



Guests enjoy 'Faster, Higher, Stronger' fundraising dinner at Northumbria University

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Paralympic medal-winning heroes celebrated at Northumbria University

Northumbria University has raised tens of thousands of pounds to support continued excellence in disability sport after four of its students brought home six medals from the Paralympic Games in Rio.

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An impressive £92,000 was raised at a special black tie event to formally celebrate the success of the University's Paralympian students and alumnus Stephen Miller MBE at the 2016 Games.

The student athletes were guests of honour at Northumbria's fundraising dinner and auction 'Faster, Higher, Stronger: A Celebration of Sporting Excellence' which was held at the University's City Campus, in Newcastle.

The money raised will go towards the University's 'Faster, Higher, Stronger' fund, providing Disability Sport Scholarships for elite athletes studying and training at Northumbria; research opportunities to create and apply knowledge about sport performance, health and wellbeing; and specialist equipment and technology to enable more students to participate in sport at Northumbria.

Leadership and Management students Harriet Lee and Claire Cashmore joined Andrew Mullen – who began the same course at Northumbria in September – as part of Team GB in Rio. Meanwhile, Sport Management student, Taka Suzuki, represented his home country of Japan in the pool.

Northumbria University's Chancellor and one of Britain's most successful Paralympian athletes, Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, was guest speaker at the event.

She said: “I am incredibly proud of our students at Northumbria University who went to Rio and won medals.

“Investment in disability sport is really important because we have an amazing Paralympic team who, in Rio, finished second in the overall medal table. However, we need to keep working on that to make sure that we stay as one of the best countries in the world.

“It is also vitally important that athletes get an education because their sporting career is not going to last forever and so balancing training and study is a fantastic opportunity for a young person.”

Harriet brought home a silver medal in the Women's SB9 100m breaststroke swimming event at last year's Paralympic Games, while fellow GB athlete and Northumbria student Andrew stormed his way to a silver medal in the Men's S5 50m backstroke. Andrew also scored two bronze medals, one in the Men's S5 200m freestyle and the other in the Men's S5 100 freestyle event.

Claire, who has been competing for Great Britain for 12 years, won a silver medal in the 100m breaststroke and was part of the Para-swim team alongside Steph Millward, Steph Slater and Alice Tai who took gold in the women's 4x100m medley. Claire was made an MBE in January 2017 for her services to swimming to cap off a hugely successful year for her.

Northumbria alumnus Stephen Miller MBE won bronze in the club throw at the Paralympics in Rio. The former world record holder is one of Britain's most successful Paralympians, having represented his country for 20 years.

Taka narrowly missed out on a medal at this year's Games, finishing fourth in both the Men's SM4 150m – with a new lifetime best and a new Japanese record – and the Men's SB3 50m breaststroke event.

The fundraising dinner and auction showcased the University's prowess as a leading UK institution for performance in sport and raised funds to support continued excellence in disability sport and exercise research at Northumbria.

The event was hosted by Northumbria alumnus Scott Hastings, former Scotland rugby international and British Lions team member, alongside Fabulous Flournoy, player and head coach of Newcastle Eagles.

Professor Andrew Wathey CBE, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of Northumbria University, said: “It is a source of immense pride for Northumbria University to have medal winning Paralympians as part of our student body and alumni. Such is their achievement, that if Northumbria University appeared in the official Paralympic 2016 medal table, we would be 51st out of 83 –ahead of the likes of Czech Republic, Denmark and Argentina.

“As a University, not only does Northumbria excel in competitive and elite sport, but we have real and developing strength in our sport-related research, in our degree programmes, in our exceptional facilities, and in our work with partners. Our students who won medals in Rio can act as a beacon for the ambition and aspirations of the institution as a whole.”

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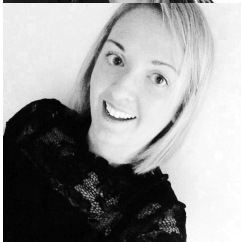


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