



Alumni newsletter

# London Connection

Issue 4 | Spring 2007

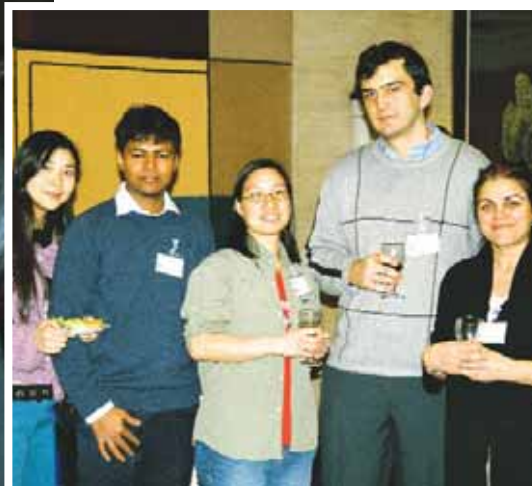
[www.londonexternal.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/alumni)

## A global success

The Alumni Association goes from strength to strength.



Alumni reception, London, UK



Since the establishment of the Alumni Association in January 2006, more than 9,000 graduates have joined and over 450 alumni have attended one of the University's networking events.

Events have now been held in the UK, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and Sri Lanka. Each event has proved a resounding success with numbers reaching capacity in every venue. This has been incredibly positive for the Alumni Relations Office. We've been overwhelmed by the response that the creation of the Association has had. 'It's very exciting for us, as a new office, to see how enthusiastic our alumni are in becoming active members and attending the events we've scheduled for them', commented Alumni Relations Manager, Anne Cronin.

Alumni events have attracted graduates who completed their degrees as recently as last year and as far back as the 1950s. The diversity of those attending reflects the Association as a whole, and has provided

graduates with the opportunity to meet a wide range of people who – despite differences in age, ethnicity and career – share a common academic background. 'People often come alone to the events not knowing if they'll recognise someone from their studies or not. It's great to see our alumni networking with people they've never met before and sharing stories about their studies and careers', Anne said.

At these events, we've also had the opportunity to speak to members and find out more about what they'd like their Association to do for them. We're working for External graduates, so it's great to have your input. This will ensure that we continue to offer services that benefit you, the members.

As the number of alumni events increases in 2007, we hope that more of you will attend and participate in these functions, and have the opportunity to benefit from networking with such a diverse and fantastic group of graduates.

The events for April – July 2007 are as follows:

### Singapore

The Vice-Chancellor will host two alumni events in Singapore on 12 April 2007.

#### Drinks Reception

5.30 – 7.30pm  
Level 24 – Panorama Room  
Hilton Singapore

#### Gala Dinner

7.30 – 10.00pm  
Level 3 – Vista Room  
Hilton Singapore

### Malaysia

The Vice-Chancellor will host an alumni drinks reception on 15 April 2007.  
6.00 – 8.00pm  
Renaissance Kuala Lumpur Hotel

### Hong Kong

13 July 2007  
Venue to be confirmed

Events for the later part of 2007 will be scheduled within the next few months. Please refer to: [www.londonexternal.ac.uk/alumni/events.shtml](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/alumni/events.shtml) for more details regarding these events.

## This issue

- Profile on: Alice Perry, Alumni Relations Officer
- London Members Group
- Focus on SOAS
- Ambassadors and Chapter Leaders
- Convocation
- Alumnus profile: Charles Kajege
- Q&A with Hilary Ganley
- Imperial to withdraw from University of London
- News in brief

## Profile on

# Alice Perry, Alumni Relations Officer



Alice on the Great Wall of China

Due to the rapid expansion of the Alumni Association, a new position was created within the alumni relations office and in November 2006 I was appointed to work alongside Anne to help fulfil the alumni strategy of the University.

I am familiar with the External System having previously worked in the University's Information centre for 3 years but I welcomed the new challenge of helping to establish an effective and worthwhile Alumni Association.

Since coming into my role, I have had a lot of contact with alumni through new registrations and I continue to be overwhelmed by your enthusiasm towards the alumni association. It has been a pleasure to listen to all your stories about the positive impact the completion of your External degree has had upon your life. I hope I can help you continue to build and strengthen your close links and associations with the University and with each other.

The Alumni community is so rich and diverse, spanning ages from 18 to 97 and a wide variety of distinct cultural and educational backgrounds. The community includes young people at the start of promising careers, older people increasing

their specialised knowledge directly relevant to their professional lives, as well as people who undertake degrees for the love of learning itself!

There are Alumni from outside conventional educational backgrounds who through the flexibility and opportunities provided by External study were able to gain access to qualifications that might not otherwise have been available, busy but dedicated people who studied independently whilst maintaining work and family commitments, people who studied with support of institutions, where they made friends and contacts they will keep (or have kept) their whole lives, and my own personal favourite, the External System romances!

What all our Alumni do share is a University of London degree of the highest quality and I have found everyone I have contacted to be very supportive, enthusiastic and warm. I have heard Alumni described as 'a window into an institution' and our alumni embody the values and enterprising spirit of the External System.

Although I was born a few blocks from Stewart House, in UoL's University College Hospital, like many other Londoners of my generation I am a dual national (in my case of the UK and Australia). Growing up in London you learn to respect and celebrate multiculturalism and diversity and I am proud that my city has produced institutions like the University of London External System that have had such a positive global impact. I am looking forward to meeting more of you and hearing your stories at the many forthcoming events!

## Focus on



# The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)

SOAS is one of the world's largest centres for the study of Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Since its formation in 1916, SOAS has built an enviable reputation around the globe for the calibre of its programmes, teaching and research. The School's range of awards in the social sciences, arts and humanities is underpinned by the regional expertise and cross-disciplinary emphasis in all its teaching. Through the Centre for Financial and Management Studies (CeFIMS), the College leads in the development of postgraduate programmes in finance, management and related subjects.

The mission of CeFIMS is to increase professional understanding of these subjects by advanced research, and by making the University of London's expertise accessible globally through high quality postgraduate degree programmes. Academics at CeFIMS have international reputations and are involved in researching their subjects at the very limits of current knowledge. Research output covers a range of topics including corporate governance, corporate finance, financial sector development and economic growth, uncertainty and investment, labour market policies, and law of electronic banking.

The Centre has extensive international collaboration in research and teaching. Strong links exist with many institutions including Hong Kong University (SPACE), Beijing University, Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, and University of Rome 'Tor Vergata'.

There are currently over 1,200 students enrolled for distance learning programmes taught through CeFIMS. In terms of the suite of postgraduate programmes offered through the External System, this places it second only to the LLM. [www.cefims.ac.uk](http://www.cefims.ac.uk)

## London Members Group

The London Members Group welcome new members who live in the Greater London area or within easy travelling distance of London. We are a friendly group who visit places of interest about once a month.

Recent outings have included:

- Lord's Cricket Ground
- a backstage tour of The Royal Opera House
- St Paul's Cathedral

The London Members Group has been in existence for over 40 years and was one of the branches of the University of London

Convocation until it was abolished in September 2003. We now operate independently and we have our own constitution. Membership is open to graduates or holders of a Diploma of the University of London and their spouses. The annual subscription is £5.00, payable on 1 October, which covers newsletters and postage.

For more information, please contact the Honorary Secretary on 07973 299 467 or by **Email: [londonmembersgroup@gmail.com](mailto:londonmembersgroup@gmail.com)**

# Ambassadors and Chapter Leaders

Want to share your experiences with prospective students? Willing to establish an alumni chapter in your own country? Read on...

The Alumni Office is in the process of establishing a number of fulfilling volunteer roles in many countries around the world that will allow you to stay involved and help the University of London community long after you graduate.

In the first half of 2007, we will be launching our Student Ambassador Programme and our International Chapter Network and we will require the assistance of our alumni community to make these new initiatives a success. Please see below for details on these two initiatives and how you can get involved.

## Student Ambassador Programme

The Alumni Relations Office is looking to recruit volunteers in the following countries to become Student Ambassadors.

- Australia
- Canada
- Hong Kong
- India
- Jamaica
- Kenya
- Malaysia
- Mauritius
- Malta
- Pakistan
- Singapore
- Sri Lanka
- Trinidad and Tobago
- United Kingdom
- United States

Being a Student Ambassador will allow you to share your experiences with prospective students who are interested in studying for an external qualification through the University of London. A photo and email addresses for each Student Ambassador will be listed on the alumni website and prospective students will be able to contact Ambassadors directly. Once contact has been established it is up to both parties to create the purpose and the boundaries of the relationship.



As an Ambassador you will be required to offer your opinion on your life as a student. Most of the questions that prospective students will ask will be related to how you managed your study / life balance during your degree and if you have any tips for ensuring success. The Alumni Relations Office will provide advice and guidance and there will be a full training manual which will outline how to deal with tricky or unusual questions. Based on current numbers of emails from prospective students, you should receive approximately 2-5 emails per month.

The Student Ambassador positions are available to all graduates who have at least two years work experience. If you have not already expressed your interest and you would like to request more information, please contact Alice Perry, Alumni Relations Officer at: [alice.perry@london.ac.uk](mailto:alice.perry@london.ac.uk) or +44 (0)20 7664 4826. Please note that the Student Ambassador position is on a volunteer basis and is unpaid.

## International Chapter Network

Reflecting the External System's global outlook, we would like to establish alumni chapters in key countries overseas. Unfortunately, the Alumni Relations Office cannot host events and alumni reunions in every country but we would like to offer all of our alumni the opportunity to meet old classmates and make new contacts through the University of London graduate base.

The Alumni Relations Office is looking for people who may be interested in becoming chapter leaders and organising professional, intellectual or social events for External Alumni within their country. Whether you decide to meet regularly or less frequently is up to the Chapter Leader as is what kind of activities you decide to hold.

Once Chapter Leaders are selected, their details will be listed on the alumni website and alumni members who reside in that country will be asked if they wish to join the chapter. The leader will then receive a list of interested alumni members and it will be their responsibility to contact the members directly and facilitate the organisation of any events. The Alumni Relations Office will offer support and guidance and there will be a full training manual provided.

# On the up

When Convocation was abolished in 2003, nearly 25,000 External graduates were active members. These members were contacted to inform them that Convocation was to cease, but at that time there was no Alumni Association for them to join.

Since the establishment of the Alumni Relations Office in 2006, the University's Student Records Database has been used to locate graduates and invite them to join the Association. However, graduates who completed their degrees prior to 1986, when the University's electronic records began, were not contacted as their details were not readily available.

To widen participation in the Alumni Association, we've spent a long time trying to decipher old Convocation records and establish accurate details for these 25,000 members. After a lot of 'data cleansing', over 11,000 letters were sent out worldwide offering ex-Convocation members the opportunity to join the Alumni Association.

We're very pleased to announce that this mailout has received an overwhelming response. In its first week we've received over 4,000 registrations for the Alumni Association and many letters congratulating us on our new initiatives.

We hope to receive many more registrations over the coming months, and are delighted to welcome ex-Convocation members to our Association. We know that your participation will add to its effectiveness and hope you can join us at one of the reunion events we've scheduled for alumni around the world.



The Chapter Leaders positions are available to all current alumni members. If you would like to express your interest and request more information, please contact Alice Perry, Alumni Relations Officer at: [alice.perry@london.ac.uk](mailto:alice.perry@london.ac.uk) or +44 (0)20 7664 4826. Please note that the Chapter Leader position is on a volunteer basis and is unpaid.

# Alumnus profile



## Charles Kajege

Now a serving member of the Tanzanian government, the Honourable Charles Kajege MP studied for an MSc in Financial Economics with the External System.

**You studied for your MSc while working as a Foreign Affairs Officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Relations. Was your employer supportive of your studies?**

Yes, my employer was very supportive of my studies. For instance, I was promised to be refunded my tuition fee and other course-related costs after completing my studies. This promise, actually, made me feel exceptionally privileged and thus I had to put in more effort to complete my studies.

**Did fitting in study around your job present a difficult balancing act?**

In fact, I decided to use my after work hours and any available time during weekends and holidays to complete the course. This didn't present a challenge to me since I was highly disciplined and needed the course very much. In addition, my boss (the Ambassador) understood the importance of the course to our Mission and gave me all the help that I needed.

**Was the course content of the MSc directly relevant to your job?**

The course content was very relevant to my job. I'm an economist and at that particular time (at the Mission) I was dealing with Economic and Trade matters between my country and Mozambique, Swaziland and Madagascar.

**Did gaining the MSc directly help you in your career and, if so, how?**

Yes it did. When I returned to Tanzania I was moved to the East African Co-operation directorate, which was tasked to deal with integration matters in the East African region, most of which concerned trade and economic matters. The knowledge that I had acquired from the course helped me very much to make informed decisions and proposals to my seniors. The course also helped me get easily an admission for an MBA course in the USA.

---

**'The course content was very relevant to my job. I'm an economist and at that particular time (at the Mission) I was dealing with Economic and Trade matters between my country and Mozambique, Swaziland and Madagascar.'**

---

**You've been an MP since the general election in 2005. Having now completed a year in post, what has the experience been like and have there been any memorable high points?**

The experience has been great. I have come to understand why we are still lagging behind many countries, in many aspects. Also, having an opportunity to represent the people, listen to them, and understand the challenges facing them, has been wonderful. Before I became an MP, I was just focusing on the theoretical part, now I am putting my knowledge into practice.

One of my memorable high points was when I was discussing with a group of villagers about how to fight poverty in their society. I was amazed to find out that they

were more informed but only lacked the right tools and technology to break from the current vicious circle of poverty. I just left amazed and therefore understood that the government should involve them more in any program or activities intended to alleviate poverty.

**What are the principal aims and objectives of the government during their five-year term of office?**

The government has set out many objectives. However, the main ones are those aimed at fighting poverty, increasing the capacity and efficiency of central government and local authorities in responding to society needs, and making credit facilities available to all people, especially those who could not before due to a number of artificial and unfair barriers.

**You represent the constituency of Mwibara. What are the particular problems and concerns that your constituents face?**

Mwibara is no different from other constituencies in the country. Poverty is the main challenge. Other problems that face my people are inadequate, unclean and unsafe water; shortage of classrooms for secondary and primary schools; shortage of teachers; lack of dispensaries, medications and doctors (health care); bad road infrastructure; lack of primary markets for cash and food crops; low commodity prices (existence of cartels); low capacity of local government officials, etc. These are some of the problems that need immediate intervention by the government and other stakeholders, including development partners, so as to create a development environment conducive for my people. Without tackling these challenges, the chance for breaking through is slim.

## key facts

### Tanzania:

- Full name: United Republic of Tanzania
- Population: 38.4 million (UN, 2005)
- Capital: Dodoma
- Area: 945,087 sq km (364,900 sq miles)
- Major languages: Swahili, English
- Major religions: Christianity, Islam
- Life expectancy: 46 years (men), 46 years (women) (UN)
- Monetary unit: Tanzanian shilling
- Main exports: Sisal, cloves, coffee, cotton, cashew nuts, minerals, tobacco
- GNI per capita: US \$340 (World Bank, 2006)
- Current number of External students: 72
- Number of External alumni: 32

## Q & A with: Hilary Ganley

Appointed in 2001 to co-ordinate the development of the e-learning version of Royal Holloway's MSc Information Security, Hilary Ganley talks about pedagogy, PhDs and products.

[www.londonexternal.ac.uk/infosec](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/infosec)



### **The distance learning MSc in Information Security has been running for three years. What particular challenges and opportunities has this new format posed?**

The early challenges were more concerned with pedagogic issues surrounding the writing and delivery style of the teaching materials. The materials themselves represented a snapshot of the course as delivered on campus and involved a large team of academics as well as security professionals as both writers and reviewers. The materials were successfully piloted with a group of part-time campus students in the year before launch. Meanwhile a support model was developed and a team of tutors appointed and trained to ensure everyone was ready for the launch.

It was soon apparent after launch that while most students use the online version, with its interactive and animation elements on first runs through the materials, they often preferred access to more traditional printed versions and audio CDs for review and revision purposes. At the same time, other students reported that online materials either on CD or via the internet meant they were able to make good use of spare hours at airports and hotels whilst travelling. In response to these requirements we now ensure a variety of modes of delivery are now available for all our students.

The most exciting opportunity relates to 'mixed mode' study. As campus students increasingly use online environments to access specific support for their studies, and e-learning students express an interest in

being able to attend campus for intensive face-to-face study periods, we're working towards building up credits for a degree by mixing modes of study. Check our website [www.isg.rhul.ac.uk](http://www.isg.rhul.ac.uk) for updates.

### **The first cohort of distance learning students graduated last year. This must have been an important milestone for you?**

We've been enormously impressed with the overall quality of our e-learning students in terms of their commitment and enthusiasm. All materials and support is available through the Virtual Learning Environment, and our students have also formed their own online community for mutual support. The first cohort of 7 graduates completed in 2005, with a further 22 in 2006. Overall, 12 of these graduates achieved distinctions. Whilst it's no surprise to learn of the increased career opportunities available for these graduates, we've been a little surprised by how many of them are considering further studies for a PhD! So far three have registered for PhDs at RHUL.

### **With 160 students worldwide engaging in online seminars and module discussion areas, has this created any logistical problems for academic colleagues at Royal Holloway?**

Not really, no. We have a carefully structured support model which seems to work well. All e-learning modules are led by Information Security Group academics or consultants. They're responsible for providing updates for their materials each year, which is essential for ensuring freshness in this rapidly changing area. It helps that in most cases campus and

e-learning versions of modules are led by the same academic. These academics also design the online seminars and brief the tutors whose task is to moderate seminars and monitor discussion areas.

### **In terms of programme development, how do you ensure that the MSc remains at the cutting edge?**

The MSc programme has always maintained strong links with the security industry since it was first launched in 1992. Leaders within the industry are invited to contribute by giving lectures on the course, as well as contributing to the review process. With over 1,000 alumni now well placed within the security industry, the ISG engages in numerous activities to maintain and foster its industrial links.

### **You attended the RSA Expo in San Jose earlier this year. What are the latest advancements taking place in the field?**

At that time the hot issues were identity theft and email spam, so there were many products claiming to offer protection against these. The increasing requirements for regulatory compliance and the pros and cons of outsourcing security continue to attract much attention.

With my background in teaching programming and software development, I particularly noted the renewed interest in software security. In 2007, the RSA Conference is in San Francisco, and we'll be delighted to meet with any potential students on our University of London/Royal Holloway stand!

## Imperial to withdraw from University of London

The University of London Council has accepted Imperial College London's formal request to withdraw from the University. The terms of the withdrawal were agreed by the Councils of both institutions during the summer.

Sir Graeme Davies, Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, described the impending departure as 'amicable' and said it was designed to enable Imperial College to pursue its chosen path as a stand-alone Higher Education Institution. He added: "Like any other institution, and in keeping with its

own history, the University of London continues to evolve. After nearly 100 years as a member of the federation, Imperial has now considered it appropriate to withdraw, while only last year the Central School of Speech and Drama successfully sought membership."

Sir Graeme said there could be no doubt that the University of London, one of the oldest institutions in the country and the best universities in the world, will continue to exist to the benefit of its remaining members, which include large multi-faculty and smaller specialist, and internationally renowned

Colleges and central Institutes. Between them they serve more than 115,000 students in London and over 40,000 students studying worldwide through the University's External System.

Following Imperial's withdrawal in July 2007, to coincide with its Centenary year, the University of London federation will consist of 19 Colleges. All continuing students registered for a University of London degree at the time of withdrawal will be able to choose whether to switch to an Imperial degree.

### LSE Guide to Careers in Asia

LSE has produced the first careers guide aimed at graduates wanting to work in India, China, Japan and other Asian countries. The LSE Guide to Careers in Asia includes testimonials from LSE alumni now working in these countries, as well as information about multinationals with offices in Asia.

Howard Davies, Director of LSE, said: 'This guide represents a new commitment by a UK university to help its students and graduates find rewarding careers in Asia. We are one of the most international universities in the UK, and long had ties with individuals and institutions in Asia. We see this guide as a vital part of the careers service we can offer to our graduates, and a springboard to develop our contacts further.'



[www.lse.ac.uk](http://www.lse.ac.uk)



University of London

Established by Royal Charter 1836

### Bolstering the UN's development goals

The Bloomsbury International Development Centre, a collaborative project by six Colleges of the University of London – Birkbeck, the Institute of Education, the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, the Royal Veterinary College, SOAS and the School of Pharmacy – was launched in early 2007 to tackle the complex problems of international development.

The new centre has won start-up funding from the government. Its creation will establish the largest multidisciplinary academic grouping on development issues in the UK. It will offer a unique range and depth of expertise drawn from six specialist institutions, and the strength of partnerships with researchers, policy-makers and practitioners in Africa, Asia, and other low- and middle-income regions. Initially, it will undertake work to support the attainment of the UN's Millennium Development Goals, but will also look beyond these to longer-term development issues and capacity building in low-income countries.

"Substantial challenges remain to achieving the UN's Millennium Development Goals, and addressing longer-term development issues" commented Sir Andrew Haines, Director of LSHTM. "Action by governments and international agencies will only succeed if policies are underpinned by a robust research base, and by developing strong links with our partners in low-income countries. The range of expertise housed within this new Centre will be unmatched by any single UK institution and will constitute an invaluable source of independent expert advice."



### International Management MSc receives AMBA accreditation

Developed by academics within the School of Management at Royal Holloway, University of London, the first ever distance learning MSc in International Management has now received AMBA accreditation.

The MSc offers an extensive range of topical, financial, business and legal options. As many of the department's academic staff are involved with international businesses – either as consultants or directors – this has allowed the department to draw on diverse and practical industry knowledge when developing new study materials.

There are currently over 800 External students in 80 countries taking the Royal Holloway MBA as part of the University of London External System, making it one of the most popular postgraduate courses.

[www.londonexternal.ac.uk/mba](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/mba)



### Find a Friend

The Alumni Association has launched a new service for alumni, allowing them to contact their old classmates and friends that they met during the course of their study.

If you don't have the opportunity to attend an alumni reunion you can still contact other graduates and network through the 'Find a Friend' link on the alumni webpage.

Go to [www.londonexternal.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/alumni) and click on 'Find a Friend'. Complete the relevant information and submit your form. If we have an updated address for the person(s) you're looking for, we'll forward your message to them on your behalf.

### Feedback

We would welcome your feedback on this issue and your letters/comments for future publication. Please contact us at: +44 (0)20 7664 4809 or [newsletter@london.ac.uk](mailto:newsletter@london.ac.uk) This issue (and back issues) of the newsletter are available to download in the 'Alumni' area of our website: [www.londonexternal.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.londonexternal.ac.uk/alumni)