

## Honorary degree for Dr Katie Perry



At a ceremony in Guildford Cathedral on 15<sup>th</sup> July, the University of Surrey awarded an Honorary Degree to Dr Katie Perry, Chief Executive of the Daphne Jackson Trust, in recognition of her tireless efforts in making the Daphne Jackson Trust the UK's leading organization dedicated to realising the potential of returners to research careers.

The award from the University of Surrey is particularly fitting as Professor Daphne Jackson, the originator of the Trust's unique Fellowship scheme, was Head of the Physics Department while Katie was an undergraduate at Surrey. Daphne became a mentor to Katie during her time at Surrey:-

*"I did my degree and PhD here, the Physics department feels like home. Because of Daphne Jackson I decided to follow my heart into science communications, because I loved science, but I also loved communicating it."*

*"Daphne became ill during the first year of my PhD, and she called me into her office, and she said, 'Katie will you do my talks in schools for me?' I started talking to youngsters about opportunities in science and engineering."*

From this initial spark, Katie's involvement with the Trust has grown over the last 20 years. Under her leadership, the Trust has gone from strength to strength, making a significant and lasting contribution to the UK research sector:

- Daphne Jackson Fellowships have saved over 1250 years of research experience and talent from being lost from the sector – worth over £37m of gross institutional costs.
- Our Fellows go on to leverage over £23m of new research funding from national and international funders, philanthropic donors, and industry. That means on average that for every £1 invested in a Daphne Jackson Fellow, they secure nearly £2 in subsequent funding.

- Nine out of ten Fellows stay in research or teaching at least five years after they finish their Fellowship, demonstrating high levels of returner retention to the sector.
- Ten former Fellows are now Professors - a rate which is five times higher in the Daphne Jackson cohort compared with the national average.

In her acceptance speech, Katie gave some apposite advice to the assembled graduates, which drew both on her own life and the experiences of many of the Trust's Fellows:-

*I have always thought that it's a great idea to have a career plan, but it's also fine to change it, and have adventures along the way. You have to live a little to know what you want to do, and more importantly, what you don't want to do. If you see your career as a journey, then you may not always be on the fastest road to your destination, and the journey may take you along some interesting side roads. Life may throw some rocks to block your path but you will find ways to overcome them and find something you love to do.*

She also thanked those who had helped her most on her journey with the Trust:-

*"I would like to thank my family for their love and support over the years as I would not have been as successful as I am without them. They mean a great deal to me. I must also mention the Trust staff – there are 12 of us and I could not work with a better team of people."*