



YOUR WILL, YOUR LEGACY | INSPIRING DOWNING'S FUTURE



DOWNING COLLEGE

Leena Priya Makani (2006)

PhD Biochemistry

Alwyn W. Heong Award
Treherne Studentship in
Biological Sciences

“Downing is my home away from home.”

I am in the final year of my PhD in Biochemistry. I received the Alwyn W. Heong award from Downing College and I also received University support. Especially as an international student, these awards and scholarships have been a boon and helped me a lot to concentrate on my studies.

When I first stepped into Downing, I was amazed to see the neo-classical architecture of the College. It feels so nice to see the green courtyards and walk through them. I just love College accommodation and the food in hall. It's amazingly awesome. I lived in College accommodation all through my PhD and made friends from across the globe, learned new cuisines and new cultures. I would have missed all that if I was not in College.

Every time I had a problem with funding or accommodation, Downing College stood by me and I am grateful for that. The tutors are so helpful that you feel a sense of security in life. It is only because of Downing, my parents back in India feel safe and secure for me.

I enjoyed my College life with friends and also by being a member of the Downing Boat Club.





A Legacy to the Future

Research and scholarship of the highest quality are powerful instruments of change and have the potential to bring about the most profound transformation in our lives.

Some of the most significant gifts made to Downing College have come from legacies. The foresight shown by legacy donors has been transformative for the College and without a legacy the College could not have come into being in the first place. Today we remember and celebrate benefactors of the past, but we are also focused on Downing's future.

Downing plays its part in shaping the world. Our ability to do that comes from the generosity of our donors and the vision of the College about its role and purpose. To that end we believe that scholarship of the highest quality is a powerful instrument of change and has the potential to bring about the most profound transformation in our lives. Therefore, a gift to nurture teaching, learning, and research is perhaps the most influential gift that you can make.

So we hope to inspire you, through the example of the students and Fellows featured in this brochure, to make

a Will and to include Downing in it. You may not have the means to give substantially to Downing during your lifetime but by writing a Will you can protect your family and loved ones, provide for causes close to your heart and make a commitment to the College which will give us the assurance of a more secure future.

Of course, writing a Will is a deeply personal matter, at the heart of which is your desire to help the people closest to you, but it is also a means by which you might continue to shape the future for generations to come. You can secure the best possible legacy for tomorrow by helping Downing's scholars continue to strive for the knowledge and progress that will benefit humankind in time to come.

We are asking you to make a legacy to Downing College not because of what the College was in the past or what it is in the present, but for what it could be in the future.

Founded by a Will

The College only exists today because of a Will and its future can be guaranteed by your legacy.



The College Charter

When Sir George Downing, 3rd Baronet, sat down on 20th December 1717, to think about what he should do with the substantial wealth and estates bequeathed by his grandfather, the 1st Baronet, a man described as a "perfidious rogue" by Samuel Pepys, his first instinct was to leave it all to his cousin, Sir Jacob Downing, and if he died without issue, to other male cousins. The estate duly passed to Sir Jacob in 1749 following Sir George's death.

Sir Jacob died in 1764 without male heirs, as had all the others named in Sir George's Will, and these events should have led to the founding of a college in Cambridge at once. Downing College would have come into existence somewhat earlier than 1800 when it eventually received its Royal Charter, had it not been for the legal challenges by Sir Jacob's widow Margaret and her relatives. The estates that Margaret had refused to give up were seriously eroded by the time Downing was founded and it depended on a much reduced endowment which persists today, despite the huge strides the College has made over the last two centuries to change its resources.

Nevertheless, the College has been fortunate because so many far-sighted members have, throughout the decades, made Downing an important beneficiary in their Wills. Names like Singer, Kenny, Seton, Graystone, Jones and Anderson are now part of the physical and intellectual fabric of the College.

Now you also have an opportunity to leave your mark on Downing's history.





Philip Hammersley

History (2008)

“I am grateful to all those donors whose contributions have helped to provide these facilities over the years.”

Studying at Downing has been a great experience and as I come to the end of my degree I look back with much fondness at three years here. I think I will miss the community in Downing; with everyone so close together it has been great to maintain friendships and build new ones throughout my three years here. The quality of the facilities is also something I will miss - sports pitches, the library, the computer room, the TV room, the bar have all been things which have helped build and maintain that sense of community which is so refreshing about Downing. I am grateful to all those donors whose contributions have helped to provide these facilities over the years. It makes such a difference to students' lives.

Stafford Withington

Professorial Fellow in Analytical Physics

“Downing’s supervision system, which brings together leading scholars and talented young people in small discussion groups is at the heart of the College’s purpose...”

As a child I was fascinated by mechanisms, and spent much of my young life dismantling and examining every machine that I could find: radios, televisions, clocks, vacuum cleaners, and even toasters.

Now, as a Professor of Physics at the Cavendish Laboratory, I lead a group developing advanced technology for ground-based and space-borne astronomy. We create instruments capable of observing the earliest moments of the Big Bang, the formation of galaxies in the early Universe, and the dynamical and chemical processes at work in nearby star-forming regions. Learning, and the emergence of creativity, is a highly personal process, and profound insight can be found in the most unlikely of places.

Downing’s supervision system, which brings together leading scholars and talented young people in small discussion groups is at the heart of the College’s purpose, and the College must do everything it can to protect this purpose. Knowledge is frail, and must be passed on actively to each new generation. For me, the greatest legacy that anyone can give is to help sustain the process by which knowledge and the richness of understanding are shared between people.





Why it is Important to Make a Will

Making a Will provides certainty for your surviving relatives and makes your wishes clear.

If you die without leaving a legally valid Will then your 'estate' will be shared out by the state according to the 'rules of intestacy'. Your partner will not inherit automatically unless you are married or in a civil partnership. By making a Will you can decide who gets your assets.

If your estate is worth more than a certain value then you will have to pay Inheritance Tax on the amount over the threshold. The level of the threshold and the rate of tax payable are likely to change over time so you should check what these are when you make your Will; nevertheless paying these duties is likely to reduce the value of any remaining assets by a substantial amount.

Inheritance Tax is not payable on gifts to charities, so leaving a legacy in a Will is a great way of helping good causes and reducing the tax bill for your relatives. Legacies are crucial to the survival of many organisations and Downing College, a registered charity, is no exception.

Details of how you can make a Will or add Downing to an existing Will are contained in the inserts in the back of this brochure and you can also visit our website for details.

Rewarding Academic Excellence

Downing strives for the highest possible academic standards and we are proud to recognise and support students who achieve exceptional results.

For example, the Whitby Scholarship is awarded to graduating medics who have achieved one or more firsts in their undergraduate studies. Up to £1000 per annum is awarded for each of the three clinical years.

Students awarded the Graystone Prizes receive money and book tokens in recognition of achieving a first and for being placed in the top 2.5% in the subject, in the University.

Neither of these awards would be possible without generous bequests and donations by alumni and there are many other examples of such prizes and scholarships across a wide range of subjects.

Your legacy too can benefit the most able students and provide them with the means to carry on with their studies or to take them to the next level.





Jessica Wong (2008)

Medicine

Whitby Scholarship

Graystone Prizes

“The scholarship and prizes awarded by Downing College are going to make a huge difference to my further medical training and my future career.”

Next year I will be starting clinical school and the Whitby Scholarship will go a long way towards helping me pay for living and travelling costs so I'm grateful to Downing College and the donors for this.

In addition, the scholars' dinner and the signing ceremony have been an excellent way to celebrate the achievements of Downing's hard-working students. It has really made me happy to study here. The best times I've had and the strongest friendships I've made have been whilst playing sport on the Paddock, sharing evenings in warm company and helping each other rise to each academic challenge.

Daisy Hessenberger (2010)

Plant Sciences

Lewin – Fritsch PhD Studentship

“The Lewin-Fritsch Studentship means that I can work on exactly what I want to work on: algae!”

This money has allowed me to study hybridization in algae because this has many potential benefits for the world. The idea of using algae as a renewable source of fuel is becoming more viable, but we're not quite there yet.

My PhD is about understanding the effects of crossing different strains of algae, which could lead to a way of producing hybrids with the greatest yield of fuel.

I am really grateful to the late Professor Ralph Lewin who made this studentship possible through his generous donations.





Striving for Knowledge

We want to be at the forefront of research and the College places great emphasis on supporting young researchers and allowing them the space to make new discoveries.

PhD studentships like the Lewin-Fritsch are vital. Competition for PhD funding is tough and some important and potentially valuable areas of research can lose out. Studentships like this are one way of making sure this does not happen. The Lewin-Fritsch Studentship supports a PhD that works in any way with algae whether it is genetic, ecological, physiological or biochemical. Such a broadly based aim gives potential PhD students and supervisors more freedom.

Legacies to support research in any discipline of this kind could have far-reaching effects in the future and the importance of such donations cannot be under-estimated. Your legacy could be world-changing.



Amy Goymour (1999)

Hopkins Parry Fellow in Law

“Hardship funds, supported by alumni, play an incredibly important (and sometimes unseen) role in allowing these students to continue, and succeed, in their studies.”

I came to read Law at Downing as an undergraduate student. Now, some years on, I am privileged to hold the Hopkins Parry Fellowship in Law, a post funded entirely from the generous donations of Downing alumni. I specialise in property law, and have recently been the holder of a three year University Lectureship in Property Law. My recent publications examine some of the modern challenges facing the law of property.

Within the College, I have considerable interaction with our student community, both as a supervisor for Civil (Roman) Law and Land Law, and also in my capacity as an undergraduate Tutor. It is increasingly the case that, alongside the rigours of their academic studies, students face (often unforeseen) financial difficulties during their time at Downing. Hardship funds, supported by alumni, play an incredibly important (and sometimes unseen) role in allowing these students to continue, and succeed, in their studies.

Nurturing Teaching Talent

Teaching of the highest quality is at the heart of Downing’s academic reputation, which is why endowed Fellowships are so vital to our success.

We are in constant competition with other colleges to attract the best teachers to the College and despite our relatively small endowment we still manage to punch above our weight. Having generously endowed teaching Fellowships makes the task easier. A number of Fellowships have been funded by the kind support of alumni.

The Hopkins Parry Fellowship in Law, The Darley Fellowship in Mathematics, The Verjee Fellowship in Medicine and The Mays Wild Fellowship in Natural Sciences were made possible by the generous support of alumni whose wish was to provide a solid and perpetual underpinning for the teaching of a particular subject at Downing.

The College aims to endow Fellowships across all our subjects and your legacy could be the key to persuading an inspirational individual to join the Fellowship, who will in turn inspire future generations to achieve great things.

Recognising Your Support


In this brochure we have tried to show you the potential impact of your legacy through the words of students and Fellows of the College today. They are benefiting from the far-sighted generosity of donors past and present.

We hope that you will wish to emulate these donors in the future. Some of you will be motivated to support Downing simply because you love the place. Some of you will feel that it was part of your passport to success in life and you want to give something back. Some of you will want to help students deal with unexpected hardship, to ensure that no-one is denied opportunity for financial reasons.

Whatever your motivation, we will recognise your pledge to leave a legacy to Downing College by inviting you to join the 1749 Society. This is exclusively for legacy donors and includes an annual invitation from the Master to attend a special garden party.

The information contained in this brochure will help you start the process of making a Will; however, you should consult a solicitor in all cases at the earliest opportunity to ensure that your Will meets your wishes and all necessary legal and financial requirements.

Please do get in touch if you have any questions. Our contact details are on the back of this brochure.



Downing is a unique College in a great university. Its significance is not measured by reputation, size or wealth alone but also by the foresight of supporters like you. Your generosity will reach out today and touch many lives in the future.

Thank you from the Master, Fellows and Scholars of Downing College in the University of Cambridge.

We are grateful to the sponsors of this brochure:

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Contact partner: Stephen Pallister
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Disclaimer: Nothing in this brochure constitutes legal advice and we strongly urge you to consult a properly qualified solicitor before writing your Will.



DOWNING COLLEGE

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