



## *Announcement of recent developments*

### *Autumn 2016*

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### *The first Thatcher Scholarships are awarded*

The Margaret Thatcher Scholarship Trust has awarded its first scholarships, just three years after it was established as a living legacy to one of Somerville's most illustrious alumnae. This would not have been possible without the generosity of our donors and supporters who shared our vision of enabling the most promising students to benefit from all that Somerville and the University of Oxford have to offer.

The competition for the Thatcher Scholarships was tough and we had a number of very strong candidates, and so we are continuing to raise funds for the MTST so that we can help more brilliant students fulfil their potential.

The Thatcher Scholarships awarded this year went to Isobel Hettrick who is the Michael Bishop Foundation Thatcher Scholar and William Sargent who is the Margaret Thatcher Scholar.

### **Isobel Hettrick**

Isobel grew up near Guildford in Surrey and has always been interested in current affairs. After studying History, Mathematics and Economics at Godalming College, a state sixth-form college, studying PPE was the obvious choice for her. After being initially put off by what she had read in the papers about studying at Oxford, her mind was changed after a family day trip to the city.

'When I first walked into Somerville I immediately loved the friendly and open atmosphere. I love the fact that it was founded to give opportunities to women and continues that progressive tradition with its access work as well.'

The Michael Bishop Foundation Thatcher Scholarship was awarded to Isobel to support her in her ambitions to close the educational attainment gap. She has already made a local impact with her work at University access events and went back to her Sixth Form College in July to give a presentation about studying at Oxford.

'Receiving the scholarship will enable me to pursue the opportunities which are most likely to help me achieve my long-term interests and goals. By maximizing the choices open to me when I graduate, I will be more able to have a beneficial impact upon the world.'



*Isobel Hettrick*

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Somerville College

## William Sargent

Throughout William's time at school in Margate he always excelled in science and knew from a young age that he would pursue it as a career. Deciding which kind, though, was the hard part. Having graduated with a degree in Natural Sciences from the University of Cambridge, William took the brave decision to pursue a further degree in Medicine and began his graduate-entry course at Somerville in October 2015.

'From the age of 16 I knew that I wanted to study Medicine. It has always been of the greatest interest to me and I know that I've made the right decision in pursuing it.'

The Scholarship will enable William to do the extra work he has been pursuing out of term time researching complications in pregnancy.

'The Margaret Thatcher Scholarship will also allow me to travel to conferences to present my findings, and the development programme, provided for all Somervillians by the MTST, will provide training to allow me to present in public with greater fluency.'



William Sargent

## *Development Programme launched*

The Development Programme is an integral part of the Thatcher Scholarship Programme. It is open to all students at Somerville and will cover all aspects of personal, academic and professional development. This term, we have launched a series of weekly lunchtime masterclasses based on topics that students and fellows identified as important. 'Essays made easy' provided an introduction to constructing university-level essays for new undergraduates as well as a refresher for postgraduates. Sessions led by the Careers Service on CV writing and applying for internships and by Oxford Hub on volunteering were designed to enable our students to make the most of the opportunities available to them. An insightful session on emotional resilience and psychological welfare helped students to understand triggers for stress and highlighted the importance of practising good habits to maintain good mental health. Future sessions this term include how to make the most of the unparalleled resources Oxford offers for research and how participants can improve their presentational skills, something that students identified as a high priority.

We are delighted with the highly positive feedback we have received for all the workshops – for example, one participant described the workshop on time management as 'a revelation'. We will continue to evaluate all the sessions to ensure that they meet the needs of students and enable the Programme Director to plan future events. We hope to grow the numbers attending as the Development Programme becomes embedded in Somerville life.

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## *Appointment of Programme Director*

Dr Claire Cockcroft has been appointed as the Programme Director for the Margaret Thatcher Scholarship Trust. She will start in post on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

Claire read Biochemistry at Somerville before gaining a PhD in Plant Molecular Biology from the University of Cambridge. During her Post-Doc in Cambridge, she was awarded a Media Fellowship, working with Tim Radford at *The Guardian* and subsequently as a freelance science writer. After deciding to hang up her lab coat in 2001, Claire pioneered a cross-disciplinary Master's Programme in Bioscience Enterprise at Cambridge in partnership with MIT, aimed at bio-entrepreneurs and future leaders of the life science sector.

In 2005, Claire joined the Babraham Institute – a biomedical research organisation in Cambridge – where she was responsible for corporate communications, media liaison, public engagement and knowledge exchange and undertook PR for the campus, home to over 40 life science companies. She established a successful Science & Society Programme delivering novel science enrichment activities for schools, and summer research opportunities to inspire young people about science and STEM careers. During this time, Claire was a Graduate Tutor at Newnham College, Cambridge providing pastoral support and mentoring for a growing graduate community.



*Dr Claire Cockcroft*

Claire is a trustee of STEM Team East, an educational charity that enriches science in schools, and has received awards for work with schools. She joined the Board of the biomedical charity Understanding Animals in Research in 2016 and is a member of the BioIndustry Associations' Communications Advisory Committee.

After joining the Centre for Personalised Medicine in Oxford during its start-up phase in 2013, Claire now offers consultancy in science communication and public engagement. Claire is a fellow of the Society of Biology, the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and in 2012 was selected as a fellow of the British-American Project – a transatlantic leadership network from a broad spectrum of occupations and backgrounds.

The role of the Programme Director is fundamental to the success of the Margaret Thatcher Scholarship Programme and the selection panel was unanimous in their view that Claire's creativity, rigour and experience would meet the challenges faced by this nascent programme.

As Programme Director, Claire will be responsible for: mentoring and supporting the Thatcher Scholars; devising, adapting and overseeing the Development Programme; publicising the scholarships nationally and internationally; and developing ways of evaluating the Scholarship Programme and its impact.

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*A young Margaret Thatcher (Roberts) at Somerville in 1943  
(back row, fifth from right)*

## *New Patron in Singapore*

We are delighted to announce that Ho Ching has accepted Lord Powell's invitation to join the board of patrons of the Margaret Thatcher Scholarship Trust campaign. Ho Ching is CEO of Temasek Holdings and wife of Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, son of Lee Kuan Yew who was a great friend and admirer of Lady Thatcher. In accepting the invitation, she wrote to Lord Powell saying:

*"Margaret Thatcher is a leader whom I admire very much... It's my honour and privilege to accept the kind invitation to be a patron.*

*"It's also a cause that I am passionate about to nurture the next generation, and seed a better brighter future for our young, through education, training and knowledge as well as a sense of values and purpose."*

We are very lucky to have her support.



*Ho Ching*

*For further information, please contact*

Jessica Mannix  
Campaign Director  
Margaret Thatcher Scholarship Trust  
Somerville College  
Oxford  
OX2 6HD

jessica.mannix@some.ox.ac.uk  
+44 (0) 1865 270670

*Margaret Thatcher*  
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