

5 to watch

In this year's edition of Five to Watch, we meet City alumni going places in the worlds of television, law, optometry, management and technology.



Jeanette
Cowley

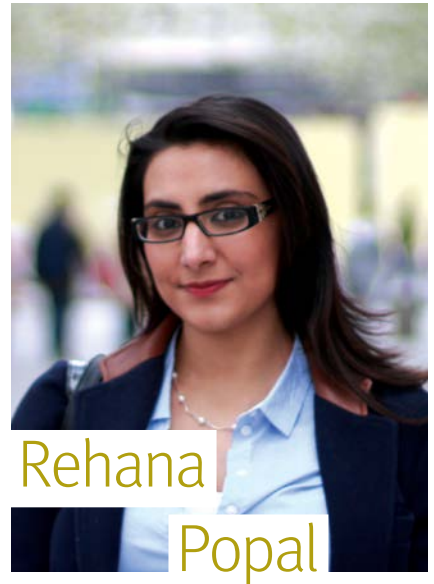
MBA, 1982

Jeanette Cowley is a Managing Director for Go For Growth. Her business helps companies to gain the most from their team and resolve complicated management challenges. "I consider myself a mediator and team coach as my research and client work is about understanding intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, dispute resolution and focusing energy on what matters. Voicing possibilities by drawing on your personal energy sits at the core of everything I do."

Before founding Go For Growth in 2006, Jeanette was the Group HR Director for a FTSE 100 business that employed 90,000 staff worldwide. She was also a Managing Director at Marsh and Head of Human Resources for the UK and EMEA Operations at American Express.

Jeanette believes that the time she spent studying at City gave her the courage to pursue her dreams. "Completing my MBA at an early age taught me how to ask senior people leading questions without feeling inferior, but also developed my ability to analyse problems and sparked my love for debate. This early experience has affected me throughout my career and is still part of who I am."

Jeanette has also started writing a book on reflective leadership entitled *Breathe: How Do You Want To Spend Your Next 20 Years?*



Rehana
Popal

BSc INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, 2011;
GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN LAW, 2012;
BAR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING COURSE, 2013

Rehana Popal is the first practising female Afghan at the Bar. A barrister at Mansfield 1 Gray's Inn Chambers, she specialises in human rights, public and civil law having initially arrived in the UK as a refugee with her family. "My achievements so far serve as a constant reminder that nothing is impossible," she says. "But this is only because I am fortunate enough to live in the UK. If I had stayed in Afghanistan, my life could have turned out very differently."

Rehana graduated in 2011 from City's School of Arts & Social Sciences with a BSc in International Politics. She proceeded to study for her Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL), which she obtained at The City Law School in 2012. She remained at City, qualifying as a barrister after completing the Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC) in 2013. "City helped me develop the intellectual maturity to challenge, critique and entertain multiple truths," she says.

While studying, Rehana was the recipient of the Major Exhibition and Duke of Edinburgh Scholarships sponsored by the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple. She was also the winner of the Bar Pro Bono Award in 2013.

Apart from joining the ranks of Queen's Counsel, Rehana aims to work with the Afghan government regarding the rule of law. "I would love to go back and serve my country, being part of a generation that must bring transparency and trust back in the justice system," she says. "If everything else fails, my natural inclination towards politics can perhaps lead to Afghan presidential ambitions."



Dr Irene
Ctori

BSc OPTOMETRY, 1994;
MSc CLINICAL OPTOMETRY, 2012;
PhD OPTOMETRY AND VISUAL SCIENCE, 2016

Dr Irene Ctori is a Lecturer in Optometry and Visual Science at City and has 20 years' experience of clinical optometric practice, in both the private sector and in specialised hospital optometry services.

Her journey at City started with a BSc in Optometry in 1991. "I was always very academically focused and only visited the main university building to attend my mathematics lectures and to go to the Students' Union," Irene says.

After obtaining her degree, she was encouraged to further her studies, but decided to spend a few years practising her trade. Ten years later she returned to City as a postgraduate student and pursued her passion for teaching. "I have always found City to be a warm and friendly place to be and I feel I have been continuously supported to achieve the best I can."

After being awarded a scholarship, Irene completed a PhD, which gave her the opportunity to travel to conferences in France and the US to present her work. But the real highlight of her career so far was becoming a full-time Lecturer in 2016 after gaining several years of teaching experience as a Visiting Lecturer. "I love being a Lecturer. I really enjoy being able to bring my clinical skills into my lectures, but also integrating innovative technology," she says. "Equally I get real satisfaction from conducting research and publishing my work. I hope that my enthusiasm for the job will remain the same for many years to come."



James
Olav Hill

BSc PSYCHOLOGY, 2011

James is a shooting producer and director working on award-winning factual entertainment television shows in the UK and the US. He produces stories, directs scenes and films and edits the footage that forms the final show.

After completing his bachelor degree in Psychology in 2011, he followed his passion for storytelling and filming. He became a researcher working for RDF Television and Redhouse TV casting contestants, shooting, logging and editing.

Following his time as a researcher, James was appointed a Shooting Assistant Producer for Channel 4's *Double Your House For Half The Money* and *Damned Designs: Don't Demolish My Home* series and a Director for the BBC's *Eat Well For Less*. His most recent experience includes being a Production Director for Discovery's highest rating factual entertainment shows, *Homestead Rescue* and *Gold Rush*.

James believes that City gave him the foundation he needed to pursue a career in television. "Aside from the technical skills of operating a camera, the essence of my job is understanding and working closely with people," he says. "My degree helped me become more empathetic, create authentic connections with others, understand the importance of airing out issues and providing follow-up care and support."

At the age of 26, James intends to keep learning with every new show, with the hope of eventually becoming an executive producer and exerting more control over multiple shows at once.



Pilgrim
Beart

BSc COMPUTER ENGINEERING, 1988

Pilgrim's creativity and passion for technology date back to early childhood. "When I was growing up our family went for walks most Sundays and I fell into conversation with my father about ideas and inventions," he says. "I noticed other people had had great ideas and made them happen. This inspired me to wonder whether I could do the same."

Thirty years later Pilgrim is a successful technology entrepreneur with a string of startups under his belt, each serving from 1 to 100 million customers. After a degree in Computer Engineering in the 1980s, Pilgrim designed innovative computer systems at startups in Cambridge and Oxford. "My degree rounded out my knowledge by exposing me to areas where I was weak. It also came in useful in 1992 when I wanted to travel as it would have been impossible to get a US visa without a degree," he says.

After spending the next six years leading technology teams at three startups in Silicon Valley, he returned to Cambridge where he co-founded five companies that developed innovative concepts for indoor location systems, multi-band smartphone antenna systems and wireless charging. "I have always been motivated by trying to see what the 'next big thing' could be and trying to play a part in making it happen. It is often hard to get from A to B, but it is our mission to make things better."