

HGS Students inspired by NHS Heroes



Over the course of the coronavirus pandemic, much has been discussed about the impact of the crisis on healthcare and education. For some remarkable students at Heckmondwike Grammar School, however, the pandemic and the dedicated response of NHS staff have provided inspiration to further their education and pursue careers in frontline healthcare.

The school is celebrating a bumper year of applications to read medicine and nursing, with 28 students currently holding offers to read these subjects at a range of UK universities. Speaking to the students, it is clear that the heroic service and self-sacrifice of frontline NHS professionals has proved a real spur to their sense of vocation.

Hasnain Nawaz, who is holding an offer to read Medicine and Surgery at Lancaster University, spoke with pride of how, "I am so excited for the future ahead for me as a Doctor, to support the brilliant NHS and health service team and to really make the future a better and brighter place for people in the health service."

Expressing similar sentiments, Natasha Clegg, who aspires to read Mental Health Nursing at the University of Manchester, reflected on how, "the Coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns have emphasised the prominent issue of mental health... my desire is to work compassionately in an environment where every single day I can make a difference to people's lives and help them to regain their purpose."

Such community mindedness also informed Mariam Helal's application to read Medicine. She comments how "a career as a doctor offers the unique opportunity to pursue interests in science and research whilst simultaneously being able to positively impact people, society, and local communities." Mariam is holding two offers to read Medicine, at Hull-York Medical School and Newcastle University.

The school's 24 medics and 4 nurses are joined by 35 other students who hold offers to study healthcare-related degrees, in subjects ranging from audiology and dentistry to optometry and pharmacy. Taken together, this means that over 30% of the school's university applicants are committed to degrees and future careers in fields related to healthcare.

Speaking on behalf of the school, headteacher Peter Roberts commented how, "The school is tremendously proud of the students' achievements, which are testament not only to their ability, but their typical 'Heckmondwike' work ethic and character. This has been a difficult year for everybody, but despite this, our students have not only been very successful, but have chosen a career of serving society and prioritising the needs of others – an admirable quality."