

## EDITORIAL

### Sehr geehrte Alumni der Universität Bremen,



This is the first newsletter in 2016, and I wish you a happy new year!

After our general meeting in October paved the way for our association's name change into 'Alumni of the University of Bremen' by amending the statutes, our appearance has adapted to the change. We now have a new logo that – like our name – more strongly emphasizes our connection to the University of Bremen. You can find the new logo on top of this newsletter.

I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter, and I hope to be able to welcome you in person at one of our upcoming events.

With best wishes from campus,

Derk Schönfeld

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## New Trust Foundations at the University of Bremen

“There are various circumstances such as diseases, accidents or wars that take away people's future prospects and threaten their existence,” Iris and Hartmut Jürgens state. They are the founders of the 'Iris and Hartmut Jürgens Foundation Opportunity for a New Life'. In December 2015, their new funding institution was included into the foundations of the University of Bremen. “Our foundation seeks to offer people a way out, to give them the chance of winning back their quality of life,” the founders explain. The founding of ‘Opportunity for a New Life’ was triggered by their own liminal experience that Hartmut Jürgens has a life-threatening pulmonary disease and their political and social commitment.

The trust foundation is meant to mainly support the university's diagnostic and therapeutic research as well as service projects for refugees.

Hartmut Jürgens and the university thereby maintain a long-standing relationship. After his PhD in mathematics under Professor Heinz-Otto Peitgen,

he managed the computer graphics lab ‘Dynamic Systems’ for twenty years.

Together with his wife Karin, Heinz-Otto Peitgen



Iris and Hartmut Jürgens signing the contract for their new Trust Foundation „Opportunity for a New Life“.

also showed his commitment to the University of Bremen by way of a new foundation. “We owe so much to the University of Bremen that we want to give back something by means of our targeted support,” Karin and Heinz-Otto Peitgen say about the founding of the ‘Karin and Heinz-Otto Peitgen Foundation’. They wish to support applied re-

search aiming at digital innovations in particular in the medical field.

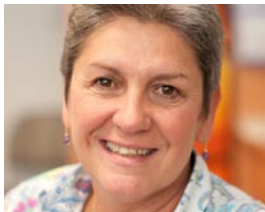
For more than 35 years, Heinz-Otto Peitgen was a professor of mathematics at the University of Bremen. In 1995, he founded the institute now called Fraunhofer MEVIS – an institute for image-based medicine – and in 1997, he started a company together with Hartmut Jürgens that has been listed on the stock exchange as MeVis Medical Solutions AG since 2007.

## „Networking from, for and with Alumni“

### Refugees and Integration in Bremen – Discussion on the Current Situation

Everyone is talking about the refugee crisis. Does it exist? What is Bremen's approach on the situation in which more and more refugees are coming to Germany? What short-term reactions are possible, and how will integrating these people work in the long term?

As part of our series ‘Networking of, for and with alumni’, our alumna Libuse Cerna, chairwoman of the Bremen Council for Integration, invites those who are interested



Our alumna Libuse Cerna invites to a discussion about Integration. © Bremen Council for Integration

to a discussion of these and other questions. Following the discussion, the usual get together with snacks will provide the possibility for a personal exchange among participants.

**Location:** Europa-Punkt Bremen, Am Markt 20, 28195 Bremen (next to the Bremische Bürgerschaft)

**Date and Time:** February 16, 2015; 6:00 p.m.

**Participants:** Limited to a maximum of 40 people.

### Our Visit of the bremer shakespeare company

On March 3, 2016, former university rector Professor Dr.

Wilfried Müller invites us to visit the bremer shakespeare company. From 5:00 p.m. onward, we have the opportunity to look behind the scenes of the theater. The staff has been running the Theater am Leibnizplatz for over thirty years in self-management. Due to its continuity and high-quality performances, it is considered an excellent example of an independent theater with repertory productions. Their focus lies on the works of William Shakespeare and his contemporaries. The executive board and the company are looking forward to giving the Alumni members a tour of their theater with its new stage technology, which has been installed during the remodeling in 2013. At the get together at ‘Falstaff’, alumni will have the possibility to talk to the actors of the company.

The official end of the event is at 7:00 p.m. However, we are offered the opportunity to attend the 7:30 performance of ‘Macbeth’ (new production from February 2016). If you are interested in joining, please contact us. You will be granted the reduced group admission fee of 19 euros.

**Location:** Theater am Leibnizplatz & Falstaff, Schulstr. 26, 28199 Bremen

**Time:** 5:00 p.m.

**Participants:** Limited to a maximum of 25 people.

**Please register for the events on our website ([www.uni-bremen.de/alumni/Veranstaltungen](http://www.uni-bremen.de/alumni/Veranstaltungen)).**

You want to offer an event as well? Then get in touch with us!

# 6 QUESTIONS FOR...

In every newsletter, we ask a member six questions about his or her time in Bremen. For this issue, we interviewed Dr. Eduardo Gallestey. If you would also like to appear in this section, please contact Jacqueline Sprindt at the office at [alumni@uni-bremen.de](mailto:alumni@uni-bremen.de).

**E**duardo Gallestey was a student in the department of mathematics at the University of Bremen in the 1990s. After graduating, he joined the department of engineering at the Australian National University in Canberra. In February 2000, he took a position at ABB in Switzerland, a company for power and automation technology. Currently, he is the head of product management and R&D for the product group 'Minerals Processing, Cement and Aluminum' there. Additionally, he is a lecturer for nonlinear control at ETH Zurich.



© Dr. Eduardo Gallestey

## 1. When did you study at the University of Bremen and what were your reasons to study there?

I arrived in Bremen in September 1994 as recipient of a DAAD scholarship. My goal was to make a PhD in Control and Optimization, applied to Renewable Energy. I did not know much about Bremen as such (except the story about the musicians), but coming from the com-

munist Cuba, having a scholarship in Germany sounded like a dream becoming reality. I was looking forward to tough academic challenges, but also very curious to see how capitalism actually works and feels.

## 2. What is your most important memory of the University of Bremen?

I lived over 4 years in Bremen and had of course good and less good moments. But my most important recollection is the kindness with which people received me. At no point I felt excluded or not being a part of my surrounding. Bremen people opened their doors and supported me at all points. On my side, I tried to correspond by working hard and not to disappoint.

## 3. Who or what has influenced your career the most?

Without doubt, Diederich Hinrichsen from the Regelungstechnik (Mathe Fachbereich) was my main Bezugsperson. Prof Hinrichsen (Didi as we all called him!) was tough at times, but

always prepared to give a hand when he saw we were doing our best. His work ethic was also most impressive, and showed me the path to success.

## 4. What advice would you like to give to the students of the University of Bremen?

Try hard to make the best of the tremendous opportunity to work in such great work environment. Do not take it for granted!

## 5. What do you associate with the University of Bremen? Please complete the following sentence: "The University of Bremen is..."

...the place where I laid the foundation for my current career, where I met some of my best friends, and which I think of with gratitude."

## 6. What does Alumni of the University of Bremen e.V. stand for in your eyes? Please complete the following sentence: "In my eyes, Alumni of the University of Bremen e.V. is..."

...the link to a past time I am very fond of."

"My most important recollection is the kindness with which people received me."

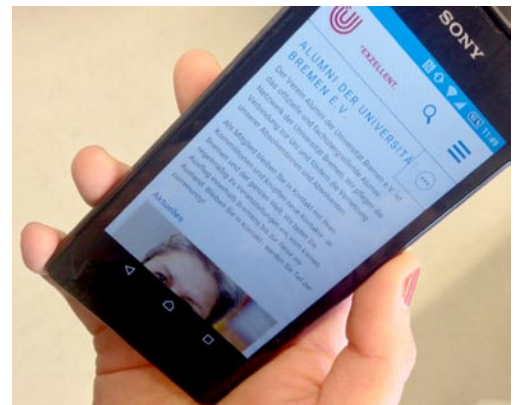
## University of Bremen Professor Coordinates German Research Project

**F**or the next three years, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) will support the research project of the German research alliance RACE ('Regional Atlantic Circulation and Global Change') with 4.4 million euros. The alliance has been researching the impact of the Atlantic circulation on the climate and on coastal protection since 2012. As of January 2016, the research project will be coordinated by Monika Rhein from the Center of Marine Environmental Sciences (MARUM) and the Institute for Environmental Physics (IUP) at the University of

Bremen. "Systematic long-lasting changes in circulation in the Atlantic can lead to fundamental climate changes in Germany and its adjacent regions, which will have environmental and economic consequences," Monika Rhein, Bremen-based oceanographer, underlines. Additionally, the insights gained by RACE will contribute to better understanding and predicting changes in the Atlantic circulation and their role in the climate system. Furthermore, RACE will contribute to the sixth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

## Mobile Webdesign on the University's Website

**Q**uickly checking what the meal choices are, following the news in research, or looking up information on study programs on the University of Bremen website is now clear and uncomplicated on mobile devices as well, thanks to the optimization of the mobile web design. "Using the Internet with mobile devices is completely natural nowadays. About a quarter of our users access our website on mobi-



The alumni website is also available in the new design on mobile devices. © Alumni der Universität Bremen e.V.

le devices," said Dr. Martin Mehrtens, chancellor of the university, adding that, as a future-oriented university, it is essential to keep adjusting one's own technology.

## Shaping the Future Together: 6th Year of Mentoring at the University of Bremen Application Period for Managers from Bremen and Surroundings is Now Open

The mentoring program 'Fokus Berufseinstieg' is entering its sixth year. Applications are now being accepted from managers in the fields of economy, administration, and culture who would like to become mentors!

Mentors support highly committed students, graduates of the humanities or social sciences, or women in the so-called MINT subjects (Mathematics, Informatics, Natural Sciences and Technology) in their career start. The program poses an advantage not only to the students: mentors get into contact with highly qualified young professionals; an outside view on their respective business can lead to new impulses; they can share valuable knowledge and experiences with their mentees and expand their own network.

So far, 150 mentor-mentee tandems participated in the program.

Managers involved were from large groups such as Mondelez, Daimler, and swb, from medium and small companies such as the Landesbausparkasse (regional building society) Bremen, Röhlig & Co, and vRM Von Ramdohr Marketing, as well as from museums such as the Gerhard-Marcks-Haus and the Bremen art gallery (Kunsthalle Bremen).

The university is seeking interested managers with leadership experience as mentors. For the duration of ten months, between September 2016 and June 2017, they are asked to make a monthly meeting with the mentee possible as well as participation in two three-hour workshops (at the beginning and at the end).

The application deadline for mentors is March 15, 2016. You can find the application forms and further information [HERE](#).

## More Biodiversity on Campus

'Bremen summt' (roughly 'Bremen buzzes') is the title of a project of the BUND (Friends of the Earth Germany) promoting the planting of bee-friendly trees all over Bremen. Therefore, ten new fruit trees have been planted at the university between the Sportturn and the sports grounds. The planting campaign was sponsored by the Heinz-Wieker-Foundation,

will soon provide food for wild and honey bees as well as insects. Additionally, they create a new habitat for birds and mammals. The project aims at increasing biodiversity on campus in general. For many years, there have already been projects promoting nature near the drop tower as well as along the Hochschulring, such as the sandy meadows with deadwood



Heike Schumacher (BUND), Joachim Orlok and Dr. Doris Sövegjarto-Wigbers (f.l.)

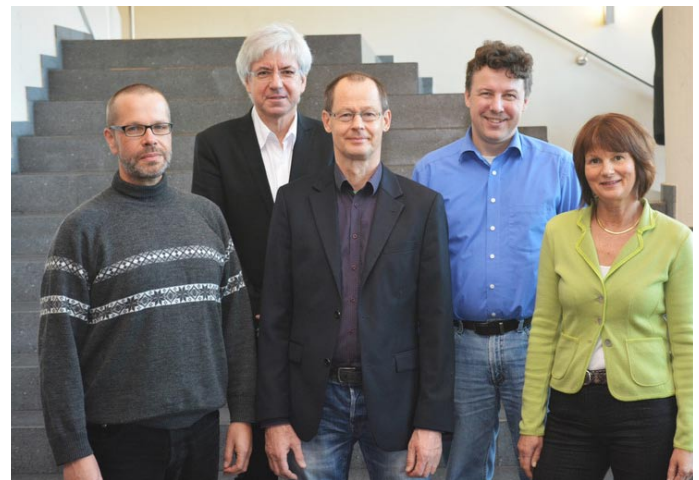
which stands for numerous nature conservation projects. These trees

and viper's bugloss behind the SFG-building as a food resource for wild bees. "That way, little by little, we will bring more nature into the city," Heike Schumacher, biologist and research associate at the BUND, explained.

## Five New Members of the DFG Review Boards are from Bremen

No fewer than five professors from Bremen University were elected into the biggest research funding organization in Europe – the German Research Foundation (DFG). The five professors will begin their legislative period of four years in spring 2016 and every single one will collaborate

with 'Political Scientist Professor Frank Nullmeier, who concentrates on the theory and constitution of the welfare state, was elected into the same board. In the field of the natural sciences, environmental researcher Professor Justus Notholt will join the board 'Atmospheric Science and



The elected professors: Wolfgang Bach, Frank Nullmeier, Justus Notholt, Rolf Drechsler und Karin Gottschall (f.l.).

in a review board. The DFG review boards belong to the most important advisory bodies for the allocation of DFG research funds.

From now on, Professor Katrin Gottschall, professor of sociology with a focus on gender policies, will support the review board 'Social Sciences' as an expert in the subject area 'Empirical So-

Oceanography', and Wolfgang Bach is a new member of the board 'Geochemistry, Mineralogy and Crystallography'. Rolf Drechsler, computer scientist in Bremen, will from now on bring his know-how on computer architecture and embedded systems to the review board 'Computer Science'.

## University of Bremen Among Top Scientific Institutions

Again, the University of Bremen was named one of the top universities internationally. 'QS Top 50 Under 50', a global ranking for universities founded since 1965, annually decides which universities are among the best globally. It has been established to improve comparability and illustrate the accomplishments of a university by taking into account its tradition. For the ranking, the respective universities are assessed based on research, teaching, and interna-

tionalization across different categories. The University of Bremen reached rank 44 (2014: 45) and thus ranks among the three best young universities in Germany. "The ranking of young universities shows that we are among the top scientific institutions internationally," Rector Professor Bernd Scholz-Reiter explains. "This is all the more pleasing as the University of Bremen is successful while being very efficient in their use of funds and, furthermore, as it does not have a medical school."



## Student Organization 'Refugees Welcome' — A Little Insight into the Recently Awarded Project

**T**he student organization 'Refugees Welcome' was honored in 2015 for their great commitment in working with refugees. In this interview, two of its active members, Samira Alssaedi and Jessica Nuske, provide an insight into the organization and give details on their service project.

**Question:** The student organization 'Refugees Welcome' has been in existence since summer 2015. How did it start?

**Jessica:** Our organization was established at about the same time that refugees were housed on campus. We suddenly were direct 'neighbors' with many refugees, and many people at Bremen University wanted to help. At our first meeting, thirty people showed up who wanted to get going right away and who brought forward their own ideas.

**What is the idea behind the project?**

**Samira:** The organization consists of smaller work groups each with a focus on its own, such as 'Culture' or 'German', which offers activities in its respective area, like painting or language courses or playing soccer. Once a week, the entire group gets together in an open plenary session. First and foremost, we as an organization want to make a difference and actively do something. We want to support the refugees with what we do.

**Who is involved – only students, or university employees as well?**

**Jessica:** In addition to us students, there are also researchers and externals who are actively involved. We are generally a colorful blend without hierarchies among ourselves.

**What motivates you and the other people involved in working with the refugees?**

**Samira:** We want to help the people here and counteract the growth of populism! It is our goal to create a common ground and set an example as an open culture.

**What role do you play as students?**

**Jessica:** I believe that young people especially are considered a welcome change by the refugees. Often times, helpers are older, which creates an age-related distance. It is more common to meet among young people and do something together. It makes the integration process somewhat easier. We students want to facilitate the refugees' first steps.

**How does cooperating with the university work?**

**Samira:** We work together with the rectorate for instance. They provide us with rooms or let us use the copy machines. Then there is the 'round table', at which, next to the active members of our organization, the university management gets together with university institutions and organizations and discusses financing or demand.

**You organize German classes, sports events and plan cultural excursions. Was there an activity that stayed in your minds especially?**

**Jessica:** In summer, we organized the event 'Soccer and Barbecue' for male refugee minors at the Weserterrassen. The boys were more fascinated in the end with the 'art of barbecuing' so that soccer played only a minor part. In general, the refugees are very interested in and curious about our culture.

**Next to the positive experiences, have there been negative ones as well?**

**Samira:** One of the positive aspects is definitely the openness of the refugees. They are outgoing and show an interest in us – that way we have fun together. On the other hand, it is difficult to deal with their frustration. They want to go to school, learn our language or find a job, yet have to endure long periods of waiting. These forced waits and constantly being put off depress them understandably. It is an uncomfortable situation for us as expectations cannot always be fulfilled.

**How do you handle such negative experiences?**

**Jessica:** We try to cheer them up and do not let the negative aspects get to us. In those moments, it is more helpful to give them new perspectives and refer them to our offers such as the German classes where they have the opportunity to learn our language.

**What are the refugees' reactions to the organization's work?**

**Samira:** They react positively and often show their appreciation. We have become one with them and ourselves en-

joy the activities such as table soccer etc. The more often you are involved, the closer the connection to each other naturally gets.

**What can be improved in working with the refugees?**

**Jessica:** Unfortunately, the limit has been reached on the bureaucratic and administrative levels. We can complain about the hygiene conditions, the cold, and the lack of privacy time and again; unfortunately nothing much changes. Nevertheless, we continue to seek new members in order to further broaden our array of activities.

**Why is supporting the refugees important?**

**Samira:** I believe that otherwise integration would not work. Volunteer groups contribute to improving the overall situation that the government seems incapable of handling. Possibly, more parallel societies would have developed otherwise. Germany is not battling the so-called 'refugee crisis' but a bureaucracy and administrative crisis. Organizations such as ours compensate for the tasks at which the government fails. Otherwise, nothing would get done!

**What does the organization's work look like for 2016?**

**Jessica:** We want to continue supporting the refugees and are looking forward to the activities in summer in particular! Apart from that, the constant change and the current dynamics prevent future plans. We have to constantly reorganize ourselves depending on the circumstances.

**The organization invites interested people to join their Open Plenary Session: Mondays, 2 to 4 p.m. on the AStA floor.**



Samira Alssaedi (l.) and Jessica Nuske from 'Refugees Welcome'.

## Honoring of Students

Despite tight curricula and performance pressure in their studies, many students volunteer. At the annual Christmas party of the International Office in the beginning of December, a few of these students were honored for their commitment. Previously, a cozy Christmas atmosphere had been created by the joint singing of songs as



DAAD Awards-Winner José Tomás's Cisternas Fredes.

well as a photo booth with Santa Claus and angels.

Chilean student José Tomás Cisternas Fredes, who pursues a degree in teaching, was awarded the DAAD Award 2015 for excellent performance by an international student. To him, social commitment goes hand in hand with being a student. Therefore, he supervi-

sed a group of adolescents with and without disability who made music together in a band. 29-year-old José has also been involved with the 'Bremer Förderprojekt für Kinder und Jugendliche mit Migrationshintergrund' ('Promotion of children and youth with migration background') of the education department, and is currently active at the Bremen 'foodsharing' service project, where volunteers stand up against food waste. In addition to that, he works with unaccompanied refugee minors.

Along the same lines, the student organization 'Refugees Welcome' ([Interview on page four](#)) also stands up for refugees. They received an award from the 'unifreunde' and Rector Bernd Scholz-Reiter for their civic engagement on campus. For the first time, the University of Bremen, supported by the 'unifreunde', awarded this honor for civic engagement. In a press conference, Bernd Scholz-Reiter praised the commitment of the group of more than twenty students as "unique and wonderful".

## Cooperation with Hokkaido University to be Expanded

Under the leadership of Vice-Rector Yasemin Karakaşoğlu, a delegation visited Hokkaido University in Sapporo, Japan. The marine biologist Wilhelm Hagen has been working together with his Japanese colleagues for years. Now, cooperation will expand to the departments of mathematics, law, and education among others – and the negotiations show that the expansion will continue since many additional starting points were discussed.

Among shared research interests, the focus will be on the expansion of student exchange, joint courses of study, and joint PhD procedures.

Internationalization is also of major importance at Hokkaido University. This, along with the substantial funding from the Japanese government, has led to a boom in international relations with our partner. We are, therefore, confident that a vibrant German-Japanese alumni network can develop from the partnership in the near future!

## First Research Ambassadors Nominated

Supported by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the University of Bremen is developing a global network of so-called Research Ambassadors. These ambassadors are former guest lecturers who have returned to their home university or a partner institution of Bremen University. It is their task to make known the University of Bremen to a wider public internationally, promote new research contacts, and inform young academics as well as prospective students about Bremen. In a first round, six professors from China, the USA, Cameroon, and Mexico have been selected. Next to the ambassadors fulfilling their tasks, the funds will open up the op-



Yasemin Karakaşoğlu, connector for internationality and diversity at the University of Bremen, gave the first certificate to Yanbing Mao from Shanghai University.  
© International Office, University of Bremen

portunity for them to pay another visit to the University of Bremen. As the first one, Professor Yanbing Mao from Shanghai University recently picked up his certificate.

All of the used pictures in the Newsletter are taken from the University of Bremen's press office, if not marked differently.

### About:

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