

# John Crook Scholarship Recipients

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Year	Previous Institution	Subject in Cambridge
2019	Liverpool John Moores University	BA (Affil) in History   MPhil in American History
2018	Aston University	MPhil in Biological Science (Pathology)
2017	University of Derby	MPhil in English Studies
2017	Brunel University	MPhil in Medical Science (MRC Cancer Unit)
2016	University of Hull	BA (Affil) in Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic
2015	Heriot-Watt University	MPhil in Energy Technologies (Engineering)
2015	Aston University	MPhil in Multi-disciplinary Gender Studies (HSPS)
2014	Plymouth University	MPhil in Medical Sciences (Oncology)
2013	Greenwich University	BA (Affil) in Psychology
2011	Open University	BA (Affil) in Education with English

## John Crook Scholars' Testimonials

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### **Liz Monaghan – BA (Affil) in Education, 2011-13**

*“As a very mature Northern student from a ‘non-typical’ educational background, I never imagined being awarded a Scholarship to the best University in the world! My father came to the UK after WW2 as a refugee from Eastern Europe. My mother left school at 14 and, although I had a 1970s grammar school education, I left school at 17 to go out to work. It was not until I had four children of my own and found myself a single parent that I took up studying seriously while working as a TA in a local primary school. I applied for the John Crook Scholarship quite by chance and, to be honest, not daring to*

*believe that I would be invited for interview....*

*When the award letter arrived I opened it while heading off to work where I received three cheers from Year 6 and a hug from the teacher. I chose to study Education and English and spent my days flitting between the innovative Education Faculty building and our magical College surroundings, stopping at various libraries*

*between the two, thrilled to be learning in such stimulating environments. Despite the practical difficulties of juggling home life and study I thrived, swept along simultaneously by a previously unacknowledged competitive spirit and fear of failure!*

*On graduating I returned to my home city and worked to support students with learning difficulties, disabilities or mental health problems at local non-Russell Group universities. All of those students were, like me, the first in their family to go to University. During the pandemic I started fostering Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children, a role in which I am constantly reminded of the importance of having access to someone who believes in your capabilities, who can encourage and facilitate learning through our education system. I share these young people's pride and pleasure in their successes.*

*I have become involved in health and social care research as a Lived Experience co-author, I sit on an Ethics Committee and a NIHR funding committee and also work with the CQC as an Expert by Experience. These roles are immensely satisfying as I feel my 'lived knowledge' is given equal value to 'learned knowledge'.*

*The John Crook Scholarship allowed me the privilege of an amazing learning opportunity which has been truly transformative. I miss my Cambridge days and still have a yearning to get back to further study. As a believer in lifelong learning I know from personal experience that it is never too late."*

### **Sarah Parnell – BA (Affil) in Psychology, 2013-15**



*"My name is Sarah Parnell and I was awarded the John Crook Scholarship in 2012. My overwhelming memory of life at Cambridge University was the feeling of awe that I experienced when walking through the beautiful grounds of St John's, attending dinner at hall, and discussing my interests with experts in my subject area. I was welcomed in my course and in college, despite being older than the usual undergraduate. I found many social experiences that I enjoyed; particular favourites of mine were attending various theatre productions and festivals. I met like-minded friends who I still turn to for a good conversation and advice. Studying at Cambridge was challenging, however, the gift of studying to such a high level and being part*

*of college life, was worth all of the effort. I am so grateful that I received the John Crook Scholarship as it afforded me the opportunity to experience a fantastic academic and cultural journey."*

### **Asma Jamil – MPhil in Multi-Disciplinary Gender Studies, 2015-16**



*"I have always dreamed of studying in Cambridge, but deep down I thought I would never stand a chance, let alone not being able to afford it. To my surprise being a recipient of the John Crook Scholarship has not only afforded me the chance to experience student life at Cambridge, but has restored self-belief in me, that I am capable. My journey in the last nine months has been one of great challenge, yet stimulating and rewarding. There are no words to fully capture my time in Cambridge and it's all thanks to the John Crook Scholarship. If I could define what was the best moment was I wouldn't be able to pick one. Despite being a small city, it is one of the places I met*

*people from across the world in one place and it was an honour to learn along with such a great blend of bright minds from all corners of the globe. Living away from home and meeting the demands of my course has been very challenging, however, it is this that has defined me as a person and taught me discipline, willpower, strength of mind, determination, resilience and so many other things I could not learn from books alone and staying in the comfort of my home. I came for the struggle – not for an easy win, and through the struggle I have learnt so much about myself and the Cambridge experience has most certainly changed my perspective on life. Cambridge is the best thing that ever happened to me, and it is not the end, it's only the beginning."*