Entrepreneurship award: the shortlist revealed

Timothy Barnes, Director of UCL Advances, announces the seven nominees for the first UCL/Business Reporter Medal for Entrepreneurship

UCL AND BUSINESS REPORTER are proud to launch the UCL Medal for Entrepreneurship to recognise an entrepreneur who has made a real difference by using their business skills to give back to society.

Encouraging entrepreneurship is important at UCL (University College London). We run one of the largest centres for entrepreneurship at any university in the world, supporting student start-ups as well as small and medium-sized businesses. We help anyone who wants to learn about, start or grow a business. Our activities build on a history of entrepreneurial alumni that includes the founders of PwC, Giraffe restaurants and polling firm YouGov.

Our graduates have set up many new firms – recent success stories include coffee waste recycling company bio-bean (www.bio-bean.com), which employs 20 people and has a production plant in Cambridgeshire. Like other student businesses, bio-bean received support from UCL Advances (www.ucl.ac.uk/advances), the centre for entrepreneurship at UCL. UCL’s excellent research output gives us a phenomenal base of know-how that we can draw on when seeking new business ideas or expertise to help existing ventures.

We recently asked Business Reporter readers to nominate entrepreneurs who have used their skills to provide opportunity for others. We are looking for someone who meets three main criteria:

- Candidates need to have founded and sustained a successful business.
- They must show that they have “given back” by applying their entrepreneurial skills for the benefit of others – more than simply writing a cheque.
- They need to be active in the UK. They do not need to be British but their business and “giving back” activities should be here.

After careful consideration of the entries, we came up with our shortlist of nominees. We will now hold a judging panel, and the winner will be announced in 2016.