

Charlotte Hill

Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, Graduates and Graduands, Families and Friend, today it is my pleasant duty to introduce Charlotte Hill, Alumna of the year 2016.

Charlotte was born in Margate in Kent, and attended Reculver Primary School and Simon Langton Grammar School for Girls, becoming Head Girl of the latter. She came to this University in 1998 where she studied Politics and Philosophy. During her time here, she volunteered to help the local MP Richard Burden in Northfield and Longbridge and ended up working for him alongside her degree. Indeed she wrote her dissertation on the Rover Crisis of 2000, which was happening at the time. She met many of her best friends and her husband Dave at Birmingham.

After graduation she began working in Parliament for another MP, Harriet Harman in a number of roles. After five years in that role she moved to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children as their Parliamentary Advisor. After her time at the NSPCC, Charlotte moved to Australia and worked for a Government Relations and Communications Consultancy and for a children's charity in Sydney. She then worked in Cambodia on her way back to the UK, teaching English in an orphanage. From 2010 to 2014 she was Chief Executive of UK Youth. Charlotte became Chief Executive of Step Up to Serve in April 2014. Step Up To Serve was established in 2013 to coordinate the #iwill campaign, This campaign promotes social action in the 10 to 20 year old age group of a wide range of different types. It seeks to promote, and I quote, “practical action in the service of others that creates positive change”, which of course benefits both the young people themselves and the communities in which they live. The recent Youth Social Action survey found current levels of participation by 10-20 year-olds stands at around 40%, the #iwill goal is to raise this to 60% by 2020, which will mean an additional 1.5 million young people are active in their communities. A wide range of charitable organisations are involved with recent sign ups including Cancer Research UK, Oxfam, Capgemini, Do-It Trust, World Youth Organisation, British Exploring and UR Potential.

Charlotte is an RSA Fellow, Companion at the CMI, Vice Chair of Whole Education, a trustee of Football League Trust and also a member of the Management Committee of Westminster House Youth Club. She also sits on the Advisory Panel for both Try for Change and Unleashing Potential. She is a keen golfer and cyclist, cycling from London to Paris for UK Youth in 2011. In 2012 Charlotte received the award of “Rising CEO Star” at The Charity Times Awards.

Charlotte is joined here today by her sister Kate and her cousin Amanda. Unfortunately her husband Dave can't be here as he is a primary school teacher, and of course this is the time of year when all academics can say to their teacher friends that *their* tem has ended.

Chancellor, Vice chancellor, for a career dedicated to improving the life of both young and old and the communities in which they live, I present to you and the University, Charlotte Hill for the award of Alumna of the Year 2016.