ANNUAL FUND 2010

Thank you to all donors who gave generously during the 2010 phone appeal. This year almost 700 alumni pledged a total of $153,125. These gifts had an immediate impact in two areas: scholarships for students in need and funds for vital cancer research projects.

Private donations have provided 105 scholarships to 180 students during the past 12 months. It is heartening to see so many former UOW students pledge funds to help improve the lives of current students.

At present, the scholarship program reaches eight per cent of all students. Your generosity will help increase the number of future scholarships offered. As you no doubt understand, scholarships alleviate students’ financial stress and assist with textbooks, stationery and other education expenses.

Your gifts also help our research teams that are working on solutions to many medical illnesses. The 2010 appeal focused on generating funds for cancer research.

One of our many cancer research projects on the verge of a major breakthrough is led by Professor Marie Ranson and Professor Phil Clingan. For over five years the professors and a large team of chemists and biologists have been working to reduce the debilitating side-effects of chemotherapy drugs.

With additional funds it is hoped their research will advance to the stage of clinical trials in 2011. If the clinical trials prove a success, this unique UOW research will improve the treatment and survival rates for thousands of Australians.

XSTRATA COAL INCREASES SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT AT UOW

Xstrata Coal has been offering scholarships to UOW students since 2005. Each year they have supported an increasing number of UOW students across different disciplines including Mining, Electrical, Environmental and Mechanical Engineering.

This year Xstrata Coal gave $157,000 to 16 undergraduate students—an increase from last year’s gift of $107,000 to 11 students.

This year’s recipients include Jarrod Hanns (Electrical Engineering), Jarith Young (Environmental Engineering), Christopher Issac (OHS), Murray Ogier (Mining) and Michael Evans (Mining).

Not only do these scholarships assist financially, students also undertake a work experience placement with an exciting multinational organisation.

If you or your organisation would like to support UOW students by offering scholarships please contact 4221 3073.

Student Scholarships. UOW scholarships help good students become great students. Our statistics show that most UOW students who receive a donor funded scholarship graduate with a credit average or above and immediately find employment in their field. Your gift has a multiplier affect, impacting the student’s life for many years to come. Giving to a student in need is a long-term investment. Giving to student scholarships is the seed to positive, happy futures.

ILLUMINATING YOUNG MINDS

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UOW Scholarship receipients
GAY BATES MEMORIAL FUND: CENTRELINK

In 2009, Gay Bates sadly lost her battle with cancer. Gay was a wife and mother, as well as a valued and respected colleague at Centrelink.

Centrelink staff have since joined together to honour their colleague by establishing ‘The Gay Bates Memorial’ to raise funds for vital cancer research at UOW. Gifts have so far reached $11,000.

Centrelink have been organising fundraising evenings to raise money in memory of Gay and thanks to the great work of the staff at Centrelink Illawarra this fund continues to grow.

One hundred per cent of the Gay Bates Memorial Fund has been allocated to research by Professor Marie Ranson and Professor Phil Clingan and their team at the UOW Cancer Drug Research Group who are working to reduce the debilitating side-effects of drugs used in chemotherapy.

Administering simultaneous drugs to treat cancer causes unwanted and often painful, side-effects for patients. The UOW Cancer Drug Research Group is unraveling this problematic situation. The breakthrough lies in testing novel formulations that allow chemotherapeutic drugs—5-Fluorouracil, folinic acid and oxaliplatin—to be administered in a single injectable solution.

This cancer research has reached a critical point and there is a strong possibility of clinical trials—testing the new drug on humans. The UOW commercialisation team is seeking a government grant to boost private gifts, like the Gay Bates Memorial Fund, to advance this important research to the next phase.

GUILIA BONACINA: 90th BIRTHDAY GIFT TO UOW

“It’s nice to feel appreciated,” Guilia Bonacina told the Illawarra Mercury last year. “But you don’t do it for the medals, helping others is something you have to have inside of you. It has to come from the heart.”

Well known in the Illawarra for her volunteer work, Guilia has served the community for more than 40 years. Her dedication to helping others continues. This year Guilia made the most of her 90th birthday celebrations by requesting that donations be made to macular degeneration research at UOW instead of gifts. Her family and friends generously gave $4,405 in her name.

Guilia’s connection with medical research at the University comes from direct experience. She struggled with breast cancer after a surprise diagnosis during a mammogram examination.

One of the many tributes to Guilia Bonacina for her service to the community was being appointed as a fellow of the University of Wollongong.

Commemorative gifts are a wonderful way to celebrate and recognise someone close to you or commemorate your special event, such as a birthday, wedding or anniversary. It allows your guests, or others involved in the celebrations, to give to something aligned with your values — such as research at the University of Wollongong.
Training young medical students who understand the challenges of working in regional Australia is one of the foundations of UOW’s commitment to improving the health and well-being of regional communities. All students accepted into the UOW Graduate School of Medicine (GSM) are selected based on their demonstrated commitment to working in rural, regional or remote areas. This distinguishes students and also shapes their degree.

Medical students experience 12-month clinical placements in a regional area as part of their academic studies. Students are not paid during their rural placement and are based away from home for extended periods – so this can create family, financial and social challenges. A solution to help ease this pressure is to provide long-term housing for these medical students across regional NSW.

Recently four organisations from the Mudgee region made a significant commitment to join UOW as partners in this new venture. Mid-Western Regional Council have provided land and Club Mudgee, Peabody Energy, and Moolarben Coal Mines are contributing funds to build a house for medical students working in the region.

These partnerships are a long-term investment in the Mudgee community and in UOW medical students. Partnerships are vital to the success of this program. Having dedicated accommodation will facilitate 12-month clinical placements for UOW medical students for many years to come in Mudgee.

The clinical placements involve students:
- consulting with patients in general practice under the supervision of a dedicated GP;
- participating in hospital ward rounds, acute care or emergency medicine with staff in Mudgee District Hospital;
- conducting other professional and population health activities.

The knowledge student’s gain during their placement will be integrated into their formal academic studies, and positive experiences in Mudgee may help address the shortage of doctors in the region in the long-term.

Feedback has showed that patients are delighted to have students involved in a medical practice in their region and they felt availability of services improved. A dedicated presence in Mudgee will provide a great base for medical students to learn, and more importantly, expand the number of health workers in the area.

**Physical Infrastructure.** Located between the Pacific Ocean and Mount Keir, UOW is a spectacularly green campus. It’s a perfect setting to inspire bright minds and collaborative scholarship. Looking ahead to 2051, 100 years from our humble beginnings, we are conserving and investing in sustainably built environments. Infrastructure gifts help shape the future by adding to new buildings, teaching resources and cultural collections. Your gift will help us build a genuinely inspired learning environment.
University of Wollongong researchers are part of an international team who have developed more efficient thermocells that might eventually be used for generating electrical energy from heat discarded by chemical plants, automobiles and solar cell farms. A study published in the American Chemical Society’s journal Nano Letters reveals that thermo-electrochemical cells using relatively inexpensive carbon multi-walled nanotube electrodes can harvest low-grade thermal energy (temperature below 130 degrees Celsius).

Nanotubes are cylindrical carbon molecules with unique properties that make them potentially useful in many applications in nanotechnology, electronics, optics and other fields of materials science.

The journal reported that UOW scientists from the Intelligent Polymer Research Institute (IPRI) have been collaborating on the project with researchers from the US and India.

One of the demonstrated thermal cells looks just like a button cell battery. However, over its lifetime this thermocell can continuously generate electricity, instead of running down like a battery. Other demonstrated thermal cells are electrolyte-filled, textile-separated nanotube sheets that can be wrapped around pipes carrying hot water that exits a manufacturing or electrical power plant.

The temperature difference between the pipe and surroundings produces an electrochemical voltage and corresponding electrical energy generation.

Researchers found that a threefold increase in energy conversion efficiency resulted from replacing conventional electrodes in thermocells with the carbon nanotubes electrodes.

IPRI Director Professor Gordon Wallace said the team took advantage of the exceptional electronic, mechanical, thermal, and chemical properties of carbon nanotubes.

Professor Wallace said that harvesting energy currently wasted in industrial plants or along pipelines could create local sources of clean energy. This could then be used to lower an organisation’s energy footprint and costs.

“Australia is well placed to use the rapidly-developing field of nanotechnology particularly in the fields of energy and medical technology, provided a co-ordinated approach is adopted,” Professor Wallace said.

The most recent advances from IPRI and the ARC Centre of Excellence in Electromaterials Science in nanobionics include new platforms for nerve and muscle regeneration and new energy applications through the development of solar cells and fuel cells.

For exciting updates on research and innovation at the University of Wollongong visit www.uow.edu.au/research

**PUSHING BOUNDARIES**

**Breakthrough Research.** Forty years ago many people believed it was impossible to land on the moon. Today some people believe it unreasonable to dream of creating biodegradable stents, bionic materials, electronic textiles or organic batteries. Yet UOW is moving forward with research into nanotechnology, energy conversion, ethics and bionics. Your gift to breakthrough research is about pushing boundaries and could turn an absurd dream into an amazing achievement for humanity.

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**THANKYOU for giving $1,060,426.67 to date.**

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**CONTACT:**

Monique Harper-Richardson  
Manager Development Alumni and Community  
Office of Community and Partnerships  
University of Wollongong  
+61 2 4221 5759  
www.uow.edu.au/donations

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