhD in genetic diseases and go into that research field. I’m so grateful for your kindness and belief in young students like myself. You are helping the next generation to do what they have always wanted to do. Words would never be able to repay the help that you have provided me with during university, but I hope one day I’m able to help the world become a better place, and it will be thanks to you.

Alyasa Hakim
Second year, Biological Sciences

DEMl JoAnNides
SECOND YEAR, LAW

“This academic year has flown by, but it’s been the best of my life! Although my stress levels reached new highs this year, I’m so proud to have achieved a First! Outside of studying, I spent a lot of time applying and being interviewed for vacation schemes. I spent two weeks working in one place and was offered a training contract. I’ve also been elected as the Mistress of the Moors for Warwick Law Society which is very exciting and means that I will be part of the Executive Committee of Warwick Law Society next year!

The scholarship has helped me fund train tickets, travel costs, and smart clothing for my interviews. It’s also going to help me volunteer as part of Warwick in Africa, teaching abroad this summer, paying for my insect repellent and anti-malaria tablets amongst other essentials.

The financial assistance has been amazing, but so have the other aspects of the programme, like the Personal and Professional Development day which was a real confidence boost. The scholarship signifies that there is someone who believes in me and sees that I have potential to succeed. That alone is priceless, and for students like me it’s the most important piece of motivation which will change their lives forever. Thank you!”

HANNAH MURRAY
SECOND YEAR, LAW

“I can’t believe how fast the year has gone by! I’m writing to you from San Francisco, USA, where I’m on an eight-week internship with the Federal Public Defender’s Office of Northern California. It was a very competitive process to get here. I’m lucky to be working with a highly-renowned National Mitigation Specialist, doing research and writing memorandums to prepare for death sentence appeals in Arizona.

The work done by these lawyers is phenomenal. I used to think that the death penalty was only given to the worst of the worst kind of murderers, but it isn’t as black and white as it seems. Innocent people have been sentenced to death without due process, only for the truth to surface years later, and there are still people today on death row from the 1970s whose lives are in limbo. I cannot express how this experience has changed my perceptions. Many criminal ‘monsters’ are found to have suffered great mental illness or have abusive backgrounds.

I feel I’ve become a stronger, more confident person, with a greater appreciation for my life and opportunities. On that note, your scholarship financial assistance has helped me tremendously this year, especially paying for this (unpaid) internship. You’ve also helped me to buy the necessary stationery, work supplies and books for my course; a very expensive activity considering the size and price of Law books! And I’ve enjoyed events like the Shard networking evening, where it was great to meet donors in person and get an insight into their lives. The theatre trip to Lord of the Flies was great because I spent time with other scholars; we all feel a sort of solidarity.

Thank you so much – I personally will forever feel gratitude to you for supporting me through my degree and I hope to be a donor myself in future.”
YASMIN ASANTEWAA
FINAL YEAR, GERMAN AND BUSINESS STUDIES

"I can finally say, ‘I'M A GRADUATE!’ The moment the mortar board was placed on my head at graduation, I shed a few tears, realising that all the late nights, breakdowns and incredible laughter led up to this very moment. My education has opened up a gateway! Better yet, I feel so proud of myself that I will let no one break my stride. Words cannot describe how grateful I am, I would like to say a billion ‘thank you’!

Your incredible gift has contributed towards my education each year, which allowed me to break my family tradition and become the first member to graduate. There have been times over the years where family problems got the better of me and I wanted to stop for a while, but the scholar gatherings showed me that everyone was in the same boat and led me to continue.

It’s given me a different outlook on life. It has motivated me to give back, whether it would be financial or mentoring. You are an inspiration. Thank you."

DANIELA SORDILLO
SECOND YEAR, BIOCHEMISTRY

"Another year, another chance to thank you for your kindness. It still amazes me how you are so kind, and still believe in me. I was especially瞪眼 in early 2017 and was unable to work or support myself. This is where the scholarship really kicked in, helping me to stay financially independent and preventing me from having to withdraw.

The programme has also exposed me to some truly wonderful people: speakers, donors, and students who just want us all to succeed and be happy. The friendships made and skills learned throughout the special workshops and events are ones I will continue to benefit from in the future.

WSP expands our horizons by exposing us to things we may never have seen before. Theatre trips, ballet, meals out, networking events (at the Shard!), galleries, budgeting and personal development workshops – these experiences all add up to make us more well-rounded people, ready for the next chapter of our lives. You’ve given me confidence, direction, guidance, and experiences I wouldn’t have had otherwise. I’m so grateful, thank you.”

Throughout my three years at Warwick, the scholarship has been more than a blessing. I don’t know if I could have stayed at university without it. This year I pushed myself despite problems including mental health issues, and I’m so happy and proud to announce my graduation with a 2:1.

The scholarship definitely helped me financially, from bills, to medication, to books, and helped me work fewer hours at my job. That’s not the only reason it was amazing though. Coming from a working-class background, I lacked confidence, and had no idea how to increase it. The programme gave us opportunities to network, learn and build our confidence. It exposed me to new experiences, like trips to the theatre and the Shard, luxuries my family couldn’t always afford. It taught me to be more transparent and open.

I used to be very timid and reclusive; I never spoke about my problems but I’ve grown into a different person. This year I organised an event to raise awareness of mental illness through creative ways, ‘Mental Health: Night of Talents and Testimonies’. People spoke, sang, and told their personal stories. Afterwards attendees said they felt more comfortable speaking about their own experiences, or approaching their friends who seemed to be suffering.

I would like to thank all current and future donors, without them, many students would be walking a different path not suited for them. Thank you, I’m truly grateful for it all.

PELUMI ANIBABA
FIRST YEAR, LAW

“I was born and raised in a South-East London council estate. I was the youngest of six siblings in a three-bedroom flat, and as a young black female, growing up in some of the poorest areas, I was used to hearing: ‘you can’t’. I saw people waste such beautiful talent, because teachers, friends and family members did not believe in them.

Sometimes believing in yourself can be very hard, when you feel like the world is against you. My first year at Warwick was tough, and I often thought I didn’t belong here. However, I met some awesome people in the MSP who pushed and encouraged me to try my best. I’ve enjoyed meeting people going through the same things, and I love that I’ve been so encouraged to do as much as I can and not be complacent. The mentorship programme has helped too.

Though to some it may seem inconsequential, it can make you feel adequate when you can’t afford what others easily can. Because of your assistance, I don’t feel out of place or disadvantaged financially. You’ve made it possible for me to join sports teams, sign up to social events, and buy a laptop.

Thank you for believing in me despite my background and upbringing. This scholarship has helped me remember there is someone else who believes in me. Without you, I wouldn’t be where I am today. I don’t take it for granted and your support only encourages me to work harder and help others.”

MUBIN ASHFAQ
FIRST YEAR, ELECTRONIC ENGINEERING BENG

“I’m the youngest son in a family of eight, and part of the first generation in my family to attend higher education.

This year I’ve met new people from across the globe, and learned to live independently (YouTube has helped me become an adequate chef). Your funding has helped me to overcome the financial demands incurred from living away from home. All aspects of the programme have benefitted me, whether it’s developing my interpersonal skills, confidence, empathy or simply meeting someone new: it’s made me into a more open-minded person.

I would like to express my gratitude to the generous donors who have made the first year of my engineering programme a huge learning curve. Not only have I achieved a First, I’ve acquired priceless life lessons. It’s difficult to put the feeling of being helped into words, but quite simply, thank you!”
I don’t come from a wealthy family or well-connected background. I’m just a simple young man from a large family of love.

My parents migrated to the UK from Bangladesh, having fled the war that engulfed India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh as it is today. They came here for a better life but weren’t able to go to university; they had to work from the age of 12 and 13. So I’m the first in my generation to go to university, and it drives me to give back to my parents for the sacrifices they have made. I’ve one year left of study. At the end of that year, I’ll be able to put the graduation cap on my father and give him the feeling he was never able to have.

I keep pushing myself to be the best I can be, and have been able to reduce my part-time work hours thanks to your support. I worked as an intern at a boutique bank over the summer, and your funding helped me meet the costs of buying a suit, and daily food and travel through London. The Welcome Reception was particularly memorable as I met a peer who inspired me to chase my dreams.

My plans are uncertain, not because I don’t know what I want to do, but because I’ve too much! This year I sold my start-ups, a make-up artist website, and a celebrity discount website, to Yelp and VoucherCodes respectively. The MSP team continually support me and encourage me to apply to renowned institutions. I’m still working part-time at the bank, with the potential to continue as an analyst, but also want to continue in education so I’ve applied to Oxford.

To my donor, thank you. You continue to fulfil the dreams of an underestimated också achever and as I stride into the future, I’ve you to thank for enabling opportunities and disabling financial barriers. Whilst we may never connect in person, you’re helping us to have a more prosperous future. Our legacy is also yours.

Nahim Miah
Second year, Law and Business Studies

MOHAMMED HAMIM ALI
SECOND YEAR, ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE

“There are many things I enjoyed during the course this year but the thing that stood out was meeting new people from all over the world.

Getting to know their backgrounds and stories was interesting.

I’m extremely grateful for the financial assistance because otherwise, I would be stressing about finances instead of focusing on my studies. You’ve helped me with day-to-day running costs but most importantly paying my rent. The scholar networking events were beneficial too, letting me gain insight by asking questions.

I’ve heard of talented individuals who refused to join top universities because of the lack of scholarships, and it’s important how much I appreciate the help you have given me. It is heartwarming to see that you are also investing in us and in a way, our future. Thank you.”

THIRD YEAR, LAW

MINHAZ WARIS

“I’ve just graduated with a 2:1. I live in East London with five family members, and I’m the first person in my family to have gone to university. Your financial assistance was pivotal to me being able to complete this degree. I was worried I’d struggle, but thanks to you I was able to focus on studying. The greatest benefits I have experienced from the scholarship programme have been primarily the amazing people I have met! I have some friends I hope to keep in contact with for life.

The visits to law firms helped me remember why I wanted to work in law; to better society and help others growing up in my circumstances. I found this best reflected in the role of clinical lawyers (working on medical negligence).

I’m applying for jobs and hoping to become the main breadwinner for my family and repay my parents for their support over the years.

We may have never met, but what you provided has changed my life. I’ve fought against negative stereotypes throughout my life, and been driven to helping others, and this degree is a huge step to achieving that. You have made so much of a difference to my life. Thank you.”

HANNAH UWHOKORI
SECOND YEAR, LAW

“I’m very grateful to be part of this scholarship programme which has opened a lot of opportunities in the legal field as an aspiring lawyer. (visited law firms) I was offered a place on the Inner Temple’s Pegasus Access and Support Scheme through the help of this programme; and other access routes too. I gained interview and application tips from law firms and Warwick careers advisors.

The scholarship also helped me financially, from listing costs and accommodation, to food and books. It made me feel more confident.

I just want to say a very big thank you for supporting me and many others. I couldn’t have done so many things without your help.

I’ve received a good amount of support. I appreciate you from the bottom of my heart and will try my best to help people in the best possible way I can in the way you have helped me.”

OMAR SHAFI
SECOND YEAR, SYSTEMS ENGINEERING

“Although it’s been extremely tough, I really enjoyed the content of the course this year.

It challenged my intellect and I had to find different and new methods of learning in order to grasp concepts. Thanks to the scholarship, I haven’t had to worry about money. It helped me afford to drive home and see my family when I was homesick, and it’s funded my upcoming journey to Honduras where we’ll be building a water system for a local community.

Thank you for funding my scholarship. It’s helped me to create a better version of myself, take on new challenges, and improve my skills in Engineering.”

Tahmina Jahan Hadi
Third year, Law

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SECOND YEAR, LAW

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Tahmina Jahan Hadi
Third year, Law

I hail from a very underprivileged area and was fortunate enough to achieve good grades at school and later at sixth form. Without the MSP programme I simply wouldn’t have been able to be financially stable during my three years at university and I thank you, my donor, for making that easier for me.

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AMANDA WYLIE
FIRST YEAR, ENGGINEERING
This year has been one filled with many new experiences. The transition into campus life was immense. It was a challenge, moving from Zimbabwe, but within a fortnight, I’d settled in and started enjoying some of the activities Warwick had to offer. Studying engineering has been exciting and stimulating. I’ve talked to many influential lecturers and engineers, and found that my passion lies in manufacturing. I intend to specialise in this field.
The scholarship has meant I haven’t had to take a part-time job and it’s given me more time to study and relax too. Next summer it will help me take up an internship, rather than another unskilled job in order to afford the next academic year. I’ve also gained networking experience. I had never had the opportunity to interact with a group of professionals before the Shard event, and it felt it was a valuable learning experience. Thank you very much for this opportunity.”

Alice Staton
FIRST YEAR, MECHANICAL ENGINEERING
“The scholarship has been a great confidence booster. A close relationship has developed between the women awarded the scholarships in the Engineering Faculty, which is supportive. My school has also been very interested in my award and have used it as a publicity item to encourage other girls in the school to consider a career in Engineering, as it is not a popular option at an all-girls school.
I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to benefit financially and professionally. Personally, the scholarship has helped develop confidence in what could otherwise be viewed as a male-dominated profession.”

Amy Fawcett
FIRST YEAR, ENGINEERING
“I’ve really appreciated the opportunity to explore all the engineering disciplines. Next year, I’m really looking forward to doing practical work in electronics, because understanding and designing circuits really interests me – especially when I can see real-world applications for the examples we test in labs.
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Isabella Curtis
FIRST YEAR, ENGINEERING
“To my donor, I would like to say a huge ‘thank you’. The scholarship has helped me in so many ways, from accommodation fees to travelling to work placements and internships across the country. These experiences have opened my eyes to different career options; I’ve learnt so much and been inspired by some fantastic role models.
Since I’m from London and the eldest of five children, I was unsettled at first by Warwick’s lack of noise and city bustle – but it’s been full of things to do and see, and I’ve had a fantastic time. I’ve enjoyed String Orchestra, archery, and working with the outreach team in the Engineering society, organising events on and off campus to get younger people interested in Engineering. I hope one day to be able to say ‘thank you’ in person too.”

Sarah Kemp
SECOND YEAR, MECHANICAL ENGINEERING
“It’s one thing giving money to your own children, or to someone you know who is deserving – it’s something else completely to donate such a large sum to complete strangers, not knowing what those people will do with it. The trust and confidence in what we can become with a little support, is as much a gift to the recipients as the funds themselves – and one for which we are enormously grateful. Just as “time is money”, so the money made available has represented time. By not having to work during term-time, I’ve been able to benefit from and participate fully in the opportunities arising. In short, I would like to say a heartfelt ‘thank you’ to the donors for their generosity.”

Disha Naik
SECOND YEAR MECHANICAL ENGINEERING
“I’m a Motorsport enthusiast, and I want to graduate into the industry as a Race Engineer. There are two achievements that I’m most proud of this year: first, completing my second year with a First; and second, being selected as their Project Manager next year. The role of leading the entire team has always belonged to a fourth year Engineering student, and to be trusted with this responsibility in only my third year gives me immense pride. This experience will also help me apply for industry placements and graduate jobs. The scholarship has helped me to spend more time studying and taking part in Warwick Racing too. Without it, I couldn’t have paid for my rent, utilities and expenses. I also found the networking days particularly useful as they built my confidence in conversations. Motorsport isn’t an easy industry to get into and requires giving up a lot of personal time and commitment to succeed. With the support I’ve received due to your kind donations, I’ve been able to do just that. You’re helping me drive towards the career I’ve dreamed of since I started watching Motorsport as a child. Thank you - I hope that I can thank you in person one day for your help too.”

Over the summer, I worked for a construction company as a trainee construction manager on a 34-storey double tower building. It wouldn’t have been possible without the scholarship to pay for travel and accommodation, and I’ve been informally offered a graduate position there too.
The Personal and Professional Development Day really benefited me; the highlight of the day was listening to Yewande Akinola, an engineer in the construction industry who’s extremely inspiring. She’s achieved amazing things within a relatively short time and in a male-dominated industry, but she’s incredibly relatable too and I left the event in awe of her.
I would like to wholeheartedly thank your donor for the help they have given me in achieving my dreams. It’s not just the financial aspect that is helpful, it’s the reassurance that someone is backing you and wants to support you to do well that makes a scholarship so important.

Carys Evans
Second year, Civil Engineering

Women in Engineering Scholarship Programme

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Second year, Civil Engineering

Women in Engineering Scholarship Programme

Over the summer, I worked for a construction company as a trainee construction manager on a 34-storey double tower building. It wouldn’t have been possible without the scholarship to pay for travel and accommodation, and I’ve been informally offered a graduate position there too.
The Personal and Professional Development Day really benefited me; the highlight of the day was listening to Yewande Akinola, an engineer in the construction industry who’s extremely inspiring. She’s achieved amazing things within a relatively short time and in a male-dominated industry, but she’s incredibly relatable too and I left the event in awe of her.
I would like to wholeheartedly thank your donor for the help they have given me in achieving my dreams. It’s not just the financial aspect that is helpful, it’s the reassurance that someone is backing you and wants to support you to do well that makes a scholarship so important.
Thank you for funding my scholarship. It’s helped me to create a better version of myself, take on new challenges, and improve my skills in Engineering.

Omar Shafi
Second year, Systems Engineering

Please note, all scholars’ reports have been shortened and edited for ease of reading in this report. If you would like to see an original report, or if you have any other questions about the programme, please contact us:

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