The University of Wollongong’s Graduate School of Medicine has received $16.3 million from the Federal Government to fund its rural clinical placement program for the next four years.

The GSM was established with a primary aim of addressing the chronic shortage of medical practitioners outside capital cities by training doctors to work as general practitioners and specialists in regional, rural and remote areas of Australia.

A key strategy is to give GSM students clinical training in doctors’ surgeries, clinics and hospitals in towns across regional NSW, comprising of a short placement during their first year and a year-long integrated community and hospital placement in the third year.

The GSM is forming partnerships with medical groups in the Illawarra, Shoalhaven, Murrumbidgee, Southern Highlands, Broken Hill and Far North Coast to provide the students with hands-on clinical training, and hopes to soon formalise an agreement in the Central West.

“Such long attachments in regional and rural areas have been proven in other states to provide excellent training for medical students,” said GSM Foundation Dean Professor John Hogg. “We believe by spending a year in these places a significant proportion of students will form professional and community attachments that will encourage them to choose to return there to practise medicine when they complete their training.”

The $16.3 million funding, announced in the Federal Budget in May, will provide operational funds to assist students with accommodation, transport and IT support during their placements. A proportion of the funds will also be allocated to upgrading facilities at rural medical facilities to provide rooms for medical education, and to provide academic and administrative support to the students while they are participating in the program.

Professor Hogg said the funding announcement was a great vote of confidence from the government. CN

Asia-Pacific’s crime fighters

UOW’s Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention (CTCP) is playing a key role in building transnational crime fighting capacity in the Asia-Pacific region, with 55 students from 14 countries studying for Masters degrees and Graduate Certificates. Some of the students are pictured with CTCP staff. SEE REPORT: Page 2.

$16.3m for medical school’s rural training

Alumni Edition

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Child birth: don’t forget the fathers

Fathers are often forgotten when a new baby comes into a family. But men face many challenges in the early months of fatherhood as they come to terms with their new or expanded role. And they need more support. UOW Senior Lecturer and Master of Science (Midwifery) Co-ordinator Moira Williamson and colleagues Professor Carol McVeigh from Massey University (NZ) and Mercy Baafi, Midwifery Manager (Education) at Wollongong Hospital, researched the impact of parenthood with 128 new fathers. MOIRA WILLIAMSON prepared this Opinion column, based on their research:

Our recent study of fathers’ adaption to parenthood, which looked at men becoming fathers for the first time or adding to their existing families, showed just how stressful the whole experience can be on men and on families in general.

There is very little paid paternity leave in Australia and even paid maternity leave is limited. This is placing pressure on families and it is time for governments to invest in families and provide more forms of paid parental and paternal leave to assist new parents. This would in turn decrease stress levels for both mothers and fathers.

While it is well recognised and documented that the adjustment to parenthood for women can be a time of great change and in some cases great stress, there has been little available evidence on the impact of parenthood on men.

Our study was exploratory in design and looked at the functional status of fathers at six weeks, three months and six months after birth. The study focused on the fathers’ involvement and activities related to household responsibilities, baby care, child care, work, study, personal care (such as exercise) and socialisation. From the researchers’ perspectives, the results of the study very much mirrored the results of studies that have investigated women’s adaptation to parenthood.

The majority of fathers were overjoyed with becoming fathers for the first or subsequent time even with the birth. This was due to their involvement with their newborn. However, often they were juggling their employment commitments with increased workloads within their homes. Fathers commented that their paid employment gave them limited time with their new babies and some felt that they missed out on providing care for their baby, such as bathing. In some cases their paid employment hours had increased with some fathers taking on second jobs to help with the household financial commitments while their partner was on unpaid maternity leave. These fathers were concerned about their inability to spend more time as a family unit.

Some of the fathers also indicated that breastfeeding limited their involvement with their new baby. As breastfeeding is so important for the well-being of the baby and the mother, it is perhaps paramount that new fathers are educated about the benefits of breast feeding and provided with other ways of feeling close to their newborn, such as settling the baby and being more involved in play time and recreational activities such as taking the baby for a walk. Health professionals need to be aware of the fathers’ desire to be actively involved in the caring and bonding with their newborn.

Some fathers identified that their educational activities such as completing tertiary education had changed since the birth of the baby. This was due to their desire or need to help with the new baby or other children. Some fathers commented that they were too tired from disturbed sleep to concentrate on other activities.

However for the majority, leisure activities such as playing sport did not decrease. Other leisure activities such as outings changed, with first-time fathers finding that socialising occurred more frequently with other families than outings to restaurants or the movies. It is easier (and more affordable) for families to socialise together rather than to find babysitters.

The fathers also commented on sexuality. Not surprisingly their sexual relationships with their partners altered during the pregnancy and following the birth. However, it was obvious to the researchers that the fathers had received little information about the impact of pregnancy and birth on sexual relationships. We have since published a paper on this aspect which may assist health professionals to include this information in their antenatal care and in parenting education sessions.

The study identified that as family size increased, men’s satisfaction with fatherhood decreased. Their level of household activity also decreased. This could be due to the increasing pressure placed on them to be the main economic support for the household and in response they have increased their paid employment. On the other hand it may be less stressful for them to be involved in more work-related activities than home activities. Further research is required in this area.

The six-month survey analysis has revealed that fathers, regardless of the number of children they had, were less involved with household duties and child care. This is supported by other studies and indicates that women may be increasing their workloads in the home and in some cases in paid employment. This places more challenges on the home front as both mothers and fathers juggle their work and home commitments and relationship with each other.

However, our study did show that most men were extremely satisfied with their roles as fathers and enjoyed their involvement with their new baby.

Crime fighters tap into CTCP’s expertise

The University of Wollongong’s Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention (CTCP) is playing a key role in the Australian Government’s efforts to build transnational crime fighting capacity in the Asia-Pacific region.

Fifteen AusAID scholarship holders from Pakistan, China, Cambodia, The Philippines, Fiji, Vietnam and the Cook Islands are among the 55 students from 14 countries in this year’s intake for CTCP’s Masters degrees and Graduate Certificates in Transnational Crime Prevention. There are also 17 Australian students, many of whom are Australian Federal Police (AFP) officers.

The students include police and law enforcement officers, anti-terrorism and intelligence chiefs, judiciary officials and bureaucrats. The scholarships are part of a $3 million commitment Foreign Minister Alexander Downer made in 2006 to provide 60 AusAID scholarships at CTCP over the next three years.

A number of the other international students have been sponsored by the AFP to undertake the courses, which teach skills to fight transnational crime such as narcotics production and trafficking, firearms and people trafficking, smuggling, fraud, corruption, money laundering, internet crime, paedophile activity, natural resources poaching and illegal shipment of hazardous waste.

CTCP Director Associate Professor Doug MacKinnon said the government’s commitment to the program was all about building crime fighting capacity in countries in South-east Asia and the Pacific.

“This is a unique degree and it is gratifying to see the government supporting it so strongly, through the provision of AusAID scholarships and AFP support for law enforcement officers from overseas, and by sending a large contingent of AFP officers as well,” Professor MacKinnon said.
Ground-blower appointed new Dean of Education

The University of Wollongong’s new Dean of the Faculty of Education Professor Paul Chandler is used to breaking new ground.

Professor Chandler was one of the first Education academics to win an Australian Research Council (ARC) post-doctoral fellowship in 1993, which allowed him to develop a research career at the University of NSW into cognitive aspects of teaching and learning.

Professor Chandler then turned his attention to attracting industry funding to support his research which was a pioneering enterprise in education at the time. This research has generated $2.4 million in ARC and industry grants.

That in turn led him concentrating his efforts on building psychology based courses with the teacher education programs at UNSW. His Education Psychology course quickly became hugely popular at UNSW – with up to 500 students (and some lecturers) across all faculties who wanted to understand the cognitive aspects of teaching and learning.

Now his appointment to UOW has made higher education history as Professor Chandler is the first Indigenous academic to be appointed Dean of a non-Indigenous unit at an Australian university.

Professor Chandler understands that his appointment is an important milestone in Indigenous achievement, but he prefers to focus on his plans for the faculty and passion for research in cognitive psychology and instruction.

He took over as Dean in April, having previously been Head of the School of Education at UNSW since 2001. He has replaced Professor Barry Harper, who has retired.

Professor Chandler said his appointment to the highly-competitive position was an honour, but also an enormous responsibility. “I was very flattered to be given this job, as it is one of the plum Education Dean’s jobs in the country. But I am also mindful of the enormous responsibility that has been placed on me,” he said.

“The Faculty of Education at Wollongong is considered one of the top three Education providers in the country, and widely regarded as the strongest provider of teacher training in NSW. I am in the very fortunate position to have come to a faculty that has strong programs and very good staff in place.

“The staff are well-known and well-respected within the Education community … and it is clear that the faculty receives very strong support from UOW’s senior executive. Not all universities have the same commitment to Education as Wollongong does, and I wanted to lead a faculty within a university that has a real commitment to Education and teacher training.

“My role, therefore, is to take an already very strong unit to the next level.”

UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton said the University was delighted to have appointed an academic of Professor Chandler’s calibre to the Dean’s position.

“Professor Chandler comes to us with an outstanding reputation as an educator and as a researcher, and I am sure he will be a tremendous asset to the University,” Professor Sutton said.

“I have every confidence that he will continue the great tradition for excellence that Barry Harper and his predecessors have established at the Faculty of Education.”

Professor Chandler, who grew up in Sydney, is passionate about encouraging Indigenous students to pursue educational and professional opportunities. He hopes his new role will provide a positive role model for other Indigenous people to pursue senior roles in academia.

He also wants to encourage more Indigenous students to consider careers as teachers.

“Teachers can have such an enormous impact on their students’ lives … on the professions and careers they seek out and the way they think about the world,” he said. “The best way to encourage Indigenous participation in all aspects of education and professional pursuits is by having more Indigenous teachers.

“Unfortunately there are minuscule numbers of Indigenous teachers in Australia. We desperately need more Indigenous teachers … that would have a huge impact on all areas of education and society as a whole.”

E-endorsement timely boost for Law Dean

One of the first emails Professor Luke McNamara read following his appointment as Dean of UOW’s Faculty of Law was from the Senior Partner of a Sydney law firm interested in developing a relationship with the Faculty.

“He told me that the best university graduate they had recruited in the past 15 years was from UOW. They wanted to strengthen their ties with the Faculty so that they could improve access to future graduates,” said Professor McNamara, who replaced Professor Stuart Kaye as Dean in May.

“Feedback like this is very good for emphasising that a Law degree from UOW also opens doors to many careers outside the legal profession.

“I am always pleased when I hear from our alumni about the diverse range of careers into which their UOW studies have led them – whether they are with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in an overseas posting, or working for a merchant bank or an international NGO.”

Professor McNamara is in a good position to know what makes UOW Law graduates so employable. He began his academic career at UOW in 1993, shortly after the establishment of the Faculty, and has taught in the LLB program for more than 14 years. (He is also a UOW graduate, having been awarded a PhD in 2000).

“It’s about recognising that legal education involves much more than merely delivering legal knowledge,” he said. “One of the Faculty’s aims has always been to have our graduates distinguished by what we might call their ‘real world readiness’. They have a very strong skills base when they leave us, but they also have a strong understanding of how the law operates in the context of society.”

Professor McNamara is also committed to the view that a top quality law school not only produces good graduates, it conducts and publishes excellent research. Professor McNamara’s own research is in the field of human rights, with a focus on Indigenous rights, the regulation of hate speech and the domestic implementation of international human rights standards. His latest book – Human Rights Controversies: The Impact of Legal Form was published by Routledge-Cavendish in June.

1300 367 869  www.uow.edu.au  UOW’s new Faculty of Education Dean Professor Paul Chandler.

Campus News July 07
FOCUS ON RESEARCH

New course makes news

The University of Wollongong now has a fully equipped newsroom to provide hands-on skills for students in the new Bachelor of Journalism program. UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton officially opened the newsroom in May.

Forty students are enrolled in the new course, run by the School of Journalism and Creative Writing.

UOW has been teaching journalism since 1990 when it opened a Graduate School of Journalism offering a Master of Journalism degree. This was followed by a Bachelor of Communications and Media Studies, where students were able to study a small number of journalism subjects.

However, with the introduction of the Bachelor of Journalism degree, the suite of subjects has been broadened and refocused to give the students more hands-on skills. The newsroom is integral to the course, and each year the undergraduate students will spend at least one full day a week working there. Depending on their year, they will be writing stories, sub-editing or involved in layout and design.

Pictured at the newsroom opening (from left): Senior Lecturer in Journalism and Creative Writing Dr Eric Loo, Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton, School of Journalism and Creative Writing Head Associate Professor Stephen Tanner and Faculty of Creative Arts Dean Professor Andrew Schultz.

Under fives new front line in childhood obesity battle

Children under five years old are the new front line in efforts to halt Australia’s obesity epidemic.

University of Wollongong child obesity researcher Dr Tony Okely says health authorities now recognise the need to establish health guidelines for very young children – 20 percent of whom are overweight or obese and at risk of becoming obese because they don’t engage in sufficient amounts of physical activity, watch too much television and eat unhealthy foods.

Dr Okely, who is Director of UOW’s Child Obesity Research Centre, is heading a consortium that is preparing a report for the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing on strategies to help promote physical activity and, as a result, prevent children in the 4-5-year age group developing tendencies that could lead to obesity.

Dr Okely said with increasing numbers of children spending much of their early childhood in formal child care settings, it was important to develop guidelines to assist staff at the centres, parents and other care-givers to understand the recommended amount and type of physical activity young children need.

He said young children ideally should have two to three hours of structured and un-structured activity each day.

“Many young children simply don’t get enough activity, which can lead to long-term health problems,” Dr Okely said. “Early childhood is a critical period for promoting healthy activities and eating habits. If children miss out in the early years it is so much harder to turn it around as they get older, so they have a much higher risk of developing associated co-morbidities such as Type 2 Diabetes and other diseases.”

Unfortunately many young children are living in environments where it is harder to participate in unstructured physical activity,” he said. “There is also a tendency to spend extended periods of time sitting in car seats, being pushed along in strollers or being parked in front of the television.

“The fact is that now 20 percent of Australian children under five years of age are overweight and developing risk factors that could lead to obesity and health problems such as coronary heart disease at a very young age, and the figure has been rising steadily.”

Dr Okely said the consortium is spending four months consulting with key stakeholders such as childcare providers, parents groups and medical authorities to develop a discussion paper that would be used to inform government policy for health-promoting activities and dietary guidelines for children in this age group.

UOW instrument tests radiation on astronauts

The future well-being of NASA space missions may well rest with an innovative instrument using micro dosimetry technology devised in Wollongong that has now been launched into space.

On board the United States Naval Academy satellite MidSTAR-1, launched on March 8 from Cape Canaveral, is a micro dosimeter instrument which can measure a range of radiobiological effects – including effects on humans during long-term space missions.

UOW’s Centre for Medical Radiation Physics Director Professor Anatoly Rozenfeld has collaborated with the Naval Academy on their grant from the US National Space Biomedical Research Institute to develop the space qualified micro dosimeter.

“Space radiations have significantly affected NASA flight missions,” Professor Rozenfeld said.

“Radiations adversely influence the design, reliability, payload mass, mission duration and planned operations of both robotic and human missions. Damage has included reduced power generation, failure of microelectronic devices, and increased background noise in sensors.”

Professor Rozenfeld said that the effects of space radiations on humans can also be extremely harmful.

“In humans, radiation exposure may lead to somatic and genetic effects. Acute health complications at relatively high doses could include fatigue, erythema, loss of hair or vomiting,” he said.

“Long-term complications from low doses at protracted exposures might include carcinogenesis, central nervous system damage and other diseases,” he said.

Because of the potential for long-term occupation of the International Space Station, and US plans for humans to return to the moon and then travel to Mars, this research into radiation effects is a critical issue, according to Professor Rozenfeld.

He said the research project would bring significant recognition to Australian science and particularly UOW, which is collaborating with US institutions including the US Naval Academy, NASA Johnson Space Centre, The Johns Hopkins University, and the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre.
For the past few years, carbohydrates have been the enemy when it comes to weight loss. But new research by the University of Wollongong’s Associate Professor Peter Williams has found that a diet high in wholegrains can assist in maintaining a healthy weight.

This doesn’t mean that stacking up on muffins, croissants and cakes will see the kilos disappear ... but it does mean that those who consume wholegrain cereal, pasta or bread and beans or nuts in a low-fat diet may be more successful at losing weight and keeping it off. They will also have better balanced nutritional intakes overall than those on low-carbohydrate regimes.

It is the first comprehensive study of its kind and its findings are being acknowledged around the country. Professor Williams from the National Centre of Excellence in Functional Foods made the conclusions after reviewing more than 500 dietary studies undertaken in the last 25 years.

“There has been a popular misconception that carbohydrate foods are too high in energy,” he said.

“However it is clear that people who have more wholegrain-based foods are at a lower risk of gaining weight over time.”

Part of the secret of wholegrain foods is that they generally have a lower glycaemic index, meaning it keeps people feeling fuller for longer, and their higher fibre content helps cut down on total energy intake.

“Consuming at least three daily servings of wholegrains is a good starting point for healthy weight management.”

Professor Williams, a Fellow of the Dietitians Association of Australia, has been dedicated to the study of food and nutrition for most of his life.

Having been the Chief Dietitian at Prince Alfred Hospital and Head of Science and Consumer Affairs at Kellogg’s, he is well versed in the benefits of certain foods and people attitudes toward food.

He also wrote the chapters on breads and cereals for the NHMRC Dietary Guidelines for Australians, was involved in analysing the nutrient content of Australian red meat for a series of recent publications and spent his PhD years investigating the vitamin losses resulting from different hospital catering services.

“It’s all been very interesting, rewarding work,” he said. “My next challenge is a trip to Saudi Arabia with one of my students to assist in the development of practice and management guidelines for obesity for dietitians in that country.”

“I am also collaborating with the School of Psychology to look at the impact of diet and physical activity in assisting GP treatment of anxiety and depression. It’s exciting to see the benefits of diet and exercise physiology being highlighted more frequently in relation to managing mental health.”

Interest builds as iC takes shape

Construction of the first buildings at the Innovation Campus (iC) is well underway, with the first occupants due to move in early next year.

The campus’ business and innovation hub, the landmark iC Central, and the Institute for Innovative Materials will be the first buildings completed on the 33 hectare site just north of the Wollongong CBD. They will be followed by the Global Centre of Excellence for Transnational Crime Prevention later in 2008 and a new home for UOW’s Graduate School of Business in early 2009.

In March this year global technology services and management consulting company, Accenture, announced the establishment of an information technology (IT) development and client support facility employing up to 150 people in Wollongong. Staff are currently working in Building 39 on UOW’s main campus, but there are plans to eventually locate the facility at the Innovation Campus.

iC Director David Fuller says Accenture’s decision to establish part of its operation at the University sends a clear signal that organisations had much to gain by tapping into ventures such as the Innovation Campus, where they would have access to UOW researchers and graduates.

Minister for the Illawarra David Campbell said the NSW Government had backed Accenture’s move through its Illawarra Advantage Fund.

“This is a major coup for our city,” Mr Campbell said. “Many of these jobs are highly-skilled positions, in IT specialist areas such as data analysis and project management. The establishment of this centre confirms the region’s growing status as a hub for knowledge industries.”

Left: Innovation Campus Director David Fuller (third from left) with a visiting delegation from the Victorian city of Geelong inspect progress on the first iC buildings. National interest is building as iC takes shape.

Below: (from left) Minister for the Illawarra David Campbell, Accenture Australia Managing Director Doug Snedden and UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton at the announcement that the global IT company would establish a facility at UOW.
One of the ‘Lost Boys’ of Sudan finds home at UOW

At first Joseph de Bol seems like any other University of Wollongong student, as he talks about his third year Environmental Engineering studies and everyday things like the latest football results.

However, his relaxed demeanour belies his torturous journey to UOW through hardship, endurance, deprivation and tragedy.

Joseph has more reason than most to feel fortunate to be studying at university. He also knows he is lucky to be alive.

Joseph is one of the ‘Lost Boys’ of Sudan – one of the tens of thousands of boys who in the 1980s fled the civil war in southern Sudan which left two million dead and millions homeless. Aged seven, Joseph was one of the youngest of the boys who fled hundreds of kilometres across sub-Saharan savannah to Ethiopia to escape being enslaved as child soldiers to be set against their own people.

“We had no food and no shelter at all for a fortnight,” Joseph says. “We had no maps, we didn’t know where we were going. We just ran but there was nowhere to hide. We had no defences, and faced the dangers of lions, hyenas, scorpions and snakes.

“There was also danger from the people whose lands we were crossing. They saw thousands of us children as a threat to their resources. They often attacked us, especially at night when we were exhausted. So many of my friends died from attacks, thirst, heat or hunger.”

The survivors then had to cross the Nile River to Ethiopia.

“It was the rainy season and the river was flooded,” Joseph says. “Many of the boys tried to swim, but were drowned or eaten by crocodiles. Being one of the youngest, I was helped onto an improvised canoe and made it across the river.

“When you’re a child, all you think about is if you’re going to eat that day. You don’t think about the enormity of your situation, although I remember being really scared seeing so many boys die.

“If I went through it now, I don’t know if I’d survive.”

Joseph made it to the Panyindu refugee camp run by a sympathetic Ethiopian government, but conditions were difficult.

“Life at the camp was very hard,” he says. “It was dry land and just rough shelters made of sticks.

“Many boys went crazy – the hope for an end to their suffering (when they reached the camps) had been the one thing keeping them going. When it turned out that there was to be no relief, they lost the will to live.

“We had to cut our own branches for shelters, there was only one small serve of food a day, and we had to go to the river to get water – each day seeing the bodies of other little boys who’d been attacked the night before.

“After a year or so, life improved. The United Nations convoys started arriving with food, and conditions got a little better,” Joseph says.

“They even got some of the older refugees to start up a school for the children, and I started to learn English.”

Joseph’s greatest grief was watching his cousin get sick and die within hours. However, in the first three years he was in the camp he had no other contact with any other family members, and didn’t know if they were dead or alive.

Eventually his father visited him in the camp and told him his mother and sisters were still alive. However, it was still too dangerous for Joseph to return to Sudan with his father, who was a leader.

In 1991 the Ethiopian government was overthrown, and the boys were forced to flee the new government’s troops – crossing the flooded River Gilo under gunfire. Some were shot while many drowned or were taken by crocodiles. Joseph managed to reach a narrow part of the river, where he crossed the torrent on a rope stretched between the two banks.

The survivors wandered across Southern Sudan, with some protection from the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army, but often under attack from hostile troops. Fortunately the International Red Cross followed their progress, and provided food for the fleeing youngsters.

After more than a year on the move from camp to camp, the plight of the so-called ‘lost boys’ gained international attention. The UNHCR took the children across the border into northern Kenya, where the Kakuma Refugee Camp was established to house them.

Joseph started school in the camp when he was 10. By age 17 he was in the top 5% of all students at Kakuma and won a Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) scholarship that allowed him to complete his education at a private boarding school in Kenya, conducted entirely in English.

“I was older than some of the boys, but was just happy to be somewhere safe where I was well fed and could concentrate on my studies,” Joseph says.

“I was even given pocket money and went to Nairobi for breaks. Life started to become normal, and I began to think about the future.”

After completing high school, he returned to the camp as a primary school teacher employed by the Lutheran World Federation. Meanwhile, the JRS had given his name to Australian Embassy staff assessing refugees for resettlement in Australia.

Joseph arrived in Australia in April 2003 and settled in Wollongong. After a bridging course in mathematics, he began his Environmental Engineering degree at UOW in 2004.

“I chose this course because the environment, in particular water, is a critical issue for this century, no matter what country you are from. I am particularly interested in helping overcome the problems of water-borne diseases by working to secure safe water supplies for towns and communities (in Africa).

“I hope to give something back to Australia and at some point go to Southern Sudan to see what I can do to help.”

As well as doing four subjects at UOW, Joseph works part-time at the Warrawong High School Intensive English Centre and as a case worker for the Australian College of Languages. This income provides his textbooks and supports his mother and sisters back in Africa.
The new chairman of the University of Wollongong’s Alumni Development Group (ADG) Dr Stephen Andersen wants to ensure that graduates feel “connected for life” to the University.

Dr Andersen, a prominent Illawarra pathologist and business leader, believes UOW graduates in Australia and overseas already have many good reasons for staying connected, and he wants to give them more.

“The University has really blossomed in recent years. It is a very successful organisation that graduates should be very proud to be associated with,” Dr Andersen said.

“Its research focus is excellent and it achieves spectacular results in research grant applications. Its teaching is of a very high standard as evidenced by the many awards it receives, and it has been blessed with inspiring and innovative Vice-Chancellors in Ken McKinnon and Gerard Sutton.

“It is one of the most powerful and influential institutions in the Illawarra and South Coast of NSW, and that influence now extends way beyond its traditional borders …..to other parts of Australia and overseas.”

Dr Andersen, who is a Fellow of the University, has Bachelor of Science and Master of Business Administration degrees from UOW and a medical degree from the University of Sydney.

He took over as chairman of the ADG in April from Dr Peter Robertson, expanding his already extensive involvement with UOW.

The founder of Southern Pathology is also a member of the Vice-Chancellor’s Advisory Board and an Honorary Clinical Associate Professor at UOW’s Graduate School of Medicine, having previously served on the UOW Foundation and as a member of the visiting committees for both the Faculties of Science and Commerce.

The ADG’s role is to provide strategic advice and support to the Vice-Chancellor on current and new alumni programs and initiatives.

“I’m coming into a very successful organisation which was very well served by its previous chairman Peter Robertson,” Dr Andersen said. “I’ve always been extremely proud of my involvement with the University, and I feel honoured to be taking on this new role.

“The Alumni Office has done a wonderful job in keeping in touch with graduates, and I’d like to see that contact consolidated with more tangible benefits for both graduates and the University. We also need to further encourage alumni networks and chapters.

“Ultimately, I’d like to help develop long-term endowments and bequests from alumni and their families that will assist the University to continue its development. The long-standing universities do this very successfully, and there is no reason why we can’t develop the same approach at UOW.”

Alumni Relations Manager Jocelin Kelly welcomed Dr Andersen to his new role, and thanked Dr Robertson for his contribution to alumni affairs over the previous six years.

Other members of the ADG are Deputy Chancellor Sue Chapman, UniAdvice Director of Marketing, Recruitment and Partnerships Robin Buckham, Faculty of Science Dean Professor Rob Whelan, Alumni Campus Chapter representative Pat Anderson, UOWD Student Services Manager Bridget Clifford, student representative Rob Sim and Young Graduates representative Tim Lawson.

Calling all UOW graduates

Calling all UOW graduates.

Here’s your opportunity to contribute to UOW’s future by standing as a graduate member of the University Council.

The University Council is responsible for the strategic and business decisions which guide UOW. It is seeking two graduates to become Council members for a four-year term starting on 1 January 2008.

The Chancellor chairs the University Council, which meets at the Wollongong campus six times a year. It has 19 members including ministerial appointees, Council appointees and elected members of the University’s academic staff, general staff, graduates and current students.

Being a member of the University Council is a great opportunity for active alumni members to contribute to the University and gain experience and develop skills in corporate governance.

To vote or stand as a candidate in the upcoming Council election, you must be a UOW graduate (including recipients of honorary awards) and cannot be a current student or a member of staff when nominations close on 18 September.

To stand for election as a graduate member you will need to complete a nomination form and have it signed by two other UOW graduates. Nomination forms will be available online (at www.uow.edu.au/about/governance/UOW027049.html) from 30 July. You will also be able to register to vote online at that link. Voting is from 2 - 16 October.

Council assistant secretary Nancy Huggett can also arrange to post out nomination forms or voter registration forms. Call her on (02) 4221 5684 for more information.

Award celebrates community contributions

Nominations close on 27 July for the inaugural University of Wollongong Chancellor’s Awards for Achievement in Community Service.

Chancellor Michael Codd AC has inaugurated the awards to recognise the personal contributions UOW alumni and others make to the enrichment of their community.

There are two categories: UOW alumni who have contributed significantly to the community and/or University; and community members or groups who have contributed significantly to the University.

Each category carries a $2000 prize. Winners will be announced at a special presentation in October.

For more information, guidelines and nomination forms visit www.uow.edu.au/about/community/chancellorsaward or call 02 4221 4676.
Journalist’s career a matter of degrees

Kate Holdsworth
Bachelor of Science 2001
Bachelor of Arts (Honours) 2002

When Kate Holdsworth told people she was studying a double degree in science and arts, many were sceptical about the unusual combination. But now, only years later, her biology/communications degree from the University of Wollongong has led her to a career as an award-winning journalist at a science magazine.

Kate is the Picture Editor and Editorial Co-ordinator at the biggest-selling Australian science magazine Cosmos. The popular bi-monthly publication has already racked up 14 journalism awards since its official launch in July 2005 including Magazine of the Year and Best Small Publisher.

“It’s a fantastic place to work,” said Kate. “The people are young and passionate about what they do. It’s the kind of place where you go to work each morning and come away at the end of the day having learnt something completely new and unexpected.”

After completing her honours year at UOW where her thesis explored the coverage of the stem cell debate in the Australian media, Kate finished an internship at the Illawarra Mercury before taking time off to live and work in Europe. She returned to Australia and briefly worked as a broadcast news reporter for Rehame before landing her Cosmos job.

“I have always been interested in science. However, I didn’t have the desire to become a scientist…I wanted to spend my time looking at the bigger picture and what it all means, rather than spending hours in a lab.”

At the age of 28, Kate’s talent for combining her scientific and writing skills resulted in her being awarded Best Newcomer to Journalism at the 2006 Bell Magazine Awards.

Kate Holdsworth receives her Best Newcomer to Journalism at Bell Magazine Awards from Kimble George from DHL Global Mail, which sponsored the award.

“IT was a huge surprise to receive that award. It has really motivated me to keep writing.”

Kate is also the News Editor for Cosmos’ sister magazine G - Australia’s first green lifestyle magazine – which offers positive, evidence-based advice for people who want to reduce their impact on the environment without having to sacrifice their lifestyle.

“It feels great working for a publishing house that cares about science and the environment, and wants to spread the word. I feel like I’m making a real contribution.”

During Kate’s time at Cosmos she has written on all sorts of topics, including weird and wonderful creatures such as waterbears, dolphins, fainting goats and genetically modified glowing fish. As Picture Editor, she has also had to track down a number of strange photographs from around the world.

“One of the weirdest was an image of a giant, diseased dreadlock stored in a museum in Poland,” she said.

Kate says that her study at UOW was invaluable in preparing her for her current role. “I am constantly using what I learned at university in my job. I think my degrees have really given me an extra edge in this industry.”

Writer achieves US breakthrough

Geoff Gillan
Bachelor of Arts (Honours) 1998
University Medallist 1998

Geoff Gillan waited a long time to have a novel published. Now, with his fantasy work Envious Gods released to critical acclaim in the United States, Gillan already has another book in the pipeline.

Gillian, who recently moved to Brisbane after working part-time as a project officer at UOW’s Faculty of Arts while he pursued his passion for writing, wrote his first novel when he was 17.

In the 28 years since then he has been a script writer for television shows and film Victoria in Melbourne, written fantasy games, studied history and politics for an Arts degree at UOW, been awarded the University Medal in 1998, and worked on manuscripts which he sent to Australian publishers.

Frustrated by the lack of interest in Australia, he decided to work through a US agent.

US publisher Five Star provided the breakthrough Gillan was looking for when it accepted Envious Gods and released it in hardcover in the US in December last year. The novel achieved instant recognition, with an early review in the American book trade journal Booklist.

“It’s very nice to finally see a book of mine in print. It’s a great confidence boost, as Five Star publish only 12 fantasy titles a year,” said Gillan. “It has sold out a couple of times on amazon.com which is great. Hopefully it will do well enough to be released as a mass market edition.”

Envious Gods is the story of the rogueish Nicholas Rakehell - actor, playwright, bon vivant – who inhabits a strange world of gods and magic. He uses a run-down theatrical troupe to impersonate a god, but finds himself way over his head in a battle of good and evil played out on a divine scale.

Aidied by a riotous cast that includes a manic-depressive puppeteer, a lascivious priestess, two egocentric matinee idols, a handful of inbred acrobats, any number of fatuous self-important wizards, scores of demented demons and, of course, one or two envious gods, Rakehell embarks on an adventure of high fantasy, high comedy and higher danger.

Gillan is now working on another novel which he describes as “more mainstream”. Envious Gods is available at UOW’s UniShop.

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Geoff Gillan
Minister Matt makes UOW history

Matt Brown
Bachelor of Mathematics
Bachelor of Laws 1996

Matt Brown says principles learned while studying for degrees in Mathematics and Law at the University of Wollongong will help him in his new role as a minister in the NSW Government.

Mr Brown, who completed his double degrees in 1996, is the first UOW graduate to become a NSW Government minister after Premier Morris Iemma appointed him to the Housing and Tourism portfolios in April after the Labor Party’s victory in the state election.

The Member for Kiama joins Fellow of the University and University Council member David Campbell, who was promoted to Police Minister in the new Government after previously holding portfolios in Regional Development, Small Business and Water Utilities.

"Mathematics is all about finding solutions to difficult problems ... identifying the problem then working out what tools you need to solve it," Mr Brown said. "I'll be applying that principle to my work as a minister in the NSW Government."

Mr Brown, who was first elected to State Parliament in 1999 and increased his majority in the March election this year, said it was a great honour to be the first UOW graduate to hold a ministerial post in the NSW Government.

"I am very proud to be a Wollongong graduate. I still take a very active interest in the University, and see myself as an ambassador for the place," said Mr Brown, who returned to work part-time as a lecturer in Law and a tutor in Mathematics after he had graduated and joined Sydney law firm Allen, Allen and Hemsley. "I really enjoyed my time as a student and as a tutor and lecturer, and follow its continuing development closely."

Mr Brown said his two portfolios provided contrasting challenges.

"The Housing portfolio is a big, meaty role, involving a lot of technical work," he said. "It has a billion dollar budget and I am effectively landlord for 147,000 homes.

"The Tourism role will allow me to show a bit more flair and I am excited to be given the responsibility of promoting the state as a tourism destination. There's nowhere in the world like NSW, and nowhere in NSW like the Illawarra and South Coast."

Uni days prepared Lylea to be MP

Lylea McMahon
Bachelor of Commerce 1997
Master of Commerce (Strategic Human Resources Management) 2005

Most students enrol at university to train for a career. In Lylea McMahon’s case, she acquired the skills for two careers at the University of Wollongong.

Ms McMahon in March moved from a successful career in human resources management at BlueScope Steel to the hurly-burly of the NSW Parliament when she was elected as the Labor Member for Shellharbour in the state election.

Like many parliamentary representatives on both sides of Australian politics, Ms McMahon got a taste for political life through an involvement in student politics and major issues around the campus during her university studies.

She was University Union president, a student representative on the Academic Senate, an elected officer of the Student Representative Council and a student advocate and research officer for the SRC.

"I loved my years at university," Ms McMahon said. "I had such a wonderful experience there – not just academically but with the whole university experience. The opportunities I was afforded were second to none and the lecturers were wonderful and so supportive. The skills I learned there have carried me through my life."

"It is a fantastic university and it has been great to watch it grow and mature. I am proud to have been involved, and I am looking forward to that continuing in my new role as an MP for the area."

Ms McMahon, a mother of three sons, campaigned for more childcare places on campus, particularly for young babies. She was the chair of a committee established to look at childcare issues, and was instrumental in the push to have Kids Uni expanded, with places for babies increased from eight to 30.

"It was in significant thing at the time," she said. "We demonstrated our case to (Vice-Chancellor Professor) Gerard Sutton, and he gave us access to the University’s architects, who were able to redesign Kids Uni to fit baby accommodation on the site."
UOW graduate
takes city’s top job

David Farmer
Bachelor of Commerce 1987

UOW graduate David Farmer has returned to Wollongong after 14 years to take on one of the biggest local government jobs in Australia.

Mr Farmer is the new chief executive officer of Wollongong City Council, having taken over from long-serving Rod Oxley in June.

Mr Farmer, who completed a Bachelor of Commerce degree at UOW in 1987, worked at Illawarra County Council (now Integral Energy) and Wollongong City Council before leaving Wollongong in 1994.

He has extensive local government experience, having been general manager of Mudgee Shire Council before being appointed chief executive of Cairns City Council in Far North Queensland in 2000.

While at UOW Mr Farmer was a founding member of the Wollongong Books rugby league club.

His predecessor Mr Oxley has retired after 19 years at the helm of Wollongong City Council. During that time he forged strong ties between the University and the city.

Mr Oxley served for 10 years on the University Council, and his contribution to both the University and to the city was recognised in 1997 when he was made a Fellow of the University.

UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton was one of the speakers at a special tribute dinner for Mr Oxley in May, attended by more than 300 people.

Professor Sutton told Campus News: “Rod Oxley is one of a select handful of people who have made major contributions to Wollongong over the past two decades, and he leaves a wonderful legacy for the city.

“Rod has been a very strong supporter of the University for a long time – as a very valued member of the University Council for 10 years and more recently serving on our Planning and Development Committee. Rod and I worked very closely together on a number of issues, but particularly on the Innovation Campus which is a partnership between the University, the City Council and the NSW Government. Rod led that partnership, and the Innovation Campus wouldn’t have happened without his support.” CN

Patrick’s powering ahead

Patrick Chih Bok Lew
Bachelor of Electrical Engineering 1997

Bachelor of Electrical Engineering graduate Patrick Chih Bok Lew runs a successful international power transmission manufacturing company, but he still has all his notes and textbooks from his student days at the University of Wollongong.

“When I get stuck on a design problem, I still like to look up my notes,” he said. “I find it valuable to refer back to what I learned at university, and apply that technical knowledge to the job I’m working on.”

Patrick lives in Malaysia where he is managing director of his family company Mayduct Technology. It specialises in manufacturing electrical power transmission equipment called busbar trunking (busduct) systems that are designed to transmit and distribute power in large buildings, power stations and factories.

Mayduct Technology exports its products all around the world.

“With our international clients, we try wherever possible to...
Alumni Appeal

In 2006 the UOW Circle of Visionaries donated over $18,500 to support vital research into prostate cancer and child obesity.

This year the Circle of Visionaries is supporting dementia education and training programs to improve the quality of life and prognosis for thousands of people living with dementia and help young people who are disadvantaged by financial hardship, family or carer commitments, ethnicity, living in a rural or isolated area and disability.

You can join the Circle of Visionaries and help us breakdown the barriers by supporting these vital projects. Contact donations@uow.edu.au or phone 02 4221 3918 for more details.

Alumni Census

Thanks to more than 6,000 UOW alumni who participated in the Alumni Census in December 2006.

The aim of the Alumni Census was to develop an understanding of the careers, opinions and attitudes of UOW graduates from all over the world. This information is now assisting the Alumni Office to tailor alumni programs and services in a more effective manner.

More than 93 per cent of UOW alumni who completed the Census said they would recommend UOW to prospective students and over 93 per cent said they have a positive attitude towards their University.

Appointments

Peter Farmakis (Bachelor of Science 1989) has been appointed managing director of industrial storage and materials handling equipment manufacturer Dexion. He took up the position in March after moving from the position of general manager of Smorgon Steel’s metal distribution business, which had annual sales in excess of $1 billion with more than 1,000 employees.

Dexion operates across Australasia, the Pacific, Asia and the Middle East, with six manufacturing plants in Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia.

Eric Yu Tak (Bachelor of Commerce 1997) has been appointed chief financial officer of Benda Pharmaceutical, a Chinese-based pharmaceutical company engaged in the development, manufacturing and distribution of medicines, active pharmaceutical ingredients and pharmaceutical intermediaries. He took up the position in February.

Michael Davey

Bachelor of Science (Honours) 1996
PhD (Chemistry) 2000

Starting a medical degree at the age of 48 might phase most people, but not Michael Davey.

He sat for his Higher School Certificate as a mature-age student, gained his Bachelor of Science (Honours) degree in his thirties and his PhD in his forties, so isn’t the least concerned that he will be in his fifties when he completes his medical degree. Rather, he is simply excited by the challenge and the opportunities that await him at the end of the four-year course.

Michael is in the first cohort of 80 students who started at UOW’s new Graduate School of Medicine in January. Michael is based at UOW’s Shoalhaven Campus, where 24 of the medical students are training.

“I've always liked a challenge, and I am really enjoying this one,” Michael said. “In fact I need to be challenged to feel fulfilled.”

He admits he found it a little difficult to get back into study mode after completing his PhD seven years ago “but the academic staff have been brilliant … so dedicated to the cause of helping us”.

Michael says he views life as an adventure, and studying to become a doctor is another chapter. He “ran away to join the Navy” when he was 15, spending 10 years as an aircraft engineer as he travelled the world with the RAN. He then worked as a builder in the Shoalhaven, and built his family home in North Nowra before tackling the HSC at Nowra TAFE.

Having successfully negotiated that obstacle, Michael enrolled in a Bachelor of Science degree at UOW, graduating with Honours in 1996. Inspired by a taste of research during his Honours year, which he spent working on anti-cancer compounds, Michael was offered a scholarship to undertake a doctorate in physical chemistry at UOW’s Intelligent Polymer Research Institute (IPRI). He completed his PhD in 2000.

He then followed his children to school, joining the teaching staff at Nowra Christian School and later Nowra Anglican College. “I wanted to spend more time with my two children, and teaching at their school seemed a good way to do that,” he said.

However, the desire to keep learning hadn't been satisfied and when he learned UOW would be starting a graduate medical degree in 2007 he decided it was time for a new challenge.

“When I heard about the opportunity to study medicine through UOW, I was really curious,” he said. “It sounded really good, and because I believe every human being has an intrinsic desire to help people I thought medicine would be an excellent way for me to facilitate this.”

Michael’s daughter Sarah has joined her father at UOW this year, enrolling in a Science degree, majoring in biology. Sarah takes all her classes at UOW’s Wollongong Campus, and they travel there one day each week when Michael goes to Wollongong for anatomy classes. Sarah also studies anatomy, although she’s in a different class, and father and daughter regularly test each other with flash cards.

Father and daughter Michael and Sarah Davey have both started a new course at UOW this year. Michael, who already has a BSc and a PhD is now studying to be a doctor, while Sarah is following in her father’s footsteps by studying Science. They are pictured in the new Medical School building at the Wollongong campus.
Exchanges strengthen Dubai-UOW connections

The University of Wollongong in Dubai (UOWD) has been operating since 1993 and is now one of the most prestigious educational institutions in the United Arab Emirates. UOWD currently has an enrolment of approximately 2,200 students undertaking Bachelors and Masters degrees in Business and Computer Science at its location in Dubai's Knowledge Village.

Mrs Sharma, who joined UOWD in 2003, has witnessed first-hand UOWD's growing popularity among students from the United Arab Emirates and surrounding countries, including India, Pakistan and Iran. “The key elements of UOWD's success are the consistent high quality delivery of the academic programs and the excellent support services,” she said.

Tricia Koster - Wollongong

Tricia Koster was dazzled by Dubai’s fast pace, energy and diverse culture when she visited UOWD in January. “Dubai is so different to anywhere I have been before. There is so much energy, and it seems that the city is changing so quickly,” she said.

“The history and culture are interesting and yet it is a place of contrasts … from the very traditional to the very modern, from women dressed in full burkhas and completely covered from head to foot, to others dressed in jeans and t-shirts. Dubai also has such a mix of cultures, with people from so many different countries living and working there. I really enjoyed meeting people of different nationalities who were working at the University.

“My trip there was a really valuable opportunity to meet the people I communicate with by phone and email, to get to know them,” she said. “It was also good to experience the culture that they operate in and to see first-hand the quality of the programs and services.

“And with my boss (James Langridge) travelling there so often, it was good to get an understanding of the people he works with when he is there, the places he goes to and the logistics issues he faces .... like the incredible traffic congestion in Dubai and appreciating just how long it can take him to get across the city for a meeting.”

Ms Koster was fascinated by UOWD’s home at Dubai’s Knowledge Village. “I was impressed with how lush and well-kept the gardens were, right in the middle of the desert.” CN

UOWD Alumni Chapter

The University of Wollongong in Dubai Alumni Association is growing rapidly, reflecting the University’s expansion since it was established in 1993.

The association was formed in 1998 with just 78 alumni, two years after the first batch of UOWD students graduated in 1996. Nine years later membership has passed the 2,000 mark and is expected to reach 3,000 by the end of this year. Association committee president Massy Azzi Hume, a 2006 MBA graduate who assumed the presidency in January, said there was a strong focus on encouraging graduating students to remain connected with UOWD.

“One of our initiatives involves reaching out to current students to inform them about the Alumni Association and the benefits of remaining active in the UOWD community after graduation,” Ms Hume said. “We have also established a Young Graduates program for people fresh out of the undergraduate programs.”

The association produces a quarterly newsletter, and hosts regular seminars known as Alumni Evenings, workshops, debates and social events.

“We hold a range of social events including a Graduate Gala Dinner, and we are planning a charity dinner in November to raise funds for the Manar El Eman School for disadvantaged children,” Ms Hume said.

“We hope to enhance the regional perception of UOWD as a premier academic institution by sourcing and cultivating influential benefactors. We also aspire to create scholarship opportunities to help people to study at UOWD, and provide more social and career networking opportunities for graduates.”

The UOW Alumni Network provides the Dubai group with funding each year to help with the costs of some activities. UOWD graduates are included on the UOW Alumni database, receiving the same communications as UOW graduates.

UOWD's Student Services Manager Bridget Clifford represents the association and other overseas Alumni chapters on the University of Wollongong’s Alumni Development Group (ADG). Her role of international liaison representative provides an international voice on the ADG.

UOWD Alumni Chapter on the move

When Arpana Sharma was in Wollongong, she’d start each day with a walk along the waterfront opposite her beachside hotel before heading out to the university campus.

“Walking along the waterfront was a beautiful way to start the day,” she said. “Then I’d go out to the campus, where the sense of warmth, camaraderie and hospitality was absolutely great.”

“It has been good to meet the people that I had been communicating with via email, and put faces to the names of the team I interact with in Australia,” she said. “Seeing the operations in Australia first-hand and meeting with teams from various divisions has also provided me with a very valuable perspective of the overall picture of the relationship between Wollongong and UOWD.

“I’ve taken back a lot of information about the team in Wollongong, and why the university has such a good reputation. Of course I’d heard a lot about Wollongong, but I have found the facilities as well as the campus absolutely amazing … and much bigger than I had expected.”

Arpana Sharma - Dubai

The University of Wollongong in the United Arab Emirates (UOWD) has established a staff exchange program to build communications and understanding between key administrative staff at the two institutions.

UOWD Chief Executive Officer Professor Nick van der Walt says the program has been designed to bring staff together and further enhance relationships between the two operations.

Among the first participants were Dubai-based Arpana Sharma, executive assistant to Professor van der Walt, and Tricia Koster, the Wollongong-based executive assistant to UOW's Vice-Principal (Overseas Operations) and Iliwana Technology Corporation Managing Director James Langridge.

Ms Koster spent 10 days in Dubai in January, while Mrs Sharma spent a week in Wollongong in April. Campus News caught up with both women to learn their impressions of their visits.

Tricia Koster

Ms Koster was fascinated by UOWD's home at Dubai’s Knowledge Village. “I was impressed with how lush and well-kept the gardens were, right in the middle of the desert.”
Display honours

UOW pioneer

Family members of the late pioneering University of Wollongong mathematician Professor Austin Keane have unveiled a display in his honour. Professor Keane, the University’s first Deputy Vice-Chancellor, died at the age of 52 in 1979 following a long illness.

The display has been mounted in the Austin Keane Building - the former Arts, Commerce and Science building that was renamed in his honour in 1983. The display, linked to some of Professor Keane’s work, was inspired by Professor Martin Bunder from the School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics, designed by Creative Arts students and completed by Illawarra Glass.

Alongside an image of Professor Keane is a display based on the diagram used in the proof of Pascal’s Theorem. As a third year student at the University of Sydney in 1948, Professor Keane was awarded the Norbert Quirk prize for his presentation of the proof.

Professor Keane’s wife Lorna and children Phillip and Joanne attended the official unveiling in June. Phillip Keane said the University of Wollongong played a big part in his father’s life and thanked the people responsible for the display for “putting a face to a name for the younger generation at the University.”

Professor Keane was appointed Foundation Professor of Mathematics in 1964 at the then Wollongong University College and in 1975 was appointed UOW’s first Deputy Vice-Chancellor when the University gained its autonomy. He was also the University’s first Emeritus Professor following his retirement in 1978. In 1980 he was posthumously awarded UOW’s first Doctor of Science degree.

He was also awarded the first mathematics PhD in Australia from the University in Sydney in 1955, joined the Australian Atomic Energy Commission as Principal Research Scientist in 1961 and served as President of the Royal Society of NSW in 1968.

Sports lecturer’s enduring legacy

Long-serving UOW lecturer and sports administrator Tom Penrose died on 12 June after a short battle with cancer. He was 74.

A legendary figure on both the Wollongong Institute of Education and University of Wollongong campuses for 30 years from 1966 until 1999 (except for a break for further study in Perth from 1974-78), Mr Penrose was instrumental in the establishment of Exercise Science and Human Movement courses at UOW.

He also played an integral part in the establishment of the highly successful Illawarra Academy of Sport, and was its inaugural chairman when it was launched in December 1985. The Academy became the model for regional sports academies across Australia.

Mr Penrose had a passion for basketball. When the National Basketball League was formed in 1979 he played a leading role in ensuring a Wollongong-based club (his beloved Hawks) would become a foundation member.

He remained closely involved with the club, and was an assistant coach under Brendan Joyce when the Hawks won the NBL in 2001.

In a tribute distributed to UOW staff, Biomechanics Research Institute director Professor Julie Steele described Mr Penrose as a “passionate pioneer of Exercise Science and Rehabilitation here at Wollongong and throughout Australia”.

“Tom was the driving force behind the establishment in 1984 of the Human Movement and Sports Science program, which provided the foundation for the Exercise Science and rehabilitation programs we have today,” Professor Steele wrote.

Mr Penrose is survived by wife Patricia, son Jason, daughter Lisa and their families.

Celebrated architects designed new centre

Award-winning Australian architects Glenn Murcutt and Wendy Lewin have designed the University of Wollongong’s new Moss Vale Education Centre building, which was opened by the Chancellor Michael Codd AC in May.

Ms Lewin attended the opening of the $2.5 million building with official guests including UOW Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International) Professor Rob Castle, Federal Member for Gilmore Joanna Gash and State Member for Goulburn Pru Goward.

Speakers praised the co-operation between the three tiers of government - federal, state and local - in seeing the $2.5 million centre come to fruition, with Ms Gash singled out for special praise for her “tireless efforts”.

The Moss Vale Education Centre began operations in 2002 as a joint venture with TAFE NSW Illawarra Institute. Students at the Centre can now study a range of degrees including a Bachelor of Arts (Community and Environment), Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Commerce or Bachelor of Commerce (Accountancy).

Moss Vale is part of UOW’s network of regional education centres.

Moss Vale student Lisa Keith who is completing a Bachelor of Arts in Community and Environment was one of the speakers at the opening, representing the students. The mother of four is Wingeacarribee Family Support Advisory Committee secretary, and plans to use her degree to work with community welfare and social housing groups in the Southern Highlands.

Mr Murcutt is the only Australian architect to have received the prestigious international awards the Alvar Aalto Medal, the Thomas Jefferson Medal in Architecture and the Pritzker Architecture Prize.

Ms Lewin received a Wilkinson Award for Residential Buildings and shared with Mr Murcutt and Reg Larke the 1999 Sulman Award for the Arthur and Yvonne Boyd Education Centre at Riversdale, on the Shoalhaven River. That project also won the Kenneth F. Brown International Award for Architectural Culture in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International) Professor Rob Castle, Moss Vale Education Centre Manager Sonia Sense and Manager of UOW’s Education Centres Anne Mitchell pictured in front of the new building.

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Rotary builds on University links

International service organisation Rotary is hoping to build on the strong links it has developed with the University of Wollongong by establishing a new club based at the campus.

UOW already has an active Rotaract Club on campus for people aged 18-30, while senior UOW mental health researchers Professor Frank Deane and Dr Lindsay Oades this year received almost $73,000 in research grants through the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund (ARHRF).

Since 2005, UOW has secured about $300,000 in ARHRF funding. In August Rotary will host a fundraising dinner at UOW's University Hall to raise money for its Village Aide Program, which provides health services, food, housing and vocational training for people in poor communities in the Philippines.

UOW is also participating in the Rotary International Ambassadors program, with Irish student Jessica Carroll currently completing a Master of Mechanical Engineering on an Ambassadors scholarship. Rotary Assistant District Governor Norm Miller says the organisation is keen to generate new membership within the UOW community, and establish a club on campus.

“We have 13 Rotary clubs in the Illawarra that people can join, but ideally we’d like to set up another club locally that is directly associated with the University,” he said.

Mr Miller praised the UOW Rotaract Club, which he described as a valuable training ground for young people in leadership, community service and networking.

UOW Rotaract president Emily Davis, who is both an Arts student and part-time staff member at UniAdvice, said the club provided many opportunities for students and staff to become involved in campus life, and in helping the wider community.

“Being a member is a great way to get involved with the community and build friendships, while there are opportunities for professional development through getting involved in event management and networking.”

Ambassadorial scholarship-holder Jessica Carroll agrees. She was president of her Rotaract club in Dublin before coming to UOW in 2006 to study for her Masters degree, and is now a member of the UOW club.

Ms Carroll, who studied for her undergraduate mechanical engineering degree at University College in Dublin, chose UOW for her Masters because of the outstanding Formula UOW racing car project run by the Faculty of Engineering.

She is now a group leader in the team developing a new car for the 2007 Formula SAE championship, and is loving her time in Australia and at UOW.

From left: UOW’s Community and Partnerships Manager Monique Harper-Richardson, Smith Family CEO Elaine Henry and Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton.

Staff giving program shows UOW cares

UOW staff now have the chance to make a real difference in their community by making regular voluntary donations to charity through their fortnightly pay.

The UOW Cares program launched in June allows staff to make pre-tax contributions to one or more of their favourite charities to ensure regular, stable and on-going funding for a range of vital community organisations.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Gerard Sutton praised the leadership and involvement of UniAdvice’s Office of Community and Partnerships and the UOW Cares Steering Committee, and expressed his pride in seeing so many people at the launch.

“The support being shown here today really does say something about the heart of this university,” he said. “This is another opportunity for UOW to give back and it highlights our commitment to community engagement.”

Smith Family chief executive officer Elaine Henry was special guest speaker at the event.

“I am very proud to be part of this launch and I congratulate Professor Sutton’s leadership and commitment to making this program happen,” she said. “We have found that people in the community truly do want to give to a variety of causes and this program will make that much easier.”

Staff are able to choose how much they wish to donate, with even the smallest donation making a difference. For example, if just 10% of University staff donate $5 a fortnight from their pay, an extra $23,400 per annum will be raised.

Payment is made as a lump sum from the University, reducing processing and administration costs for the group which means that 100% of the donation goes directly to supporting the cause.

For further information: Contact Leanne Crouch or Jan Sullivan on 02 4221 3110.

Dietitians honour Tapsell

The Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) has honoured Professor Linda Tapsell, Director of UOW’s National Centre of Excellence in Functional Foods, with an Acknowledgment of Outstanding Contribution. DAA President Julie Halcombe said Professor Tapsell has demonstrated devotion to a high standard of research in nutrition and dietetics in Australia through an outstanding record of service.

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Following an extensive review, eight charities and two UOW causes have been chosen to reflect staff preference for giving. The Smith Family, The Cancer Council, The Fred Hollows Foundation, Autism Spectrum, the Australian Conservation Foundation, Oxfam Australia, Indigo Foundation, RSPCA, UOW Equity Scholarships and UOW Community-related Research. Donating through the workplace will allow UOW staff to:

- Make an important contribution to the community
- Receive a tax deduction without the need to keep receipts for tax purposes
- Receive an immediate tax benefit from their pay
- Make a donation decision without pressure from fundraisers.

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The University of Cambridge has recognised the contribution made by the published research of UOW academic Professor Colin Woodroffe by approving him for the degree of Doctor of Science. A Doctor of Science is a prestigious degree awarded on the basis of a collection of published works which make a distinct and original contribution to the advancement of science or learning.

Professor Woodroffe is the coordinator of UOW’s GeoQuEST Research Centre in the Faculty of Science. Professor Woodroffe’s research has focused on the way in which coastal landforms change. His publications include a scholarly book, entitled Coasts, form process and evolution, published by Cambridge University Press in 2003, as well as more than 100 scientific papers in prestigious journals.

He undertook undergraduate and postgraduate studies at Cambridge, including a PhD thesis which examined the morphology, stratigraphy and sedimentary dynamics of mangrove shorelines in the Cayman Islands in the West Indies. Woodroffe has been admitted as a Doctor of Science at Cambridge.

His publications include studies of coral reef development and sea-level history in remote parts of the world such as Belize, Tuvalu, Tonga, the Cook Islands, and the Maldives, as well as papers on the Australian coast. His more recent studies have examined the implications of climate change for low-lying reef, deltic and estuarine coasts and reef-island development. Professor Woodroffe is a member of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The Clarke Medal is now awarded annually for meritorious contributions of men of science, whether resident in Australasia or elsewhere”.

Professor Tony Hulbert has become the first UOW scientist to win the highly-prized Clarke Medal, first awarded by the Royal Society of New South Wales in 1878 for distinguished work in the Natural Sciences.

Professor Hulbert from the School of Biological Sciences has joined an honour board of the most noted scientists Australia has produced. He has been rewarded for his research into the zoo-physiology of a wide variety of Australian animals which includes important implications for both obesity and ageing.

The Clarke Medal is named in honour of the Reverend William Branwhite Clarke, one of the founders of the Royal Society. The medal was to be “awarded for meritorious contributions to Geology, Mineralogy and Natural History of Australasia, to be open to men of science, whether resident in Australasia or elsewhere”.

The Medal is now awarded annually for distinguished work in the Natural Sciences (geology, botany and zoology) in the Australian Commonwealth and its territories. Each discipline is considered every three years.

Hulbert awarded Royal Society Medal

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Steele to head biomechanics society

Professor Julie Steele has been elected president-elect of the International Society of Biomechanics. She will take up the post at the society’s annual conference in Taipei in July. The two-year term will be followed by two years as president of the main international professional association for the 5,000 academics and professionals working in the field of biomechanics around the world.

Professor Steele, who is head of UOW’s Biomechanics Research Institute, was elected to the society’s executive council in 1999 and has been secretary-general for the past six years. She is the first Australian to be elected to the position, and will take over the presidency from Walter Hertzog, who is in charge of the world’s largest biomechanics laboratory in Calgary, Canada.

“I feel very humbled to be given this opportunity. It is a fantastic role, with excellent international links,” she said. “I stood on a program of improving student services, particularly international exchange opportunities for students from developing countries. I am looking forward to the opportunity to promote biomechanics in economically disadvantaged countries.”

A key role for the president is to organise the society’s annual conference, which attracts up to 1500 delegates.

Professor Steele, who has worked in the field of biomechanics research since 1984, said biomechanics was particularly strong in Europe and the United States.

Engineering researcher wins railways award

UOW Engineering PhD student Behzad Fatahi has been named the Young Railway Engineer of the Year 2007.

The award, granted by the Railway Technical Society of Australasia (RTSA), rewards young professional engineers, technologists or associates who are under 30 and have reached a demonstrated level of achievement and involvement in the field of railway engineering.

Behzad won the award for his research (under the supervision of Professor Buddhima Indraratna and Dr Hadi Khabbaz) into how railway infrastructure can be improved by identifying and managing surrounding vegetation. His findings refute the traditional belief that vegetation is detrimental to the stability of railway tracks.

He has developed a new model integrating geotechnical engineering and botanical science. The model creates a new procedure for designing railway lines in the vicinity of native vegetation resulting in significant environmental benefits and cost-saving for rail companies.

It also demonstrates that planting trees in a 15-20 metre radius from rail tracks can stabilise the soft formation and save a significant portion of the billions of dollars spent on maintenance.

The research is part of a larger project under the CRC for Railway Engineering.

Wand joins elite statisticians’ fellowship

UOW’s Research Professor in Statistics Matt Wand will be inducted as a Fellow of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics (IMS) in the United States on 30 July.

Professor Wand, a UOW Mathematics graduate who returned to Wollongong this year to take up his professorial position in the School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics, has developed a strong international reputation as a statistician during a stellar academic career which has included a five-year term as Associate Professor in Biostatistics at Harvard University in the US.

His induction will take place at the IMS annual meeting at Salt Lake City in Utah. He is receiving the award for “fundamental contributions to the theory, computation and applications of nonparametric and semiparametric statistical methods”.

IMS fosters development and dissemination of the theory and applications of statistics and probability. It has 4,500 active members around the world.
The University of Wollongong Cricket Club capped off a remarkable season with premierships in first, third and fourth grade.

University took out the Illawarra club championship with six teams across four grades making the play-offs. First grade led the way with an unprecedented sweep of all four titles on offer - the premiership, minor premiership, one-day championship and the inaugural 20/20 title played between Illawarra and South Coast clubs.

It was University's first top grade premiership since 1992, and the club's first ever one-day title. Being the first team to win a 20/20 title was just the icing on the cake.

University romped home in the minor premiership, scored an easy 98-run win over Balgownie in the one-day final and beat South Coast club Oak Flats by two wickets in the final of the 20/20 competition. The first grade premiership final was a nail-biting affair plagued by wet weather, with University’s last batting pair Nathan Eastwood (34 not out) and Andy Koutsoufis (not out 5) valiantly defying Corrimal’s bowlers for an hour in gloomy conditions to force a draw and secure the premiership.

Club president Geoff Mettam said the outstanding season was the result of a lot of hard work across the club. "It was a tremendous effort to have all teams in the finals, and to win premierships in three grades," Mettam said. "The first graders had an outstanding season and were deserving premiers. Second grade only just missed out in the final, while thirds and fourths did really well to win their competitions."

Mettam paid tribute to the club’s major sponsor, the Illawarra Master Builders Club, saying: "We are in the fourth year of our relationship with the Club, and the player who really made difference was big-hitting all-rounder Graeme Stinson, in his first season with the club. Stinson took 66 wickets at 9.72 with best figures of 7-26 and scored 655 runs at an average of 40.9. "Graeme had a great year, and clearly proved himself the outstanding cricketer in the Illawarra competition," Mettam said. CN

\['Pembo’ hits 500 not out\]

You have to be pretty special to warrant a mention in Peter Fitzsimons’ popular sports column in the Saturday edition of The Sydney Morning Herald (see right).

And Fitzsimons got it dead right. Fifty-three-year-old John Pemberton is indeed a good and faithful servant, not just to cricket at UOW but to rugby union, hockey and sport in general. In 2002 he was the first (and so far only) person to receive an Outstanding Contribution to University Club Sport Award.

Consider this astonishing record over 35 years as a player of summer and winter sports:

- Joined the University cricket club in 1972 and by the end of the 2006-2007 season had played 509 games (over about 700 Saturdays);
- Played seven seasons and 100 games of rugby from 1973-80 as a five-eighth or fullback, during an era when Uni rugby wasn’t at its strongest. As a result, he’d often double up in more than one grade;
- Switched from rugby to hockey in 1980, and is still playing for University 28 seasons and 500 matches later.

And as an administrator:
- Cricket club secretary for 30 years (includes stints as president and treasurer); A life member of the club;
- Served on the University’s Recreation and Sports Association for 20 years, including long service as vice-president. One of four life members of the association (now called URAC);
- On the hockey club committee for the past 20 years. A life member of the University Hockey;
- For the past 10 years has been a paid administrator for the University Rugby Club, the Illawarra Men’s Hockey Association and the Illawarra Cricket Association.

As Fitzsimons noted in his short tribute in the Herald, Pemberton, who has a Bachelor of Science (Geology), Honours and a PhD from UOW, started playing sport at the University as a student and continued his involvement with the teams during 17 years as a tutor/lecturer in the Geology Department.

“I was very fortunate. For many years I could just zip down to training after work,” he says.

Ten years ago, after the Geology Department merged with Geography, Pemberton started his own sports administration business working from home. But there was no thought of severing his ties with UOW sport.

Pemberton attributes his longevity to a simple love of sport and strong support from wife Margaret (also a UOW graduate and sports stalwart). “I still enjoy every moment that I’m playing hockey or cricket, and I’m active enough and fit enough to be able to do it … even if the reflexes aren’t what they used to be,” he says. “And my wife Margaret has also been involved as well, so it has been a great partnership.” CN

JOHN PEMBERTON: The beloved “Pembo” has just passed the 500-game mark for his beloved University of Wollongong Cricket Club. He started with the club in the ’72-73 season, when he started his science degree, and has continued for the next 35 seasons straight, with 52 games in 1sts, 204 in 2nds, 107 in thirds and 137 in 4ths. Well done, oh good and faithful servant.

- From The Fitz Files, Sydney Morning Herald, 31/03/07

Sporting stalwart John Pemberton on his beloved University cricket ground with the bat he has used for the past 27 years.