

Principal's Update September 2012

Colleagues

I hope this message finds colleagues having had an enjoyable break at some stage over the summer despite the typical British summer weather and looking forward to the new academic year ahead.

British Science Festival

As I write, the British Science Festival is underway in Aberdeen and is set to transform the campus and the City over the next few days. A huge amount of hard work has gone in by staff to make the Festival a reality and I want to record my considerable thanks for all that colleagues have done. It is truly exciting to see this event taking place at Aberdeen and to think of how widely talked about the University will be in the coming days.

Open Day

I'm also very pleased to say that the campus was equally busy during the undergraduate open day on 28 August with over 7,000 visitors to the University - an increase on last year. We also used social media this year to a greater extent than ever before to allow people who were unable to attend in person to participate and to help generate interest in the University 'virally'. The results were quite exciting with a total of 30,500 people seeing our marketing page or interacting with it virally on Open Day and the average viral reach of a post from Open Day being c. 5,000-6,000 with the highest being 9,000. I gave three welcome addresses at Open Day and did feel that our degree programmes were being received very positively. Could I take this opportunity to thank all those who participated in the day. Meeting colleagues from across the University is so important in attracting potential undergraduates.

US Alumni

I recently had the pleasure of visiting San Francisco to meet with alumni and to attend events organised by our alumni network there. It was encouraging to be reminded of the vibrant and influential network of alumni we have in California, all of whom take great pride in their association with the University and who are enthusiastic supporters and promoters of Aberdeen in the US.

Academic Recruitment

As I am sure many colleagues will be hearing within their particular Schools and Departments, we have had a superb response to our academic recruitment campaign and we are now well into the process of making appointments, with many new colleagues already in post or soon to join us. This is all hugely exciting for the future intellectual growth of the University. Colleagues are encouraged to continue to bring to our attention individuals who they think might be of the calibre the University is looking to recruit.

Teaching Awards

It was a great pleasure to host the Annual Teaching Awards last Thursday. It is wonderful to celebrate the great teaching we have here at Aberdeen and to do so with awards nominated by the students. I was impressed first that the recipients came from all stages of the academic life course, and second that the nominators included students from all years.

Staff Honours

Finally, a brief note of congratulations to Michael Keating, Chair of Scottish Politics, who was elected as a Fellow of the British Academy last month. Michael is one of only 38 academics to be elected this

year to the Academy, a huge honour for him and I'm sure all colleagues would wish to join me in congratulating him.

Best Regards

Ian Diamond

Principal and Vice-Chancellor