

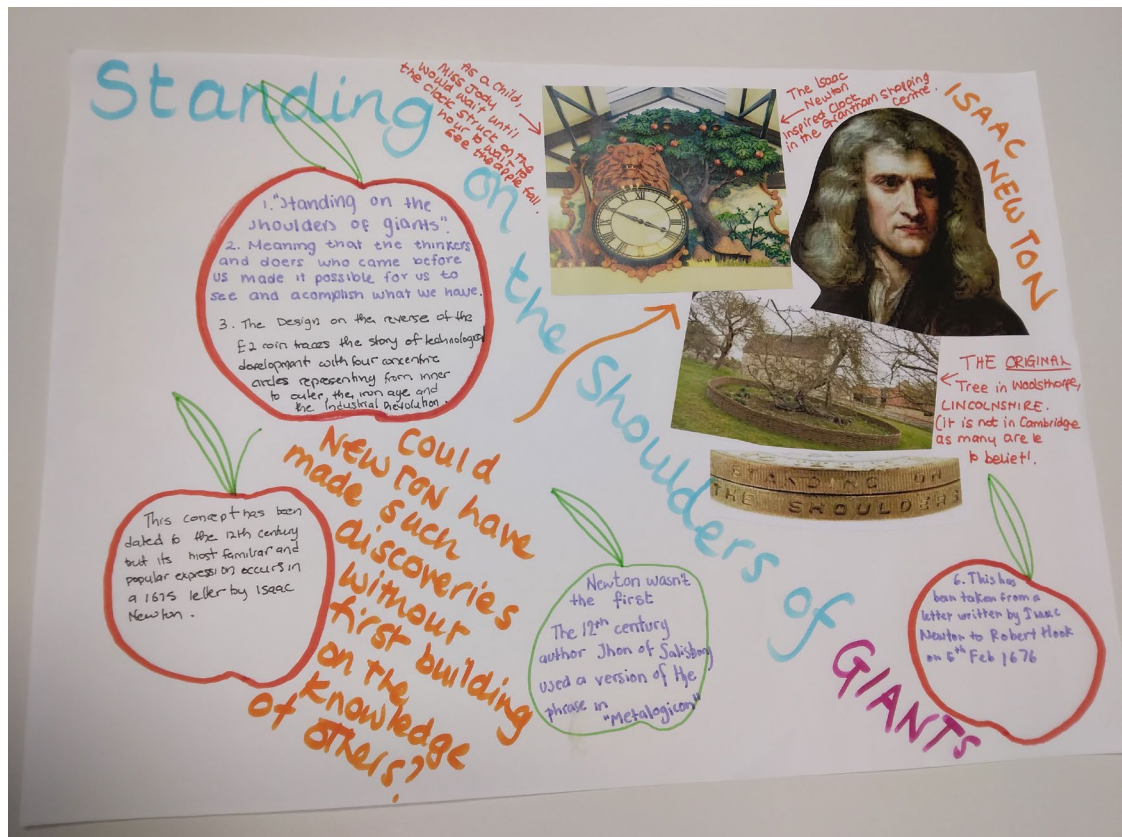
Newsletter

"It's not what you achieve, it's what you overcome. That's what defines your career."

Carlton Fisk, Professional baseball player

Week 31 2022-23

Careers Conference, CATS Cambridge



STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS

How can I decide what to do in life? What subjects shall I study at university? What about my career?

Many students arrive at CATS Cambridge, not sure of which direction their lives will take and asking themselves these fundamental questions. At CATS Cambridge, our aim is to encourage, inspire, equip and enable our students to make informed choices. One way we can do this is to have a regular programme of inspiring speakers so that our students can be exposed to new ideas and can ask questions to inform themselves. In this newsletter, we celebrate our successful careers conference which all our Key Stage Four and A-Level Year One students participated in.

We were pleased to welcome back long time friend of CATS Cambridge, Dr David Smith, from the University of Cambridge. Dr Smith, a fellow of Selwyn College, Graduate Tutor and Admissions Tutor, spoke about characteristics of an excellent student and what applicants need to show. What did the students learn? **Paulina Fabregat** (AL1) writes: 'I learned to be myself and not lie just because I may think people want me to be a certain type of person.' Our final keynote speaker was Dr Ayobami Ilori, Applied Macroeconomist and Policy Analyst from the Open University. Dr Ayo addressed the potential impact of AI on our current situation highlighting that the workplace of the future will need resilience, perseverance, adaptability and creativity. **Emiliano**, one of our AL1 students commented that the thing that stayed with him most is to choose a career that cannot be replaced by AI. Now there's a challenge! More on that from our Principal, Dominic Tomalin, in his back page article.

The photo on the opening page was a poster produced by Jody-Helena Williams' PT group.

A highlight of the morning was our alumni speakers. The session entitled 'Standing on the Shoulders...', allowed our students to discover key decision-making moments in the lives of the speakers. How inspiring to see former CATS students speaking enthusiastically about their university studies and their career trajectories. The teachers, of course, were thrilled to see their previous students doing so well. The second session, 'A day in the life of..' involved professionals from a range of career backgrounds giving insights into the daily reality of life in a particular profession.

Standing on the Shoulders

What does this expression mean? Where does it come from? Why is it the title of our alumni feature?

The expression is commonly attributed to Sir Isaac Newton, the English mathematician and physicist, who wrote in a letter to the scientist Robert Hooke, that "if I can see further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants". It is expressed with gratitude and humility. He, however, almost certainly was inspired by John of Salisbury, a 12th century theologian who, in turn, took the idea from Bernard of Chartres, a medieval French philosopher. The suggestion is that we can see further than previous generations, not because we are superior, but because the work that went before enabled those following to see, discover, learn, understand and create more. Former CATS Cambridge students have discovered their own routes through the higher education system and onto the career path they are now pursuing. Our students can learn from the knowledge of their predecessors. Not only to discover the many varied and interesting things you can do at university, but also to see that the path chosen may not always take the direction planned.



Janet Johnson

ESL Teacher and Jaguar House Director

INSPIRATIONAL GUEST SPEAKERS

Career Talks Option 1: Pharmacy, Biomedical Science and Medicine

Okwuchi Nwakwue is from Nigeria and graduated from CATS Cambridge in 2020 – mid pandemic. She studied Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics and is now in her 3rd year studying **Pharmacy** at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland. She has done an internship in Boots the Chemist, and has experience as a Pharmacy Assistant and a Scientific Researcher.



Ieva Budriunaite (CATS Cambridge 2015) completed a **Biomedical Sciences** degree at Essex University, did a placement year at Cambridge University Hospitals and graduated with First Class Honours. Ieva continued in Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics, supporting solid organ transplant patients. The pandemic saw her in a Clinical Biochemistry/Immunology lab, setting up Sars-Cov-2 antibody assay. In 2021 she joined the Wellcome PhD programme in Integrated Molecular, Cellular and Translational Biology in the University of Dundee.

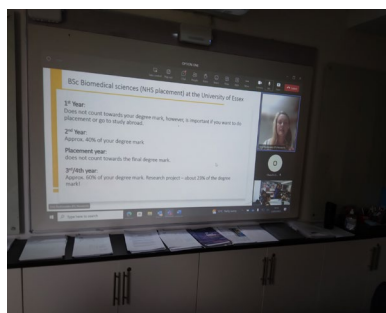


Syen Yee Ow is a Malaysian-born, Bristol-graduated biochemist. Currently in her 3rd year studying **Medicine** at Cardiff University, having studied Maths, Chemistry and Biology at CATS. She graduated in 2017. She says: “The humble beginnings of my career definitely started at CATS – I’m looking forward to reliving some of my memories in my talk to all of you aspiring scientists and medics.”



What did the students say?

Sophia Volpe Albertin Fogolin (AL1), who went to the Medicine and Pharmacy focused session took on board that to pursue a course in this discipline you have to “respect your boundaries, follow your passion and never give up”.



INSPIRATIONAL GUEST SPEAKERS



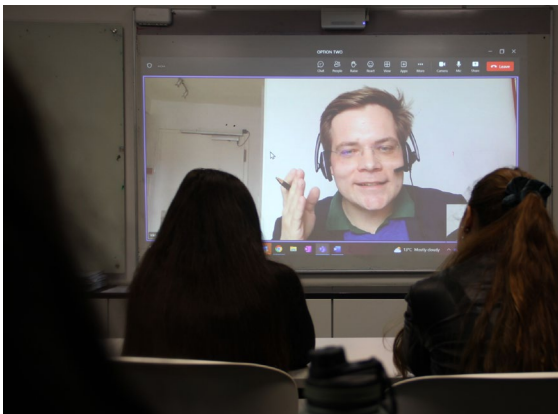
Career Talks Option 2: Social Sciences, Law and International Relations

Inqilab Shahbazov (BA Sociology; University of Sheffield, MSc Criminal Justice Policy; LSE) is the author of a book on Social Research Methods and has published 9 articles. Currently, chief consultant on data collection and analysis at a Social Research Centre, he designs and implements socio-economic research projects. Inqilab was a finalist at Study UK Alumni Awards 2021-22 for Science and Sustainability, Azerbaijan.



Leyla Shahbazova attended CATS Cambridge and Canterbury over 10 years ago. She attended the BPP School of Law and the University of Westminster focusing on **International Commercial Law**. She is also a member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK) and has worked in the education sector as a Legal Consultant for several years dealing with educational and legal matters.

Viktor Eberl graduated in **Law and Political Science** from Oxford Brookes University, subsequently completing his master's degree in **Advanced International Studies** at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna. He draws on experience in business, politics, research and administration and is currently Head of Studies at the European Akademie NRW, Bonn, Germany.



What did our students say?

Vanessa Tostado Lopez (AL1) took this important message from the session on Social Sciences and Law. She now understands that “there are a lot of ways of implementing your degree in your job life.”

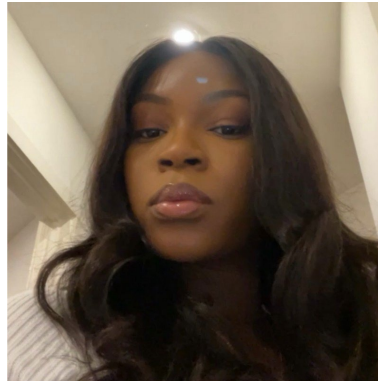
INSPIRATIONAL GUEST SPEAKERS

Deinso Douglas is studying **Mechanical Engineering** Meng at Lancaster University. She is on the pathway to becoming a Design Engineer. Now she is working on several projects in university; test rig design, a short project for Siemens and Motor Control Engineering for Lancaster University E-racing. She studied Chemistry, Maths and Physics at CATS Cambridge and graduated in 2019.

Careers Talk
Option 3:
Engineering and
Architecture



Ibiye Obelema Isokariari is a 3rd year **Architecture and Planning** student at the University of the West of England in Bristol. She studied Maths, Physics and Chemistry during her time in CATS from 2017-2019. She has pivoted towards the technology industry and is currently learning about the application of technology in urban environments and experience design.



Careers Talk Option 4: Journalism, Music, Visual Arts

Ekaterine Goglidze studied **Politics and International Relations** at Exeter University and then received her MA in **Journalism** from City University, London. Her experience includes working with Forbes, the global media company and Reuters, the news agency. Ekaterina is also a singer-songwriter and has appeared on BBC Music Introducing as a new artist.



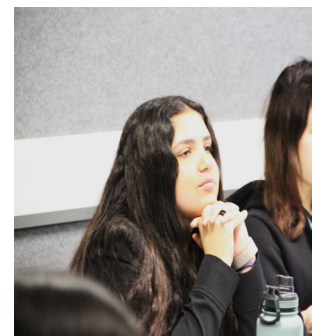
Alice Nhu Cao Quynh Nguyen is a BA **Illustration** graduate of the Cambridge School of Art and holds an MA in **Visual Communication** from Birmingham City University. Currently based in the charming little medieval town of Shrewsbury, Shropshire, Alice specialises in traditional hand-drawn illustration.



What did our students say?

By attending the Engineering and Architecture stream, **Ensar Hadergjonaj** (AL1) was reminded that he needs to work hard, be patient and remain focused on his goal.

The experiences shared by the speakers in the Music, Visual Arts and small business stream encouraged **Paulina Fabregat Hernandez** (AL1) to persevere, work hard and share her dreams with her family.



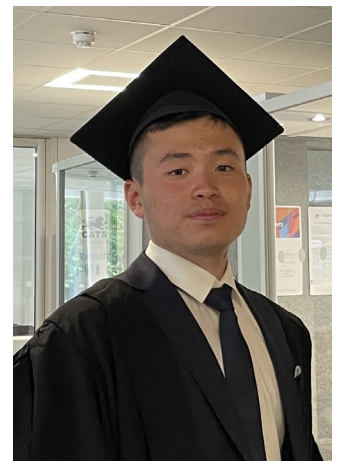
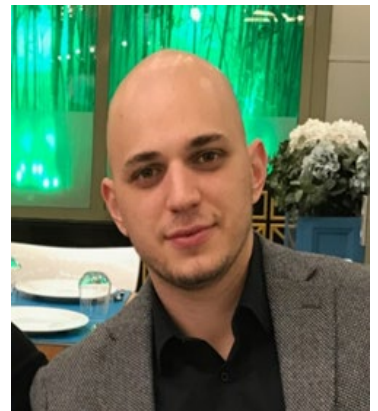
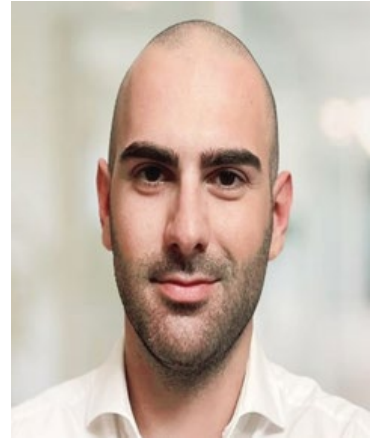
INSPIRATIONAL GUEST SPEAKERS

Careers talk Option 5: Corporate Communications, Business, Economics and Finance

Rezo Bitsadze joined the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in 2022 and leads the communications efforts in the Caucasus region. Prior to that, Rezo worked at the Caucasus University in Tbilisi, United Nations Office in Geneva, and a political organisation in Tbilisi. He holds **MSc in History** and **BSc in International Relations** from the (LSE).

Taner Can Guven studied Economics, History and Sociology at CATS Cambridge in 2013 before completing his degree in **International Relations** from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). He moved into business and now works as the International Sales Manager at Optimum Digital Planet.

Nurmukhammad Suleimanov is a 2nd-year student at the University of Exeter with a strong interest in the investment banking industry. He is pursuing a degree in **Economics and Finance**. He started his academic journey at CATS College Cambridge, where he successfully completed his GCSE and A-level studies in Economics, Mathematics, and Russian.



What do our students say?

From the business and finance session, **Alissa Popova** (AL1) says: “I learned that career paths are chaotic and can be changed. It doesn’t have to be perceived as one thing to stick to for the rest of life. I should choose the direction, but I don’t have to choose a specific profession.” **Arturo Ruiz de Chavez** (AL1) echoed this observation: “you don’t always end up practising the career that you studied.” He noted that studying finances can lead to many different careers, including medical and political and that building connections is important.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...

"I learned more about careers that I didn't even know existed and heard more about paths that I never had the time to research more about." **Manuela Gusmao (KS4)**

We have a wealth of experience, expertise and knowledge right here within the CATS Cambridge family. Our staff members and nearby associates shared aspects of their career journeys and students could see the realities of life as a Computer Programmer, a Pharmacist, a Business Finance Partner, an HR Specialist, an Auditor, a Children's Prison Teacher, a Business Manager and a Project Manager.

A day in the life of.....

...**a Pharmacist:** Dr Serena Scuderi. Serena is one of the lab technicians supporting the teachers at CATS with practical activities that illustrate the science. Her first degree was Chemistry and Pharmaceutical Technology, and she qualified as a Pharmacist. She also has a PhD in Chemistry from Sheffield University.

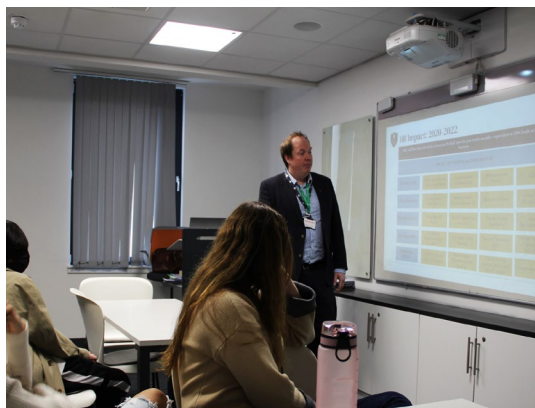
....**a Computer Programmer.** Dr Simon Mullen, one of our Maths teachers, was a software engineer for over 12 years. He began his career at Shape Data, focusing on developing a solid modelling kernel. Then he transitioned to a web development company, and recently he worked at VERO, tackling tool path calculations.

....**a Children's Prison Teacher.** Jody-Helena Williams, our Sociology teacher, graduated from the University of Lincoln in Criminology and Social Policy. She began her career as a teacher in a secure unit for remanded and sentenced young people. Here, her teaching career began with a desire to pass on knowledge, regardless of circumstances and background.

... **a Finance Business Partner:** Pamela Padayatchy. We were pleased to welcome Pamela from head office. As the Finance Business Partner for CATS Global Schools, she works closely with all the schools. She says: "Life is full of options, it's about how you grab them and make the most of them".



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...



...a **Human Resources Specialist:** Tim Gladston. Tim also joined us from head office; the People and Engagement Director for CATS Global Schools, he brings over 20 years of hands-on experience through a range of sectors and environments.

... a **Business Manager:** Sandra Vojnovic. Now Sandra teaches Business and Economics at CATS Cambridge, but she hasn't always done this. She has a wide range of experience in business roles and focused particularly on being the boss!



...an **Auditor.** Harold/Haodong Guo is a former CATS Cambridge student, now based in Cambridge working as a public auditor in Ernst and Young checking financial statements of local authorities including Cambridge County Council. He says: "Life in CATS helped me to build up my self-awareness in the diversified and real world. I will always treasure the memory in CATS".

What did our students say?

After the talks, **Annabel Windoe (AL1)** reflected that "the teachers were greatly inspiring. It gave me motivation to push myself to reach my dreams. I was taught that part of the process to reach my goal is to go through hurdles, and it doesn't matter if my process takes a long time."

Sophia Volpe Albertin Fogolin (AL1) says "I had doubts about which university course I should take, now I don't have any anymore. I'm certain about what I will study."

... a **Project Manager:** Dr Mike Liptrot. Now our Chemistry teacher at CATS, Mike studied Natural Science at Cambridge University. He was awarded his PhD on Macrocyclic Chemistry in April 1984. Working at SC Johnson on alternative aerosol propellants, he became their R&D project manager in Holland, then in the USA. Mike is well placed to share experiences of an Industry Project Manager.

A WALK IN BELFAST

One of the underlying recurring themes of the Careers Conference mentioned was that our career paths are rarely straightforward: our first academic focus may not be the route that we will follow through our whole lives. **Weronika Halabis**, our Deputy Head of Boarding has first-hand experience of this.



This year, I was given the chance to welcome spring in the unknown to me city of Belfast, Northern Ireland. Almost at the end of the term, I received an offer to teach Spanish this month to a group of soldiers from the British Army who are being sent for training to the beautiful city of Valladolid in Spain, and I thought: “Why not?” I have always enjoyed going back to my former profession, teaching, the one in the past I shared with my current passions: boarding and the colour green: plenty of which I found while in the camp with the Army and in Ireland.

This was absolutely not in my plans, but I think everything comes to our lives for a reason, and sometimes, we need to stop, look back and disconnect from our reality to reset: it happens not only as an adult with responsibilities but also as an upper sixth student waiting to be accepted by the desired university, followed by the sense of finding where to belong. At that moment, with that call, I identified with all of it at once, and accepted.

So, I took my time off, packed my bag and flew to Belfast expecting to disconnect. My positive surprise upon arrival at the camp was a constant comparison with my daily life: ID display and sign in and sign out, wake up calls, meals in the Mess (their canteen) with their relevant schedules, room checks, daily routines, lesson time, sports day, safeguarding and welfare concerns. Which meant, to some extent, continuing with my normal days.

On the other side, going back into teaching was thrilling and full of challenges and unexpected situations: a very small group with no skills in language learning but more in shooting and planning strategical movements, plus a very intense course. The outcome: headaches, laughs, fun, trouble with pronunciation, learning and, the best, motivation and effort to try their best as we might not be good at everything, but we will never know if we do not try.

Not only did I have the chance to work, but also to explore a city full of street art, which I love, and learn about the history and development of Belfast with a deep overview of their quite recent events. Luckily, Belfast and the Belfast people have worked hard in the last decades seeking peace and development to make everybody feel safe and more than welcome to visit, no matter their religion, gender or nationality. As they quote “Belfast people love everybody. We just sometimes do not like each other”.



A WALK IN BELFAST



Weronika Habilis – teaching Spanish to the British Army in Belfast





**Dominic Tomalin,
Principal**

Being of Use



I hope you will agree that CATS Cambridge Careers Conference 2023 has been a great success. It is pleasing to see and hear so many of our alumni return to provide insights and counsel about such a wide range of fields and professions. I spoke at last year's careers conference. In my remarks I highlighted the importance of 'being of use'. I even offered it as a mnemonic:

- B – Behave like a winner: Skills, Habits, Attitudes
- E – Expect change
- O – Offer to help
- F – Forge relationships, networks are key
- U – Understand yourself and others
- S – Seek out opportunities, be someone who notices and then acts on what is noticed
- E – Education never really ends, keep learning

As I write today, there is much in the news about artificial intelligence (AI), in particular, the current incarnation of ChatGPT. There has been a reawakening of concerns about 'intelligent machines' taking over and the ultimate demise of humanity. The central issue arises from a need to be wary of the objectives given to AI and the manner in which such systems are incentivised towards solutions.

I tinkered a little with ChatGPT, secreting a paragraph authored by ChatGPT into a recent set of remarks – it would have gone unnoticed had I not pointed out its inclusion. ChatGPT was able to create a decent paragraph including analysis and evaluation directed by the question set. Evaluation of ideas feels like the last preserve of the human, yet this too looks under threat. Unsettling questions arise; What is the point of me? How will I make a difference? How will I 'be of use'?

Ours is an age of individualism. Our connections to one another may be legion in number, but those connections are often fragile and tenuous – we are less bound to the communities to which we belong than we have ever been. We have lost touch with a sense of the 'common good'.

Unfortunately, it is the very same idea of the 'common good' that needs to be set as the objective for AI. Defining this in terms that guide AI to the common good is the great challenge, not least because, as a species, we may pose the greatest threat to our own common good and that of the planetary ecosystem. With that in mind, allowing AI to decide on the common good may lead to unfortunate consequences for humanity. The imagining of Terminator and the Matrix feel rather less far-fetched.

So, a year on, I am minded to change my advice, well the B and the last E anyway:

- B – Be an advocate for the common good, help define it, help to manage its development
- E – Education never really ends, keep learning, develop and maintain the skills, habits and attitudes of a lifelong learner – keep working on understanding the common good.

The machines are coming, by some measures they are here already. Human morality might be the only characteristic that sets us apart from artificial intelligence. Deciding on what amounts to the common good is the real challenge that we all face. It may well be the only way we can actually, 'be of use'.