Govt funds global crime research centre

The Federal Government is providing $12 million funding to build a global crime prevention research and training centre at the University of Wollongong’s new Innovation Campus.

Federal Minister for Education, Science and Training Julie Bishop announced the funding for the Global Centre of Excellence for Transnational Crime Prevention (CTCP) when she visited UOW in May.

Ms Bishop’s visit was closely followed by Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, who announced 60 AusAID scholarships worth $3 million over the next three years for overseas students to study at the Centre.

Mr Downer made his announcement while at the University to present the inaugural Lecture on National and International Security, to celebrate the Government’s support for expanding the CTCP.

He said UOW was destined to become one of Asia-Pacific’s most important resources in the fight against international crime.

The Federal Government’s funding will allow a major expansion of the research and training facilities for the CTCP, which was established by UOW in 2000 with a focus on international organised criminal activities that impact on regional and global security, including narcotics and people smuggling, forensic accounting, fraud and money laundering, poaching, internet crime and identity theft.

The CTCP currently trains officers from key Australian agencies such as the Federal Police Force, and international students from 15 countries across the Asia-Pacific Region.

It will also provide an important flagship research centre and building for the Innovation Campus.

FULL STORIES - PAGES 4 AND 5
Historic community foundations created a special relationship

University of Wollongong Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton reflects on the special relationship the University has with its community:

The University of Wollongong was established in response to a campaign by a community that was determined to have its own University.

There had been a Wollongong Division of the NSW University of Technology (later UNSW) since 1951, but that wasn’t considered good enough.

The Illawarra community – aided by the region’s major manufacturing industries – fought hard to create its own University, raising £188,000 in 1959-60 (matched by State and Federal Governments) to construct the first buildings. The Wollongong University College (still a division of UNSW) opened in those buildings in 1962, followed by a persistent campaign for autonomy that resulted in full independence for UOW in 1975.

With such a foundation, it is not surprising that UOW and its community have become so strongly integrated over the years.

This has certainly been to the advantage of both – and speaking on behalf of the University I believe we could not ask for better community support.

This support manifests itself in many ways – from the strong involvement of many of the region’s business, political and community leaders in UOW’s governing bodies and advisory groups, to the work placements and work experience opportunities so many of our students receive from local businesses, schools and other organisations. This gives our students invaluable practical experience and helps them achieve the highest graduate employment rates in the country.

We have important research partnerships with large organisations such as BlueScope Steel and Integral Energy that have a significant regional presence.

Support from the region’s medical community and the South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service played a major role in our successful bid to establish a Graduate School of Medicine (GSM). And there could be no more dramatic example of community support than the $3 million contribution local businessman Mick Williams of the Allied Group has made to our new Medical School – funding a professorial chair in memory of his late wife Roberta (See story - Page 3).

The support is also apparent in the way Wollongong welcomes and embraces our international students.

And it is seen in the way the local media supports the University, and keeps the public informed about what is happening on our campuses. Of course we are not immune (and shouldn’t be) from criticism when it is deserved, but the media coverage we receive is overwhelmingly positive. We do not take that for granted, but certainly appreciate the support we receive.

In return, the University works hard to repay the support and faith our community demonstrates in us.

The most obvious way that a University can repay its community is through its core roles in teaching and research. We strive to provide the best possible education for our students, particularly providing opportunities for the region’s young people to obtain a first-class tertiary education without having to leave home. And our researchers work on many projects that translate directly into community benefits. But UOW’s impact is much broader that that.

We make a major economic contribution, pumping well in excess of $500 million into the regional economy every year – and assist businesses by providing a steady supply of well-trained graduates.

We contribute to the region’s cultural richness through our involvement with a range of cultural organisations, including the Wollongong City Gallery and the Conservatorium of Music.

Our international students contribute significantly to the region’s diverse multicultural mix, while the University’s extensive international links provide an important bridge between the region and the world.

Our academic staff regularly present public lectures and staff and students work closely with community groups on everything from research projects to the delivery of public health initiatives. We are also represented on important regional organisations like the Illawarra Regional Development Board, the Illawarra Area Consultative Committee, Healthy Cities Illawarra and the Port Kembla Port Corporation.

In recent years we have taken steps to take our integration with the community even further, establishing the Office of Community and Partnerships to target opportunities to expand our relationships across the region.

We also have two major projects – the Medical School and the Innovation Campus – that are destined to make a massive impact on this region over the long term. Ultimately, they could provide UOW’s greatest legacy.

A prime motivation in establishing the Medical School has been to assist in improving the standard of health care in the region in the future. Judging by experiences in cities like Newcastle that have a Medical School, this will be achieved by attracting more highly qualified medical specialists from the area to work with the University and Wollongong Hospital as it develops as a teaching hospital. It will also result in doctors who train at our Wollongong and Shoalhaven campuses remaining in the area to practise after graduation.

The $300 million Innovation Campus will ultimately generate thousands of jobs as government and non-government organisations join some of our key research teams in an environment of innovative research and collaboration. Construction will start this year on buildings that will house some of UOW’s high-profile research teams in ground-breaking areas such as nanotechnology, IT security, transnational crime prevention and cutting edge health research.

Cancer Carers back UOW researchers

The Illawarra Cancer Carers Group has donated $100,000 to a University of Wollongong team for research into a promising anti-cancer drug.

In another example of the close connection between the University and the Illawarra community, the money has provided a major boost to the research into the new anti-cancer drug formulation.

The research project is headed by Professor Philip Clingan, Honorary Clinical Professor at UOW’s Graduate School of Medicine and Director of the Illawarra Cancer Care Centre, and Professor John Bremner from UOW’s Department of Chemistry and Institute for Biomolecular Science.

Illawarra Cancer Carers President Rex Saunders said that with the improved methods of detection of cancer, the treatment itself should now be a priority.

“We are all affected when a friend or family member is diagnosed with cancer. Our group decided to donate to this research at the University of Wollongong again because we feel strongly about the need to improve the treatment of cancer,” he said. CN
Allied contributes $3 million to fund Medical School Professorial Chair

The Illawarra-based Allied Group of Companies has provided $3 million to fund a Professorial Chair at the University of Wollongong’s new Graduate School of Medicine (GSM).

Marsden (Mick) Williams made the $3 million contribution towards the Medical School to honour his late wife Roberta. It is the largest private contribution in the University’s history.

The money will be used to establish the Roberta Williams Chair of Medicine (General Practice) at the Medical School, which is on track to accept its first students next year.

UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton described the contribution as “incredibly generous”.

“This is the single largest contribution the University has received, and it reflects the very giving nature of Mick Williams,” Professor Sutton said.

“Through this contribution, Mr Williams is providing a very significant legacy to the community in which he lives, and where his business was founded.”

Allied is a highly successful diversified group providing industrial services and equipment to Australia’s mining, manufacturing and shipping sectors, with close to 400 employees.

“The Roberta Williams Chair of Medicine (General Practice) will epitomise our Medical School’s strong commitment to training doctors to work in regional areas, and the value we place on the role of General Practitioners in the overall delivery of health services,” Professor Sutton said.

GSM Foundation Dean Professor John Hogg described the contribution as a “dramatic and wonderful example of community support” for the School.

Professor Sutton said he hoped Allied’s contribution would inspire other individuals and corporations to consider supporting the University.

“I hope this will encourage other people to show the same degree of confidence in the University that Mr Williams has shown,” Professor Sutton said.

“We are a relatively young University, and we don’t have the reserves of Australia’s older institutions, yet we will have to rely more on public support and less on government funding in the future,” Professor Sutton said.

Professor Sutton said donations, no matter how small, from Alumni and the wider community would be crucial for the University’s future development. CN
Top researchers moving to Innovation Campus

The University of Wollongong has announced two of its flagship technology research teams will spearhead the development of the Innovation Campus (iC), with construction scheduled to start later this year on the first buildings at the research and business precinct.

UOW and joint venture partners Baulderstone Hornibrook are developing iC on a 33-hectare beachside site to the north of Wollongong’s CBD. The Campus is designed to give creative companies and organisations the opportunity to work alongside and collaborate with the University’s research teams.

Two UOW research teams working at the leading edge of nanotechnology, “intelligent” materials research and superconductivity will be the first UOW researchers on the Innovation Campus, in the appropriately named Institute for Future Materials.

UOW’s Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Margaret Sheil said the Intelligent Polymer Research Institute (IPRI), led by Professor Gordon Wallace and incorporating the Australian Centre of Excellence in Electromaterials Science, and the Institute for Superconducting and Electronic Materials (ISEM) led by Professor Shi Dou, will form the core research focus for the Institute of Future Materials.

Professor Sheil said IPRI and ISEM both have outstanding international reputations and important industry partnerships, making them ideal to spearhead development at the Innovation Campus.

IPRI, for example, has partnerships with Boston Scientific, the CSIRO, Rio Tinto, the Bionic Ear Institute, Monash University, BlueScope Steel, the Defence, Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO), Schefenaker, Hanbat National University in Korea, Dublin City University, Trinity College Dublin and the Cooperative Research Centre for Polymers.

ISEM has links to the CSIRO and the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO), a range of international energy and battery companies, nine other Australian universities and 27 international research institutes at universities in Asia, North America and Europe.

“These two research groups are consistently our top research grant winners, and they work with a range of leading industry partners,” Professor Sheil said. “Their on-going research success has created a demand for new research space, so the University and our partners are investing in a state-of-the-art building to house them at the Innovation Campus.”

Construction is expected to start later this year on the three-storey Institute building and central facilities building, to be called iC Central, which will provide office and meeting space as well as cafes, retail space, recreation and health facilities, and function rooms.

The Federal Government has committed $12 million for a third building at the Innovation Campus to house the Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention (CTCP), the Centre for Maritime Policy and the Centre for Comparative Law and Development Studies in Asia Pacific (see story – Page 5). All three centres have strong links with governments and agencies throughout the Asia-Pacific region, in training, research and consultancy services.

“These centres attached to our Faculty of Law have very strong international connections, and it will certainly be advantageous to have them all located together with facilities such as the latest in training rooms and a comprehensive library to share,” Professor Sheil said.

The fourth building currently being planned will house the University’s Business School and a joint TAFE/UOW Digital Media Centre for graphic design and audio-visual training and development.

Professor Sheil said iC Central and the Institute for Future Materials should be ready for occupation at the end of 2007. Work on the next two buildings would start next year, and they would be ready for occupation in 2008.

The iC Masterplan allows for a staged development that will eventually provide:

• 84,000 square metres for research, training and office space
• 5,000 square metres for retail and service facilities
• a hotel and conference centre
• 18,000 square metres for residential accommodation.

www.innovationcampus.com.au

UOW’s first Federation Fellowship

The University of Wollongong’s internationally-acclaimed nanotechnology scientist Professor Gordon Wallace has been honoured with UOW’s first-ever Australian Research Council Federation Fellowship to develop a nanobionics research base.

The Federation Fellowships are highly prestigious awards designed to develop and retain Australian skills. Federation Fellowships provide opportunities for outstanding Australian researchers to return to, or remain in, key positions in Australia.

Federal Education, Science and Training Minister Julie Bishop announced Professor Wallace’s fellowship in May. He will receive over $1.5 million in funding over the next five years. UOW will provide matching funding for new staff and infrastructure.

Professor Wallace is Director of the Intelligent Polymer Research Institute, incorporating the ARC Centre of Excellence in Electromaterials Science which was officially opened earlier this year. It will be one of the first research institutes located at the Innovation Campus (see above).

Nanobionics is the merging of biology and electronics using recent advances in nanotechnology. (A nano-metre is a billionth of a metre).

Professor Wallace plans to use the Fellowship to further develop his research team and introduce new and multi-skilled researchers to the University.
The Federal Government has announced $12 million funding for a global crime prevention research and training centre to be built at the University of Wollongong’s new Innovation Campus.

Federal Minister for Education, Science and Training Julie Bishop announced the funding for the Global Centre of Excellence for Transnational Crime Prevention when she visited UOW in May.

The funding will allow a major expansion of the research and training facilities for the Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention (CTCP), which was established by UOW in 2000 with a focus on international organised criminal activities that impact on regional and global security including narcotics and people smuggling, forensic accounting, fraud and money laundering, poaching and identity theft.

The CTCP currently trains officers from key Australian agencies such as the Federal Police Force and international students from 15 countries.

Ms Bishop said the funding would be an important non-military resource in the fight against terrorism. It would also expand crime prevention and security training cooperation with neighbouring countries.

“The work the centre will do in the areas of international smuggling and fraud will help us follow the money trails, and enhance our understanding of the sources of funding for terrorist groups,” she said.

“The Government recognises the momentum the Centre has built up in providing an important service to the Australian community and countries in the region. It has become a global resource in the fight against transnational crime, developing an international reputation and becoming a focal point for research and training in a range of transnational crime issues.”

Ms Bishop said the $12 million funding would be used for “bricks and mortar”, building a new centre that would enable the CTCP to expand and build on the services it already provides to Australian and international students and government agencies.

“I can’t think of a better way for Australia to engage in transnational crime prevention than in the education of students … from Australia and from agencies in other countries in our region,” she said.

UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton welcomed the Federal Government’s support for the Centre’s expansion and paid tribute to the role that NSW Senator Concetta Ferravanti-Wells played in supporting the Centre within the Government.

He also acknowledged the support the University had received from Prime Minister John Howard, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer and Ms Bishop’s predecessor as Education Minister Dr Brendan Nelson. CN

Minister for Foreign Affairs Alexander Downer speaking at the inaugural Lecture on National and International Security at UOW. Director of UOW’s Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention Associate Professor Doug MacKinnon is in the background.

A ustralia’s Minister for Foreign Affairs Alexander Downer has announced 60 AusAID scholarships worth $3 million over the next three years for overseas students to study at the University of Wollongong’s Global Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention (CTCP).

Mr Downer said the students from countries in the Asia-Pacific region would learn important skills to help their countries fight international organised crime and terrorism.

Mr Downer, in Wollongong on 16 May to present the inaugural Lecture on National and International Security, said the University was destined to become one of Asia-Pacific’s most important resources in the fight against international crime.

The lecture celebrated the Federal Government’s announcement earlier in the month of $12 million in funding to build the new CTCP building at the Innovation Campus.

The Minister used his visit to announce the Government through its aid agency AusAID was currently funding 19 students from Indonesia, the Philippines, China and Pakistan at the Centre. They were studying courses such as Masters degrees in Transnational Crime and Forensic Accounting, and Mr Downer said the Government would extend the program over the next two years.

“I’m pleased to announce the Government will fund a further 41 places over the next two years to take the total to 60 places … directed to priority countries and agencies in the Asia-Pacific Region,” Mr Downer said.

“The additional scholarships highlight the Government’s commitment to building capacity in Australia and internationally in these areas which are critical to international and national security.”

Mr Downer said UOW’s transnational crime-fighting centre was enormously important for Australia and the Asia-Pacific, because it provided the opportunity for law enforcement agents from across the region to learn new skills to combat international crime ranging from people-smuggling to terrorism.

The Minister paid tribute to UOW as a “creative, dynamic and outward-looking University that is really making its mark in the Asia-Pacific Region and the world”.

UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton thanked Mr Downer for his visionary support for the CTCP, and said it was fitting that the Minister should deliver the inaugural address to celebrate funding for the new Centre.

Professor Sutton said when he had first taken his idea for the Centre to the Foreign Minister, Mr Downer had urged him to expand the concept and come back with a bigger vision.

“We did that, and the Minister supported us,” Professor Sutton. “Now he has backed up the Government’s $12 million in funding to build the new Centre with $1 million a year in scholarships.”

“We also received tremendous support from the Education Minister Julie Bishop and NSW Senator Concetta Ferravanti-Wells.” CN
Welcome back to one of our own

Twenty years ago Professor David Griffiths urged a bright young post-graduate Mathematics Honours graduate to leave the University of Wollongong to further his career. The 1986 University Medalist Matt Wand did just that.

Matt went to the Australian National University to undertake a PhD under highly-regarded statistical researcher Professor Peter Hall, before embarking on a stellar international academic career that included appointments in the United States at Texas A&M University, Rice University in Houston and a five-year stint as Associate Professor in Biostatistics at Harvard.

He is on the International Statistical Institute (ISI) Web of Knowledge list of highly cited researchers, and is currently Professor of Statistics at the University of NSW.

Now Professor Matt Wand is returning to his alma mater, and will join UOW on 1 January next year as a Research Professor of Statistics within the School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics.

Professor Griffiths couldn’t be happier that Professor Wand is returning to the fold. “Matt is a very highly regarded statistical researcher and a great addition to our School, which is becoming arguably the strongest statistical group in any Australian university,” Professor Griffiths said.

That is a far cry from the situation in 1986, when Professor Griffiths urged Wand to spread his wings.

“I’d just been appointed to UOW, and came down to meet my future colleagues,” Professor Griffiths said. “They told me a PhD student wanted a chat, and I met Matt who was then the only PhD student in the department.

“We talked about what he was doing, and I learned he’d never met another statistical researcher. He also told me he’d been offered a scholarship to do a PhD under Peter Hall at ANU, but hadn’t taken it up.

“Peter has a great reputation and I considered it would be in Matt’s best interests to leave, so I rang Peter and asked if the scholarship was still available. The rest, as they say, is history. Matt was a huge success as a research student and has gone on to forge an international reputation.”

Professor Wand, who grew up in Wollongong and attended Edmund Rice College, is also pleased to be returning “home”.

“I always appreciated the advice to leave Wollongong and establish myself as a researcher by rubbing shoulders with the best operators in my field,” he said. “Now the University has provided strong motivation for me to return.”

Audit reinforces reputation

The University of Wollongong has welcomed the release of a wide-ranging audit into its operations which showed it had “justifiably earned an excellent reputation for its teaching, research training, research and community engagement activities”.

The Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) Audit Panel reviewed the processes UOW has in place to achieve and monitor its objectives. The Audit Panel visited the main Wollongong campus and delegations were also sent to the University of Wollongong in Dubai, to a sample of the University’s partners in Hong Kong, to Wollongong University College in Sydney and the Sydney Business School.

During these visits the Audit Panel spoke with more than 360 people including senior management, academic and general staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students and external stakeholders.

The AUQA audit was part of a program in which all Australian universities are audited in five-year cycles.

UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton said the audit report’s positive conclusions clearly demonstrated that UOW was a high quality university that “enjoys success as a strong teaching institution” and that “by clearly defining and concentrating on its research strengths, UOW has become a research-intensive university”.

Quoting from the report, Professor Sutton highlighted how the Audit Panel found that the governance and management systems were “reflective, sound and well trusted by the University community” and that the University’s students express a high level of satisfaction with graduates enjoying among the highest employment rates and starting salaries compared with graduates from other Australian universities.

The Audit Panel team said the University contributed significantly and in many different ways to the City of Wollongong and the Illawarra region.

Professor Sutton said the University would draw on the report as a basis to improve in areas where the AUQA team recommended UOW could enhance its performance.

“The University is now working on the report’s recommendations to enhance practice, which is already of a high standard, to improve its planning processes and address the other areas identified by the Agency,” Professor Sutton said.

A copy of the full AUQA Audit Report can be located at www.auqa.edu.au/qualityaudit/ssl_reports/index.shtml

UOW hosts dementia training project

The University of Wollongong will receive $3.6 million in Federal Government funding to lead a partnership of four academic institutions and four industry partners to host an Eastern Australia Dementia Training and Study Centre.

Federal Minister for the Ageing Senator Santo Santoro announced the dementia project in June, with total funding of $8.36 million.

The Eastern Australia Dementia Training and Study Centre will service metropolitan NSW, ACT and Queensland. Wollongong will lead the partnership of four academic institutions (with the Queensland University of Technology, Griffith University, and University of Sydney) and four industry partners (Hammond Care Group, Uniting Care, Blue Care and RSL Care).

Acting Dean of UOW’s Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences Professor Patrick Crookes said the announcement provides a huge boost for dementia training across NSW and Queensland.

“It is also a clear acknowledgement of the work done to date by the Nursing Schools at the University of Wollongong and Queensland University of Technology,” Professor Crookes said.

Associate Professor Victoria Traynor (Rehabilitation, Continuing and Aged Care) in UOW’s School of Nursing, Midwifery and Indigenous Health said the success has been due to the strength demonstrated between the partnerships of the service providers and academic institutions.

More than 7,500 health professionals around Australia will benefit from specialised tertiary dementia training and scholarships over the next three years under the project. CN

Professor Matt Wand

A copy of the full AUQA Audit Report can be located at www.auqa.edu.au/qualityaudit/ssl_reports/index.shtml

CN

Auditor’s report

The AUQA Audit Panel reviewed the processes UOW has in place to achieve and monitor its objectives. The Audit Panel visited the main Wollongong campus and delegations were also sent to the University of Wollongong in Dubai, to a sample of the University’s partners in Hong Kong, to Wollongong University College in Sydney and the Sydney Business School.

During these visits the Audit Panel spoke with more than 360 people including senior management, academic and general staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students and external stakeholders.

The AUQA audit was part of a program in which all Australian universities are audited in five-year cycles.

UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton said the audit report’s positive conclusions clearly demonstrated that UOW was a high quality university that “enjoys success as a strong teaching institution” and that “by clearly defining and concentrating on its research strengths, UOW has become a research-intensive university”.

Quoting from the report, Professor Sutton highlighted how the Audit Panel found that the governance and management systems were “reflective, sound and well trusted by the University community” and that the University’s students express a high level of satisfaction with graduates enjoying among the highest employment rates and starting salaries compared with graduates from other Australian universities.

The Audit Panel team said the University contributed significantly and in many different ways to the City of Wollongong and the Illawarra region.

Professor Sutton said the University would draw on the report as a basis to improve in areas where the AUQA team recommended UOW could enhance its performance.

“The University is now working on the report’s recommendations to enhance practice, which is already of a high standard, to improve its planning processes and address the other areas identified by the Agency,” Professor Sutton said.

A copy of the full AUQA Audit Report can be located at www.auqa.edu.au/qualityaudit/ssl_reports/index.shtml

CN

Professor Patrick Crookes and Associate Professor Victoria Traynor, delighted that UOW has been chosen to host a dementia training and study centre.
Scholarship rewards family tradition

The Children of Alumni Scholarship awarded for the first time this year is the latest addition to the UOW Alumni Network’s range of services to current students. *Campus News* spoke to the inaugural recipient:

Laura McKinnon didn’t need to win a scholarship to speak to the inaugural recipient: Alumni Network’s range of services to awarded for the first time this year is The Children of Alumni Scholarship Scholarship rewards family tradition liked the fact that it was the closest to home. Lots of and with the support it offered,” said Laura. “I also “Wollongong had the nicest campus, both physically first preference. Sydney and Canberra, but UOW was always her first preference.

“Wollongong had the nicest campus, both physically and with the support it offered,” said Laura. “I also liked the fact that it was the closest to home. Lots of my friends from Nowra are studying here too, and it is good to have that support … even though it is easy to make friends here.”

Laura, who is living at the student residence at Campus East, said being awarded the Alumni Scholarship had made student life much easier to manage. “It certainly takes the pressure off having to do too much part-time work while I am studying,” she said.

Laura’s father Mark completed his Graduate Diploma of Education at UOW in 1993. He is now the Mathematics Coordinator at St John the Evangelist High School in Nowra, where Laura completed her Higher School Certificate last year.

She learned of the Alumni Scholarship, which is judged on academic excellence, when UOW representatives visited her school last year to talk about opportunities for study at the University. UOW Alumni Relations Manager Jocelin Kelly said the new scholarship was an opportunity to reward the children of UOW Alumni who had excelled in the Higher School Certificate.

Inaugural Children of Alumni Scholarship winner
Laura McKinnon.

“The University is building a tradition where the children of Alumni are now following in their parents’ footsteps. This scholarship is designed to recognise this and reward outstanding students,” Ms Kelly said. “Laura is certainly a worthy first recipient.”

Primary Teaching student Julie Garret undertakes her interview with an Alumni Education Chapter volunteer.

and Training (DET) interviews for their teaching accreditation.

The educators from DET schools conduct one-on-one interviews where they ask the kind of questions students can expect in their DET interview and provide advice on how to best prepare for that interview.

The program, which is unique to UOW, started six years ago with 15 volunteers. It has proved so successful that around 45 volunteers were involved in this year’s interviews, conducted in early June at two locations in Wollongong as well as UOW’s Shoalhaven and Loftus campuses.

“These interviews really add value to the students’ degree,” Alumni Education Chapter Convener and former school principal Dr Lenore Armour said. “It has become an important professional development day for the students, while the Alumni who are involved gain an understanding of our graduates and also provide valuable feedback to the Faculty of Education.”

Primary Teaching student Julie Garrett, who participated in this year’s interviews, agreed. “It was really valuable,” Julie said. “I received lots of guidance and fine-tuning for my actual interview. But just as importantly, it was very encouraging and has boosted my confidence.”

Education Lecturer Ann Baxter said feedback from DET showed that UOW graduates generally fared better in their accreditation interviews than other graduates, which demonstrated the success of the Alumni interview program.

Interviews give students the edge

The University of Wollongong’s Education Alumni are helping prepare current student teachers for their careers by conducting mock accreditation interviews with final year students to prepare them for the real thing.

Alumni and educators in senior positions such as school principals, deputies and educational consultants volunteer their time to help prepare the students for compulsory Department of Education

appeal

Prostate cancer and childhood obesity are two of the most pervasive diseases of our times - and two key areas of the University of Wollongong’s health-related research. This year UOW’s Alumni Office has targeted these two important research projects for this year’s Circle of Visionaries fund-raising appeal. It is focused on helping UOW’s Professor Anatoly Rozental and his team at the Centre for Medical Radiation Physics in their development of a new prostate cancer treatment called Brachytherapy, and Dr Tony Okely’s team at the Childhood Obesity Research Centre.

The Alumni Network has written to Alumni asking them to consider contributing to these research programs. If you would like more information on how you can contribute, please contact UOW’s Office of Community and Partnerships: Phone: 1300 367896, email donations@uow.edu.au or visit www.uow.edu.au/donations

“Primary Teaching student Julie Garrett undertakes her interview with an Alumni Education Chapter volunteer.”

1300 367 869  www.uow.edu.au  University of Wollongong  Campus News July 06 7
Life begins at 40 for seabird scientist

Dr Terry O’Dwyer
Bachelor of Environmental Science (Honours) 1999
PhD 2004

Kiama man Dr Terry O’Dwyer is a classic case of life beginning at 40.

Over the past 18 months Dr O’Dwyer, 40, has completed his doctorate in Biological Sciences at the University of Wollongong (UOW), married his long-time partner and fellow scientist Louise Puslednik and taken the final step in his fascinating journey from steelworker to international seabird research scientist.

In March he took up a position as a Post-doctoral Research Scholar at the University of California Davis Campus. Dr O’Dwyer is working in the School of Neuro-biology, Physiology and Behaviour, conducting research into seabirds off the North American coast.

“It’s a long way from his first job as a fitter and turner at the Port Kembla Steelworks to one of the United States’ leading Biology research schools.

Although he grew up in Kiama overlooking the ocean, Dr O’Dwyer said his interest in seabirds didn’t develop until he had completed his undergraduate Science degree at UOW.

And his University career started almost by chance in 1995, after he had spent a decade in his previous trade.

“I was travelling in the United States, and met a guy who had gone to university as a mature age student. I’d never thought of going to uni before, but I came home and started investigating the possibilities,” he said. “I’d always been interested in nature and the environment, so I decided to study Science.”

He took to study with relish, completing his Mature Age entry requirements and enrolling in the Bachelor of Environmental Science degree at UOW. He completed the degree with Honours, having developed a profound interest in Biology.

Then embarked on a PhD from 2002-2004, working on an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant project studying breeding cycles of the rare and endangered Gould’s Petrel that breeds in only one location – tiny Cabbage Tree Island off the mouth of Port Stephens on the NSW Central Coast.

Dr O’Dwyer presented his research findings at an international conference on albatross and petrels in Uruguay late in 2004, where he met American seabird researcher Associate Professor Gabrielle Nevitt from UC Davis.

“We got chatting and found we had a mutual interest in each other’s research,” Dr O’Dwyer said. “A year later Professor Nevitt offered me a job on her research team, so it has turned out rather well. My wife Louise is just completing her PhD in Biological Sciences at Wollongong and UC Davis is a leading American centre for Biology research, so this is a great opportunity for both of us.”

Dr O’Dwyer’s PhD supervisor, the Head of UOW’s School of Biological Sciences Associate Professor Bill Buttemer, said it had been fascinating to watch his evolution from a student with a natural curiosity into a highly competent scientific researcher.

“Terry’s experience shows that education can take you out of where you are, and change your life,” Professor Buttemer said. “And it’s never too late to start”. CN

IN MEMORIAM

Dr Winifred Mitchell AM
Fellow of the University and former history lecturer Dr Winifred Mitchell died in May, aged 89. Dr Mitchell, who was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for her services to UOW, had retired from her job as a history lecturer at UNSW when she took on a casual role at UOW replacing a staff member on leave. She was to stay for another decade, working in a variety of roles and making a major contribution to the development of the University. She also played a key role in the establishment of the Wollongong City Gallery, and was a strong feminist and activist throughout her life.

Efrem Bonacina OAM
Fellow of the University of Wollongong Efrem Bonacina died in December, aged 88. Mr Bonacina immigrated from Italy in 1961. He and his wife Giulia became tireless workers for Wollongong’s Italian community, and were foundation members of the Friends of the University. They received Fellowships in 1991 for their contributions to the University, the first husband and wife team to be admitted as Fellows.

Barry Kelly
Barry Kelly died in April, after a battle with cancer. The first general manager of the Illawarra Credit Union was made a Fellow of the University in 1991. This was recognition for his role in establishing the Illawarra Credit Union Scholarship Scheme which was designed to give undergraduates the opportunity to gain work experience, and for his contribution to the wider community.

Alumni Census

The Alumni Office will soon be conducting a Census to gather information about the careers, achievements and interests of our graduates. The information received will enable the Alumni Office to tailor benefits and services to the needs of UOW graduates. By taking the time to complete the alumni census you will also go in the draw to win some great prizes.

The Census will be conducted by email, or by mail if the Alumni Office does not have a graduate’s current email address.

Alternatively, graduates can simply go to the Alumni section of the UOW website (www.uow.edu.au) and update their details online.

UOW Alumni receive a range of benefits including discounts on car hire, shopping and accommodation, so it is well worth “staying connected”. CN
Angela’s career is flying high

Angela Pitt
Bachelor of Science (Psychology) 2004

University of Wollongong graduate Angela Pitt had always dreamed of being a pilot. It was a dream that waxed and waned but eventually stuck...and now she's literally flying high.

She is one of only a handful of female pilots to ever be sworn into the Royal Australian Navy and after 22 weeks training at HMAS Creswell in Nowra she recently headed off to Tamworth to complete six months of flight training to prepare her to get behind the controls of a Sea Hawk helicopter.

"It’s scary, it’s exciting, it’s challenging," said Sub Lieutenant Pitt, who attended Kiama High School before enrolling at UOW. "It’s been an intense couple of months but worth it in every way.”

Angela said her 22 weeks training in Nowra has prepared her for the best and the worst of experiences.

"They really take you out of your comfort zone. For the first few weeks I had zero contact with the outside world – no phone, no e-mail. I just had to immerse myself in a very strict training regime which involved drills, marching, fitness tests, seamanship training out on the ocean, camping, naval history and plenty more."

Angela, who graduated with a Bachelor of Science (Psychology) in December 2004, said she is glad she completed her degree before her life took such an amazing turn.

"I am grateful for my time at university and I really enjoyed studying Psychology. It has helped me to better understand people, which is really important when you are living in conditions that can be really trying. A lot of people just can’t handle military training and my degree has helped me to understand why."

"They basically drop you somewhere and have you chased by dogs. I’ll also be trained for - war.”

She is one of only a handful of female pilots to ever be sworn into the Royal Australian Navy. “It’s tough because you’re so often away from your family and friends and there are times - like where you’re sitting in a life raft in the middle of the ocean where you can’t see the shore and are surrounded by sick, cold, hungry, borderline-hypothermic crew - when you really question what you’re doing”

But Angela says the highlights far outweigh those harder days. The next few months in Tamworth will involve Angela undergoing basic flight training on fixed wing aircraft followed by combat survival training in Queensland and advanced flying training in Western Australia. Combat training will involve her being ‘downed in hostile territory’.

"They basically drop you somewhere and have you chased by dogs. I’ll also spend a day and a night in a life raft on the ocean and be involved in jungle/desert/water phases which will simulate all the different things we might face in a real life combat situation. And there will be very little food, which will be interesting…”

When the training is completed, Angela will be back in Nowra ready for the ‘real deal’ – helicopter flying.

"I want to fly helicopters because they’re so versatile...you can land pretty much anywhere and you don’t need a runway. They may not fly at the speed of jets but you need just as much, if not more, coordination. If it doesn’t hover, don’t bother!"

Angela is the fourth generation of her family to join the Australian Defence Force, continuing a grand tradition of service. Her great-grandfather served in the Army during WWI, her grandfather is a WWII veteran and her father was an infantry soldier serving in Vietnam.

Sub Lieutenant Pitt realises that hers is the kind of career that is full of twists and turns and she is well aware of where she may end up.

"The reality is that one day I could be sent to Iraq or Afghanistan. You try not to think about it too much but in the end that’s what we’re all being trained for - war.”

Meet a fairy godmother

Martha Fasoulas
Bachelor of Arts (Psychology) 1998

Martha Fasoulas’ job description could well include the title ‘fairy godmother’. After all, she is responsible for making sure that over 200 wishes come true each year. And to make that even more special, she grants those wishes to sick children.

Martha (pictured left) is the Wishgranting Coordinator for the Starlight Foundation, responsible for NSW, the ACT and the Northern Territory. She applied to work with the Starlight Foundation as a volunteer while she completed her Bachelor of Arts (Psychology) degree at UOW in 1998.

"It was a case of right time, right place, because a paid administration role was available, which I took gleefully! That led to many more opportunities, finally fulfilling my own ‘wish’ to run the Wishgranting program three years ago,” Martha said.

“The Foundation’s goal is to create meaningful and life-changing wish experiences for seriously ill children aged between four and 18. It’s the kind of medicine no doctor can prescribe – smiles, laughter and the magic of having your dream come true.

"Wishes can range from the simple to the extravagant, but it’s the simple requests that are the most heart-warming – like a little five-year old boy with a life-threatening brain tumour. His biggest wish was to have a birthday party and turn four again. When I asked him why he said: ‘Because when I was four I wasn’t sick’.

"Knowing this would be his final birthday party, with tremendous support from the Illawarra community we were able to organise an unforgettable party with jumping castles, animal farm, party food and decorations – and a room full of presents”.

Martha loves her job, and says she gets daily inspiration from the children the Foundation helps.

“The most important thing I have learned is that the day to day trivialities we whinge about really have no importance when you are making a difference in the life of a sick child, who hasn’t or may never have, the chance to live their life to the fullest.”

1300 367 869  ■  www.uow.edu.au  ■  University of Wollongong  Campus News July 06
Dr Ian Reece (pictured right) may have spent his working life as a science academic, but history has become his passion in retirement.

The UOW graduate and former academic has published two historical books. The first was a family history called Isaac’s Journey, based on the ill-fated voyage of a sailing ship called the Juliana, which was shipwrecked at Cape Town on its way to the Colony of New South Wales in 1838. Among the passengers who eventually continued their journey on another vessel was Dr Reece’s great-great-grandfather, Isaac Reece.

Dr Reece’s latest book, Harold’s Diary, is based around the World War I diary of his father, Harold Reece, who served with the Australian forces on the Western Front. Harold Reece rarely spoke about his war-time experiences, and his son was unaware the diary existed until after his father’s death in 1982. However, it wasn’t until Dr Reece used a photocopy of the diary as a “guide book” on a tour of the Western Front battlefields a few years ago that he considered turning it into a book.

“There was a lot of interest from the World War I museums I visited along the Somme. They collect that kind of material, and so does the Australian War Memorial (in Canberra),” Dr Reece said. “Their interest inspired me to think about how I could use Dad’s diary in a book.”

Dr Reece used his father’s diary as the central section of the book, while adding family and social history from the period, much of it based on pre-and post-war newspaper clippings found in Harold Reece’s scrapbook.

Around 60 photographs provide excellent illustrations for the text.

“I wanted to provide a feeling for the attitudes that existed in Australian society at the start of the war, to show why young men enlisted in such large numbers,” Dr Reece said.

He also explores the impact of the war years on returned servicemen like his father, who devoted many years to the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League.

Talking of history, Dr Reece has a long history with the University of Wollongong. He lectured in Chemistry at the old Wollongong University College from 1961-1968, starting when it was still located in the Technical College (now TAFE) premises in Gladstone Avenue, Wollongong.

He was on the staff when the University College moved to UOW’s current location, but was long gone when it finally gained independent status in 1975, having left in 1968 to become foundation Head of Chemistry at Toowoomba (now the University of Southern Queensland).

Harold’s Diary is available for $35 (plus postage). Contact Dr Ian Reece on phone 07 3371 9935 or fax 07 3371 1910. CN

James Goudkamp
Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Laws 2003

UOW Law graduate James Goudkamp has accepted two scholarships to study at Oxford.

James, who has been working as an Associate to Justice Michael Kirby in the High Court of Australia since he graduated from UOW, will leave for Oxford in September to study Civil Law.

He was offered a Clarendon Fund Bursary – an internal scholarship administered by the University of Oxford to assist international postgraduate students study at the University.

He was accepted a Clarendon Fund Bursary – an internal scholarship administered by the University of Oxford to assist international postgraduate students study at the University.

Having accepted the Clarendon, James then won a James Fairfax Oxford-Australia Scholarship, which will allow him to stay at Oxford to study for a Master of Philosophy in Law after he completes his Civil Law studies.

By Hilary Rhodes (Melbourne University Press $39.95)

Artist Dr Hilary Rhodes, who completed her Creative Arts doctorate at UOW in 2003, has published a book and interactive DVD based on her doctoral work.

Exploration Without Boundaries invites you on a journey of reflection and fantasy through 48 digital landscapes - dreamlike yet reminiscent of familiar places.

You can explore the virtual environments of this unique package in three different ways:
- browse the pages of the beautifully produced full colour book
- watch the videos included on the accompanying disk
- engage with the interactive DVD. CN

In 1991, Lisa Havilah was one of the first students to enrol in the University of Wollongong’s Creative Arts/Law double degree. However, her Creative Arts degree majoring in Painting and Creative Writing soon took precedence. Instead of completing her Law studies, she has forged a successful career as an arts manager after graduating with her BCA in 1993.

In 1995 Lisa established Project Contemporary Artspace in Wollongong - a contemporary arts organisation that is committed to supporting emerging contemporary artists within the region.

In 1998 she was appointed the Assistant Director of Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre in Liverpool. During her time in this position she developed and managed an international program of contemporary visual arts focusing on community cultural development practice. She also lectured on Arts Management for the Masters of Arts Administration program at the University of NSW.

In 2004 Lisa was appointed the Director of Campbelltown Arts Centre. The Centre opened in June 2005 after a $10 million redevelopment which included galleries, theatre, workshop studios, café and amphitheatre. The project was a partnership between the State and Federal Government and provides diverse multidisciplinary cultural programs for the communities of South West Sydney.

In 2004 Lisa was appointed the Chair of the NSW Ministry for the Arts Western Sydney Arts Program, which is responsible for the implementation of the State Government strategy for delivering arts and cultural infrastructure across the Western Sydney region.

She is also a member of the Ministry’s Visual Arts and Craft Committee. CN

Billy’s Tree
by Nicholas Kyriacos (Scribe Publishing $32.95)

Dr Nicholas Kyriacos graduated from UOW in 2005 with a Doctoral Degree in Creative Arts. This year the former school principal and award-winning poet and writer has had a new novel related to his thesis work published by Scribe.

Set in the working-class Sydney suburb of Redfern on the eve of the South Sydney Rabbitohs’ expulsion from the national rugby league competition, Billy’s Tree is a powerful novel that deals with the impossibility of escaping your past and the need to confront longstanding injustices.

Played against the struggle to have the Rabbitohs reinstated to the rugby league competition, Billy’s Tree is a deeply moving story that explores the importance of friendship and community, the need to exorcise ghosts, and the devastating ways in which families can be torn apart. CN
Law firm targets UOW graduates

Leading Illawarra legal firm RMB Lawyers with Kearns and Garside has a clear strategy when it comes to recruiting new staff – it seeks University of Wollongong law graduates first.

As a result, RMB currently has nine UOW-trained lawyers on its staff, and the firm’s Managing Partner Craig Osborne is delighted with the results. He has no doubt that UOW’s Law Faculty is producing top-quality lawyers who compare favourably with other universities, with the added advantage of local knowledge.

“We’ve been in Wollongong for more than 120 years, and we pride ourselves on our local knowledge and experience, and links with the community,” Mr Osborne said.

“Employing young lawyers from the local university, most of whom also grew up in the area, perfectly fits our positioning for the future. They’re local and that’s a great advantage. They know the area, and understand the people and the issues.

“Even if they’ve come from outside the area to go to uni, they’ve been here five years while studying so they’ve become part of this community. We feel this gives us an edge,” he said.

“I also like the way UOW develops law graduates who are down to earth and practical. This fits very well with our approach to the law. We expect our lawyers to be highly skilled, but we also expect them to be good with people, so our clients feel comfortable when they are dealing with them.”

Criminal lawyer Justine Hall is one UOW graduate who has benefited from RMB’s policy. She joined the firm in 2004 after spending time there in a graduate placement program, and is delighted to be able to pursue her passion for criminal law and court work with a large firm in her home town.

“I absolutely love my work, and it is a wonderful firm to work for,” Justine said. “And the local knowledge is definitely an advantage.”

Top: RMB Lawyers Managing Partner Craig Osborne (centre) with his UOW-trained lawyers Justine Hall, Chris Sheppard, Ryan Grove, Adam Barlow, Kelly Madlia, Tim Dill and Imran Khan.

Above: RMB’s latest UOW recruits Michael Lewis and Farid Fanaian.

Justine, who went to school at Lindsay Park Public and Smith’s Hill High, studied for a double degree in Law and Arts, majoring in Japanese. She also obtained a Graduate Diploma in Linguistics and Japanese during an overseas study trip to Tokyo in 2003.

The other UOW-trained lawyers at RMB are Imran Khan, Kelly Madlia, Ryan Grove, Chris Sheppard, Tim Dill, Adam Barlow, Farid Fanaian and Michael Lewis.

Farid and Michael are the two most recent arrivals, having joined RMB in May. Farid, who graduated in 2003, grew up in Kiama and has spent the last two years working in Sydney for a Land and Environment Court Judge and an investment bank. He jumped at the chance to return to the Illawarra to a firm with expertise in Land and Environment Court matters, and will concentrate on that area of law.

Michael, who grew up in Batemans Bay and graduated from UOW in 2004, spent two years working for a law firm in London but was lured back to Wollongong by RMB, admitting the surf and the city’s lifestyle were added attractions. CN
Hajar’s following in her father’s footsteps

For University of Wollongong in Dubai student Hajar Roudaki, winning a scholarship to study at the Wollongong campus was something of a homecoming.

As the inaugural winner of UOWD’s International Coursework Graduate Scholarship, the 23-year-old Bachelor of Business Administration graduate is in Wollongong studying for her Master of Accountancy.

She is in familiar territory. The 23-year-old lived in Wollongong for three years as a child, while her father, UOWD Accountancy lecturer Dr Jamal Roudaki, studied for his PhD at UOW between 1993 and 1996.

Hajar attended West Wollongong Public School for three years, and has fond memories of her first time in Australia. When her father finished his PhD at the end of 1996 the family returned home to Iran, where Dr Roudaki worked as an Assistant Professor at the University of Shiraz. They moved to Dubai in 2003 when he joined UOWD.

Hajar said she had long been determined to return to Australia to study.

“I really wanted to come back to Australia for postgraduate study, and I particularly wanted to study in Wollongong,” she said. “UOWD has the best accountancy course in Dubai and I think UOW has the best in Australia. I looked at what other Australian universities were offering, but Wollongong’s course was much more specific and just what I was looking for.

“I am glad I chose UOW. I really like the course, and I like the lecturers.”

Hajar said she was also attracted by the idea of following in her father’s footsteps.

“I needed the scholarship to be able to study in Australia, so throughout my studies in Dubai I was trying very hard to get the highest grades possible,” she said.

Hajar says she has settled well into her life in Australia, and is enjoying being back in Wollongong. She intends to stretch her one-year post-graduate course over three sessions and is working part-time as an Accountancy tutor for UOW’s Faculty of Commerce, to help meet some of her living expenses.

“The University Campus is lovely, with all its trees and nature. Wollongong itself doesn’t seem to have changed much since I left in 1996,” she said. “This is such a contrast to Dubai, where if you leave for a month it will have changed when you return.”

She says university education in Australia is a little less formal than in Dubai, but the teaching methods and standards are very similar. Now she is planning to help form a UOWD group with the other students from Dubai studying in Wollongong.

Hajar said she had received a lot of support from UOWD staff including the Chief Executive Officer Professor Nick van der Walt, Michael Singleton, Dr Raed Awamleh, Sonia Davies, Ghada Al Pasha, Dr Ashraf Mahate and Professor Nobi Baydoun.

“I’d really like to thank all those people, and of course my parents, for the help and support they gave me to come to Wollongong to study,” she said.

CN
People who donate their bodies for medical and scientific research make an invaluable contribution to the advancement of medical knowledge. It is a unique gift that helps promote health and alleviate suffering in the community by helping in the training of doctors, nurses, medical scientists and other health professionals. With the Graduate School of Medicine (GSM) on track to open next year, there will be an increased need for cadavers (human bodies) at the University of Wollongong’s Anatomy Laboratory. The University has launched a Body Donation Program to supplement existing sources in the years ahead. Campus News talked to two Science students from the Anatomy Laboratory, who explained just what this gift means to them.

Anna Harris is a young woman with her whole life ahead of her – yet she has already decided to donate her body to science. The 3rd Year Bachelor of Medical Science student made the decision soon after starting her studies in the Anatomy Laboratory at the University of Wollongong.

It didn’t take long for Anna to appreciate the importance of studying human bodies rather than plastic models to learn how the body works. She also developed a profound respect for the people who donate their bodies for medical and scientific research.

“I quickly realised just how valuable it is for students to be able to work on real human tissue and bones,” Anna said. “It is the only way to really learn the inner workings of the human body. Health professionals need to know that every body is different but models just can’t provide the variation and the same level of understanding.

“Cadavers are such a valuable learning resource. I told my parents I wanted to (eventually) donate my body to science as a way of giving something back.”

Two years after her first encounter with a cadaver, Anna is an instructor in UOW’s Anatomy Laboratory helping this year’s 1st Year Anatomy students overcome any squeamishness they might have about handling human tissue and to appreciate the extraordinary gift that people who donate their bodies contribute to the learning process.

Anna and fellow Anatomy Laboratory instructor Nicole Cook, a 3rd year Bachelor of Advanced Science student, offered to talk to Campus News to encourage people to join the University of Wollongong’s Body Donation Program.

Nicole said most students experienced an initial “scare factor” when dealing with human tissue for the first time, but that usually wore off quickly.

“Cadavers look quite different from a living human,” Nicole said. “For a start there is no blood and you generally don’t study a full body.

“Studying real human bones, muscles and organs is so much more valuable than studying plastic models. You see all the variations in size and shape, how muscles and organs differ between individuals, and the effects of things like fractures and diseases.

“You get a real clinical perspective on a disease like arthritis when you can study its effect on a knee joint.”

Nicole vividly remembers studying a fibula (lower leg bone) that had been broken clean through. “There was a massive calcified lump, so the students could see clearly the effect of the break. You couldn’t do that with a plastic model.”

Nicole and Anna said Anatomy students treat cadavers and human tissue and bone with great respect.

“We understand that people have willingly chosen to donate their bodies to help us learn, and there is a great deal of respect for that gift,” Nicole said.

Details on UOW’s Body Donation Program are available on the Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences website www.uow.edu.au/health/ or by contacting program coordinator Darryl McAndrew on (02) 4221 4835.

Academic cracks maths formula

University of Wollongong mathematician Associate Professor Song-Ping Zhu has cracked a formula that will have important implications for researchers, traders and investors working on the valuation of American-style stock options.

One of Professor Zhu’s areas of long-term interest has been developing analytical as well as numerical techniques suitable for the options and futures price modelling.

Options are financial derivatives popularly used by companies and large financial institutions in their risk management. Their valuation is, however, a complicated process as the value of an option depends on many factors including the underlying asset (such as stock) value, the time left for the option contract to expire, the strike price at which the option can be exercised, the interest rate that banks pay for the fund deposited with them and the volatility that measures the market fluctuations.

Mathematicians worldwide have been working for years to find an exact solution of the Black-Scholes equation for the valuation of American options. Many concluded that such a solution did not exist until Professor Zhu revealed his work.

Professor Zhu presented his work at the 41st annual Australia and New Zealand Industrial and Applied Mathematics Conference and the Quantitative Methods in Finance conference. He was also an invited speaker to present his new solution at the 3rd SPIE International Symposium (Noise and Fluctuations in Econophysics and Finance) held at Austin, Texas.

His findings have triggered widespread excitement among his mathematical colleagues who are confident that this longstanding problem has finally been solved. Professor Zhu has now had his journal paper, An Explicit and Exact Solution of the Value of American Put and its Optimal Exercise Boundary, accepted for publication in the journal, Quantitative Finance.
Linda sees US from the inside

While most University students spent their summer holidays on the beach, UOW Bachelor of Arts student Linda Nelson was picking turnips at the home of former United States President George Washington.

It was one of the many highlights that she experienced as a participant in the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Program which brings 12 Australian students from different universities to Washington DC each year to work in the thick of American politics for two months. Other highlights included touring the Pentagon, exploring the White House and meeting Star Wars creator George Lucas.

“It was a wonderful, amazing experience,” she said. “I have such a deeper understanding of American politics and social culture now and I made some long lasting and very special friendships within the intern group and our offices.”

The program, founded and directed pro-bono by former senior congressional adviser Eric K. Federing, offers a unique senior congressional adviser Eric K. Federing, offers a unique opportunity for Australian university students to undertake an internship on Capitol Hill. The program has bipartisan support of both the US and Australian Governments.

Linda was placed with the House Committee on Science, which has jurisdiction over much of the non-defence Federal research and development within the United States including the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

“As someone who is essentially a science geek without a science degree this was a dream come true – a chance to work with the people responsible for these organisations,” said Linda.

Linda attended briefings where she heard Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice being ‘grilled’ and was able to stand in the room where the President delivers the State of the Union address. A reception was also held in honour of Linda and the other interns in the Capitol building, attended by the Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta.

While Linda immersed herself in a very gruelling and challenging two months in Washington, she also made time to travel and experience the sights of the US, and meet one of her idols.

“I’m an avid Star Wars fan and was lucky enough to attend a function in the Capitol building where George Lucas was awarded a Medal of Excellence in film production,” Linda said.

Her stay in Washington only confirmed her desire to work in science and technology policy in the near future, and after completing an Honours year at UOW she will seriously consider returning to the place she called home last summer.

Linda Nelson, who was one of 12 Australians chosen for an internship in the US capital.

Cup fever sends stocks soaring

New UOW research shows the national exuberance associated with the Melbourne Cup sends Australian stock returns soaring on the first Tuesday in November when the race is held.

Professor Andrew Worthington, of the School of Accounting and Finance at UOW, discovered the phenomenon in a study of Melbourne Cups over the 45 years from 1961 to 2005. His working paper entitled, National exuberance: A note on the Melbourne Cup effect in Australian stock returns, is understood to be the first study of its kind ever conducted.

His study showed that average Melbourne Cup Day stock returns were significantly higher (more than 5%o) than average daily returns for other Tuesdays throughout the year and nearly four times higher than average returns for all other days in the trading week (Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays).

Based on experience over the 45-year period, the 2006 Melbourne Cup would have been associated with a one-day gain of some $2,040 million in market capitalisation.

He said although the nation stops whatever it’s doing to watch the race, the stock market opens and closes as usual, with the Melbourne Cup only recognised as a public holiday in Melbourne and surrounds.

“The exuberance associated with Australia’s unofficial national day appears to be translated into irrationally optimistic market behaviour,” Professor Worthington said.

Professor Worthington’s study included closing prices from the Australian Stock Exchange over the period 3 January 1961 to 30 December 2005 encompassing 11,328 trading days. The capitalisation-weighted All Ordinaries Price Index was used to measure market returns.

Research exposes alcohol ad breaches

A UOW research team led by Associate Professor Sandra Jones has called for an urgent overhaul to Australia’s current alcohol advertising regulation system.

Professor Jones conducted a widely-reported media conference in Sydney in June to present the team’s findings on alcohol advertising and revealed that an independent panel of experts found the codes and regulations were repeatedly breached.

The collaborative project was undertaken by Professor Jones and her team from the UOW’s Centre for Health Behaviour and Communication Research (including Danika Hall) and Geoff Munro from the Australian Drug Foundation in Melbourne. It was funded by VicHealth.

The research required the monitoring of television and magazine advertising for alcohol products over a 10 month period and revealed that 14 advertisements appeared to be in breach of regulation codes. Complaints were then made to the Advertising Standards Board (ASB) who referred five advertisements to the Alcoholic Beverages Advertising Code (ABAC).
Honours recognise major contributions

University of Wollongong Professor Michael Hough (pictured right) was honoured for his academic and community contributions when he was made a Member of the Order of Australia in the Queen’s Birthday Honours List in June.

Professor Hough, 64, a professorial fellow at UOW’s Graduate School of Business and Professional Development, also has many civic roles. He is chairman of Illawarra ITeC, an organisation that provides training for long-term unemployed. Professor Hough is also a board member of Flagstaff Group of Companies for people with disabilities, the Flagstaff Print and Mail organisation, the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music and the Historic Aircraft Restoration Society Museum.

He is also regional chairman of the South Coast and Tablelands Scouts Association, chairman of Mt Keira Scouts, a national councillor for Scouts Australia, president of Wollongong Central Rotary Club and chairman of the successful bid for an Australian Technical College in the Illawarra.

Professor Hough shrugs off his busy workload. “The busier you get, the more efficient you get,” he said. Professor Hough described receiving the award as a great honour, and paid tribute to his wife and life partner of 35 years, Wendy, for her support.

“I’d also like to thank the University of Wollongong for providing a supportive environment which encourages wider activities including community involvement,” he said. “I get great personal satisfaction from my community roles, and I would encourage everyone to undertake some voluntary community service.”

UOW Honorary Bert Flugelman was also made a Member of the Order of Australia in the Honours List.

The acclaimed sculptor and teacher, who is 83, served for many years as a Senior Lecturer on the Faculty of Creative Arts staff. He was honoured for his contribution to Australian art through his works and his teaching.

The UOW Art Collection features a number of Flugelman’s works, including the striking Gateway to Mt Keira sculpture in stainless steel on the lawns outside the FCA building.

UOW Emeritus Professor Ian Chubb received a Companion of the Order of Australia in the Honours List for his services to higher education and research. Formerly a Deputy Vice-Chancellor at UOW, Professor Chubb currently is Vice-Chancellor at the Australian National University in Canberra.

Professor Debora Picone, who is Chief Executive Officer of the South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service, was also honoured for her contribution to public administration.

Lamb’s legal appointment

UOW’s Professor Ainslie Lamb has been appointed to a prestigious advisory committee to review legal education services in Victoria.

Professor Lamb, an Honorary Professorial Fellow at UOW’s Faculty of Law, joins an illustrious group of legal experts on the committee established by the Victorian Attorney-General Rob Hampel and Victoran Solicitor-General John Cain.

Other members of the committee include former Commonwealth Attorney-General Michael Lavarch who is currently Dean of Law at the Queensland University of Technology, former Victorian Supreme Court Judge George Hampel and Victorian Solicitor-General John Cain.

Awards flow for Creative Arts staff

This year has been a successful one for members of the Faculty of Creative Arts, who have won a string of awards and accolades:

Photographic award

Visual Arts lecturer Jacky Redgate has won the prestigious $10,000 Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photograph Award for 2006 at the Gold Coast City Gallery.

The intriguing title of her work is Pigs can’t run as fast as nurses can they Mum! (from the series Untitled 1980 – 2005). The origin of the work comes from a diary her mother kept when she was hospitalised as a three-year-old child. It was during her illness that Redgate ‘imagined’ the images from this series.

Author’s accolade

Creative Writing lecturer Merlinda Bobis has won a Philippine award and an Australian shortlist. Merlinda has won the 2006 National Balagtas Award in Fiction in English from The Writers’ Union of the Philippines for her body of fiction works. Merlinda will receive a citation and a sculpted hardwood trophy by prizewinning Filipino artist Manuel Baldemor at the Writers Congress in August.

Merlinda’s novel Banana Heart Summer has also been shortlisted for the 2006 Australian Literary Society Gold Medal, Australia’s oldest literary award inaugurated in 1899 by the Australian Literature Society which was incorporated into the Association for the Study of Australian Literature in 1982. The winner will be announced in July.

Playwright wins again

PhD student, Summer School tutor and playwright Van Badham has followed up her recent Australian awards successes with international honours by winning the International Student Playscript Competition (ISPC) in Britain.

Van took out the award from an international field, including students from some of the world’s most prestigious universities, including Cambridge. She is the first Australian to win the award in its 30-year history.

Van won with Black Hands / Dead Section, which also won the 2005 Queensland Premier’s Literary Award. It is about the revolutionary terrorist campaign of West Germany’s Baader-Meinhof Gang in the 1960s and 70s.

Designers’ presentations

Graphic Design and New Media lecturer Jon Cockburn has been invited to deliver a research paper at a conference entitled Walter Benjamin and the Architecture of Modernity. The conference is being hosted by the Centre for Social Theory and Design at the University of Technology, Sydney in August.

Another Graphic Design and New Media lecturer, Grant Ellmers, will present a paper on Reflection and Graphic Design Pedagogy at the 2006 Australian Council of University Art & Design Schools Conference in Melbourne in September.

London calling

Visual Arts lecturer Sue Blanchfield left for London in June to take up her Skills and Research Grant residency awarded by the Australia Council for the Arts in 2004. The residency is for three months at the London Skills and Arts Development Studio. This national award to promote excellence in the arts includes a $10,000 grant.
Dr Chris Turney is an optimistic, which is good news for future generations in the face of potentially dramatic climate change driven by global warming.

After all, Dr Turney has seen it all before – dramatic shifts in the world’s weather patterns, Ice Ages, extinctions of entire species and so on – if not in person, at least through his research.

And it hasn’t dented his confidence in the ability of the human race to overcome the obstacles that will surely face future generations as the world’s climate heads for uncharted waters.

Dr Turney is a palaeocologist and international authority on the study and carbon dating of ancient plants and fossils. He is a Research Fellow at the University of Wollongong’s School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, where his research focuses on human evolution and migration, and how past peoples have coped with climate change.

Macmillan has just released Dr Turney’s latest book world-wide, Bones, Rocks and Stars – The Science of When Things Happened is a popular science book that examines many of the greatest mysteries of our world by explaining when and how they happened – and how we know that.

“The central theme of my research is that we can learn a lot from the past about the future,” he says. “Climate change and extinctions are nothing new. They’ve happened before and they’ll happen again. A great example is that by reconstructing past climate changes, we can see that when a certain threshold is passed then all hell breaks loose and we get a big shift in the world’s climate.

“But I’m an optimist, and I think the human race can face the future with confidence . . .”

Dr Turney said the inspiration behind his latest book was to get science “out there” in a form that is easy for people to understand and relate to.

He was part of the UOW team that carried out the dating work on the discovery of the new species of tiny humans - Homo floresiensis, nicknamed the “Hobbits” – on the Indonesian island of Flores.

“After the excitement of the “Hobbit” find, I wanted to explain how science works in these kind of discoveries,” Dr Turney said.

Naturally, the Hobbit discovery is covered in the book, as are more timeless topics ranging from the separating the myths and reality of the legend of King Arthur to the Shroud of Turin. Dr Turney even demonstrates explaining when written records, carbon, pollen, tree rings, constellations and DNA sequencing can help archeologists, paleontologists and geologists to ‘tell the time’.

The book has already attracted rave reviews from fellow scientists.

South Australian Museum Director Professor Tim Flannery called it “a fabulously entertainingly written account of the amazing science behind calendars, dates and dating objects. Essential reading for anyone interested in prehistory.”

Professor Tim White from the University of California in Berkeley said: “This delightful, introduction successfully fuses history, prehistory and earth science. It captures the imagination from its first page, and then takes the reader on a fun and fact-filled world tour through the past.”

The science blog Pharyngula wrote: “What I like best about the book: it’s a scientist clearly explaining what he does for a living, and why it’s important, at a level any literate person can understand. Not an easy accomplishment.”

See the Rugby World Cup in Europe next year

France will host Rugby World Cup 2007 – the biggest sporting event in the world next year. A small number of games will also be played in Britain, including Australia’s clash with Wales at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff on 15 September.

The University of Wollongong Rugby Club has joined with Brisbane-based Keith Prowse Sports & Entertainment Travel to offer a tour to the Rugby World Cup. Keith Prowse Sports Travel is an Official Travel Agent for RWC 2007, having taken tours to every World Cup since the event started in 1987.

The Rugby World Cup Tour package takes in Australia’s Pools games against Wales in Cardiff, Fiji in Montpellier and Canada in Bordeaux. In between there are exciting travel options in France, including following the wine route to Bordeaux for the match against Canada and visits to Paris, Marseille, Nice and Aix en Provence.

The tour leaves Sydney on 13 September next year, returning on 3 October. It will cost approximately $10,890.00 per person plus airline ticketing taxes.

Another option is a Finals Package, taking in the Semi-finals, Play-off and Final at Stade de France in Paris.

Rugby club spokesman Canio Fierravanti said the partnership with the Keith Prowse organisation provided rugby fans with an opportunity to see the Rugby World Cup while also supporting the club which in turn gives talented young players the opportunity to study at UOW and further their rugby careers at the same time.

“Rugby fans can’t just book tickets to World Cup matches and head off to Europe. They must go through the official agents,” Mr Fierravanti said.

“By joining the UOW Rugby Club tour, fans will have access to match tickets, enjoy some great sight-seeing between games, travel with friends and be supporting our club at the same time.

“We’re hoping this will really appeal to UOW Alumni, but of course we’d welcome all rugby enthusiasts. There is only 40 tour places so bookings will be on a first in, best dressed basis.”

Former Wallaby Adrian Skegg, who works with the Keith Prowse organisation, is coordinating the UOW tour bookings which are open to all rugby enthusiasts. He can be contacted on 07 3239 5922 or by email at skegzy@keithprowse.com