



DURHAM UNIVERSITY

Volunteering Awards 2022

MONDAY 13TH JUNE 2022

RADISSON BLU HOTEL, DURHAM



Welcome

Welcome to the Durham University Volunteering Awards 2022. The Volunteering Awards evening celebrates the relationship between the University and the wider community, which is achieved through the efforts of staff and student volunteers. Through this event, we are able to share with our community members the wonderful contributions of our staff and students and inspire our volunteers to continue to engage by recognising their efforts. Our staff and students give their time and share their skills to 'give back' to the wider community and do their bit to make the world a better place.

Over the past year, volunteering across Durham University has gone from strength to strength. We have seen the establishment of new volunteering projects, revival of old projects, phenomenal fundraising efforts, selfless acts of kindness and much more.

Despite its success, the last year has not come without its challenges, and once again our student and staff volunteers have shown dedication and resilience in adapting to changing Covid-19 restrictions to ensure our service users received the best support, despite the circumstances. We have also seen incredible efforts across the University to help Ukraine and refugees, from fundraising efforts, donations and translation assistance.

After a year's delay due to Covid-19, Durham University's Student Volunteering and Outreach Team were finally able to receive the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in September 2021. The Lord Lieutenant Sue Snowdon presented the award with an official ceremony held at Durham Castle, which was attended by student volunteers and members of the Volunteering and Outreach Team.

Tonight, the awards have been designed to recognise the diversity that exists within volunteering at Durham and the rich impact that this has on the community around us.

Congratulations to all of our nominees and we hope that you enjoy your evening!



Special Guests

Mrs Sue Snowdon - Lord Lieutenant of County Durham



As the Lord-Lieutenant her aims for the Lieutenancy are to provide a focus for identity, unity and pride; give a sense of stability, recognising achievements, success and excellence; promoting service to others; celebrating the unique history and culture of the Lieutenancy area; supporting its communities and helping to make a positive contribution to the areas future.

Sue is a former teacher and Magistrate. She co-ordinated the Durham Writing project and was tutor for Adult Literacy and Numeracy for many years. Sue served as a magistrate in County Durham and Darlington for 23 Years

Sue has devoted much of her life to supporting and fundraising for charities. In particular the work of Cancer Research, both locally and nationally and Hospices care across the Lieutenancy area.

A great supporter of communities she was one of the founder members of the Bishop Auckland Town Centre Forum. She chaired the marketing and promotion group which developed and implemented an events led strategy designed to lift and raise the profile of the town and immediate surrounding areas

Mrs Sam Barlow - BBC Sports Personality of the Year Unsung Hero Award 2021

When Sam's eldest child started school in 2009, she realised that she was missing the opportunity to meet and socialise with other parents in the school yard, and decided to use her love of running to try and meet other parents. After putting a note out to the children's parents, with a date and time for parents to meet on her driveway to go running, five mums turned up and from that moment, Fitmums & Friends was born.



After many years of hard work and dedication by Sam, there are now 14 Fitmums & Friends groups across Yorkshire and NE Lincolnshire. Fitmums & Friends, like many voluntary groups is dependent on a huge network of volunteers who keep each group running smoothly and who reinforce the Fitmums & Friends systems of support. This ensures everyone, whichever group they attend, can be sure of a friendly welcome and support no matter what their level of fitness. The volunteer network is what makes Fitmums & Friends so very special - members of the community supporting one another and spreading the special spirit.

In December 2021, Sam was awarded the BBC Sports Personality of the Year Unsung Hero Award, which recognised her contribution to volunteering. Speaking at the ceremony over zoom, Sam said "It's an incredible thing that the BBC recognises even the work of all the volunteers in communities across the country and I feel honoured to be one of so many amazing volunteers tonight. The volunteers that work with me are the magic of everything that happens because I have the ideas but I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for those volunteers out in the community supporting and helping people."

Student Nominees

Alex Cowan (Best Social Inclusion Effort Nominee)

Alex was Community Visiting Scheme (a Van Mildert Outreach Project) Director last year, which aims to combat loneliness in the elderly community. He adapted it to Covid-19 guidelines, ensuring that contact was still maintained virtually. Then Alex took what he had learnt from CVS and went on to found and run "Parkinson's Pals." Alex recognized a gap in support for this community section and effectively filled it.

Alex created the training programme for students to be educated about Parkinsons, to provide them with the expertise to engage in telephone communication with people with Parkinsons.

Alice Theakston (Outstanding Newcomer Nominee)

Alice is an inspirational volunteer who leads on the DU Once a Month project in Stephenson College. Once a Month aims to remove the taboo around periods, educate others and provide period products to those in need. Alice has run a very successful donation campaign in College this term and as a result has made a positive impact on the lives of girls and women in the County Durham area. Alice was nominated as a Stephenson Women of the World for her volunteering efforts.

Amy Cornelius (Volunteer of the Year Nominee)

Amy has been outstanding as the Junior Hockey Co-ordinator. Amy oversees all aspects of the junior hockey programme which include; writing welcome packs, registering and managing the participants and their data, weekly communication with parents and coaches, organisation of fixtures, liaising with parents and coaches for player availability and transport to away fixtures, recruiting parent volunteers to the programme, working with the volunteer coordinator to train and organise volunteers, running a parents' information coffee morning. Amy is incredibly diligent, thorough and personable and a massive credit to the University.

Daisy Robinson (Longstanding Volunteer Nominee)

Daisy has been involved in volunteering throughout her entire time at Durham University. Her volunteering experiences range from being an active volunteer, to project leader, to DUSVO Exec member. Daisy has been a committed volunteer and project leader to the CATSS project, a project that aims to support hard-to-reach young people in the County Durham area. Daisy's commitment to volunteering is endless with her voluntary involvement in the Durham Student Theatre, journalism and article writing, Frepping, student befriender in care homes, summer reading volunteer, committee member at her College Josephine Butler and Durham President for Coppafeel!

Emily White (Longstanding Volunteer Nominee)

Emily has been heavily involved in Mildert outreach in her 4 years in Durham. She has volunteered for Carer's Respite Committee- attending many 'Happy Saturday' sessions and building bonds with all those she interacted with. Primary School Project is also indebted to her- she has been a keen volunteer but also spent a year leading the project as its Director. This year she has been the Van Mildert JCR Outreach and Fundraising Officer and has put so much effort into getting Outreach back on its feet post Covid-19.

Jacob Cowley (Best Fundraising Effort Nominee)

Jacob led the Grey College RFC's fundraising efforts for Movember in November 2022, and raised over £2000 himself.

James Marshall (Volunteer of the Year Nominee)

James Marshall joined the beyond food volunteering team this year and has been an incredible asset to the team. Giving up countless hours to work at the foodbank warehouse across the term on a Friday, James has gone above and beyond to help make the project a success. Working as a representative for Grey College he helped to raise awareness for the project and bring in large food donations from the college community.

Jessica Farnsworth (Volunteer of the Year Nominee)

Jessica has been the shining beacon of volunteering with Beyond Boundaries. She has persevered throughout the pandemic and has only ever tried to improve her project. Her own empathy for working closely with young and elderly people is an example to us all and it is clear she has spent time preparing other students so they have the skills to be pro active when they arrive to work at the farm.

Jiayu Liu (Best Cultural Effort Nominee)

Project Leader of Durham Global Schools. Jiayu has been an excellent project leader. She was heavily involved in the recruitment of volunteers for one off events such as 'It's a Small World' and the Chinese New Year Celebrations at the start of the year. She is always very responsive to requests from Staff, and her positive mind-set and passion for promoting culture volunteering within DUSVO is inspiring.

Lily Kerns (Outstanding Newcomer Nominee)

Lily joined Van Mildert from overseas this year, and has shown unprecedented levels of commitment and dedication to volunteering. She is part of 3 Mildert outreach projects - Young Person's Project, Primary School Project, and Environmental Conservation Committee and was also Co-Head of Van Mildert Charity Fashion Show, always trying to find new and improved ways to better the fundraising approach and keeping her chosen charities (Art Refuge and Moving on Durham) always at the forefront.

Lottie Gravelsons (Outstanding Newcomer Nominee)

Lottie has thrown herself into all opportunities that have come her way this year and has approached all sessions with a smile and infectious enthusiasm. As project leaders for the ChemSG scheme, we are grateful for Lottie's dedication as a volunteer and her eagerness to help whenever we put out a call. She has very quickly started to gain more confidence and lead some of the demonstrations and activities herself, and the children love her! She has also taken part in tree planting and charity craft sessions and has been a regular volunteer at both Durham Food Bank and the Gardening Project.

Megan Hughes (Best Educational Effort Nominee)

Megan volunteers teaching year 3 and 4 pupils French at a local primary school weekly, putting her foreign language skills into action and inspiring and supporting children to learn a foreign language which is extremely beneficial for their brain development. She is supporting the children's academic enrichment as not many primary schools have experienced foreign language teachers and thus this is increasing their educational experiences.

Olivia Gaynard (Student Support Nominee)

Olivia is a project leader for Durham Minds which aims to reduce stigma around mental health among students. Olivia singlehandedly revived the project since September which is now big enough to have its own exec. Olivia volunteers for all aspects of Durham Minds including the weekly peer support sessions for fellow students who might be struggling with their mental health. The students can also participate in weekly arts and crafts to help with their wellbeing. Olivia is committed to continue getting referrals from other services such as counselling for students that would benefit from peer support making a huge positive impact on supporting students in the university community.

Ross Plowman (Volunteer of the Year Nominee)

Ross is in his second year and is a project leader for DFR Kids Club and volunteers for Durham City of Sanctuary. Since starting his volunteering in September he's shown inspiring levels of dedication to helping the local community. He's raised money and household items for local refugees, and he has regular video calls with Syrian refugees in London to offer support. He has also organised a new volunteering initiative by reaching out to 'Under One Sky' to get supplies to give out to homeless people in Durham which he does on a regular check-up walks (6 so far) and hopes to grow into an official DU volunteer project.

Xiaoyao Yin (Student Support Nominee)

Yao has been an immensely kind and helpful individual to lots of her friends this year, for who she has provided a lot of emotional support, despite the own troubles that she has faced this past year; truly a kind individual.

Zoe Crome (Longstanding Volunteer Nominee)

Zoe has been a stalwart of the Josephine Butler Intergenerational Project over her 4 years at Durham. Starting out as a first year when the project was quite new she stepped forward and encouraged other students to take part, acted as a liaison between our community partners at Waddington Street URC, and during the last 2 years has been student lead for the project itself. Her energy and quiet enthusiasm for the project is great to see and she has become a popular person with our friends at the church. Without her commitment the project would not have been as successful, and she continued to be a driving force even when lockdown meant we had to switch to a virtual platform.

Staff Nominees

Anna - Mae Heseltine (Best Social Inclusion Effort Nominee)

During the start of the Russia / Ukraine War, a HGV driver was stranded in Anna's neighbourhood and could not go back to his home in Kyiv. He could not speak English, but the locals all helped in out; especially Anna who gave up her bed and home to welcome him with open arms so he could have a warm bed to sleep in, fresh food, a warm shower and wash of clothes. She was able to help support him before he was able to make his way to Poland to try reaching his family again.

Jayne Dixon (Best Social Inclusion Effort, Best Fundraising Effort, Volunteer of the Year Nominee)

Jayne, travelled with her husband and some other volunteers all the way to Poland, twice to drop off 9 tonnes of donations for large numbers of refugees in need of support. They collected donations of essentials items and fundraised £10,889 to be able to purchase everything required, including medical supplies to be provided to the refugees. They also volunteered at the refugee camps to help out anyway they can. They organised this all by themselves after they saw the devastating effects of the war on the Ukrainian families.



Katherine Dodd (Longstanding Volunteer, Volunteer of the Year Nominee)

Kath founded Durham "Mums on the Run" along with three other members in 2014. They are "A friendly inclusive running group for women in Durham who run or want to start running". Hosted at Maiden Castle, sessions take place on Monday mornings and Thursday evenings, sessions. The group also offers Couch to 5k groups, hill sessions and off road runs. The group has over 100 regular runners and has 25 trained run leaders. Kath leads regular sessions, as a Run Leader mentor she trains new volunteers.



Natalie Craig (Outstanding Newcomer Nominee)

Natalie began volunteering for text-based mental health support charity, SHOUT, this past year and has since committed the maximum hours to the role, despite finding it very challenging at times. In her first shift after training, Natalie supported an individual at high risk of suicide and her intervention may have directly resulted in that person choosing not to take their own life.

Polly Low (Longstanding Volunteer Nominee)

Throughout the pandemic, Polly volunteered at the NHS vaccinated centre in the Arnison Centre on a weekly basis. Considering all the pressures upon members of staff stemming from increased workloads during the pandemic, it is impressive that she found the time every single week to provide such an important service.

Rebecca Topping (Volunteer of the Year Nominee)

Rebecca not only goes the extra mile for everyone in the Business School, but she also works tirelessly for the Feeding Families project. She was instrumental in the organisation and running of the large-scale Feeding Families hamper distribution over the Christmas period (specifically coordinating the Durham University response) and is involved with the project year round.

Team / Group Nominees

Catholic Society (Best Example of Collaboration Nominee)

In a seemingly increasing world of intolerance, that Jewish Society and Catholic Society shared and promoted religious tolerance and social communal awareness by volunteering to do their afternoon to do voluntary gardening at the Old Durham Gardens on Mitzvah day.

Collingwood College Amateur Football Club (Team of the Year Nominee)

Collingwood Amateur Football Club (CCAFC) has continued its longstanding charitable work with support for the Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre (RSACC) and other charities. £5682 was raised by their '24 hours of football' game (where students played around the clock), and charity formal and raffle in Epiphany term. CCAFC has been continuously working beyond fundraising to challenge unacceptable behaviour and make sure people feel safe in the University and is now helping RSACC recruit volunteers. Similarly, £2450 was raised for Epilepsy Action with a fancy-dress football tournament, in memory of a Collingwood student.

DURFC (Best Fundraising Effort, Team of the Year Nominee)

DURFC have hugely helped and contributed towards the local community and the charities in which they support. Led by Rhys Belcher as club captain, the club has raised over £50,000 for some amazing charities, and Sam Harris, Ollie Strudwick and Efan Morris have led the community programme to secure numerous projects, and have created a buzz around Wednesday night rugby that has never previously been seen before.



Faculty of Social Sciences and Health (Team of the Year Nominee)

The team came together following lockdown to do something collectively and have participated in a Seaham Beach Clean, Durham Riverbanks clean and are about to help out at a food bank in Durham. Holly Ayre has been fantastic in making all of the arrangements and ensuring there are activities that everyone can join in with. The volunteering helped to reintroduce everyone following an extensive period apart as well as helping to introduce new members of staff, whilst doing something rewarding.

Jewish Society (Best Example of Collaboration Nominee)

In a seemingly increasing world of intolerance, that Jewish Society and Catholic Society shared and promoted religious tolerance and social communal awareness by volunteering to do their afternoon to do voluntary gardening at the Old Durham Gardens on Mitzvah day.

Project Nominees

Beyond Boundaries (Best Social Inclusion Effort Nominee)

Beyond Boundaries is an educational provider based upon a farm in North Yorkshire catering for adults and children with special needs and physical disabilities, with an aim to improve their confidence and give the service users a fun day out at the farm where it is based.

Chem SG (Best Educational Effort Nominee)

Chem SG aim to deliver fun, hands-on Science sessions to groups of Brownies, Guides, Scouts and Cubs. The sessions consist of exciting science experiments to promote STEM to young people in the County Durham area, specifically targeting areas of low progression to university, where the volunteers can help inspire children to aim high and to advocate for female representation in science.



Collingwood Art Initiative (Best Cultural Effort, Social Inclusion Effort Nominee)

The 'Collingwood Art Initiative' works with around 15 young people aged 12 - 17 from disadvantaged backgrounds at Durham City Youth Project on a weekly basis, creating art pieces using a range of materials and techniques based on the theme of 'home'. The volunteers have been teaching the young people art techniques, acting as role models and mentors and raising their aspirations.

Collingwood Charity Fashion Show (Best Fundraising Effort Nominee)

In June 2021 Collingwood student organised charity show fundraised £10,000 for two charities - Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY) and Durham Food Bank. The students worked hard to recruit volunteers for the fashion show and to make the event a spectacular success to ensure many tickets were sold for the fundraising efforts.



Collingwood Eco Week (Best Environmental Effort Nominee)

Collingwood students organised Eco Week to raise awareness about important environmental issues. Over 150 students engaged over the week and initiatives included local sustainable stalls, a clothes swap, and an Eco Dinner catered by a local charity RE-f-USE. The students also interviewed alumni about their work in sustainability to inspire a new generation of green activists.



Durham Minds (Student Support Nominee)

Durham Minds have set up a student support group at the St Margaret's Centre for students to meet other people who are struggling with similar mental health issues. Over creative activities and tea, students can meet new people and talk about their struggles. Durham Minds also has weekly well-being arts and crafts sessions for students to come and escape the business and stress of uni life. Durham Minds are also actively trying to improve the support for students in the university. Durham Minds has help found a mental health network that connects students to the mainstream uni counselling and mental health service to ensure as many students are receiving help and know where to go if they are in need of support.

ENTs and Football Societies Formal (Best Example of Collaboration Nominee)

Collingwood Events Team (ENTs) collaborated with numerous Collingwood College football societies to organise a black tie ball event to raise money for RSACC. RSACC is a charitable Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Service for Darlington and County Durham supporting individuals in a variety of ways. The event has around 240 attendees, raised awareness and £1500 for the charity.

Hedgehog Friendly Campus (Best Example of Collaboration, Best Environmental Effort Nominee)

Hedgehog friendly campus have completed two bake off competitions, have been chosen to mentor University of Cumbria's Hedgehog Friendly Campus campaign, WON the national litter pick competition, picking more than 100 bags of litter overall, and offered training in both Hedgehog First Aid and supporting Hedgehogs in Winter. They also offer survey equipment to Durham University Nursery, and have been proactive in getting the local Brownies involved in the national litter pick effort.

Parkside School Project (Best New Volunteering Project Nominee)

A team of over 10, a new project that was conceived organised and facilitated by Durham Student Theatre and Parkside School. This involved delivering weekly workshops at the school building of GCSE English Literature texts that cumulated in field trips to the theatre and immersive workshops and performances.

Psychologists for Environmental Action (PEAs) (Best Environmental Effort Nominee)

The PEAs have several initiatives to engage university members to be more environmentally conscious including environmental talks, hosting litter picking walks, and initiating the Earthwalk challenge to encourage staff to walk to work. This group has also created a new environmental psychology module for undergraduate students, illustrating how the PEAs group has engaged university members at all levels.



Street Museum Volunteers (Best Cultural Effort Nominee)

The Street Museum event could not have been delivered without the passion, enthusiasm and energy of these outstanding DU student volunteers. The aim of Street Museum is to widen access and engagement with DU museum collections and families in Blackhall, a deprived north-east ex-mining community.

The Primary School Project (Best Education Effort Nominee)

The Primary School Project is a Van Mildert outreach project and volunteers from Mildert attend local primary schools every week. The project works with 5 different schools in the local Durham area. The volunteers help with a range of activities, depending on what the school asks for. Volunteers are able to provide additional support to pupils, such as helping children learn to read 1:1.

The Young Person's Project (Team of the Year, Best Social Inclusion Effort Nominee)

The Young Person's Project volunteers at Van Mildert College went into schools twice a week delivering workshops and building relationships, all with the aim of raising aspiration and increasing the confidence of year 10 students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This all culminated in the residential held at VMC at the beginning of the Easter holidays. This is the first time it went ahead in 3 years due to covid, but it returned bigger and better than ever. The level of passion, drive, commitment, and care that was demonstrated by the team is evident from the testimonies of the young people and teachers. There were speakers, a sports day, a fashion show, a trip to an outdoor adventure centre, a formal, an awards ceremony, and more.

Ukraine Project (Best New Volunteering Project Nominee)

This group of students came together to collect over 100kg of donations for Ukrainian refugees. They created official pages on social media to distribute information about what is happening in Ukraine as well as how each person abroad can help. The group has organised two solidarity protests with the second one having over 300 attendees.

College Nominees

Van Mildert College (College of the Year Nominee)



Van Mildert College has a long history of student - led outreach and volunteering activity but the pandemic risked exposing this vital part of the Van Mildert student experience which is built on the knowledge and enthusiasm of students being passed on from one student cohort to the next. As the college emerged from the pandemic, a priority was to re-build the college's six student - led outreach projects despite the loss of several community partners. This has required three projects to fundamentally re-think their purpose and start afresh with new community partners. While the re-build continues, the success of the Young Person's Project and Primary School Project, have been central to Van Mildert's contribution of over 2000 hours of volunteering.

Collingwood College (College of the Year Nominee)

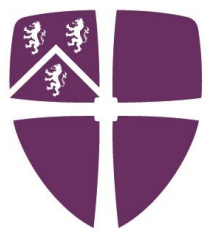


Collingwood College have made outstanding fundraising efforts over the past year. The College have raised over £30,000 for a variety of charities and appeals including, CRY, RSACC, RE-f-USE, Epilepsy Action and Ukraine Refugees. In addition to fundraising, Collingwood have delivered a number of volunteering projects including the 'Green Soc Clean Up' and the 'Arts Initiative'.

Ustinov College (College of the Year Nominee)



Ustinov College has a small group of international volunteers. They are committed individuals who have continually tried to make a positive contribution to life in Durham. From litter picks to Christmas cards appeals for care homes across Durham, they have done everything they can to give back to their local community.



Durham University

Volunteering and Outreach

Thank you for joining us!