

Campion Scholarship Recipient Maria Kouridaki



How has the Campion Scholarship had an impact your life?

If someone were to ask me to find one thing that has shaped my life and has played a major role in making me who I am now, I would say without any hesitation: the Campion scholarship. I am in the lucky position to say this because the scholarship opened doors to me that I would not have considered before. First of all, Campion School is an amazing environment, providing pupils with a high-quality, well-rounded education combined with physical exercise and many extra-curricular activities which enable pupils to acquire versatile knowledge and discover themselves and their actual talents and desires. Apart from that, Campion School is a genuinely British-style school, which as the same time maintains its philhellenism. Hence, I am honoured to say that the Campion School Scholarship prepared me in the best possible way for living and studying abroad not only through my school education but also by shaping me as a person, providing me with a life experience that I would not have had otherwise.

How has your experience at Dundee been and what do you think are the main differences between the experience you are having and the experience you would have had at a Greek university?

Living and studying somewhere else other than your birthplace, by itself, can greatly broaden your horizons. Of course, there are difficulties and challenges that someone has to cope with but the amount of new experiences and knowledge you get from the new culture, people, lifestyle as well as new opportunities is so intriguing and valuable that it is totally worth it. Dundee, as a small but cosy town where students from three nearby universities reside, can be characterised as one of the best places to get such a life experience since it offers a lifestyle that allows you to concentrate on your studies while at the same time providing a lively social life and great variety of extra-curricular activities. As a university Dundee is, in my opinion, of an excellent academic level and one of the leading European institutions in life sciences, which is what my course is related to. In addition to the well-organised modules and the excellent academic staff, the laboratories are fully equipped as well. I feel very lucky I was awarded a scholarship which enabled me to pursue my studies at this university because, apart from it being a great opportunity, it appears to have been a better choice. The Greek crisis has resulted in numerous strikes of academics in Greece as well as deficiencies in university laboratories of reactants and equipment.

What comments do you have, if any, regarding the possibility of the Campion Scholarship raising the hopes of its recipients to study in the UK when they cannot afford further education abroad?

Some people would think that they would not be able to afford the life that comes after the Champion scholarship, involving university fees and the expenses of living abroad. My answer to this is “where there is a will, there is a way”. The truth is that there are multiple solutions that you can choose from if you have the ability and the will to study abroad. In Scotland the fees are funded by a European service called SAAS, while in England you can be awarded a student loan that you start to pay off only as soon as you start working and you are actually getting paid a certain minimum amount of money. As for covering living expenses, getting a part-time job in the UK is easy and manageable while studying if you have good time management. Bursaries for students are also available in many universities. Gap year is another option during which you can work to save some money. However, life in most of the towns in the UK is not much more expensive than life in Greece, and there are always deals and cheaper services provided for students.

What are your current plans for when you graduate from Dundee in mid-2017?

This is a very interesting question and I am actually asking myself the same thing! I know for sure that I want to specialise in Synthetic Chemistry and Pharmacology and one of the areas of great interest for me are neurodegenerative and auto-immune disorders. I have applied to several related masters and doctoral courses; however, I don't know yet what exactly I am going to do. I am currently enjoying the freedom of choice in this endless sea of opportunities from all around the world!

Maria Kouridaki
Alumna 2014