

# GradLife



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# OPPORTUNITIES WITHOUT BORDERS

**AS** the world becomes increasingly connected, globalisation provides graduates with a myriad of opportunities to broaden their professional profiles and employment prospects.

This edition of GradLife contains just a small sample of our many international and local alumni success stories. I invite all our alumni to keep in touch and share your stories with the UWS community, wherever you are in the world.

For winemaker Andrew Margan (profiled on p18), qualifications from UWS opened the door to roles in some of Europe's top wine regions, while Chinese Medicine Master, Jenny Chou, used her UWS degree to research the traditional medicines of her homeland (p14). A UWS MBA was Ryan Perera's ticket to a high-profile career in Sri Lanka's finance sector (p6), and his hard work and dedication saw him recently presented with the Australian Alumni Excellence, Business Leadership Merit Award 2015. Congratulations Ryan; we are very excited to hear the news and wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

Just as UWS equips students with the skills to access the many opportunities the world has to offer, the University is also expanding its international horizons. We have broadened our global reach through collaborative research and teaching partnerships with institutions overseas, and continue to build links with our international alumni. Our expansion into online education will remove even more geographical boundaries into the future. In addition, our exciting new high-rise campus under construction in Parramatta's CBD will be another attraction for the growing number of international students who come to UWS.

Our recent ranking among the world's top 100 universities under the age of 50, gives us another achievement to celebrate with our Alumni as we continue to build upon our reputation through our graduates' excellence and achievements.

**Professor Barney Glover**  
Vice-Chancellor and President

# BOLD AND BRILLIANT

Marketing mastermind, stand up comedian and television panellist on ABC's The Gruen Transfer are just some of the hats worn by one UWS communications graduate.

**HUMANS** are selfish, scared and stupid by nature, according to Dan Gregory, founder and CEO of innovation and engagement think-tank, The Impossible Institute.

"The survival brain still drives most human decision making, we're self-interested, feel the need to mitigate risk, and are biased towards the simplest, easiest way of getting what we want," explains Gregory, who recently released a book, *Selfish Scared and Stupid*, with business partner Kieran Flanagan.

But when it comes to Gregory's own career, safe and easy certainly aren't the first words that come to mind.

## STARTING OUT

Gregory was close to finishing an economics degree when he decided he wanted to work in a more creative field. He switched to studying communications at UWS hoping to become an editorial cartoonist, and developed an interest in marketing instead. But when he completed the course in 1991, the recession had made job opportunities scarce in the already competitive industry.

"I spent 18 months taking any labouring jobs I could get, and in my spare time I was banging on doors trying to meet people in the industry," Gregory says. He set his sights on Siimon Reynolds, the man responsible for the famous Grim Reaper AIDS commercial. Gregory phoned Reynolds' office every day for six months, until he finally took the call. "I wanted to pick his brain," he says.

Reynolds' advice led Gregory to an advertising course at Award School, where he became one of the top graduates. He went on to land a job at the newly formed VCD agency and within six months had won the top award for creativity in Australia – the Award Pencil.

## CLIMBING THE LADDER

It didn't take long for Gregory to become one of Australia's leading creative directors and in 2003 he co-founded the agency Kindred with Kieran Flanagan and George Betsis. Working with the likes of Coca-Cola, Unilever, and the NRL, he was often summoned to rescue failed product lines. "You tend to become more bold and adventurous in the work you do when your back is up against the wall," he says.

Sticking to smaller start up agencies throughout his career has further empowered Gregory's bold and creative approach. "In a big corporate agency you might work for one big client for a year, but in a smaller one, you can work with half a dozen in a week," he says.

## A FUNNY TURN

Ironically, Gregory developed some of his most valuable skills while taking time out from advertising to try stand up comedy.

"At VCD we used to put our personal goals up on the wall, and mine was to try stand up comedy before I turned 30," he says. "A friend at the agency enrolled

me in a course and I ended up spending a year doing stand up in the US, a few in the UK, and then travelled around Europe."

The experience helped Gregory transform from a self-professed terrible presenter to a highly sought-after celebrity speaker. "Stand up was training at altitude – I learnt how to work with difficult, hostile audiences," he says.

Since launching The Impossible Institute with Flanagan in 2011, Gregory has put these skills to good use, spending most of his time delivering speeches, programs and workshops. He also explores the ins and outs of the advertising world as a panellist on The Gruen Transfer.

Having reached the pinnacle of his industry, Gregory is no longer driven by the desire to succeed but rather, the pursuit of interesting projects. "Time has become the new currency," he says. "I get to do the work that I find challenging and worthwhile. Who knows what's next."



“You tend to become more bold and adventurous in the work you do when your back is up against the wall.”

**DAN GREGORY, CEO  
THE IMPOSSIBLE INSTITUTE**

Dan Gregory  
Bachelor of Arts  
(Applied Communication Studies) 1991

# CONSCIENCE CASHES IN

To say Ryan Perera has been busy since graduating from UWS would be a gross understatement.

**RECENTLY** awarded the Australian Alumni Award for Business Leadership for young and emerging leaders in Sri Lanka, Perera is recognised for his commitment to responsible business practices, bringing about positive change in the workplace and inspiring others.

Since completing his Master of Business Administration in 2005, the Sri Lankan national from Colombo has worked his way up from a junior bank teller in Hatton National Bank to a high-net-worth private banker and a corporate leader.

Perera's entrepreneurial spirit has constantly pushed him into new challenges, guided by little more than his instinct, MBA education and moral compass. He has revamped and restructured entire divisions across various Sri Lankan banks, interviewed and trained hundreds of staff and stayed positive through more than 25 years of civil war. His outstanding reputation has also seen him zealously pursued by head hunters throughout his career.

The 41 year-old, a married father of two, was last year appointed as deputy CEO for Candor Group, a Colombo-based financial services firm owned by Eagle Propriety Investments Ltd, based in the Dubai International Financial Centre, UAE.

He shares the lessons from his sometimes tumultuous and always exciting journey to the top.

## LESSON ONE: ENJOY LEARNING AND SUCCESS WILL FOLLOW

Perera was a banking assistant and had completed Diploma and Advanced Diploma business qualifications when he enrolled in a UWS MBA, offered through a local partnership. Although a junior among a cohort of CEOs and company directors, he soon became the 'blue-eyed boy' who was called upon to tutor and mentor his fellow students.

"I was not a person who was very ambitious about getting the best results – rather, getting the best out of my subjects was my priority," Perera says. "I combined and compared management theory with practice. Even 10 years down the line most of that learning is still in my mind. Learning never stops."

**"Learning never stops."**

**RYAN PERERA, DEPUTY CEO  
CANDOR GROUP**

Ryan Perera  
Master of Business Administration 2005

Photography: Yaveen Jayasekara



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## LESSON TWO: HAPPY STAFF EQUALS DELIGHTED CUSTOMERS

"You often hear people say 'the customer is king,' but I always champion an inside-out approach," Perera says. "If staff are truly happy and are given a positive work environment, they will perform better which results in better customer service."

The quality of customer service is one of the basic things that underpin a company's success, he explains. "Organisations are trying to do big things, even spending lots of money, while neglecting the basics. This is a simple theory which many learn in management, but soon forget when it comes to putting it into practice."

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## LESSON THREE: ETHICS COME FIRST

From the Wolf of Wall Street to the GFC, the world of finance isn't one known for ethics. But Perera, a devout Christian, refuses to compromise his values for short-term gains.

"Certain people will always try to take the short cut to success," he says. "There's corruption all over the world today, but I believe you can still grow your business the proper way. It's a matter of choice. Learn to innovate, stick to proper governance and ensure that what you do doesn't have a negative impact for the organisation and industry at large."

Perera prides himself on taking action against malpractice and fraudulent activities to safeguard the interests of his employers. "I always encourage staff to speak up and speak the truth," he says. "You need to be bold and daring enough to stand up against such negative activity."

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## LESSON FOUR: VENTURE BEYOND YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Perera was just 34 when he was offered a role setting up the private banking segment for Pan Asia Bank in 2008. "Many people advised me to stay at Standard Chartered Bank as things were going well for me," he says.

But he rose to the challenge and became one of the core members of senior management who radically transformed the bank. In addition to private banking, he went on to establish the mass-affluent prime banking segment. Within three years it had become the bank's fastest growing segment. "Setting up business segments from the ground up is no easy task, especially in a bank," Perera says. "With the support of my colleagues, I had to drive many peripheral business areas and design innovative IT-based platforms that streamlined operations to serve clients better."

Perera's recent move to Candor, which has seen him segue from banking into a fully fledged financial services firm in the capital markets space, has opened fresh opportunities for leading with vision, passion and innovation.

If his track record is any indication, Perera will be quick to make this role his own. Where he goes from here is anyone's guess.

# UWS ALUMNI HONOURED

Five UWS alumni have been recognised in this year's Australia Day Honours List for their service, achievement and the difference they have made to their communities.

### MARG CARROLL OAM

Honoured with an Order of Australia Medal (OAM), the author is also a rural women's advocate, a youth mentor and is establishing a housing complex for low income older people.

### BRIAN MCKINLAY OAM

Honoured with an OAM for his service to the community through fire and emergency services, hazard reduction and lobbying to reduce the risk to frontline firefighters.

### KERRY PINNELL OAM

Honoured with an OAM for her services to agricultural education and equestrian sports, including the partnership program she founded between Australia and East Timor in 2004.

### MARWAN EL-CHAMY PSM

Honoured with a Public Service Medal (PSM) for outstanding public service in New South Wales in the area of natural resource management and water legislation compliance.

### RODNEY TOWNEY PSM

Honoured with a PSM for outstanding public service to education and employment opportunities for Indigenous youth in New South Wales.

We congratulate all those honoured in the 2015 Australia Day Awards and encourage all alumni to share news of their awards and achievements on our new 'your story' section of our GradLife App.

# REACHING ACROSS ASIA

UWS extends far beyond its Western Sydney campuses, with thousands of international alumni, as well as teaching and research partnerships, with institutions abroad. Late 2014 was a busy time for touching base with overseas contacts and celebrating the achievements of our offshore graduates.



## VIETNAM – HO CHI MINH CITY

A partnership between UWS and Ho Chi Minh City's University of Economics saw close to 100 business students celebrate their graduation on 30 November.

A delegation of UWS academics and staff, including Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Barney Glover, attended the graduation ceremony, along with a group of Australian students on a study tour in Vietnam.

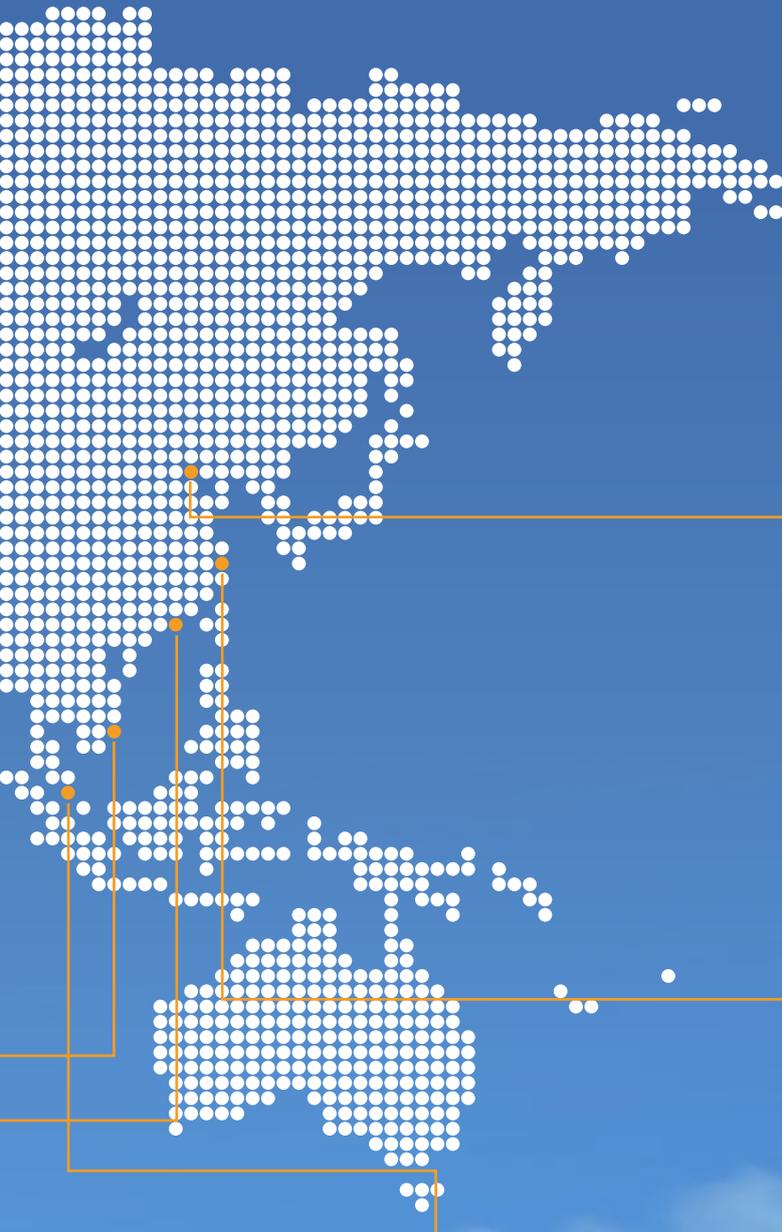
New, expatriate, and local alumni also joined UWS executives for a gala dinner following the ceremony.

## HONG KONG

About 100 students from Hong Kong Baptist University received UWS Bachelor of Nursing and Master of Nursing degrees at a graduation ceremony on 28 November. They join more than 4,000 other graduates who have benefitted from the successful 24-year partnership between the two institutions.

UWS Chancellor, Professor Peter Shergold AC, attended the ceremony, along with Vice-Chancellor, Professor Barney Glover, and academics from the UWS School of Nursing and Midwifery. A celebratory dinner at the Shangri-La attracted recent graduates, Australian expats and local alumni.





### CHINA – BEIJING

China is the top source country for international students at UWS, and is home to over 1,000 alumni. UWS Professor James Arvanitakis helped lay the foundations for an alumni network during a visit to the nation's capital last November.

Taking time out from an academic tour, Professor Arvanitakis met with several Beijing alumni over dinner. The group had an opportunity to network, catch up on each other's careers and find out about recent developments at UWS.

### CHINA – SHANGHAI

Professor James Arvanitakis from UWS hosted a table of alumni and guests at last November's Australia China Alumni Awards.

Over 150,000 Chinese students have graduated from Australian universities over the past four decades and, armed with their Australian education, many have achieved great things upon returning home. Among the finalists was UWS Master of Business Administration graduate Baisha Zhang, who also completed a Masters of Commercial Law at Melbourne Law School. Now a law firm partner in Guangzhou, Zhang is a pioneering figure in the field of Chinese competition law, and was voted one of his city's top 10 lawyers by the Guangzhou Lawyers Association.

### MALAYSIA – KUALA LUMPUR

UWS hosted a table for Malaysian graduates at the fifth annual Australian Alumni Awards on 4 December. Organised by the Malaysian Australian Alumni Council and held at the JW Marriott Hotel, they are the only awards to recognise and honour exceptional Malaysian graduates from Australian universities. Australian High Commissioner, His Excellency Mr Rod Smith PSM, attended as the event's guest of honour.



# VIRTUAL COURSES FOR REAL SUCCESS

In today's rapidly changing world, few graduates can afford to rest on their laurels. If that degree on your wall is looking a little dusty, you could be due to brush up on your skills.

**FURTHERING** your education is now easier than ever, with this year's launch of UWSONline. Developed in conjunction with a leading online university, Open University UK (OU), UWSONline currently offers 27 courses. Options range from an Executive Master of Business Administration to various Master of Science specialties, a Bachelor of Communication and a Graduate Certificate in Teaching Higher Education.

The courses are currently available to Australian students, with plans to roll them out globally.

With years of experience in the online education space, OU boasts sophisticated online teaching methods,

rich multimedia content and a high degree of interactivity and flexibility. UWSONline students also benefit from local learning facilitators who deliver online group tutorials and individual sessions, prepare students for assessment tasks and provide a point of contact. "The materials have been jointly developed with UWS academics," adds UWSONline program manager, Felicity Orme. "A lot of work has gone into ensuring the courses meet the needs of UWS students and are highly relevant in the Australian context."

The University's leap into the online sphere is complemented by a streamlining of all online student support information and mechanisms.

For individuals with competing responsibilities who want to update their skills, this adds up to a highly flexible, high-quality solution. "Your first degree will help you get into the workforce, but it's increasingly being seen as an entry-level qualification," Orme says. "If you're looking to further your career, you need to stay in touch with new developments, new technologies and new ways of doing things. It's also important to demonstrate an openness to lifelong learning and improvement."

For a full list of UWSONline courses and further details, visit: [uwsonline.uws.edu.au](http://uwsonline.uws.edu.au)

## SNAPSHOT: POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

- Around 20 per cent of bachelor degree graduates immediately go on to further study and many others do so later in their careers (*source: Graduate Careers Australia*).
- The number of people who completed a postgraduate degree rose from 413,093 in 2006 to 631,121 in 2011 – an increase of 52.8 per cent (*Source: ABS*).
- Of all students enrolled to study in 2008, over 27 per cent were in some form of postgraduate study (*Source: DEEWR Selected Higher Education Statistics 2008*).



# GREAT-GRANDMOTHER PROVES IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO GRADUATE

**MARGUERITE** Tobin is using any money she can spare to help people achieve their study goals without having to wait as long as she did.

The great-grandmother was 74 when she finally had the opportunity to enrol in a Bachelor of Arts at UWS at Penrith.

She's now 89 and says being a graduate has given her a new lease on life: "Studying gave me a lot of confidence and I had a lot of encouragement from friends and family, tutors, lecturers and students who were much younger than me."

Growing up as one of seven children in a working-class family, the Mount Druitt local didn't have the means to study in her younger years. Nor was it an option once she was married and bringing up four children.

"After I turned 74, my children were all grown up and my husband had died four years before, and then the opportunity came up," says Tobin.

"I read about a six-month course at UWS (UniStart) that, if you passed, would guarantee you a spot in a degree course."

Tobin was granted a merit-based equity scholarship to help with her studies, and is now intent on giving back to her community. Since graduating at the age of 78, she has busied herself with volunteer work, which led to her receiving the Chifley Woman of the Year award for 2013.

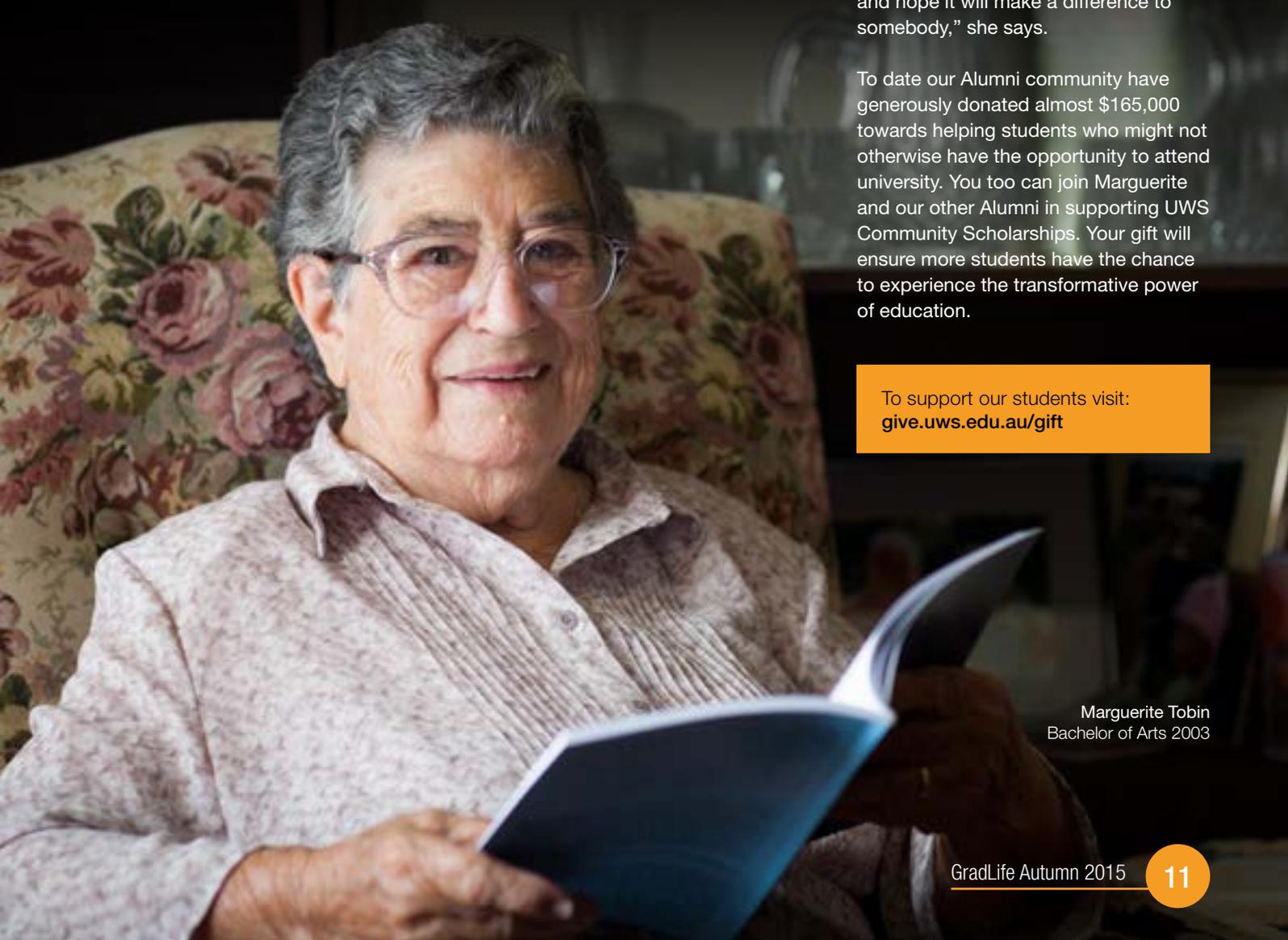
Learning about Aboriginal issues also inspired her to join a local reconciliation group. Tobin complements this work with regular donations to the UWS Community Scholarship program.

"I know what I can give is only a small amount, but I give as often as I can and hope it will make a difference to somebody," she says.

To date our Alumni community have generously donated almost \$165,000 towards helping students who might not otherwise have the opportunity to attend university. You too can join Marguerite and our other Alumni in supporting UWS Community Scholarships. Your gift will ensure more students have the chance to experience the transformative power of education.

To support our students visit:  
[give.uws.edu.au/gift](http://give.uws.edu.au/gift)

Marguerite Tobin  
Bachelor of Arts 2003



# TALKING SHOP WITH A RISING STAR OF RETAIL

How Aaron Lum's top-rung career started on a supermarket step-ladder.

**DOING** late night shifts packing shelves at his local Woolworths, Aaron Lum hardly expected his pocket money job to turn into a stellar career.

But with plenty of drive and the right qualification, the Business and Commerce graduate did just that.

Lum worked his way up from night-packing and checkout service during uni to a head office job and then a graduate program with the retail giant.

Less than three years out of uni, the 25 year-old is a national buyer for Woolworths, overseeing a range of products across more than 940 stores.

While retail jobs are easily accessible, Lum's story proves that where they lead to is up to the individual's hard work and determination.

"Lots of people attach a stigma to working in retail – they see it as just a job to get you through uni, but the skills you gain can really set you up for your career in the future," he says. "For me, it has been an amazing journey."

Lum describes his role as similar to running a small business within a large company, as he looks after everything from product selection to pricing, placement and promotion. In other words, next time you browse through

the household storage and haberdashery products at a Woolworths outlet, you can credit this fellow graduate for doing the background work to get them there.

"When I'm interstate and walk into a Woolworths I'm able to see all my initiatives being brought forward," Lum says. "It's mind boggling to see the effect of the decisions I make here (at the Bella Vista head office) flowing down to every store across Australia."

A passion for retail saw Lum receive a highly commended award at the 2014 National Retail Association's Young Retailer of the Year Awards. It was a highly competitive process which involved forming a business plan and impressing several retail executives during a panel interview. Winning a spot in the final stages of the competition, Lum was quizzed on-stage at a gala dinner – an experience he likened to being a Miss Universe contestant. "We didn't know the questions they were going to ask and had to think on-the-spot," he says. "It was a wonderful experience. I was up there with a lot of ambitious young people and it gave me great exposure. Since winning the award I've achieved recognition throughout the business and it has really helped me with my personal development and public speaking."

It's all a far cry from Lum's early days as a shelf packer. But, as he approaches





Aaron Lum  
Bachelor of Business and  
Commerce (Marketing) 2011

Photography:  
National Retail Association  
Young Retailer of the Year awards.

the opposite end of the career ladder, he values the experience and understanding he gained on the retailing frontline.

“It has definitely been beneficial learning how to treat customers, merchandising and upselling,” says Lum, who also worked as a McDonalds store manager during his student years. Plus, with cost-efficiencies high on the agenda in his current role, the in-store experience helps Lum come up with effective procedural changes. All this is backed up by his UWS degree, which included developing a business plan for an active company.

### FAST FACTS

- Retail is Australia’s second largest employment sector after health care, accounting for almost 11 per cent of all workers.
- In total, 1.7 million Australian jobs exist because of the retail sector.
- Over \$60 billion in Australian wages are due to retail sector activity.
- Retail supports over \$120 billion in economic activity across all sectors in Australia.

(Source: ABS; ANRA)

# HEALTHY BLEND OF EAST AND WEST

Chinese Medicine changed Jenny Chou's life and left her with a burning desire to share it with others.



**JENNY** Chou's childhood memories are tainted by bouts of ill health and hospital visits. Growing up in Nanjing, China, she battled chronic fatigue and inexplicable high fevers. She went on to study and practice Western medicine, but when she migrated to Australia in the early 90s, her medical qualifications weren't recognised. This prompted Chou to shift her focus to Chinese Medicine and, as a 'side-effect', transformed her health. "Now, I always treat the cause as the main focus, as well as the symptoms," she says. "Through focusing on Chinese herbs and acupuncture... my body was finally fighting disease rather than being treated for it."

In the 20 years that followed, Chou set up a thriving Chinese Medicine practice in Adelaide without needing to take a single sick day. "I'm so passionate about Chinese Medicine because I've seen so many people with different chronic conditions benefit," she says. "It looks at how the whole body works together and is preventative. We need Western medicine and it has its advantages, but it's much more symptom targeted."

Halfway through her career in Australia, Chou consolidated her practical experience with a Master of Traditional

Chinese Medicine from UWS. She was drawn to the National Institute of Complementary Medicine (NICM)'s reputation for high quality research and, since graduating in 2007, has been a regular donor. "UWS has done a lot for improving the evidence base for Chinese Medicine," Chou says. "I'm so grateful to my Chinese ancestors for establishing this theory and practice that has been helping mankind for centuries, but (NICM director) Professor Alan Bensoussan and his team are the modern heroes. They're the ones helping it to evolve."

Now nearing her 60th birthday, Chou is semi-retired and the picture of health. Free from the chronic diseases which plague others in her generation, she believes Chinese Medicine has an essential role to play in addressing the mounting health burden of Australia's ageing population. "The health crisis is coming and it's so important to teach people about preventative methods," she says. "There are so many ways you can help yourself to stay healthy."

Chou's passion for holistic health inspired her recent tree change to the Huonville Valley in Tasmania's far south with her husband. The 55 acre haven is set in heavily forested mountains, with the

## STRENGTHENING THE EVIDENCE BASE

UWS National Institute of Complementary Medicine (NICM) is helping to prove that complementary medicine is a valuable addition to the mainstream treatment mix. The Institute's clinical research projects have been published in high quality medical journals, with its Chinese

Medicine and acupuncture trials covering irritable bowel syndrome through to infertility and diabetes. "Chinese Medicine has been trialled in China for decades but it has not been well recognised at the international level," says graduate and Chinese Medicine practitioner Jenny Chou.

"The challenge is that it's a very individualised approach – my chronic fatigue is different to Mr Smith's chronic fatigue. For me, it's linked to digestion, the spleen, but for others it might be their liver. This makes the trials hard to design, but this is something NICM does very well."

“I’m so grateful to my Chinese ancestors for establishing this theory and practice that has been helping mankind for centuries, but (NICM director) Professor Alan Bensoussan and his team are the modern heroes. They’re the ones helping it to evolve.”

**JENNY CHOU,  
MASTER OF TRADITIONAL  
CHINESE MEDICINE (2007) AND DONOR.**

tranquil Huon River and the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area at their doorstep. “I’ve been promoting the philosophy of living in harmony with nature, but we’ve always been too busy to have the chance to do it for ourselves,” Chou says. “We wanted a place with good feng shui and we saw this as an ideal paradise. We have a couple of cows and chooks and enjoy good organic living.” Chou regularly travels back to Adelaide to complete the hand over of her Chinese medicine practice, and continues to share her knowledge through local community programs.



# HEROES THAT HAILED FROM HAWKESBURY

On the 100th anniversary of the ANZAC landing at Gallipoli, we remember the many servicemen and women who have sacrificed their lives for our nation throughout the generations. Some of the lives among this first batch of heroes trace back to Hawkesbury Agricultural College (HAC), with a disproportionate number of students – in some cases entire classes – having enlisted to fight in World War I.

**OVER** 700 staff, students and graduates from HAC are believed to have served in World War I. Put in context, this represents almost a quarter of all students who had ever attended the college by the time the war ended in 1918. Many students who enlisted were highly skilled horsemen from regional areas, and went onto become members of the Light Horse Brigade.

According to UWS archivist, Cathie Lester, the close knit nature of the HAC community makes it easy to understand why so many students and staff enlisted together. “It was a working farm, they lived on campus, worked the land together, studied together, socialised and ate together,” she says. “There was a huge sense of camaraderie on campus, and once the war broke out, you can see how they would have all mobilised together.”





**Harold Thomas Watkins (pictured)**  
*(ex-student) Hawkesbury Agricultural College. Watkins completed the Hawkesbury Diploma of Agriculture in 1913. Lieutenant HT Watkins, C Company, 13th Battalion, 4th Brigade Infantry Australian Imperial Expeditionary Force was killed at the Dardanelles soon after the Gallipoli landings in April 1915. Watkins' brother, Wallace Roy, also a HAC student in 1914 who enlisted in the Veterinary Corps, returned from the war, completed the Hawkesbury Diploma of Agriculture in 1920 and worked at HAC as Farm Manager for more than a decade and later donated this portrait to the Archives.*

In a letter to the HAC principal, published in the college's journal in September, 1915, Major W. Charley named a long list of Hawkesbury students who had already lost their lives in the war.

The letter also detailed some of the horrors that he and his peers had experienced in the trenches. "The whole place is like a huge rabbit warren," Major W. Charley stated in his letter. "I am beginning to feel that I am getting more and more like a wombat every day...it is like hell let loose when the artillery gets going. We are swept with shrapnel and high explosive shells continuously, and the bullets are flying in all directions all day and all night."

But it's the respect he had for his fellow Australian fighters that really stands out in the letter. "I have a good many old HAC boys in my command," he wrote. "Since I have been over here the proudest moments of my life have emanated. Our Australians have done such good work... truly, our Australians are great fighters."

With so many of its staff and students fighting in the war, the college formed a comforts fund to provide care packages for the soldiers, and became a hub for their supporters. This support and camaraderie on campus continued beyond the war, in fundraising efforts for the construction of a memorial hall in 1928.

## LAST SUPPER LONG REMEMBERED

**A BATTERED** dinner menu from 1915, scrawled with the signatures of 20 men, serves as a poignant memento of what was, for some of them, a final meeting.

The men, former students and staff from Hawkesbury Agricultural College, were all serving with the Australian Expeditionary Forces in Egypt at the time, and had met up for a reunion dinner.

The group dined at the Eden Palace Hotel in Cairo on February 20, 1915, the same date that orders were sent from London for Australian and New Zealand troops in Egypt to prepare for the invasion of the Dardanelles.

Just over two months later, many among the group were sent to fight in Gallipoli, and some never returned.

One of the attendees who did return was George McGillivray, who had entered Hawkesbury Agricultural College in 1910. Decades later, his son found the menu from that fateful reunion dinner, and sent a copy of it to the college.

On 20 February this year, the UWS Hawkesbury Alumni Chapter marked the 100th anniversary of this unique reunion with a memorial dinner. Initiated as an occasion to honour all students and staff who served in World War I, the dinner was held in the Memorial Hall at UWS Hawkesbury campus. Its menu included roast chicken and plum pudding – the same dishes that, according to the late George McGillivray's lovingly preserved memento, were served on the same date, a century ago.

# SCIENCE, ART AND A WHOLE LOT OF HEART

Hawkesbury graduate Andrew Margan has carved his own niche in one of Australia's top wine regions.

**WINEMAKING** was a natural career choice for Andrew Margan, who grew up on a Hunter Valley vineyard next door to the Tyrrell's wine empire.

It was a choice he seriously second-guessed upon graduating from UWS Hawkesbury with a Bachelor of Agriculture in the early 1980s. At the time, Australia was a nation of beer drinkers, exported little wine and had such an oversupply of grapes that the government was offering subsidies to land-owners who pulled out their vines.

Looking for an alternative career path, Margan returned to UWS to study environmental health. It was there that he met his wife Lisa, and while love was blossoming, so too was Australia's wine industry. By the time Margan graduated in 1986, the industry had grown enough to encourage him to ditch his plan-B.

Margan went on to complete a winemaking apprenticeship at Tyrrell's Wines, spent six years working in vineyards across Europe, and returned to Tyrrell's as marketing manager. In 2007, the time was ripe for the Margans to launch their own brand. Margan Wines in the Hunter Valley now produces half a million bottles a year, exports to 10 countries and boasts a 320 acre vineyard with a cellar door and restaurant. The awards that keep pouring in are constant reminders that Andrew Margan made the right career choice. **He steps out of the cellar for a chat with GradLife.**

## WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT WINEMAKING?

"It's very satisfying to be involved in growing, manufacturing, putting it in a bottle and putting your name on it. I have always had pretty strong abilities around logistics and science, and also need to have a creative outlet in my work. Winemaking is the perfect blend of science and art."

## IS IT AS IDYLIC AS IT SOUNDS?

"Every day I wake up thinking that I'm lucky. I live in a beautiful place and get to work for myself. That said, it's definitely not idyllic – you've got the difficulties that are involved in farming, then add in manufacturing, sales and marketing – it makes for a very busy life."

## HOW ABOUT BEING AT THE MERCY OF NATURE?

"This can be hard when you're running a business of our size. Every growing season is different and every vintage is different. In 2011 we had massive hail storms that took a lot of the crop away. The living cycle that nature gives you is full of peaks and troughs."

Congratulations to Margan Wines who took home gold in the Tourism Wineries, Distilleries and Breweries category along with the Excellence in Food Tourism category and won silver in the QANTAS Award for Excellence in Sustainable Tourism at the 2014 NSW Tourism Awards. We wish them the best of luck in the Australian Tourism Awards, to be announced in April.

**Lisa Margan**  
Bachelor of Education  
(Home Economics) 1989  
Master of Applied Science  
(Food Science and Nutrition) 1996

**Andrew Margan**  
Diploma of Applied Science in Agriculture 1981  
Bachelor of Applied Science (Environmental  
Health) 1986





### **WAS IT DIFFICULT TO SHIFT FROM WORKING FOR THE TYRRELL FAMILY TO BEING A COMPETITOR?**

“We don’t see each other as competition. It’s us versus the world and we all work together to promote the region. The more Hunter Valley wines on wine lists, the better.”

### **WHAT DID YOU LEARN WHILE WORKING IN EUROPE?**

“To never take no for an answer. They were all very sceptical about an Aussie winemaker when I first got to France in 1987. They didn’t even know we made wine, but within five years we had become their strongest competitor.”

### **WHAT’S THE FUTURE FOR MARGAN WINES?**

“I have three children; my eldest son is in his third year of studying wine and has an interest in taking over. My daughter is studying communications marketing and is also interested in being involved. I can see a succession plan there.”

Photography: Penelope Beveridge

### **ON DISCOVERING WINE...**

“Drink as much wine as possible to get your head around the different varieties and regions. It helps not to generalise and to keep an open mind. You may have disliked one chardonnay, but others can be very different. Avoid wines that are very simple and obvious in your mouth. Wines that have more savoury characters and more complexity are the most memorable.”

**ANDREW MARGAN, MANAGING DIRECTOR AND WINEMAKER,  
MARGAN HUNTER VALLEY WINES.**

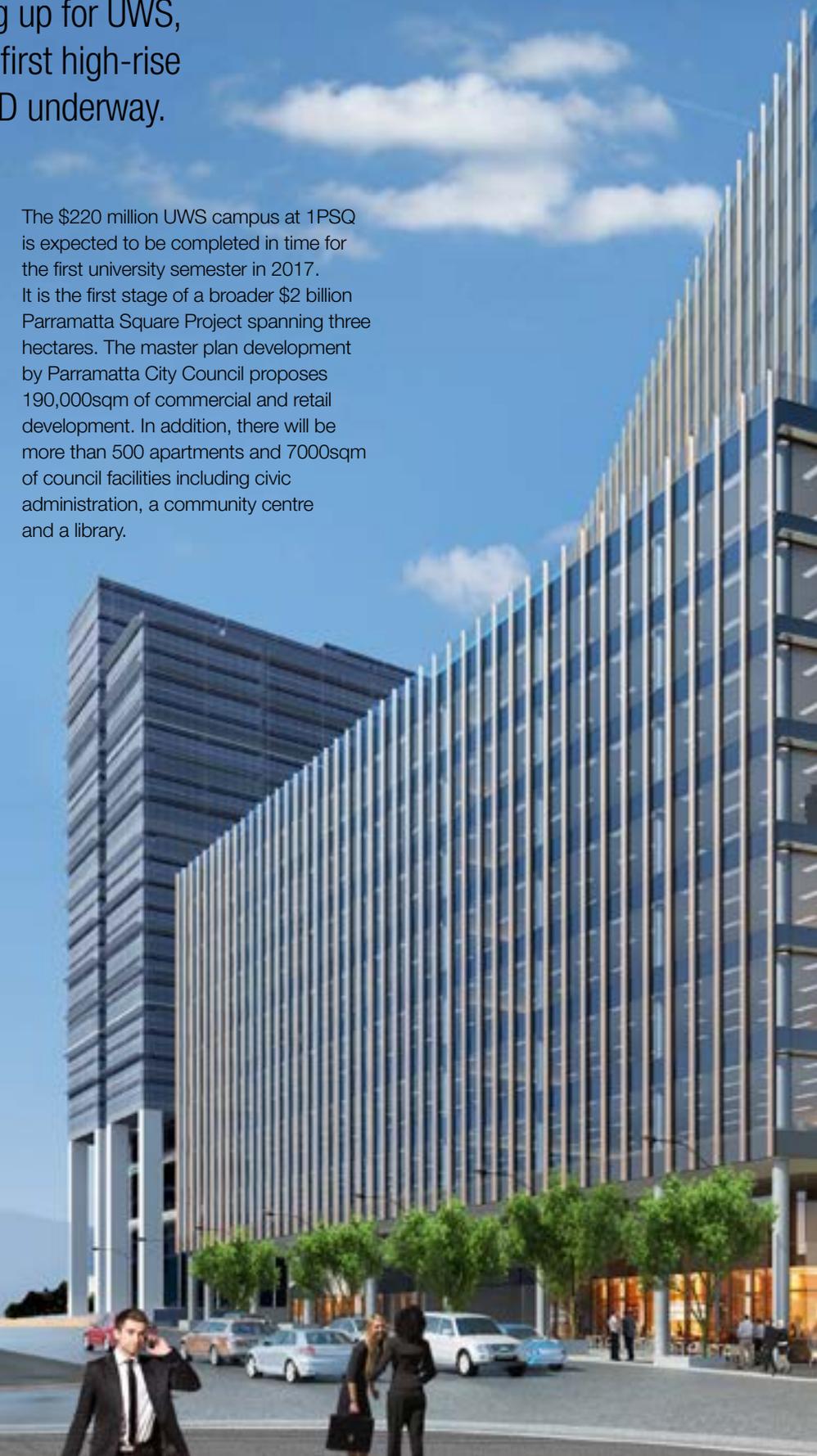
# VERTICAL CAMPUS TAKES UWS TO NEW HEIGHTS

THE future is literally looking up for UWS, with the development of its first high-rise campus in Parramatta's CBD underway.

**COVERING** 26,000sqm and rising 14 storeys, the vertical campus will be a base for over 10,000 students. Leighton Properties is the developer and Charter Hall is the owner of the 169 Macquarie St site, otherwise known as One Parramatta Square or 1PSQ. The building, to be leased by UWS, will blend state-of-the-art technology with the latest collaborative learning spaces. According to UWS Vice-Chancellor, Professor Barney Glover, Leighton Properties was selected as the preferred development partner based on the strength of the building's design, flexibility and prominence. "This project forms a vital part of the University's strategy to significantly expand its international student population, and will be a focal point for our postgraduate programs," he says. "The prime CBD location will embed UWS in the social, economic and civic life of Parramatta and Greater Western Sydney."

The building's sustainable design has achieved a five-star green rating and is the result of a competition won by architecture firm, Architectus. It will enable students to enjoy distant views to the north and east in a roof terrace break-out space, move easily between the floors through a central atrium and access ground floor retail amenities. The vision is to create a campus that not only provides students with a lively, cosmopolitan atmosphere to enjoy, but provides them with important links to amenities and public transport, as well as connecting them to the many other exciting developments underway in Parramatta.

The \$220 million UWS campus at 1PSQ is expected to be completed in time for the first university semester in 2017. It is the first stage of a broader \$2 billion Parramatta Square Project spanning three hectares. The master plan development by Parramatta City Council proposes 190,000sqm of commercial and retail development. In addition, there will be more than 500 apartments and 7000sqm of council facilities including civic administration, a community centre and a library.





University of  
Western Sydney



## DID YOU KNOW?

'87 Bachelor of Business (Land Economy) graduates, David Harrison and David Southon are joint Managing Directors of Charter Hall – the owners of 1PSQ.

## SNAPSHOT OF GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY (GWS)

- Almost 1 in 10 Australians live in GWS
- GWS has \$95 billion in economic output
- By 2032 the population in GWS is predicted to top three million
- A 2012 Deloitte study found that UWS contributed over \$845 million and 8,800 jobs to the local economy in 2010. The value of our contribution today is estimated at well over \$1 billion per annum
- 76% of UWS students come from the GWS region

PSQ

# A PATHWAY TO A BETTER LIFE

**REFUGEE** Balendran Thavarajah fled to Australia with bucket loads of ambition and little else. Sri Lanka's civil war had interrupted his schooling and, when he arrived in the year 2000 aged 26, he had no school certificate and few options.

"I knocked on the door of every university in NSW looking for an opportunity, but not having a school certificate held me back," Thavarajah says. "I wanted to make the most of what Australia had to offer."

His break finally came when he discovered the alternative entry pathways available through UWS. After successfully completing two subjects, Thavarajah was accepted into a Bachelor of Computer Science. It was around the time when internet use was rapidly gaining momentum and he saw it as a fascinating and promising field. "The program was well structured for people like me who were disadvantaged," says Thavarajah, who now works as chief technology officer for location based services platform provider, Bluedot Innovation. "It gave me the opportunity

to start, but also prepared me for the challenges ahead."

High on the list of challenges was having barely any English. "I was studying for 18 hours a day, I had to learn English as well as the subject content," says Thavarajah, who spent any spare moment watching English movies and reading English books. "I had an appetite to succeed and I knew I had the potential. Plus, I was very fortunate to have the support of my father throughout my studies."

Thavarajah's faith in his abilities proved to be well justified. He went on to complete a Masters in Software Engineering at Sydney University and worked in the IT departments of several large companies before moving to Melbourne with his wife and daughter for his current role. He has also done some casual lecturing and university tutoring, including at UWS. "I hope to eventually return to teaching if an opportunity arises," he says. "I feel like I have so much more to give back. I can't thank UWS enough for the opportunity I had. If that pathway wasn't there, I wouldn't be where I am today."

For information about Pathways to UWS visit:

[future.uws.edu.au/pathwaystouws](http://future.uws.edu.au/pathwaystouws)

## OPTIONS ABOUND

Several alternative pathways exist for applicants who miss out on a place at UWS or don't meet the entry requirements. These include academic and English language programs through UWS College; enrolling in individual units; applying with a VET qualification; sitting a Special Tertiary Admissions Test or applying through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alternative entry program.

"I can't thank UWS enough for the opportunity I had. If that pathway wasn't there, I wouldn't be where I am today."

**BALENDRAN THAVARAJAH,  
CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER,  
BLUE DOT INNOVATION.**



Balendran Thavarajah  
Bachelor of  
Computer  
Science 2003

# UPCOMING EVENTS 2015

<b>MAY</b>	Coop Alumni Network (CAN) 20th year celebration	<a href="http://uws.edu.au/CAN">uws.edu.au/CAN</a>
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	Spring graduation ceremonies	<a href="http://uws.edu.au/NewAlumni">uws.edu.au/NewAlumni</a>
<b>COMING LATER IN 2015</b>	Singapore Alumni and Friends Function	<a href="http://uws.edu.au/AlumniEvents">uws.edu.au/AlumniEvents</a>
	Hawkesbury Alumni Chapter Parliament House luncheon	<a href="http://uws.edu.au/AlumniEvents">uws.edu.au/AlumniEvents</a>

## STAY CONNECTED

Immediately following your graduation or completion of your studies at the University of Western Sydney, you become a valued member of the UWS Alumni community. We encourage all of our graduates to update their details online and remain connected with UWS.

Update your details, join chapters and stay connected online at [uws.edu.au/stayconnected](http://uws.edu.au/stayconnected)

## GRADLIFE MEMBERSHIP

We also invite you to join the GradLife Membership Program to gain access to benefits exclusive to UWS alumni.

To find out more or to join visit [uws.edu.au/gradlife](http://uws.edu.au/gradlife)

## FIND OUT MORE

Look online at [uws.edu.au/AlumniEvents](http://uws.edu.au/AlumniEvents) or contact the UWS Alumni Unit at [alumni@uws.edu.au](mailto:alumni@uws.edu.au) for more information.

Keep up to date with UWS on our social media channels.



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[uws.edu.au/alumniLinkedin](http://uws.edu.au/alumniLinkedin)

Scan the QR code to download the free UWS GradLife App.



## Thank you

Since 2012, with the support of our alumni and staff we have been able to provide 14 Community Scholarships to our students.

With your support we can ensure more students like Mereti make it to their Graduation Day.

[give.uws.edu.au/gift](http://give.uws.edu.au/gift)



# A NEW WAY TO CONNECT

GradLife is moving into the digital age and is available via the free UWS GradLife app.

The new app is available for iPad, Android and Windows and will **replace printed copies of the magazine.**

Access content directly from your device, including image galleries and online content.

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