



**"I couldn't have achieved my degree without the support of Clive and Patricia Wilson; they were inspirational,,**



**Top Left:** Lisa Wilson, **Bottom Left:** Patricia Wilson, Gus McKechnie, Clive Wilson, **Middle:** Kirsty Smithers, **Top right:** Tom Dowsett, **Right:** Ali Lalani

# Lisa Wilson Scholarship Fund

For over eight years, the parents of Lisa Wilson have tributed the memory of their daughter by supporting Southampton Solent University students with bursaries to help them with the costs of higher education.

**I**t is a testimony to the outstanding achievement of both Clive and Patricia Wilson, and a fitting tribute to their daughter Lisa, that they have helped 44 students to overcome their own personal adversities.

Through the Lisa Wilson Scholarship Fund, Clive and Patricia have raised over £198,000 during the eight years since Lisa tragically died in a car crash in Australia in 2002. Lisa graduated from Southampton

Solent University (formerly Southampton Institute) in 2001 with a 2:1 BA (Hons) Business Management degree.

The award takes the form of a bursary of up to a maximum of £1,000 per year which is renewed annually. It is available to students who have overcome adversity or can demonstrate why they need extra financial help with their studies.

**Masters graduate, Gus McKechnie has raised thousands of pounds for charity and inspired hundreds of kids, despite facing a string of tragedies that took his family from him.**

Gus was crowned British Men's adaptive Indoor Rowing Champion and has run five New York marathons. He raised thousands of pounds for the Fund and has played a key role in helping Clive Wilson to establish the continuing success of the Lisa Wilson Scholarship. Clive and Patricia have raised over £190,000 to help students in higher education against the odds in this tough economic climate.

Gus coached hundreds of schoolchildren in indoor rowing events and now the indefatigable athlete is undertaking Paralympic trials for sailing, athletics and sled hockey. On top of this Gus, who has cerebral palsy, has been a prolific charity fundraiser.

Gus's brother was diagnosed with Haemachromatosis in 1998. An early diagnosis would have given him the chance of life-prolonging treatment, but he died, aged 36 in 2003, not long before Gus' father, who, Gus says, died of the "stress of the illness".

When Gus discovered he had the same genes that cause the condition, he vowed to raise funds and awareness of Haemachromatosis. But, in 2007, soon after he graduated, Gus received another body-blow. His mother was taken ill and died of ovarian cancer. "I decided to continue fundraising in memory of my brother, father and mother," said Gus, who went on to raise thousands of pounds for charity by cycling on a stationary bike twice the distance around the equator, on the Red Funnel ferry.

**Ali Lalani – recipient of the Lisa Wilson Prize for outstanding academic achievement – has bowled his way to gold medal glory in the boccia world cup in Canada, and he says he couldn't have done it without unwavering support and his place at a unique university.**

The BA (Hons) Event Management graduate won a string of medals during a glittering five years of playing at international level.

Living with the muscular condition, cerebral palsy, increased Ali's determination to succeed. "I always felt I had something to prove. I had a passion for boccia, and Solent University gave me the full support I needed to take it further," he explained.

Ali has won major medals across the globe, including silver in Portugal 2005, team bronze in Brazil 2006, an individual bronze and team gold at the World Cup in Vancouver, Canada 2008. He later captained England to silver medal glory in Vienna in 2008, earning a call-up to the Great Britain team for the 2009 International Czech Open in Prague, winning silver.

Ali – who graduated in 2010 with a 2:1 in BA (Hons) Event Management Sport – said: "It's been an enormous honour and privilege to be a Lisa Wilson Scholarship student. I couldn't have achieved my degree without the support of Clive and Patricia Wilson; they were inspirational."

**Tom Dowsett recently launched Cre8able, a website dedicated to helping disabled people to succeed in the creative industries. Tom suffers from the muscular condition, cerebral palsy.**

"While at Solent, I was offered support with note-taking, reading, and accessing information. I used some of my scholarship funding to explore alternative methods of access to written texts such as computer based reader software and I was able to employ an amanuensis to help me with assignments.

"When I met the Wilson family I was touched that they should think of me while dealing with their own personal tragedy."

Tom received the Lisa Wilson Prize for outstanding academic achievement in 2009, the same year that he graduated with a 2:1 BA(Hons) Television and Video production.

**When Kirsty Smithers was made homeless and diagnosed with dyslexia, a university education was the furthest thing from her mind.**

But thanks to the Lisa Wilson Scholarship Fund and the Compact Scheme, Kirsty was able to study for a BA (Hons) Fine Art degree at Solent University – and the course of her life changed forever.

She now publishes poetry, exhibits art and runs a successful collaborative collective fine arts and film production company.

"I loved the course and the lecturers at Solent. I found expression through my artwork; my confidence improved and a whole new world of possibilities opened up to me," said Kirsty.

After graduating in 2009, Kirsty travelled to America, where she developed experience in the film production industry through shadowing skilled practitioners. She fell in love with California, and decided, with her friends, to develop a production company.

"My World Illuminations Studios uses social media to network and recruit actors, artists, musicians and film crew on volunteering projects to produce amateur short films, documentaries, plays and other works of art," explained Kirsty.

It's a fitting role for someone who has expressed herself through a multitude of media platforms. Kirsty writes scripts and novellas, takes photographs and produces impressionist art and sculptures. Her most recent poem, 'I'm Dreaming' is published in the Mystic Melodies poem anthology.

She said: "The origins of my work spring from aspects of my life, including a challenging childhood."

Kirsty is now working on new scripts, screenplays, and short films. My World Illuminations Studio is producing an art installation of new sensations, inspired by Kirsty's work, using sculptures, sounds, film, digital photography, paintings, lights, textiles, embroidery, typography, poetry and performance.

**"a whole new world of possibilities opened up to me"**

**Sean and Charlotte Lystor were both on the Lisa Wilson Scholarship scheme while studying at Solent. They struck up a firm friendship on campus – and ended up tying the knot.**

Charlotte graduated in 2006 with a first class honours degree in BA (Hons) Marketing, Media and Design. She was also awarded the Lisa Wilson Scholarship Prize for outstanding academic achievement, the Southampton Solent Woman's award for outstanding achievement and the campus IT award.

Charlotte went on to study for a postgraduate Masters in Communication Design and a PGCE post-compulsory Education and Training. Three years ago she joined Solent University as an Associate Lecturer in Marketing. She is now a lecturer at Winchester University.

Sean is a computer-aided design (CAD) technician at Warmafloor, designing the under floor heating systems for the 2012 Olympics Athletes village.

Sean – who graduated with a BA (Hons) Architectural Technology with Interiors degree in 2007 and postgraduate study in Computer Aided Architectural Design and Construction – has also been CAD technician at Amey, as part of the accident investigation and prevention team, and with Halcrow, as part of an asset management, data analysis and surveying role in engineering CAD drawings.