



Stephenson College
Durham University

Stephenson College

YEAR IN REVIEW 2024/2025



Change Starts
With Us

Global College
Award 2025



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Principal's Letter



It is with immense pride that I welcome you to this edition of our Stephenson College Year in Review 2024/25. As you turn the pages you will see examples of the diverse range of activities our students have participated in and the successes they have achieved. Importantly, I hope you get a sense how our students have thrived, embracing opportunities and overcoming challenges while helping to strengthen our College community.



We are very much a values led, inclusive, progressive College and this comes through in what our students have done over the last year. Our volunteering and community outreach work for example, has been exceptional. This was reflected at the annual DU Volunteer Awards evening where the College and individual students were nominated for several awards, with Flynn Edwards winning Volunteer of the Year!

Our students have continued to show their wonderful talents in Arts and Culture, including theatre, music and art, with the College also opening a new art studio.

The number of societies across the College led by our students continues to grow, catering for a wide range of interests. Congratulations to all our Presidents for leading your societies and organising some excellent events.

Another important part of College life is our sport and wellbeing, which we have seen go from strength to strength over the last 12 months. Our teams and individuals have participated and competed at every level across the University, coming overall 8th in the College league and winning the Annual Varsity against Josephine Butler. The sportsmanship and team spirit as ever has been outstanding.

Supporting our students' personal development is a priority for us here at Stephenson and we awarded 70 Connections Grants last year to help them pursue this. These ranged from helping students attend conferences and exchanges overseas to participating in sporting events.

We are also very proud of our work around Global Citizenship and were absolutely delighted to be presented with the Global College Award at this year's Global Awards. We have also had enriching international exchanges this year for our students with California State University in the USA and Future Hope, an NGO providing support for vulnerable street children in Kolkata, India. We also held the Global Goals Summit and Internationalisation at Home Conference at Stephenson College.

Stephenson College celebrates our diverse, inclusive, community and this year we were delighted to welcome so many First Generation Scholars. We were also delighted to hold our first ever College Iftar to mark the month of Ramadan as well as supporting the Shia community. In addition, we hosted an event to mark Holocaust Memorial Day alongside the DU Jewish Society and DU Chaplaincy.

We have had some excellent speakers for our Stephenson Ideas talk series this year, including our Chancellor Dr Fiona

Hill, on the eve of the US election. We also launched our Career Connections programme this year giving our students an opportunity to build their networks and learn about a range of sectors. We were thrilled to see one of our students, Emmanuel Togoh awarded the inaugural Personal Development Champion at this year's Student Employee of the Year Awards.

I hope you enjoy our Year in Review and reading about the achievements of our students. This is my final year at Durham University and as Principal of Stephenson College. I have had six wonderful years here and have been very proud of everyone associated with the College and grateful for the support I have received. Our students and Common Rooms have been outstanding, as have our staff. I am also grateful to our alumni for their support and that of our College Advisory Board and supporters. The College will be marking 25 years in 2026 and will have much to celebrate.

Finally, thank you to everyone who has supported the College and continues to do so. Our fantastic Vice-Principal, Katie Stobbs will be leading the College over the coming academic year and I want to wish her, the students and staff all the very best.

Professor Rob Lynes CMG
Principal of Stephenson College

Junior Common Room



JCR President: Aidan Woodley

This year the JCR has worked tirelessly to provide excellent experiences for all members of Stephenson College. We have used creative solutions to ensure the cost of participation is kept low and accessible to everyone, while keeping the quality of our activities and events high. This has led to a year of record engagement and enthusiasm around college, which has really shown in everything the JCR has done this year!

The year started off strong with a fantastic Freshers' Week, working with College to welcome hundred of new students. It was a great start to the year and it couldn't have happened without our energetic team of Freshers Reps! We saw the return of fan favourite events such as the white t-shirt party, Casino Royale and Murder Mystery nights in College and ending with a classic

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Stephenson Quiz! In what felt like a blink of an eye, Freshers' Week was over and we were into Michaelmas Term.

It was fantastic to see so many people signing up to join all of our different sports teams and societies, enjoying the wide range of social events and throwing themselves into college life. This trend continued into the rest of the year. Our societies have seen huge growth this year, with existing societies like The Flaming Steamos and Grow Soc increasing in numbers, as well as new societies such as Northern Soc and Minecraft Soc being formed, or in the case of Spag Bol Soc being brought back to life after a few years! Our societies have provided a great opportunity for students to have fun, make friends and pursue their passions and interests. Thank you to Eibhin and Lucy for being such brilliant Sports and Societies Officers this year.

Throughout the first two terms our JCR Events Committee organised some fun evenings in College, starting with



our Oktoberfest celebration, to our Christmas party, and finishing Epiphany Term with St Patrick's Day celebrations. These events were enjoyed by so many and really did help to build the College community. We also saw the return of the Masquerade Gala, by popular demand! We also had several live music events throughout the year, karaoke, bingo and the ever-popular paint and sips! Well done to our Events Officer Charlea and the Events Committee for their hard work this year.

This year we have developed an engaging programme of globally themed events, celebrating many different cultures from around the world. We had a fantastic collaborative celebration of Lunar New Year with Joesphine Butler College, held our own Cherry Blossom Festival to welcome in the season of Spring, a very colourful Holi celebration, and our first ever College iftar during Ramadan. I want to say a big congratulations to Dora and the International Committee for all their hard work.



Throughout the year our Volunteering and Welfare teams have done some excellent work, with loads of people getting involved in the different events and activities they both put on. A highlight of this year for me was the JCR's Movember fundraising, with fundraising events and challenges going on throughout the month of November,

raising awareness and supporting men's mental health issues. This fundraising included a 5-a-side charity football tournament where we even had a staff team get involved!

Overall, this year has been immensely successful for the JCR, with consistently high engagement levels and so many students looking to get involved in all the stuff we do or start something new. I am very pleased with the progress made this year and excited to hear about what the future has in store! Thank you to the JCR Exec and Non Exec Committee Members for their dedication and commitment over the last twelve months. And a big thank you to everyone who has made this year so successful, and best of luck to incoming President Millie and the JCR Exec Committee next year; I'm sure you'll do a fantastic job!

Middle Common Room



MCR President: Adam Stone



As we reach the close of another remarkable year in our Middle Common Room (MCR), I want to take a moment to reflect on everything we've achieved together and to celebrate the vibrant community we've built.

This year, our MCR has been a great place for socialising, making friends, and enjoying time together. From lively pizza nights and inter-MCR events to memorable bar crawls and elegant wine and cheese evenings, our calendar has been filled with opportunities to connect, relax, and enjoy the company of fellow members. Each event has added something unique to the fabric of our community, and it's been wonderful to see such strong engagement throughout.

What has made this year so special, though, is not just the events themselves, but the energy and enthusiasm that our members have brought to them. Whether participating, volunteering, or simply turning up with a smile, you've each played a part in shaping an MCR that is warm, welcoming, and inclusive. It's this collective spirit that defines us.

A huge thank you is due to our wonderful committee, whose dedication and teamwork made all of this possible. While many are now moving on, Freya Alldred, our Chair, remains, and I want to extend a special thanks to her for her leadership, consistency, and commitment throughout the year. Freya's steady hand and positive energy have been instrumental in shaping the success of this year's MCR.

As we look to the future, there's so much to be excited about. We'll be building on the strong foundations laid this year, continuing to create events and spaces that bring people together, celebrate our diversity, and make everyone feel truly at home in the MCR. Good luck to incoming President Charlotte and Chair Emma!

Thank you all for being part of such a wonderful year.

Volunteering and Community Outreach



It has been another successful year for volunteering and outreach within College. Students and staff have volunteered over 1,300 hours in the local community, which is a fantastic achievement! Student events and activities have raised thousands of pounds for charity, including our Pink Week and Charity Fashion Show raising over £1,500 for St Cuthbert's Hospice.

But logged hours aren't everything; the impact our volunteering has on our volunteers, partners and beneficiaries is what really matters. Our volunteers have made friendships across the county and we look forward to building on those next year.



Brilliant Club Scholars Programme

Through our partnership with The Brilliant Club, Stephenson students have welcomed local school pupils from Outwood Academy (Ripon), Farringdon Community Academy (Sunderland) and Manor Community Academy (Hartlepool) into College as part of the Brilliant Club Scholars Programme.

The Scholars Programme helps less advantaged pupils develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to progress to the most competitive universities. Through graduation events held in College, Stephenson students have shared their subject knowledge and passion for learning with small groups of pupils aged 8-18.

We look forward to meeting more Brilliant Club Scholars next year!



Environmental Outreach

Our volunteers have partnered with Riverscapes twice a month, clearing huge amounts of rubbish from the River Wear. The Riverscapes team have been hugely appreciative of the time and commitment shown by the volunteers, and as a result JCR Volunteering and

Outreach Officer Flynn Edwards was invited to St. John's College Fairtrade and Environment Forum to speak about his motivations for getting involved!

Stephenson also collaborated with other Colleges on an intercollegiate beach clean at Crimdon!

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Lunar New Year Schools Outreach Project

Between January - February 2025, Stephenson students volunteered in two County Durham schools to deliver a fun and exciting Lunar New Year activity programme to local classrooms! East Asian students shared their culture and traditions through art, food, music and dance. In partnership with Durham County Council, this outreach project culminated in a fantastic Lunar New Year Event in

Durham Town Hall, where welcomed in the Year of the Rabbit alongside the local community. The school children loved the opportunity to learn and perform a wide range of songs and dances from our East Asian students, and our students enjoyed the experience of getting to know the local community and its people through the promotion of their culture.



Sherburn House Intergenerational Project

To mark our joint twentieth anniversary, Stephenson and John Snow Colleges established Sherburn College Intergenerational Project in 2021. This has been a wonderful befriending project where students and elderly residents from a lovely, scenic, retirement community on the edge of Durham come together and enjoy each other's company on a Wednesday afternoon. Our friends from Sherburn House visited College in October 2025 and volunteers visited them at home throughout the

year. To celebrate the end of each term, there was a Christmas concert complete with choir and jazz band in December 2024 and in June 2025 students and residents enjoyed an afternoon tea party with gentle game of boules on the large lawn and also some soft drinks and fizz! The residents at Sherburn House really enjoy spending time chatting with students and this project gives us a real chance to make a positive impact in the lives of local people.



Merryoaks Community Hall

Stephenson College volunteers have had great fun supporting Merryoaks Community Hall once again this year, a community hub for the residents of Neville's Cross and surrounding area.

Building on last year's success, volunteers delivered a fantastic Murder Mystery Burns Night for the local community in January 2025! Our volunteers helped prepare dinner in the kitchen and were the actors on the evening - dodgy Scottish accents may have been featured! The event raised over £1000 for the Hall.



Christmas volunteer cheer at St Cuthbert's Hospice

A real highlight of the year for our volunteers is helping out at St Cuthbert's Hospice Christmas fair! The hospice's aim is to make every day count for those affected by life-limiting illnesses. Their vision is to be a centre of excellence within our community and to provide

all-embracing, compassionate, and individualised care to all those affected by life-limiting illnesses, at a time and a place that is right for them.

With over 40 stalls, the event is a much-loved staple in the calendar for many in the run up to Christmas. This year saw the Hospice launch it's fair in its biggest venue yet, after its recent success welcoming hundreds of supporters.

There was a Santa's Grotto as well as fundraising stalls including retail items from the Hospice's nine charity shops, Christmas cards, Hospice 2025 Calendar, raffle, teddy tombola and bottle and chocolate tombola. Rock Choir North East also performed a medley of festive songs throughout the day, raising an incredible £7,300 for the charity!

The staff team were also feeling full of Christmas cheer, volunteering at St Cuthbert's Hospice on 16 December. Staff spent the morning wrapping hundreds of Christmas presents for hospice users as well as getting to know the staff and hear about the work of the hospice.

Durham University Volunteer Awards 2025

Stephenson College had an incredible evening at the annual DU Volunteer Awards, held at Trevelyan College on 12 June 2025.

Flynn Edwards was shortlisted for an amazing three awards, including Volunteer of the Year, Volunteer Leader of the Year and Longstanding Volunteer, winning the prestigious **Volunteer of the Year Award!**

Stephenson College was shortlisted for the Environmental Outreach Award and College of the Year Award.

A huge congratulations to all our amazing volunteers!



The following students were also awarded Student Volunteering Certificates for their commitment to volunteering throughout their degree:

Hall of Fame Award

(at least 200 volunteering hours)

- Louisa Marsden-Smedley (313)
- Victoria Woodhouse (242)
- Dora Yong-En Leong (224)

Platinum Award

(120-199 volunteering hours)

- Sam Walshaw

Gold Award

(90 - 119 volunteering hours)

- Sakura Doody

Silver Award

(60-89 volunteering hours)

- Ho Chi Denise Yip
- Shannon Riley

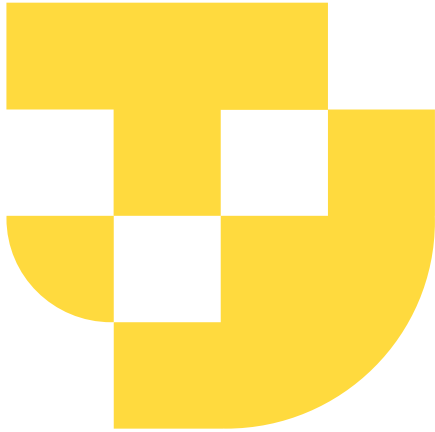
Bronze Award

(30-59 volunteering hours)

- Claire Chow
- Kiruthika Sampathkumar
- Romilly Foster

! Congratulations to all!

Arts and Culture



Mound Musical Society

Mound Musical Society has gone from strength to strength this year, delivering another fantastic annual musical production, *'The Guy Who Didn't Like Musicals'* in Epiphany Term.

There were hilarious performances and incredible singing by the cast, supported by a wonderful band, spectacular lighting and sound by our tech team and stellar creative collaboration from our directors, choreographer and producers. The hard work of everyone involved resulted in a really fun show, which entertained large audiences at each performance!

The Flaming Steamos

It has been another fantastic year for The Flaming Steamos! The jazz band has grown this year, comprised of musicians from varying degrees of musical background who want to bring music to the forefront of our College's reputation. Whilst primarily a jazz band, they incorporate a wide range of different music into their ever-expanding repertoire and welcome all to the jazz family! Now in their third year as a band, they have worked extremely hard to make a name for themselves and enjoy a fantastic working relationship with a number of other jazz groups across the University. This year the band has ran charity events as well as performing at large scale events such as the DU Global Awards and Stevo Day. Well done to everyone!





Performing Arts Palatinate Awards

Congratulations to Tim Millard, who was awarded a Half Palatinate for his Outstanding Contribution to Theatre at June’s annual awards ceremony! This award recognises those individuals who have been a vital part of the student theatre community over their entire time at Durham University, excelling both in their field, and shaping the wider experience of theatre-making at Durham.

“In everything he has done across his time in Durham Student Theatre, Tim has brought a kind, highly organised, and unyielding ambitious energy to his practice. Tim’s emotional and technical intelligence, as well as his positivity and efficiency, have proved him to be a reliable and talented leader across countless productions. Tim’s work has also stood as DST Secretary this year, maintaining strong communication and organisation throughout the committee and wider societies.”

Tim was also nominated for the Outstanding Achievement in Theatre Award, as was Abby Greenhalgh. ‘Strange Young Girls’, which Abby wrote and co-directed, was the standout cult hit of the Durham Drama Festival programme. Exploring the real-life friendship of Michelle Phillips from The Mamas & Papas, and Sue Lyon, the star of Stanley Kubrick’s Lolita, ‘Strange Young Girls’ combined research-



informed precise writing with sensitive and delicate direction to enormous success, winning four awards at the Drama Festival.

Rocket Theatre Company

Throughout 2024/2025, Rocket Theatre Company retained its status as the centre of student drama in Stephenson College and strengthened its reputation for innovative programming and artistic excellence.

Rocket Theatre Company produced two fantastic shows this year. The first production was ‘*Birthdays Candles*’ by Noah Haidle performed in the prestigious Sir Thomas Allen Assembly Rooms Theatre, comprising of a cast of mainly Freshers from all colleges. This poignant play explores the dichotomy of human existence—our lives are both unique and unremarkable. It follows Ernestine Ashworth from her rebellious teenage years, when she vows to surprise the universe, to old age, where she reflects on a life marked by both joy and loss. Through a series of birthdays, anchored by the tradition of baking a cake, Ernestine navigates love, heartbreak, and the inevitable chaos of life.

The show had fantastic reviews, a testament to the hard work and talent of the cast and crew!

“An ever shifting yet perpetually grounded play....It is a resolute performance, easily embodying both the tenderness and heartache needed to compact such a complex life into one brief act, all whilst continuously leaving the audience gripped”

Darcy McBrinn, Palatinate

Last year, RTC’s student-written Epiphany term show ‘*milk teeth*’ received the award for Best New Student Writing at the annual Durham University Student Theatre Awards. Building on this success, Rocket Theatre Company has continued to support student writing this year. In Epiphany term, RTC collaborated with Fourth Wall Theatre Company to stage a student writing double bill. Rocket’s contribution was ‘*I Can’t Stop the Loneliness!!!*’ by Horatio Holloway, which was a great success!

We were proud to see Stephenson students in both cast and creative roles in both productions, and people worked in their first directing/ tech roles, which the Rocket exec committee provided support and training for.

Student Art Prize 2025

Congratulations to second year undergraduate George Davies, whose latest painting “*a red Dawn*” was selected to be featured in this year’s University’s Student Art Prize exhibition! Durham University’s annual Student Art Prize was launched in October 2019 to expand opportunities around the visual arts within the University and to develop a new permanent student art collection. Although Durham does not formally teach fine art, almost every college has its own active art society or art group. Within these groups, students can develop their artistic skills through collaborative creativity. The Student Art Prize was established to harness this creativity and provide a professional platform for students to develop and



exhibit their work. This year’s theme was Light.

It has been a busy year for George, having won an Award in 2023/2024’s competition and painting a beautiful artwork of Stephenson College, which is displayed in the Wylam building and also on our official College cards!

Art Studio in College

This year we were proud to open our brand new art studio space in Heighington. This dedicated creative space is open to all students and has been enjoyed by the Textiles for Good society and members of our newly established Art Society, as well as individual students pursuing creative past times!



Spotlight on Societies



Stephenson JCR has 17 ratified societies catering to a wide range of interests - and if we don't have what you're looking for, it's easy to set up a new one!

We have a newly established Art Society as well as a Textiles for Good society, knitting and crocheting baby clothes for local maternity units, a Feminist Society, Stephenson-Butler Christian Union and a Book Club, to name a few. All of the societies have been set up by students looking to have fun and meet like-minded people doing something they all enjoy.



Quiz Society

Presidents: **Elliot Derbyshire and Charlie Downing**

This year we have continued to hold weekly pub quizzes every Sunday, with a returning crowd of over 100 people! We have held several big quizzes where we've given away massive cash prizes and have continued the tradition of air-fryers for Heads or Tails. The Christmas quiz, Valentine's quiz, and Easter quiz were some of the most popular events this year, with over 120 attendees, and we were also happy to host a sport quiz with Team Stephenson. With it being our last year hosting Stephenson Quiz, we have been looking forward to the Big Summer Quiz.

It's been amazing seeing so many people come to the quiz every week, with 45 teams attending over the year, and a total attendance of 982 students!

We have also been happy to partner with Walk On Charity Fashion to raise money for their show with a fashion-themed quiz, as well as support Movember in Michaelmas Term.

Feminist Society

President: **Anna Ao**

It has been another busy year for FemSoc! The society aims to promote gender equality, diversity and inclusion within the College. This year we hosted regular events and discussion groups that aim to raise awareness on feminist issues, building a strong and supportive community for femme people and likeminded feminists. We have thoroughly enjoyed hosting our ever popular Paint and Sip events as well as a joint-College bar crawl with other FemSocs!

Games Society

President: **Matthew Currie**

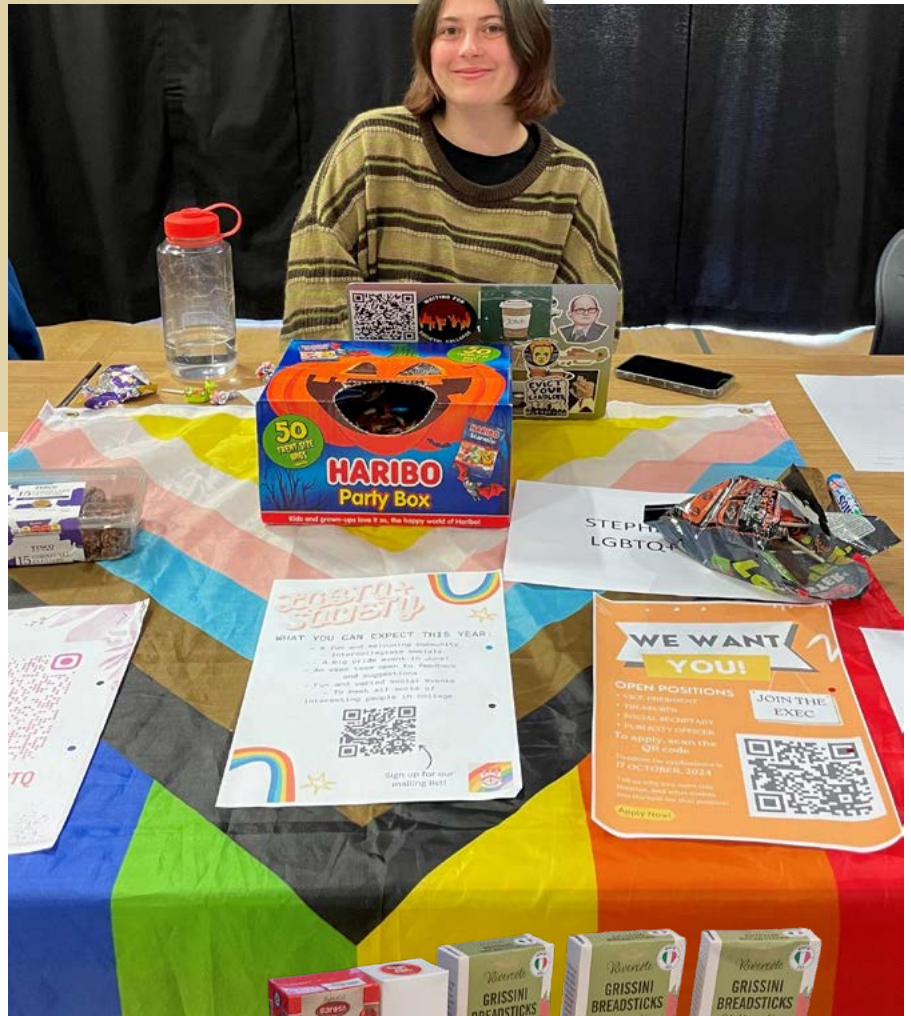
Stephenson College Games Society aims to provide the college community a space to play any game they want! As we are still relatively new, we have mostly played more popular games like Monopoly, Scrabble and Cluedo, but we have also branched into more niche games such as One Night Ultimate Werewolf. We look forward to continue developing the society and hope to be able to branch into other kinds of games soon, including video games!



LGBTQ+ Society

President: Libby Smout

The LGBTQ+ Society has run many great events this year, including many successful karaoke nights, a movie night, themed bar crawls and many intercollegiate events, including Hill Pride 2025! The society is proud of its work with other colleges and creating a positive atmosphere for LGBTQ+ students across the university.



Grow Society

President: Shannon Riley

Grow Soc are a group of amateur gardeners who grow and maintain a variety of fruits and vegetables around College. We regularly do a bit of weeding and watering on Wednesday afternoons as well as hosting a range of friendly socials such as plant pot painting, picnics and walks around our local environment.

Grow Soc's plant sale was popular amongst students living in College once again. The sale is a culmination of all the work to plant, maintain and harvesting their produce and raises funds which go straight back into buying seeds and equipment for next year.



Spag Bol Soc

President: James Carvell

This year saw the revival of Spag Bol Society after a year-long hiatus. The group brings students together to cook and enjoy some delicious spaghetti bolognese, providing a great opportunity to socialise over a much loved Italian staple!



Spotlight on Sport and Wellbeing



Participation in College sport has gone from strength to strength this academic year with 39 JCR sports teams on offer, including cricket, tennis, squash, men’s and women’s rugby, ultimate frisbee, rounders and lacrosse!

Team Stephenson placed 8th overall in the College sport league this year; well done to all clubs and players!

In addition to formal sporting opportunities, students also have access to both Howlands and Walker gyms on-site for personal use to support their wellbeing.



Annual Varsity vs Josephine Butler College

On 12 June 2025, Team Stephenson faced Josephine Butler College for our annual Varsity match. It was a great day of sport on a sunny Thursday with some solid results for both teams. We are pleased to say that Stephenson once again triumphed and brought home the silverware! Well done to all teams and players involved.



Netball

President: **Louisa Marsden-Smedley and Ellie Shepherd**
 Team Captain: **Oyinda Habeeb and Layla Ross**

Stephenson’s two women’s Netball teams alongside the mixed team have been busy competing in weekly league games and knockout cups over the course of the season.

The greatest achievement of the Netball club this year was the A team making it to the Cup Final. This was the first time Stephenson have made it to the Netball final and is true testament to the hard work of all the players in the club! Unfortunately, the title did not go our way, losing out to Van Mildert College by just 2 goals, but to finish second is a huge achievement that we are very proud of!

The As came 2nd in the Premier Tier and the Bs also came 2nd in Division 2. The mixed team placed 1st in their Premier Tier, so all in all an incredibly successful season for Stephenson Netball!



Stephenson Boat Club

President: **Gustav Lloyd**
 Captain: **Will Ryder**

It has been another solid year for the Boat Club, with lots of training balanced with some great socials!

In Michaelmas Term, the club competed in the Novice Cup, with the women placing 7th out of 26 with an incredibly quick erg relay. In Epiphany Term, the men’s boat placed 11th out of 27, with some excellent technical rowing given some hardships in training conditions. However, the greatest achievement is always getting students who have never rowed before onto the water and improving at breakneck speeds. Well done to everyone!

Volleyball

Presidents: **Toby Ashurst**

The formidable Stephenson Volleyball squad was back on top form again this year! We have 3 teams, one in each league (Premiership, Division 1 and Division 2) and played around 9 matches each in the Epiphany term. Both the A and B teams finished 2nd in the Premiership and Division 1 respectively, and the C team finished comfortably in the middle of the Division 2 table. The B team gained promotion to the Premiership, so we are the first and only College to have two teams in the Premiership next year!

The team has also enjoyed their annual beach volleyball trip to the Deep Dish Tournament in Portugal over the Easter break, always a highlight of the calendar!



Women's Football

Captain: **Kathryn McCafferty** and **Zoe Gibbs**

This year has been a big one for Stephenson Women's Football. For the first time in years, we've had enough wonderful people to get a full 11 to every game we've played. With experienced players joining us to play at a more casual level than previously, dedicated members returning, and women lacing up their boots for their first taste of the game on a uni pitch (or for some, on any pitch!), every single member of the team has done us proud and contributed to the fabulous footballing community we've been working hard to build.

After finishing last year at the bottom of Division 2 (despite ending the season by beating the two top teams), we had high hopes of what the team could achieve this year, and we have not been disappointed.

Stephenson is often underestimated as one of the few teams without any players currently in DUW AFC, other teams didn't see us as much of a threat. Until they'd been on the pitch with us.

For the first year within the team's memory, we made it through the first



round of the Floodlit Cup (beating Trevs-South, a team from the division above), sadly then suffering a loss to Josephine Butler in the semi-finals. We were excited for the rematch at Varsity and were pleased to beat them on penalties!

As for the league, we've won, we've drawn, we've (occasionally) lost. Mary's, Aidan's-Hatfield and Collingwood (B) all provided unique challenges, but we played well and came out (mostly) on top. To our great disappointment, we will be missing out on top of the table due to a little thing called 'goal-difference'. Guess it's time we upped the shooting practice!

As if a stellar year on the field wasn't enough, we've somehow found time to see each other outside of training, with bar crawls, park runs, café trips, nights out and pancake making all featuring at various points.

Whichever way you look at it, it has been a fantastic year for this team, and we can't wait for next year!



Men's Football

Captain: **Dan Hart**

After winning the Football Cup last summer and many key players graduating, it's been a rebuild season for us, with some fantastic participation from first years! The highlight of our season has been our triumphant Floodlit Cup run against some tough sides where we knocked out St John's, John Snow and then took St Cuthbert's Society to the wire in a 4-4 thriller, which sadly saw us knocked out 5-4 on penalties in the quarter finals.

With more experience and some new talent next year, we are looking forward to next season!



Phoenix Cheer

President: **Tilly Forster**

Captains: **Chloe Base, Niamh Wheatley, Georgia Huggins, Alan Bijo**

Phoenix Cheer have had an incredibly busy year! We started off the year by raising over £100 for Movember in our 'Bring a Buddy' charity event, which was a huge success. Phoenix had a huge range of performances this year, ranging from Revival Charity Fashion Show, John Snow v Stephenson Men's Football Floodlit, and a performance at the Durham v York Varsity! We also hosted our annual charity showcase in aid of Action Foundation which was hugely successful with an incredible audience turnout.

Our greatest achievement by far this year was the Intercollegiate Cheerleading Competition in Epiphany term, in which we came home with some amazing results:

- **1st Place Pom Routine**
(2nd year in a row!)
- **2nd Place All-Girl Stunt Group**
- **2nd Place Co-ed Stunt Group**

The squad had such an enjoyable day competing and supporting all the other amazing college cheer teams!

Mixed Badminton

Presidents: **Charlea Bailey and Ben Peacock**

As we entered the new academic year, we knew it would be a struggle to maintain high-quality badminton as many strong players had graduated over the summer. However, the overwhelming participation from new students as well as continued efforts from returners we were able to keep our teams strong and our Mixed A's team took part in the Loughborough

Varsity in November. As our first real test of the year, we are immensely proud of their performance and although they didn't win, a 10-5 defeat was more than we could ask for due to unexpected conditions on the day.

Our Mixed A's have once again kept their position in the top league and will fight to be the best college team again next year! With many sprightly first years, the future of this club looks very promising, and we are excited to see this club regrow, being worthy to be associated with the mighty Team Stephenson!

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Women's Hockey

President: **Maddie Tanner**

Stephenson Women's Hockey has had an impressive 2024-25 season. The team's match results have improved through the season, including dominant performances against John Snow A (7-0), St. John's and Chad's A (5-0), and Van Mildert B (5-3).

One of the standout aspects of this season has been the successful integration of a large cohort of Freshers. Their enthusiasm and talent have injected fresh energy into the squad, ensuring the club is in excellent hands for the future. It is a testament to the team culture that new players have gelled so quickly and have massively contributed to the team's success on the pitch.

The greatest achievement this season has been the team's commanding rise in the league and the strong possibility of securing a second-place finish — a true marker of progress since the one-win season that the club had four years ago. With momentum on our side, we finished third place in Division 1. Congratulations to all involved!

Movember Charity Fundraiser

Well done to all students involved in a fantastic week of events raising money for Movember, the leading charity changing the face of men's health.

Special thanks go to:

- **Eibhin Faith and Amy Bunting for organising the Football 5-a-side tournament** (featuring a guest appearance from the staff!) **which raised £220;**



Durham University Palatinate Awards

It was a fantastic evening at this year's Sport Palatinate Awards, where several Stephenson students were recognised for their sporting achievements over the academic year.

Ben Alderson was named Sportsman of the Year in recognition of his achievements with DU Water Polo.

Full Palatinates were awarded to Molly Morris (*Women's Hockey*) and Ben Alderson (*Water Polo*).

Half Palatinates were awarded to Bertie Holwell (*American Football*), Oliver James (*Athletics & Cross Country Club*), Olivia Stubbs (*Equestrian*), Liam Siggs (*Men's Lacrosse*), Eleanor Pringle (*Netball*), Adam Tabernacle and Rose Forrest (*Swimming*).

Congratulations to all!

- **Rex Ezard and the pool players who participated in the 12-hour pool marathon raising £520;**
- **Rex also organised the Fun Run which raised £80;**
- **Flynn Edwards who organised the Movember karaoke fundraiser raising £542;**
- **Stephenson Quiz Soc for raising £49!**

In total, £1411 was raised for a brilliant cause!



Darts

President: **James Woodhead**

This year, our team joined the Durham University College Darts League at the third (and lowest) step. The team showed up for our first game at John Snow with a few nerves and a great deal of excitement. Fortunately, we put together a comprehensive display that saw our team finish 7-1 winners against John Snow Women's team, with the captain dropping the only leg of the night. This set the tone for the rest of our season, which saw us defeated only once in the league - with Hatfield Freshers capitalising on a nervy display to narrowly sink us 5-3. In our first ever cup game, we put in an admirable display against a higher leagued Hild Bede B team, however, our doubling was not up to scratch on the day, and we were marginally beaten 5-3. Some of our side also managed to represent the college in the university floodlit tournament, where the reigning champions Josephine Butler showed their strength, subjecting us to a 6-2 defeat on the night.

Outside of the fixtures themselves, the team took a social trip up to Newcastle to watch 'flight night', a darts exhibition tournament contended by professional players - including Callan Rydz, the 2024 World Championship quarter finalist.

The primary achievement of the group is how far everyone has come on individually as a darts player. We have seen a meteoric improvement in everyone's game, including a first 180 (and a few thereafter) from some of our players. When we started half of our team had never thrown a dart before, and so to have challenged every team we have played, and, moreover, having won the Division 3 title and gained promotion to Division 2, is an incredible achievement for the team.

Looking individually, the team has seen success in the university singles tournament, with Josh Curry winning two games and Ollie Hughes currently waiting to play in the last 16 round, having beaten some of the university's best players. Furthermore, three of our players have represented the University at darts: Ollie Hughes, Ben Wislocki and Sam King.

Connections Grants



Stephenson College provides Connections Grants of up to £250 to enable students to undertake aspirational activities that further their personal development beyond the requirements of their degree. Students can apply as individuals or as a group. This year, we have awarded 70 grants to undergraduate and postgraduate students to pursue a range of development activities, including:

- Spanish, Arabic, Korean and Portuguese lessons with the Centre for Foreign Language Study.
- Participation in a six-week leadership-in-action project in Sri Lanka as part of the Laidlaw Leadership and Research Programme.
- Attendance at Hackcon 2025 in New York.

Chriselda Fernandes – Berlin Field Trip

Studying the module 'Berlin: Culture, Politics and Contestation', facilitated by the fieldwork, has profoundly reshaped how I understand space-making, power, and belonging. The quiet, reflective corners of memorial landscapes in Berlin, my research journey has been shaped by more than just interviews and observations, it's the personal and intimate encounters along the way. As a political and cultural geographer, my work sits at the intersection of displacement, education, and memory. I'm particularly interested in how cities like Berlin embody, construct, or resist their traumatic pasts.

Berlin is not just a city; it is a living, breathing palimpsest of memory, trauma, and resistance. Over a week, I immersed myself in its memorial landscapes, observing, reflecting, and feeling the weight of history through spaces that continue to bear the scars of violence, division, and genocide. This blog captures my ethnographic journey through some of Berlin's most powerful sites of remembrance.

At times, the field felt like a confrontation with commemoration and

silence, and my role as a researcher. Yet, these moments of discomfort were vital. They reminded me that to study trauma is to risk proximity, to feel history in the soles of your feet as you walk over cobblestones that once bore witness to brutal violence. Fieldnotes became more than documentation; they became meditations on complicity and hope. I carried with me more than a recorder; I carried questions about ethics, solidarity, and what it means to conduct research with rather than on ostracised communities.

Stepping inside the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, I was immediately enveloped by a hush of reverence. Around twenty visitors (mostly German-speaking adults) moved thoughtfully through the exhibition, pausing to read, reflect, and occasionally document their experience through photography or small purchases from the souvenir shop. An unusual moment of disruption occurred when a woman began eating inside the church. This subtle breach of decorum illuminated the diverse sensibilities people bring into sacred and memorial spaces.

As I looked upward, my eyes fixated on the ceiling, its cracks, though repaired, had not been concealed. Instead, they emphasised the church's fragility and strength. The contrast between these scars and the surrounding gilded artwork amplified the space's emotional resonance. This reminded me that memory isn't always found in perfection but in the imperfections that persist.

The East Side Gallery, stretching along remnants of the Berlin Wall, radiates energy and complexity. The reflective surfaces on the memorial pillars create a visceral intimacy, inviting visitors to see themselves in history. A guided tour for a group of German students with disabilities stood out, a powerful example of inclusive historical education.

Graffiti layers and tourists' personal inscriptions transformed the wall into a collective canvas: art, posters, and personal narrative woven into one evolving monument. This image captures a moment from the field, a visual echo of the stories and silences I encountered. Every crack, every line, every stroke speaks of memory and movement.





simultaneously as a site of mourning and a public park. Children played, tourists snapped selfies, and commuters passed through. But for those who paused, the space's power unfolded. Walking through the stelae (tall, cold, and uneven) induced disorientation and emotional unease. The gradual enclosure by the concrete forms mirrors the claustrophobia of persecution. The cracks and moss on the stones suggested that memory, like stone, erodes but also persists.

Berlin's memorial sites are not uniform. They oscillate between stillness and chaos, between reverence and everyday life. Some, like the Topography of Terror, demand quiet contemplation; others, like the East Side Gallery, invite expression and protest. The Jewish Museum intricately layers architecture, sound, and light to evoke historical trauma and cultural continuity. Together, these spaces resist closure. They keep Berlin's wounds visible, not as spectacles, but as invitations to remember, reflect, and learn.

Berlin does not ask its visitors to mourn uniformly; it allows for multiplicity. In doing so, it offers a blueprint for how cities can honour their pasts without being defined solely by them.

Fieldwork has unsettled me, in the best way possible. It has asked me to re-examine my assumptions, stretch my methodologies, and centre voices too often peripheral in academic discourse. As I move into analysis and writing, I carry with me not just transcripts and photos, but relationships, responsibilities, and a deeper understanding of the worlds I seek to illuminate. Research, after all, is not just about producing knowledge; it's about transforming the spaces we inhabit and the systems we challenge.

Located on the former SS and Gestapo headquarters, the Topography of Terror offers a more solemn tone. Unlike other sites, visitors here engage more quietly, deeply immersed in the exhibits. Outdoor ruins of the Gestapo offices confront visitors with material remnants of terror, while inside, the café and reading rooms provide spaces for rest and reflection.

In the museum's quietest corners, visitors lingered silently, particularly around the barred windows overlooking the Gestapo garage. It was here that the architectural framing of memory was most palpable, at once suffocating and intimate, evoking the psychological terror that words alone cannot.

The Jewish Museum offers both confrontation and comfort: In the Axis of Exile, Jewish lives are remembered through personal artefacts; The Holocaust Memorial Book anchors the scale of loss, name by name, humanising the incomprehensible. Walking through the Memory Void and over the Fallen Leaves installation was both sonically and emotionally jarring. Each clang beneath my feet echoed the screams of silenced lives. The architectural voids do not merely frame absence, they make it physical, inescapable, and emotionally intimate.

The 'Holocaust Tower', cold and nearly lightless, was a space of suffocating despair. A single slit of light far above offered the illusion of hope, distant, unreachable, devastatingly symbolic. And yet, resilience emerged. In the remembrance section, I noticed an elderly couple humming to traditional Jewish tunes, a reminder that survival and joy are also part of memory. The museum resists framing Jewish identity solely in terms of loss; instead, it celebrates its continuation through art, intellect, and faith.

At the Berlin Wall Memorial, daily life and memory coexist in tension. Children played between the iron bars of the rebar structure, while tourists peered through a slit in the wall, a literal and metaphorical window into the Cold War. The site's east side was quieter, marked by sparse graffiti and urban stillness. The death strip, on the other hand, is lined with wooden crosses and mass graves. The restored cemetery wall at Bergstrasse, still divided by barbed wire, serves as an enduring symbol of Berlin's fractured past and the difficulty of reunification.

Perhaps the most abstract of Berlin's memorials, the 'Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe' functions



Rebecca Town – Football

This year, I was fortunate to receive a Connections Grant that helped cover the cost of my kit and subs for the Stephenson College Women's Football Team. As someone who loves playing sport but is also mindful of the financial pressures that can come with university life, this support made a huge difference. It allowed me to fully take part without worrying about the extra costs of getting involved.

Thanks to the grant, it made me feel more confident and part of something bigger. Being a member of the team this year has been one of the highlights of my time at university. I've developed my football skills, but more importantly, I've

grown personally. I've learned how to work better with others, stay motivated through challenges and build meaningful connections. Matches became something I really looked forward to each week and they helped me manage stress and stay active, especially during summative season.

The Connections Grant didn't just offer financial help — it made me feel encouraged and supported by the college community. I would really encourage others who are concerned about joining college club sports due to financial restraints to look into the Connections Grant. Having the opportunity to play and represent my college — even in a small way — gave me a sense of pride and connection. It made a big difference for me, and I'm so glad I didn't let the cost hold me back from getting involved.

Grace Ellis – UniSlam 2025



This is my second year in Durham University's amazing Slam Team competing in UniSlam! Being a part of this society has taught me how much I love to write and perform poetry and has given me so much confidence to be able to go on a stage and do it all again. Going through the stages of writing, editing, and rehearsing has been a lot tougher this year as a third-year student doing my dissertation, but it has been an absolute joy to be able to collaborate with a fantastic team of poets who I've become great friends with. Furthermore, our team also have been lucky to have the support of two fantastic coaches, Molly and Freya!

UniSlam took place on the Birmingham University campus this year. We had the opportunity to meet and speak to a huge array of poets from different universities and so many fantastic and inspiring

writers that I hope to continue to stay in touch with. I had the opportunity to hear from the incredible poets Amerah Saleh, Mariah Fergurson, Kareem Parkins Brown and Bradley Taylor at the artist's panel. Afterwards, there was a "takeover" event from the poetry collective, Apples and Snakes, which meant we got performances from Fergurson, Brown, and Taylor, as well as other poets, including Durham's own incredible Molly and Carrie.

Our first heat took place in a seminar room in the university, and we were up against Birmingham University, UCL, and Leeds Beckett. We had a fantastic group of judges, also: Amerah Saleh, Billie Manning, Kareem Parkins-Brown, and Mathilde Petford. I wasn't competing in this round, but it was a fantastic performance from my team and I'm so lucky I was there to watch and see all their hard work turn pay off.

The time finally came for our second heat, which I was competing in! It was in the lecture room on campus, judged by the incredible Bohdan Piasecki, Monica Parle, Patrizia Longhitano, and Peter deGraft Johnson (The Repeat Beat Poet). We were up against Trinity College Dublin, UCL, and Worcester. I was incredibly nervous – it was my first time ever performing on a microphone! However, I'm extremely happy that I got up there and performed, as I really enjoyed it and got positive feedback. Bohdan Piasecki gave all our team individual feedback, which was constructive and very positive. In this round, we came first!

Our semi-final was on the Sunday morning, taking place at Eggar Concert Hall. We were up against Birmingham, Bath Spa, Leeds, and Warwick. This was a beautiful space, and so we all went outside to practice our semifinal poems, with some cherry blossom trees in the background.

The competition itself was hosted by the brilliant Vanessa Kisuule. The judges Harry Baker, Ella Frears and LateKid, would also be the judges for the final. It was all very nerve-racking but I got up on the stage and performed my poem. I'm still shocked and awed by the response; I received a lot of kind comments from poets on the competing teams and from Vanessa Kisuule herself!

In the second half of the semi-finals, I was also able to perform as a part of a group poem, written by my incredibly talented teammate Heather, and this was a great opportunity to perform with my friends, the Slam Team. Everyone was so incredible and gave such powerful performances throughout the entire weekend and I'm so proud of them all.

Whilst we didn't get into the finals, we are still so happy with how far the team came. It was an extremely tough competition with lots of strong poets. Congratulations to Leeds University for being crowned winners! I'm very lucky to have been able to take part in UniSlam again and very thankful that a Connections Grant has allowed me to embrace this opportunity.

Marcel Latwinski – Volleyball

With the help of Stephenson College's Connections Grant, I have been able to attend all the extracurricular societies that I wish to take part in. These currently are both College and DU level Volleyball, as well as being an active member of the Durham Space Flight Society.

Stephenson College Volleyball has held a grasp on my heart since joining Durham University. Initially, I joined just because I wanted to try a new sport, however it eventually turned into late night 2am training sessions with friends. A significant moment in the club to me was at the end of my second year in the club, when one of our members had made an hour-long documentary which documented the entire journey the club had taken to win the college league that year. It was amazing.

This year, it was a hard start given that some players had graduated and they



were the students who had paved the way for us in the first place. Nevertheless, I have held a large role in keeping the club as a place that people can love by helping to run the sessions. Through this, I have met a lot of new people and have

enjoyed teaching them about the sport I love. This leadership role has helped me learn how to put across my ideas into words better as sometimes it can be challenging to describe the training drills I wish to do.

Because of my passion for volleyball that the Stephenson Volleyball Club had initially fostered, I had eventually progressed to also playing the sport at University level. This year, we have really come together as a team, however over the Michaelmas term I had felt I hit a wall with my progress. Nevertheless, through Stephenson College's support I can continue my practice, as I am sure I can break through and become an exceptional player for the University.

All the sessions I have had for volleyball have helped me a lot during my time here. Other than the obvious physical benefits, it has also been a newfound method for me to relax as well as train my discipline and overall wellbeing. I stand by sport being almost necessary to maintain a healthy lifestyle.



Daniil Loktiev – Internship at Bench Walk Advisors

Thanks to the generous support of Stephenson College's Connections Grant scheme, I was fortunate to complete an internship at Bench Walk Advisors, a leading litigation fund in the City of London. I am especially grateful to College staff for facilitating such a career-defining experience – the application process to receive the grant was super straightforward and involved minimum bureaucracy!

The internship offered a blend of practitioner-led seminars and hands-on casework, providing deep insight into litigation finance – the practice of offering capital to cover legal costs in exchange for a share of the potential award. I picked up so much – from the basics of litigation funding to investment arbitration (BITs/MITs), collective actions (particularly collective proceedings) and financial valuation techniques such as Discounted Cash Flow and EBITDA. I learned that litigation funders typically base their due diligence on five key variables: (1) the budget-to-quantum ratio, (2) enforcement and recoverability prospects, (3) merits of the claim, (4) the profile of the parties involved, and (5) the adequacy of the legal team. As someone with a deep interest in banking, I particularly enjoyed

exploring securitisation, which allows the fund to bundle multiple claims into a single security to be sold to investors, thereby hedging risks through partial monetisation of a prospective award.

In parallel with seminar-based learning, I was tasked with reviewing nine cases which sought funding. Each assessment required a legal (merits) and financial (quantum/budget ratio/asset structure) analysis. A particularly interesting example involved the politically sensitive corruption claim which initially appeared promising. However, a sudden political shift which reinstated the defendant in a position of power rendered the claim effectively unenforceable. This experience underscored an important lesson: success in litigation finance depends not merely on the strength of a legal claim but on the real-world enforceability – a favourable award on paper does not guarantee return on investment, especially where a defendant's assets are concealed within complex offshore structures.

I also developed my interpersonal and client-facing skills by negotiating with a representative of an asset tracing firm regarding a potential partnership – a valuable exercise in professional communication with a stakeholder. Finally, I participated in a case review meeting with Managing Director Adrian Chopin, contributing to the decision to decline funding for a claim due to exaggerated “smoking gun” – i.e., exaggerated evidence of misconduct on the defendant company's part.

Overall, this experience has been truly magnificent – broadening my commercial awareness, sharpening my legal skills, and confirming my aspiration to pursue a financially oriented legal career. One crucial takeaway advice I would love to share with prospective interns in all fields – please do not hesitate to proactively offer “coffee chats!” Such an informal discussion will not only offer deeper insight into the firm but also provide an opportunity to leave a positive impression.



Sakura Doody – Skydive for St Cuthbert's Hospice

With funding from the Stephenson College Connections Grant scheme, I undertook a sponsored tandem skydive in aid of St Cuthbert's Hospice! The grant helped to cover most of the cost of my 13,500 ft skydive, which took place at Shotton Airfield in County Durham.

Doing a skydive has been on my bucket list for a long time and the experience didn't disappoint. The weather was lovely so, after some brief training, we were up in the air much quicker than I expected. The views were incredible and I loved every second of it! From that height, the villages of the North East and coastline of Sunderland stretched out in front of me, and I could even see Durham. Even though I was plummeting towards the ground, I felt quite safe because I had a trained instructor strapped to my back.

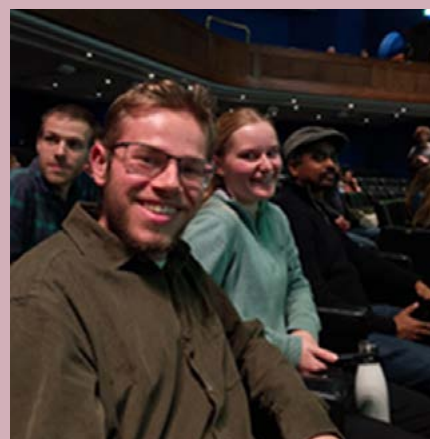
As well as ticking off a major bucket list item, the sponsored nature of the skydive gave me the chance to touch up on some fundraising skills such as raising awareness of a charity, their aims and creating a JustGiving page.

Over £550 was kindly donated to my fundraising efforts. I'm so grateful to everyone who supported me and the charity by contributing to this, and to Stephenson College for helping to fund this incredible experience. I'd recommend trying a tandem skydive to anyone who may consider it!

Sam Walshaw – RGS Explore Conference

At the start of November, I spent the weekend in London at the Royal Geographical Society's Explore conference, the UK's only dedicated event for planning expeditions, field projects and purposeful journeys, packed with inspiration, practical advice, and networking. I was very fortunate to receive a college Connections Grant, which covered the cost of the

conference ticket as well as travel to and from London and my accommodation, to allow me to do this. Explore was an amazing opportunity to hear about successful projects and how to run them, and meet academics, explorers, speakers and fellow students. I attended lectures, workshops, talks and tours and over the course of the weekend, I successfully developed my networking, organisation and collaboration skills. I now have lots of ideas, connections and potential avenues to explore for taking part in a research project or expedition, and even for my dissertation!





Yuwen Sheng – Exchange programme with Palacký University Olomouc, Czechia

As a postgraduate student pursuing my MA in TESOL and Applied Linguistics at Durham University, I recently had the privilege of participating in a week-long exchange programme at Palacký University Olomouc in the Czech Republic. This exchange provided valuable exposure to diverse educational contexts and practical insights into language teaching.

During the week, I engaged deeply with several specialised courses like Language Teaching Methodologies and Sociolinguistics. These sessions enriched my understanding of theoretical and practical frameworks, highlighting the dynamic nature of language education across different cultural contexts.

A significant part of my exchange involved visits to two distinct international schools in Olomouc. Over two days, I observed classroom activities, interacted with teachers, and conducted presentations tailored to the students' age groups. Classes typically consisted of around a dozen students, allowing for highly interactive and personalized instruction.

It was intriguing to notice how teaching styles and content were adapted according to students' developmental stages. Younger learners experienced lively, interactive sessions, incorporating visual aids and engaging activities. Older students, on the other hand, were guided toward deeper content knowledge, critical thinking, and expressive communication.

My role included delivering presentations about Durham University and an educational session focused on the fascinating topic of dangerous animals, both of which fostered curiosity and lively discussion among students and teachers alike. The enthusiastic interaction during these sessions underscored the effectiveness of cross-cultural dialogue and interactive teaching methods.

Participating actively in school lessons allowed me to gain direct insights into international educational practices and significantly broadened my perspectives on language teaching. The exchange experience not only honed my professional competencies but also reinforced the importance of adaptability and intercultural communication in contemporary education.

I am sincerely grateful for this enriching experience, supported generously by Stephenson College. It has undeniably shaped my future teaching approaches and expanded my academic horizons.



Isabelle Hutchins – Taekwondo

This academic year I have been a member of the DU Taekwondo club, being able to train and compete on behalf of the university. I have attended classes up to four times per week at Maiden Castle as an active member of the club. I have trained in both patterns and sparring, alongside both ITF and WT athletes, building upon my previous experiences as a first-degree black belt.

I have participated in two competitions this year, one in Twickenham in November, and the other in Nottingham in February. This allowed me to represent the university through a sport I am passionate about, gaining confidence and improving my own techniques. I was able to meet athletes from across the country, competing at a high level whilst being engaged with the taekwondo community. I supported other Durham competitors through coaching and have been able to make great friends through taekwondo this year. I achieved both a gold and bronze medal in sparring at the competitions, gaining BUCS points for the university.

Recently, I participated in a taekwondo self-defence skills workshop jointly ran by the taekwondo club and the Durham Student Halo Project, in which I helped demonstrate the techniques. I hope this gave those who attended more confidence in their self-defence abilities and gave them an insight into taekwondo and its benefits.

During the recent taekwondo AGM, I was voted in as the next Events Manager, which is an exciting opportunity for me to become more involved with both the club and wider student community. In this role, I will lead a committee who will organise the club's presence at both the Fresher's and Refresher's events, alongside the winter and summer balls. I also intend to plan more charity-based events utilising taekwondo as a means to give back to the student community and get more people involved, following on from the self-defence skills workshop. Additionally, other events I hope to oversee include a collaboration with other martial arts, in some form of demonstration, which I believe could be popular and raise money for both the martial arts societies and charities.

The grant made this experience possible by covering the costs of training and competitions, allowing me to commit fully to the martial art. I am very grateful to Stephenson College for providing this investment in my training and allowing me to have a broader student experience beyond academics that I otherwise would not have been able to afford.



Yan Liang – Study visit to Brussels

"What is the purpose of finance if not to serve society?"

This was the most powerful question that echoed in my mind during my international study visit to Brussels. As students of finance, we are trained to predict, calculate, and optimise—but this journey reminded us to reflect, connect, and empathise.

This study trip transformed how I perceive finance—not as a self-contained discipline, but as a system deeply embedded in environmental, geopolitical, and technological realities. From carbon neutrality to fintech ethics, from monetary systems to social impact, every classroom and corporate visit contributed to a more holistic vision of financial responsibility.

This journey would not have been possible without the financial support from Stephenson College. Their generosity not only alleviated the financial pressure of international travel and accommodation, but more

importantly, allowed me to fully dedicate myself to learning, exploration, and connection during the entire program—without distraction or hesitation.

Thanks to this support, I was able to participate actively in every lecture, site visit, and presentation opportunity, engaging deeply with professors, professionals, and peers. Beyond academic knowledge, this experience heightened my awareness of the intrinsic link between global financial systems and societal well-being. It inspired a stronger sense of personal responsibility to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and to advocate for financial practices that balance profitability with long-term environmental and social value.

I am sincerely grateful to Stephenson College for enabling me to embark on this transformative journey—one that not only broadened my academic and professional horizon, but also reaffirmed my commitment to becoming a responsible, globally minded finance professional.

Megan Stenhouse – Durham University Athletics and Cross Country (DUAXC)

On 31 January 2025, Durham University Athletics and Cross Country (DUAXC) made the journey down to Cardiff to compete at BUCS cross country. For student runners, BUCS is quite possibly the standout race of the season. Hundreds of athletes from across the UK come together to compete across four races, which include a short and long race for both men and women. Because of the large number of runners taking part, each race has enthusiastic supporters lining practically every inch of the course. The energy of this event



is truly unbeatable – there are very few races that can match the intensity of BUCS support.

I had the privilege of representing Durham in the women’s long course race. I was pleased to have been the first scorer for Durham, finishing 22nd despite very nearly not starting the race due to a medial tibial stress reaction (shin splints!) which developed the week leading into the race.

The highlight of the day for me was definitely getting to watch the other races, particularly the women’s short course, which had big Durham representation, and the men’s long course which featured Durham athletes right at the front of the race, the first scorer finishing in an incredible 5th place.

It was also great to watch international athletes in action across the day, including winners of their respective races Jess Bailey, the U20 5K British record holder and New Balance athlete in the women’s long course, and Tomer Tarragano who earlier this season won the senior men’s European cross country qualifying race at the Liverpool Cross Country Challenge. How inspiring!

Cross country running is so often an individual pursuit. However, BUCS is unique in that it provides the opportunity

to race as a team, emphasising team scoring which undoubtedly adds an extra layer of excitement to the day. Durham showed impressive results in the team standings . . .

- 11th in the women’s short race
- 10th in the women’s long race
- 11th in the men’s short race
- 12th in the men’s long race

BUCS weekend provided many opportunities to develop a range of skills. Firstly, after having targeted this race as a main goal at the beginning of the season, after coming into race week injured, it was important for me to be flexible and adaptable with my expectations for the race. In the end, I was not so focused on individual performance, but on doing everything I could to help the team finish as well as possible.

Many circumstances arose calling for quick thinking and problem solving, from navigating putting down the team tent, to a last-minute attempt to locate missing trainers, it was certainly a weekend that called for a calm, considered mind and quick wittedness!

I am incredibly grateful for the Connections Grant – it absolutely made BUCS weekend the unforgettable experience it was. With the funding I received I was able to purchase cross country spikes, which were very necessary for the muddy course! The grant also provided support in terms of travel and accommodation, ensuring that the day of the race was logistically stress free and that I was well rested the night before and well recovered the night after! The grant also helped with meal expenses. Service station food can be unjustifiably expensive, and the grant ensured that good quality nutrition was maintained throughout the trip.



Participation Fund

In response to the rising cost-of-living, Stephenson College and JCR established a new Participation Fund in 2023. Students can apply for a grant from the Fund to enable them to engage in student enrichment activities and the wider student experience, which for financial reasons they may not otherwise be able to engage with. We have awarded 118 grants this year, enabling students to engage in and enjoy the following activities:

- Engagement in JCR clubs and societies
- Engagement in Durham Students’ Union societies
- College gym pass
- Signature College/JCR events
- JCR/MCR levy payments

Global Citizenship



Global College Award 2025

Stephenson College was thrilled to be presented with the Global College Award at this year's Durham Global Awards.

Stephenson College has continued to develop its global partnerships and wider student experience over the last twelve months, as part of a continuing commitment to being a truly global college and ensuring every student has the opportunity to have a global experience here at Durham. Stephenson College's global activities have had

a significant impact, supporting its aspirations as a respectful, inclusive, and interdisciplinary community of students, staff, and local community members. The College itself is more globally connected than ever before and has created transformative opportunities for members of the community to develop themselves and their global perspectives, as well as be truly active global citizens.

Congratulations to all staff and students!



First Generation Scholars Exchange with California State University, Los Angeles, USA

From 16 June - 14 July 2025, 6 students flew out to Los Angeles to participate in a month-long programme for First Generation Scholars between Stephenson College and California State University, Los Angeles. In June 2024, we hosted 20 students from LA and this year we were excited for Sam, Archie, James, Faatemah, Lily and Melissa to travel out to the USA for the summer!



This exchange is hugely important for both Stephenson College and CSULA as it aims to:

- Address equity gaps within higher education by increasing access to global education opportunities for first-generation university students;
- Connect first-gen students across spectrums of cultural identities, linguistic backgrounds, academic interests, and professional goals to:
 - cultivate awareness of common first-gen experiences and identities as well as foster appreciation for difference and diversity;
 - build students' sense of institutional belonging by emphasising the unique forms of social and cultural capital first-gen students possess;
 - create support networks for sharing academic success resources and co/extracurricular opportunities;
- Develop students' writing abilities through process-oriented approaches to drafting, revising, and editing essays;
- Provide publishing opportunities for students to:
 - understand the impact their writing can have on public audiences;
 - promote global awareness of first-gen experiences and identities;
 - demonstrate academic achievement on future job and/or graduate school applications;
 - Help students to recognise and circumvent patterns of oppression and privilege that limit access to higher education around the world.

The students from CSULA and Durham University participated in three writing workshops per week over the month, honing their writing skills and sharing their experiences. The workshops were facilitated by Dr Danelle Dyckhoff Stelzriede, Assistant Professor of English and Director of First-Year Writing at California State University, Los Angeles, who guided workshop participants through the process of drafting personal narratives exploring first-gen experiences and identities.

Students also participated in many enrichment opportunities over the course of the exchange, including visits to Venice Beach, Hollywood, Griffiths Observatory and The Huntington Library, Art Museum and Botanical Gardens, as well as celebrating 4th July in Santa Monica!

The students' narratives and vlogs are centred around the following two themes: First-Generation Experiences and Identities and First-Gen Joy and excerpts were shared by each author during the Writer's Showcase on Sunday 13 July at the end of the exchange.

All narratives will be published to *Text & Type*, a CSU Open Journal sponsored by the English Department at CSULA and circulated widely.

We are proud to partner with California State University, ranked number one in the United States for upward social mobility. This trip was generously supported by the Turing scheme and the Sir Cyril Taylor Memorial Scholarship Fund, as well as the Stephenson College Connections Grant scheme. This exchange was hugely inspiring and we look forward to hosting Cal State LA students in Durham again in June 2026!

Future Hope Exchange

Our second international exchange opportunity for Stephenson students launched this year through a fantastic partnership with Future Hope NGO in Kolkata, India! Future Hope is a charitable organisation which provides opportunity through its homes, school, sports and medical programme for some of the most vulnerable children from the streets and slums of Kolkata. Future Hope puts society's most vulnerable children at the centre of all they do, and after more than 35 years they understand the problems they face, and the solutions that dramatically and permanently change their lives for the better.



From 21 June - 17 August 2025, Dante Butler and Roisin Duffy-Bence travelled to Kolkata to spend eight weeks volunteering their time supporting the organisation's sports and educational programmes.

Community Connections Trips

Our Community Connections trips enable Stephenson students to explore and connect with the local community around them. The North East of England is a place of big adventures, breath-taking beauty and strong cultural heritage and we want to ensure that all Stephenson College students have the chance to enjoy it. Students have enjoyed trips to Arbeia Roman Fort in South Shields, the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, The Auckland Project, Beamish Museum and Locomotion in Shildon. The trips are fully subsidised for students and hugely popular!



Global Goals Summit

On Saturday 1 March 2025, Stephenson College hosted the third Global Goals Summit to kick off Durham Global Week 2025. The summit saw 60 student delegates from Durham University, Durham International Study Centre and Durham Sixth Form Centre come together to learn about the UN Sustainable Development Goals and why they are important through an opening

talk and panel discussion. Delegates then had the opportunity to work on innovative solutions related to SDGs 5 and 10 - gender equality and reducing inequalities through a condensed Game Changer activity in the afternoon, facilitated by Enterprise Manager **Rachel Bickerdike**.

Delegates heard from subject matter experts including **Dr Faty Kane** (Executive Director of The Angelou Centre), **Bani Rikhranj** (Support Worker at

The Halo Project), **Dr Tetiana Marienkova** (Research Assistant in the Department of Sociology and Tutor at Durham Law School) and **Dr Cat Hirst** (Assistant Professor in the Department of Earth Sciences at Durham University).

The winning Game Changer team, comprising of students from Durham Sixth Form Centre developed a proposal for Hydropath, were invited to the Durham Global Awards ceremony (hosted at the Oriental Museum) on Friday 7 March.

Internationalisation at Home Conference

Evidence clearly shows that students who study, work or volunteer abroad during their studies get better degree results and are more likely to be in a graduate level job six months after graduation than their peers who have not travelled.

Currently only about 10% of Durham students are able to or choose to undertake mobility abroad during their time at Durham and therefore it is crucial that we provide opportunities for developing these skills, competencies and understandings through 'domestic internationalisation' in order to reach all of our students.

This is often referred to as 'Internationalisation at Home' and has been defined more specifically as: 'the



purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments'.

We were proud to host the Internationalisation at Home I@H Conference on Tuesday 4 March 2025. This was a great opportunity to bring staff together from across Durham to learn from recognised experts in the field

of internationalisation at home, such as Professor Elspeth Jones (Leeds Beckett University) and Professor Anthony Manning (University of Kent). Attendees also had the opportunity to hear about impactful case studies from other institutions, share examples of good practice with colleagues, understand Durham's strengths and weaknesses in I@H and help to inform next steps for Durham's Internationalisation at Home Strategy.

An inclusive community



First Generation Scholars Network

It was wonderful to welcome so many First Generation Scholars amongst our Freshers cohort this year. First Generation Scholars is a term often used to refer to students who are the first in their family to attend university or from schools or communities where going to university is not the norm. Such students are significantly underrepresented in UK higher education (Henderson et al. 2019), especially among students attending the UK's most academically selective universities such as Durham (Boliver 2015; Sutton Trust 2000, 2007).

Our Vice-Principal Katie Stobbs is the FGS contact in College, running a series of informal get-togethers throughout the year, starting in Freshers' Week. This is to ensure that First Generation Scholars are supported from the moment they arrive at Stephenson College and are able to navigate and embrace everything Durham has to offer.

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Ramadan Iftar

We were thrilled to host our first ever College Iftar on Thursday 6 March 2025. This event was a lovely way to mark the month of Ramadan and was a signature event in our Global Week 2025 programme. The iftar brought together students from all across the University for the Maghrib prayer led by University Imam Ibrahim ElSayed, followed by a dinner and some relaxing post-dinner entertainment, including henna, sand art and storytelling from 1001 Nights! Congratulations to Natalya Henein, Iqra Aziz-Malik and Dora Leong for organising such a fantastic event.





Holi on the Hill

It was wonderful to see so many students having fun at our Holi on the Hill event on 15 March 2025! Also known as the Festival of Colours, Holi is a popular Hindu celebration that signifies the triumph of good over evil and welcomes in spring. It is most famously celebrated by throwing gulal (coloured rice powder) at each other!



Holocaust Memorial Day

On Monday 27 January 2025, Stephenson College alongside DU Chaplaincy and DU Jewish Society welcome Hannah Goldstone from the Northern Holocaust Education Group. Hannah shared her grandfather Martin Wertheim's story, explaining his journey in the context of pre-war Germany, life under Nazi rule and the trauma of travelling to a strange country. The talk was centred around a family photo album, which was given to a neighbour by Martin's father and lovingly kept until Martin's brother travelled back to Germany after the war.

After Hannah's talk, we came together for a simple candle lighting ceremony and read the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust's statement of commitment together.



Supporting the Shia community at Durham University

Throughout the academic year, we have welcomed members of Durham's Shia Muslim community into College for various festivals throughout the year, including Muharram, Ashura and Ramadan. Prayer congregations were held each evening alongside refreshments.

Wear Red Day

Team Stephenson proudly wears red all year round but especially so on 21 October for #WearRedDay 2024, in support of Show Racism the Red Card. Our sports teams showed their support for this fantastic initiative and the work SRtRC do to fight racism, injustice, and hatred in sport.



Stephenson Ideas



It has been another successful year for our Stephenson Ideas talk series, which has seen an excellent range of speakers come into College on a Monday evening. Each talk aims to inspire, challenge and develop the intellectual curiosity of our students. The talk series features motivational and inspiring speakers with a story to tell, sometimes academic in nature, sometimes not, but always providing an opportunity to discuss innovative and engaging topics. The talks are open to all members of the Durham University community.

Talks this year have featured:



- A Black History Month panel discussion with Dr Sol Gamsu (Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology), Terry Graham (local history teacher and founder of Project North Star) and Lexi Amoakohene (President of Durham People of Colour Association). The panel focused on **“Is the Northeast really the least diverse place in England? Teaching black history through a Northeast lens.”**
- An exciting **Stephenson Ideas US election night special** with former presidential advisor Dr Fiona Hill on 4 November 2024! Dr Hill is Chancellor of Durham University, an

acclaimed foreign affairs specialist and author, and a former advisor to George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump. She served on the US National Intelligence Council from 2006 to 2009 and was a member of the US National Security Council from 2017 to 2019. The talk was chaired by Dr Dave Anderson (School of Government and International Affairs) and following a very lively discussion, six students had the fantastic opportunity to join Dr Hill, Dr Andersen and College staff for dinner!



- Professor Donna Chambers, Professor of Critical Cultural Studies in the School of Design, Arts and Creative Industries at Northumbria University, gave a thought provoking talk titled **“How have Black women been represented in tourism and leisure?”** She is an interdisciplinary scholar who is interested in how people and places are represented through tourism and leisure, drawing on a range of critical perspectives including, though not limited to postcolonial and decolonial epistemologies, critical race theory and Black feminist theory. Professor Chambers is currently one of 16 women from Black, Asian and minority ethnic heritage in the North East of England featured in the ‘Inspirational Women’ permanent exhibition at the Discovery Museum in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.



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Institute of Advanced Studies Fellows

Every year we host Visiting Fellows from a broad range of academic disciplines through the Institute of Advanced Study. Each researcher has made an outstanding contribution over a sustained period of time in their research field, and we were thrilled to host Professor Diogo Aguiar Gomes from King Abdullah University of Science and Technology in Epiphany Term 2025.

On Monday 3 March 2025, Professor Gomes delivered a fascinating lecture on **“Game Theory and Sustainable Future: How Mathematical Models Can Help Solve Urban and Environmental Challenges.”**

This lecture focused on how our cities and environment face unprecedented challenges – from traffic congestion to climate change, renewable energy integration, and efficient resource allocation. But what if we could use mathematical tools inspired by game theory to help address these pressing issues?

The lecture explored how “Mean-Field Games,” a mathematical framework that models the collective behaviour of large populations, can help us design smarter cities, optimise renewable energy systems, and develop effective environmental policies. We discovered how these mathematical models can predict and shape human behaviour in crowds, guide electric vehicle charging strategies to support clean energy adoption and inform carbon trading markets. Using real-world examples and accessible explanations, we explored how mathematical research at the intersection of game theory, economics, and environmental science is helping pave the way toward a more sustainable future.

Enterprise and Employability

Career Connections

We were thrilled to launch our Career Connections programme in October 2024, delivering a series of five talks focusing on key graduate skills and four complementary skills workshops throughout the course of the academic year.

All students could choose to attend any number of the talks and workshops to help support their skills development. Those who wished to opt into the Career Connections mentoring programme were paired with a mentor drawn from our Senior Common Room or alumni community, providing invaluable employability advice and guidance. This was a fantastic opportunity for current students to learn from key supporters of the College who have a wide range of experience across a range of sectors, as well as build their network!

Congratulations to Katelyn Yau, Elisabeth Cooke and Emmanuel Togoh for achieving the Career Connections Award!

The College wishes to thank Dr Barbara Dick, Stephenson SCR member and Placement Manager for the Faculty of Social Sciences and Health and Kelci Jacoby, Assistant Manager for the Durham Leadership Framework, who both delivered a range of interactive sessions in College supporting students with their graduate skills.

We would also like to thank the mentors who volunteered their time to share their experience and support students participating in the programme: Sarah Cliff, Darren Sweetland, Harry Hu Yu, Ed Holloway, Isobel Fleming, Gar Goei Loke, Emily Hole, Christian Vince and Fraser Logue.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor or delivering a talk/workshop related to your current role and/or sector, please reach out to stephenson.alumni@durham.ac.uk. We would love to hear from you!



Student Employee of the Year Awards

Congratulations to first year Psychological and Behavioural Science student Emmanuel Togoh on being awarded the inaugural Personal Development Champion Award at this year's Student Employee of the Year Awards!

"Personal growth isn't just about individual effort—it thrives in community, mentorship and courage to push your limits.

I had the incredible honour of being voted the first-ever Personal Development Champion. This recognition is a milestone in my journey of resilience, adaptability, and continuous learning.

Reflecting on my experience, I remember attending my first networking event—uncertain, yet eager to grow. That step led me here today. Through the Level Up Programme, I've embraced personal and professional development by participating in workshops, networking events, and one-to-one coaching, all of which have shaped my confidence and leadership as a Durham Student Ambassador.

This achievement reinforces the power of mentorship, continuous learning, and lifting others as we climb. I'm committed to paying it forward—supporting others in their journeys and embracing new opportunities for growth."

Durham Blueprint Challenge and Enactus

Akshaj Pawar and Aryan Menon made it through to the Blueprint Startup Challenge 2025 Semi Finals with their startup ideas. Akshaj delivered an impressive pitch as part of team Synthura (a diabetes profile adjustment solution) and Aryan and his team mates at DU Pulse (a student engagement platform) have continued with the business and are gaining traction across the University.

Congratulations also go to Brandon Ross and Ruth Ekhuemelo who were part of this year's Enactus team, who made it through to the UK Finals in April in London. Ruth also came in 3rd place at the University's Game Changer Challenge weekend, with her team winning £400.





College Events



JCR Balls

The Fire and Ice themed Winter Ball was the first flagship event in the calendar, taking place in the last week of Michaelmas term. Set at the stunning Ramside Hall, 400 students celebrated the end of term over a three-course meal. As always, entertainment ran throughout the evening, with dancers, live bands and of course a DJ and dancefloor!

The JCR Summer Ball was just as successful, held at Derwent Manor Hotel on a beautiful sunny June evening. Attendees celebrated the end of the year in a fabulous ballroom, having fun on the fairground rides and dancing the night away!





Stevo Day 2025

Stevo Day is always one of the most fun days in the calendar and this year was no exception. Students fully embraced an *In the Jungle* theme this year, complete with bushtucker trials! We all enjoyed glorious sunshine, inflatables, market stalls, lots of food and eleven hours of live music!



Stephenson College Charity Fashion Show

Building on last year's success, our annual Stephenson College Charity Fashion Show was held on 17 June 2025, raising over £2,000 for St Cuthbert's Hospice. This year's show was held in College for the first time, with Howlands Hall transformed for this year's Get into the Groove theme!

The Fashion Show exec and models worked tirelessly to deliver a brilliant showcase of sustainable fashion from a range of up-and-coming designers, as well as St Cuthbert's Hospice charity shops, with over a range independent brands featured on the catwalk!



George Stephenson Birthday BBQ

Staff, students and friends of College came together on a lovely afternoon at the annual George Stephenson Birthday BBQ on 9 June. Over 250 attendees enjoyed a delicious BBQ in honour of our namesake!



College Dinners

Stephenson students have enjoyed some fun dining experiences this year, including a Burns Night Supper with a fantastic address to the haggis by Stephenson alumni Fraser Logue and a very romantic Valentine's Day dinner! We also had our very first Movie Meals dinner, enjoying a casual two-course dinner whilst watching Disney's Ratatouille in Platform 1!



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Honours Formal

We ended the year on a high at our annual Honours Formal, a fantastic evening where current students and staff came together to celebrate students' achievements across all aspects of College and JCR and MCR life over the last twelve months. We also marked the handover of the JCR and MCR Executive Committees. **Principal's Awards** were awarded to:

- **Isaac Hammond Spirit of Stephenson Award** - Oliver Wood
- **Unsung Hero Award** - Sam Walshaw and Barbara Hogg
- **Stephenson Ambassador Award** - James Carvell

JCR Honorary Life Memberships

were awarded to:

- Aidan Woodley
- Flynn Edwards
- Ellie Fisher
- Maddie Tanner

The **Adrian Darnell Community Award** was presented to Lucy Fryer and the **Stevo Spirit Award** was presented to Rex Ezard. The **Best Sports Team Award** was presented to Volleyball and the **Best Society Award** was presented to Grow Soc.

Congratulations to all the aforementioned as well as the many individuals who were awarded full and half colours for their respective sports and society activities. Well done!



Graduation



Student Support and Wellbeing



It has been another great year for student support at Stephenson College, building on existing connections and initiatives to support wellbeing amongst the College community.

Frankie, Laura and Elize have continued to deliver fantastic support provision within College, supporting students with any issue they may be facing, whether that be academic, financial, personal, health or wellbeing issues. This year the team has offered 593 student support appointments, with 276 of those face-to-face, 277 online and 37 by phone.

We have continued to work closely with a number of colleagues across the University to bring information, resources and support into College, to try and improve awareness and accessibility across our student body. We've held roadshows for sexual health, drugs and alcohol and money management and worked closely with our JCR Welfare team on proactive wellbeing initiatives.

We have embraced the new Student Support Information Management System, which has improved the way we support students across the University going forward.

We're very much looking forward to building upon the team's fantastic achievements over the last year and are excited to see what 2025/26 brings for student support.



JCR Welfare

This year, the JCR Welfare team have been working to continue Stephenson College's welcoming and informative peer-led support system. In collaboration with fellow JCR members and external organisations, the 2024/25 team has built on the excellent work of previous years, striving to make Stephenson a positive, inclusive, and supportive community for all.

From paint-and-sip evenings and charity fundraisers to our ever-popular petting farms, we hope our events have been enjoyable and enriching, and that every student has felt supported. A heartfelt thank you to those who attended regularly, it has been a real pleasure to see so many smiling faces throughout the year.

We've also continued on Instagram (@stephenson.welfare), sharing informative content during campaign weeks. This has covered a wide range of topics relevant to the student experience, from navigating Durham's housing landscape and raising awareness around drugs and alcohol, to the return of SHAG Week (Sexual Health and

Guidance). Our final campaign, Stress-Less Week, aimed to promote healthy work/life balance during the exam season.

A particular highlight was the launch of Stephenson's first Movember fundraising week, hosted in partnership with the JCR Sports and Volunteering Officers. The week was a resounding success, raising £1411 and bringing the community together in support of an important cause.

My time as Senior Welfare Officer has been an incredibly rewarding experience. I'm immensely grateful to the JCR Welfare Team, Matt, Sakura, and Alicia, for their enthusiasm, support, and contributions. My thanks also go to my predecessor, Millie, for her unwavering support, and to Frankie, our Assistant Principal, for his guidance throughout the year.

Finally, thank you to everyone who took part in our events and supported our initiatives this year, your engagement has made everything we do possible!

**Welfare Love!
Amy and the 2024/25 JCR Welfare Team x**



Alumni and Friends



It was fantastic to catch up with many of our recent alumni at our informal after-hours events at The Counting House, London in February and June 2025. Hosted by the Principal, it was a great opportunity to come together and update alumni on recent developments at Stephenson College, enable them to reconnect with fellow alumni, and discuss our plans for the future. It was

also lovely to welcome alumni back for Stevo Day in June!

Stephenson now has a lifelong global community of over 7,000 alumni. Whether you graduated last year or in 2001, we're always happy to hear from you and to keep you connected to the College and to each other. Through our regular communications and events, we

endeavour to make you feel as much a part of Stephenson as you might wish to be, and to keep you informed about many of the extraordinary events and activities that happen throughout the year.

Connection 25

We will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Stockton to Darlington Railway in Michaelmas Term 2025 and launching our Connection 25 anniversary campaign in January 2026, so do look out for upcoming communications on how you can connect, contribute and join the celebrations. Make sure to save the date for our Durham Alumni Reunion Weekend from 4 - 6 July 2026!

Get involved

25th Anniversary Working Group

It's an exciting time as we get ready to launch our 25th anniversary campaign, Connection 25. If you are interested in sitting on our 25th Anniversary Working Group chaired by Stephenson alumni Darren Sweetland (class of 2003), please contact the Principal on stephenson.alumni@durham.ac.uk.

Inspire the next generation

We are proud of our reputation as one of the friendliest Durham colleges and we aim to constantly provide opportunities for our students, staff and alumni to meet, engage, teach, learn, and inspire. There are opportunities for Stephenson alumni to deliver talks and workshops in College, as well as support students through more informal networking and employability focused activities such as our Connections dinners.

All Stephenson alumni are eligible to join our Senior Common Room. We would also welcome any alumni members who are interested in becoming development coaches to current Stephenson students, helping them make the most of the opportunities available to them whilst at University and prepare them for life after university. Email stephenson.inspired@durham.ac.uk to find out how you can be involved.

Creating opportunity

Stephenson College is committed to ensuring that all students can take advantage of every opportunity during their time in Durham. No student should feel prevented from studying at Stephenson because of their financial background, or experience hardship while studying here. By making a gift to Stephenson College, you are creating an opportunity for a talented young person to not only explore their academic interests at a world class institution but to also experience all that Stephenson and Durham have to offer. Any gift, of any amount can have a huge impact on the life of a Stephenson student. As part of our Connection 25 anniversary campaign, we will be fundraising to provide £250 bursaries to support all new Stephenson students from lower-income households to meet some of the core costs of College life, including 3-year Common Room membership, a gym pass and tickets to signature events such as Stevo Day.

Alumni community

Events

Stephenson alumni events provide an opportunity for members to reconnect with their peers, as well as opportunities for networking and mentoring. Our upcoming alumni events are advertised in the monthly Newswire email as well as via our alumni mailing list.

Keeping in touch

Please keep us up to date with your contact details by emailing stephenson.alumni@durham.ac.uk so that we can let you know about news and events. We'd also like to hear any news of your achievements, appointments, publications, honours, or events such as a marriage or a new baby, so that we can include it in our Year in Review..

Visiting Stephenson College

We're delighted to welcome Stephenson alumni visiting the College at any time of year. Please email stephenson.alumni@durham.ac.uk to arrange a time.





Stephenson College
Durham University

