

Hello again!

I hope you had a wonderful summer and it doesn't seem like too much of a distant memory! It's certainly been a busy one here at High Force Research.

Since our last bulletin we've expanded our new laboratory space at the Wilton Centre, appointed our first ever STEM Co-ordinator to oversee our outreach to local schools and colleges, and met with leaders from across the industry to discuss the skills challenges our sector faces.

Our industry is so diverse and full of exciting opportunity that it's easy to forget that for many young people their view of what we do is very different to our own. That's why at High Force Research we're committed to investing in and supporting young talent, from encouraging youngsters to consider careers in science to supporting promising university graduates and postgraduates.

If you would be interested in hearing more about our work in this area or opportunities to work together, please do get in touch.

I look forward to speaking and meeting with you soon, whether at one of our three sites around the UK or one of the many events HFR will be attending in the coming months.

Stella

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Keep reading to find out more about the appointment of our first ever STEM Co-ordinator. If you know of any North East schools or colleges that may be interested in arranging activities or talks for students on careers in the chemical and pharmaceutical industry, please do encourage them to contact High Force Research via info@highforceresearch.com



Debating the Life Sciences skills challenge

High Force Research Operations Director, Stuart Penny, recently met with key figures from the Life Sciences industry to discuss the skills shortages facing the sector nationwide and the nature of the challenge in the North East of England.



High Force Research Operations Director, Stuart Penny, joined key figures from the Life Sciences industry, including Professor Roy Sandbach, Director of National Centre for Ageing Science and Innovation and Margaret Rowe, Associate Dean Business and Engagement Northumbria University Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, to discuss the skills shortages facing the sector. © KG Photography

The event, which was organised by business and entrepreneurial title, Business Quarter Magazine, was a great opportunity to meet with a diverse range of organisations from across the region with an interest in supporting a flourishing Life Sciences sector.

Discussions between the panellists, who represented local NHS Trusts, universities, research companies and business development organisations, provided interesting and valuable insights into the scale of the challenge and possible solutions. From the need to ensure that pressures on the curriculum don't eclipse the skills and attributes that employers most need young people to develop, to the importance of employers having high expectations of students. There was also significant discussion of the need to find opportunities to set real problems for students of all ages to solve so as to

create a sense of purpose and generate excitement around the subject.

Speaking at the event, Stuart commented: "To train young people to be chemists they also need to possess the skills of a good scientist. Vocational training can be a really useful tool to help make sure that young scientists have the necessary practical skills to progress within the industry. To enable vocational training to work though, we need greater connections between employers and universities and more part-time science degrees, but universities can only offer these if industry supports and encourages students towards this route."

High Force Research has recently appointed a STEM co-ordinator to help encourage local youngsters to pursue careers in the chemical and pharmaceutical industry. Keep reading to find out more!

Calling all budding Einsteins!



High Force Research's new STEM co-ordinator, Senior R&D and GMP Chemist Iain Lawson

HFR has appointed its first ever STEM co-ordinator, Iain Lawson, to help encourage local youngsters to pursue careers in the chemical and pharmaceutical industry.

Iain, a Senior R&D and GMP Chemist, who has worked at HFR for five years, will be responsible for developing our outreach programme to local schools, colleges and universities. Iain, whose research has helped contribute towards the development and manufacture of treatments for Alzheimer's, was a natural choice having volunteered to facilitate talks, presentations and activities for local schools for many years.

Commenting on his appointment, Iain said: "I'm delighted to have the opportunity to help encourage more students to consider careers in science. There are so many different roles and specialisms for young people to consider, the possibilities really are endless, but often career routes within the industry aren't obvious.

"I really believe that science should be fun. After all it's messy and lots of things go bang! But best of all you get to discover things. I'm where I am today because of a number of inspirational and engaging teachers and mentors who got me hooked on science. If I didn't pass on what I've learnt to young people, what's the point?"

HFR expands its new laboratory at the Wilton Centre!

After opening a new laboratory at the Wilton Centre in Redcar, near Middlesbrough earlier this year, High Force Research has recently expanded its laboratory space at the 75-acre world-renowned business and science park.



High Force Research's Dr Neil Sim, Research Leader at the Wilton Centre

Located in the heart of the North East chemical industry, the new laboratory space has proved to be an ideal setting and features research facilities custom designed for chemical development.

High Force Research's Dr Neil Sim said, "One of the reasons we selected the new laboratory space at the Wilton Centre was because we knew there was potential to expand, which is really important as our Bowburn site is now full. As we're in the process of recruiting more chemists to join our existing team based at the Wilton Centre, including two newly qualified PhD students from Newcastle University, it was the ideal time to look at expanding.

"The location is great with excellent facilities including a restaurant and gym, and we're already finding there are lots of networking and collaboration possibilities with other research-orientated businesses based on the site."

Fluorescent Retinoid test kits prove a big hit!



Our Fluorescent Retinoid sample test kits, produced by High Force Research and Durham University have been flying off the shelves.

The sample test kits, which contain three Fluorescent Retinoid derivatives, have been requested by research organisations as far afield as Brazil and the USA, as well as numerous institutions across the UK.

Retinoids are very powerful molecules controlling cell proliferation, cell differentiation and cell death. The human body produces and controls extremely small amounts of retinoid at any one time.

The synthetic retinoid compounds are both highly stable and highly fluorescent and as a result can be used as 'visual probes' providing a completely new way of observing drug and biological behaviour.

If you would like to receive a free Fluorescent Retinoid sample kit, please contact Dr Stella James at stellajames@highforcerearch.com

High Force Research gives Newcastle University Postgraduate – and local publican – a career head start!

As part of our commitment to champion young talent in the industry, High Force Research has supported Newcastle University Postgraduate, Jennifer Wallis, to complete her Chemistry EngD.

Jenny, who is set to complete her EngD by the end of this year has spent the last four years studying the synthesis of fluorescent dyes for use as imaging agents. Her research, which has been undertaken with EngD supervisor Dr Lee J. Higham of Newcastle University School of Chemistry, has been co-funded by High Force Research and the EPSRC EngD programme.

Jenny, who also co-owns The Manor House Inn, is keen to pursue a career in business development within the science industry. She said: "I've always been fascinated by science and the numerous different career paths that you can follow. After achieving my chemistry degree and MPhil I was keen to continue and complete my EngD but without the funding for my position, which was provided by High Force Research, this would never have been possible."

Dr Stella James commented: "We're delighted to have been able to provide support for Jenny's EngD at Newcastle University. The research she has undertaken, along with Lee, could have some fascinating applications and we look forward to continuing to work with Jenny as she forges ahead in her scientific career."



Dr Stella James with Newcastle University Postgraduate Jennifer Wallis who will shortly complete her Chemistry EngD, which has been co-funded by High Force Research

Jenny is the eighth student to have been supported during their undergraduate or postgraduate studies by High Force Research. Their talents have a direct impact on our sector in the region, with many going on to gain employment with companies across the North East of England, including High Force Research.

High Force Research heads stateside!

Dr Stella James recently flew to New Jersey to the Pharmaceutical ChemOutsourcing 2016 conference and exhibition, which brings together buyers and suppliers from leading pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies.

This is the second year that High Force Research has been represented at the conference, which is a vital forum for developing relationships in one of the world's largest pharmaceutical and biotechnology markets.

Speaking after the conference, Stella said: "It was a great opportunity to extend our network in the US further and develop a number of key relationships for HFR. As one of the largest USA-based shows

for chemists and business development professionals in the pharmaceutical and biotech sectors, Pharmaceutical ChemOutsourcing has proved a really valuable route for us to meet with potential US clients and partners. From our UK base we are now increasingly working with clients from around the globe."

In the coming months High Force Research is going to be represented at a number of European conferences and events. We'll

be attending CPhI, Barcelona on the 4th – 6th October, and ELRIG, Liverpool on the 13th-14th October, before we head to BIO-Europe, Cologne in November and PharmaOutsourcing 2016, Stockholm in December.

If you are attending any of the above events please do get in touch to let us know, we'd be keen to catch up. Please contact Dr Stella James at stellajames@highforceresearch.com



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