

Dear Somervillian,

On behalf of the Somerville Law Fellows and the Somerville Lawyers' Committee we would like to invite you to join us in an important new initiative to support Law at Somerville.

We strongly believe that the tutorial system encourages our students to reason clearly, think critically and argue persuasively. It fosters an environment that encourages our students' intellectual curiosity and the course at Oxford is regarded as one of the best undergraduate law degrees in the UK, if not the world.

Today, Law at Somerville continues to be a high-achieving and important subject - we have had the two highest MJur results in the University in recent years. We have also had a range of excellent 2:1 and 1st class undergraduate degree results, and have had students at both undergraduate and postgraduate level winning university prizes in individual law subjects. Some of the College's most illustrious alumni have studied Law, including the first woman to practise law in both Britain and India, Cornelia Sorabji, Honorary Fellow and distinguished QC, Lady Fox, Her Honour Judge Deborah Taylor, and Dame Judith Parker (Mrs Justice Parker). Somerville also has representation across major firms at Partner level. It may therefore come as a surprise to you that Law is one of the most underfunded subjects at the College. The teaching of Law is only 31% funded by our endowment, leaving a shortfall of around £100,000 per annum – the highest out of all the subjects at Somerville, bar English.

Our current teaching provision is comprised of two Tutorial Fellows and a part-time Stipendiary Lecturer (early career law lecturer). The support of the Stipendiary Lecturer has proven vital in enabling the Somerville Law Fellows to run a yearly law induction course for new undergraduate law students, in the week before their first term at Somerville. Such courses are designed to help all students, but perhaps especially those who are amongst the first in their families or communities to attend University, to successfully make the transition from school to higher education. Somerville sees the provision of such courses as one aspect of our outreach and access work, and as part of our commitment to provide educational opportunities to the brightest and best, regardless of background. In addition, without the Stipendiary Lecturer, the Somerville first year law students would be taught entirely out of College for their first two terms, as the first subjects studied in law are true specialisms in their own right.

We wish Somerville to continue to attract the best students: those who will make a significant impact in Law across the world like so many of our alumni. Our ability to engage a longer term Stipendiary Lecturer will play an essential role in reaching this objective.

Accordingly, we are now launching the Somerville Law Appeal and seek your support for these critical needs to secure a strong and bright future for Law at Somerville. The target to create funds for a Stipendiary Lectureship is around £25,000 per annum. We believe that together, our Somervillian [legal] community can successfully support this. Regular gifts in particular will have an enormous impact on the success of this appeal. For example, **if just 40 alumni agreed to make a commitment of £40 a month for at least five years, once Gift Aid has been reclaimed, we would raise £120,000** to secure the Stipendiary Lectureship for five years.

Donors to the Somerville Law Appeal at this level will become automatic members of the newly formed and exclusive **Somerville Law Circle**. Members will be acknowledged for their generous support in our publications and further invited to special VIP events.

Finally, to mark Dr Alice Prochaska's most distinguished Principalship at Somerville in what is her final year, as well as her dedication to the development of young academic researchers, we thought of naming the new Stipendiary lectureship in honour of her. Her own preference would be, however, to name it for her grandparents Arnold and Marjorie McNair. Marjorie (née Bailhache) read English at Somerville from 1906 to 1909, and in 1920 took her degree on the first day when women were allowed to do so at Oxford. In 1912 she married Arnold McNair, eventually Lord McNair, who taught Law at Cambridge for

many years and went on to be President of the International Court of Justice at The Hague and the first President of the European Court of Human Rights, in addition to various distinctions beyond the practice of Law. Both of them campaigned for women to take their degrees at Oxford and Cambridge, and both encouraged Alice to come to Somerville.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017, Her Honour Judge Deborah Taylor and the Somerville Lawyers' Committee are delighted to invite you to an exclusive fundraising event at Inner Temple, in the heart of London's legal quarter, to celebrate Law at Somerville, and to invite you to join together with other members of the community in support of this exciting and important initiative.

We very much hope that you will be able to join us on May 25<sup>th</sup>. There will be an opportunity to make donations on the night, however if you are unable to attend and would like to support the Appeal, please visit the [Somerville website for further details](#). As ever, if you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Sara Kalim (Classics, 1990), Director of Development and Fellow of Somerville, at sara.kalim@some.ox.ac.uk or on +44 1865 280 596 who would be happy to speak with you further.

With warmest wishes, and thanks,



Julie Dickson, Associate Professor of Law  
Chris Hare, Associate Professor of Law  
Sheena Singla, Chair of the Somerville Lawyers' Committee