

IMPACT REPORT 2024



WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY



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Front cover photo: **Katie Page** and scholarship students
This page: **Parramatta South campus**

ABOUT WESTERN

Western Sydney University is a world-class university with growing international reach and a reputation for academic excellence and impact-driven research.

Ranked in the top 2% of universities in the world, we are globally focused and committed to making a positive impact at a regional, national and international level.

For the fourth year running, Western has been recognised as number one in the world in the prestigious Times Higher Education (THE) University Impact Rankings as measured against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). This includes

- 7th in the world for SDG 5 Gender Equality
- 4th in the world for SDG 15 Life on Land
- 8th in the world for SDG 13 Climate Action and SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
- 9th in the world for SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals
- 14th in the world for SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities
- 9th in the world for SDG 6 Clean Water and Sanitation

Our University has over 46,000 students spread across 13 campuses and offers more than 600 courses across 100 disciplinary areas, carefully structured to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world, as well as the opportunities and challenges that are unique to our region.

We are committed to the success of our students, the impact of our research and the co-created transformation of our communities.



IN THE WORLD
2022-2025
TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION IMPACT RANKINGS



TOP 2%
OF UNIVERSITIES WORLDWIDE*

* Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2019-2025



FIVE STARS
FOR EMPLOYABILITY*

* QS Top Universities: QS Stars Ratings 2024

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Distinguished Professor George Williams AO



“Every day, I am inspired by the generosity of our donor community and the transformative impact your contributions make on the lives of our students and the strength of our research. At Western Sydney University, we believe in the power of partnership and in the possibilities created when purpose meets philanthropy.”

In 2024, we launched *Accelerating Ambitions*, our new philanthropic strategy to grow a culture of giving across Western. This strategy reflects our unwavering commitment to building a future where no student is left behind due to financial hardship, and where our researchers can lead with confidence to tackle the complex challenges facing our region and nation.

Thanks to your support, students like Dharshini Rajkumar, who received a PhD scholarship in immuno-oncology can pursue world-leading research that has the potential to change lives. Scholarships like these are not only financial lifelines; they are signals of belief, validation and hope.

This year, we are proud to celebrate significant milestones in our philanthropic journey: from the \$10 million gift from Marcus and Caroline Blackmore to strengthen the NICM Health Research Institute, to the visionary support of donors like Lyn Ingham and David and Rachael Chin, who are advancing student research and opportunities across medicine and law.

We also look to the future with the development of the Indigenous Centre of Excellence - a transformative initiative that places Indigenous self-determination at the heart of higher education. With \$78.5 million from the NSW Government and the support of donors like you, we are building an institution of national significance, one that will shape policy, research and leadership for generations.

Your continued partnership is critical. Thank you for helping us make Western a university where ambition is matched by opportunity, and where philanthropy is a force for deep and lasting impact.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR

Professor Jennifer Westacott AC



At Western Sydney University, we are defined by our purpose and strengthened by the people who believe in it. Our donors and partners continue to play an extraordinary role in helping us realise the bold ambitions we hold for our students, our research and the future of Western Sydney. I extend my deepest thanks for your continued generosity, trust and shared commitment to excellence and equity.

This *Impact Report* celebrates remarkable stories of giving, from the enduring support of the Presentation Sisters and the Hawker family, to the extraordinary philanthropic leadership of Katie Page and Harvey Norman. Katie's vision and generosity, culminating in the creation of the Harvey Norman Young Women's Leadership Academy, exemplifies how transformative giving can shape lives, futures and communities.

We are also entering a pivotal phase of strategic renewal. The University is refreshing its institutional strategy to ensure we are fit for the future - agile, courageous and laser-focused on delivering impact. From medical research to regional community engagement, and from teaching to the establishment of the new Indigenous Centre of Excellence, our work is aligned with purpose. And it is made possible, in large part, because of you.

The role of universities is to promote knowledge, wisdom and aspiration. Ours is also to deliver positive impact on people's lives.

Your support fuels programs across every level of the University and ensures Western can deliver on its mission of student success, impactful research and stronger Western Sydney communities.

It is our hope that the stories in this edition inspire you as much as they inspire us. We are proud to walk this journey with you, and even prouder of what we are achieving together.



STAFF GIVING

in 2024

353



staff gave a donation through payroll



Staff donated through payroll

\$126,950

to scholarships, prizes and student support



\$19,480

to charity partners



IMPACT OF DONOR GIVING

in 2024

340

students were recipients of donor-funded scholarships

56

Indigenous students were recipients of donor-funded scholarships

198

students received Equity scholarships

61

students received High Potential scholarships

35

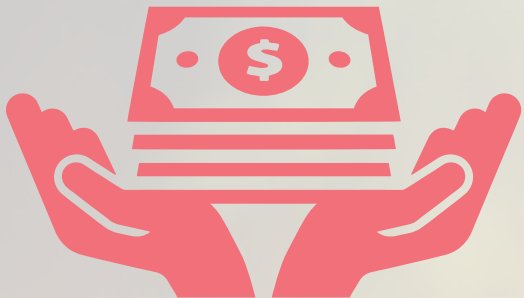
students received Humanitarian scholarships

34

students received Indigenous scholarships

11

other scholarships were also awarded



DONORS



112 donors donated

\$326,625

to Prizes



68 donors donated

\$5,953,491

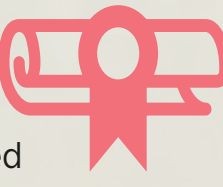
to Projects and Programs



40 donors donated

\$14,303,783

to Research



406 donors donated

\$3,121,085

to Scholarships

Total donations

OVER \$23,704,985

BLACKMORES: A FAMILY LEGACY

TRANSFORMING COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE

Dr Marcus Blackmore AM and Mrs Caroline Blackmore, through the Blackmore Family Foundation and Blackmores, have a longstanding history of philanthropic support to the National Institute of Complementary Medicine (NICM) Health Research Institute at Western Sydney University.

The Blackmore family have been dedicated supporters of NICM since its establishment in 2007. Their support continued with a landmark \$5 million gift in 2016, followed by another \$10 million in early 2024 to establish the Dr Marcus Blackmore AM NICM Health Research Institute Innovation Fund.

This phenomenal philanthropic support has enabled NICM to expand, advance research, accelerate key positions, and progress commercial research and development and complementary medicine manufacturing facilities.

Professor Dennis Chang, Director of NICM, acknowledges that Dr Blackmore's visionary support has been instrumental in strengthening NICM's research excellence and ensuring Australian consumers have access to the highest quality research to support their personal health choices.

"These transformative gifts are a remarkable demonstration of support, enabling us to strategically enhance NICM's capacity to advance research targeting high-priority chronic diseases, where complementary and integrative medicine can potentially have meaningful impact," said Professor Chang.

"NICM is one of the largest complementary medicine research concentrations in the western world and plays a critical role in driving research and innovation to support evidence-based complementary and integrative medicine, both nationally and internationally."

"This is so important for the complementary medicine industry in Australia which is now worth over \$6.2 billion. The robust research conducted by NICM will continue to support the growth of the industry, driving increased exports and job creation."

Giving to Western Sydney University and NICM is deeply personal for

Dr Blackmore, who considers the donations as tributes to his late father.

"I wanted to provide a legacy for my father who was considered Australia's pioneering naturopath," said Dr Blackmore.

"My father passed away in 1977 and on his death bed he said, the great disappointment in his life is that he had not seen naturopathy as a true profession. It is with this background that my personal charitable Foundation decided to provide ongoing support to NICM."

This research is also what makes giving so important to Dr Blackmore.

"The Blackmore Family Foundation has contributed to both Western Sydney University and Southern Cross University, and I am pleased to say there is significant collaboration between the two universities. We are immensely proud that together they have over 100 researchers dedicated to complementary medicine. I could not be more proud."

Vice-Chancellor and President, Distinguished Professor George Williams AO, said Western Sydney University is an anchor institution for the region with a mission to deliver student success, impactful research and stronger Western Sydney communities.

"The University is immensely grateful to our philanthropic investors, whose contributions help us improve the wellbeing of our people," said Professor Williams.

"The Blackmore family's generous contributions have strengthened the research capabilities of NICM and inspired our researchers to continually pursue excellence.

"This latest gift will help our research teams work closely with industry to generate the scientific evidence needed for complementary medicine to be integrated into conventional healthcare," Professor Williams said. "Philanthropic donations like this are crucial and we are grateful to Marcus and Caroline Blackmore for their long-term support."



Western Sydney University Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Barney Glover AO; Imogen Merrony; Caroline Furlong; Chair, Blackmore Family Foundation, Dr Marcus Blackmore AM; Western Sydney University Chancellor, Professor Jennifer Westacott AC; Minister for Medical Research, the Hon. David Harris MP; the Hon. Donna Davis MP; and Professor Dennis Chang, Director, NICM Health Research Institute.

KATIE PAGE'S LEGACY OF SUPPORT AT WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

Since 2015, Katie Page's unwavering dedication to education and the transformative power of student scholarships has had a profound impact on the lives of 113 students at Western Sydney University. Through her generous donations, totaling more than \$11 million, Katie has provided invaluable opportunities for students to reach their full potential.

Through the Harvey Norman Scholarships Program and the Katie Page Scholarship Program, Katie has not only offered financial support but has also empowered over 100 students to pursue personal, academic and professional growth. These scholarships have served as catalysts for transformation, opening doors to new possibilities and enriching the lives of students.

- **Katie Page Equity Scholarship for Women** – 40 recipients
- **Katie Page Scholarship for Refugee Women** – 16 recipients
- **Katie Page Scholarship for High Achieving Women** – 25 recipients
- **Harvey Norman Scholarship** – 32 recipients

The scholarships provide more than just financial assistance. Students have gained the opportunity to immerse themselves in their studies, undertake research, engage in extracurricular activities, and contribute meaningfully to their communities. The program's transformative influence has enabled students to unlock their potential and pursue dreams they might have otherwise thought were out of reach.

"In the almost 10 years of scholarship support for tertiary students at Western Sydney University, we have witnessed the transformative power of access to education. What began as 13 scholarships for women from refugee and disadvantaged backgrounds has expanded to over 100 student scholarships. Many of the recipients are now graduates," said Ms Page.

The enduring impact of Katie Page's scholarship initiatives is reflected in the success stories of its recipients, who are now ambassadors for Western Sydney University. Their achievements stand as a testament to the extraordinary outcomes made possible through strategic partnerships between visionary philanthropists and higher education institutions.

In 2024, Western Sydney University welcomed a landmark philanthropic donation of \$7.9 million from Harvey Norman to establish the Harvey Norman® Young Women's Leadership Academy led by Katie Page.

A first-of-its-kind program, the Harvey Norman Young Women's Leadership Academy is a decade-long leadership program that will increase the social, economic and educational participation of young women in Western Sydney, with the program to be based at Auburn Girls High School. The Harvey Norman Young Women's Leadership Academy, to be delivered by the University, will include learning, development and mentorship opportunities for young women, parents and community engagement, and a research component to analyse the program's impact.

Professor Alpha Possamai-Inesedy comments on the ongoing impact of Katie Page's contributions: "Under Katie Page's leadership, Harvey Norman has shown a deep commitment to social responsibility. The Academy exemplifies this ethos, striving to enhance the social, economic, and educational

participation of young women in Western Sydney. This 10-year initiative, currently being rolled out at Auburn Girls High School, is more than just about financial support. It's about providing comprehensive learning, development, and mentorship opportunities, involving parents and the community, and embedding a research component to ensure its long-term success."

The Leadership Academy will engage with families and the wider community through information sessions and community building. Financial support in the form of learning grants and Western Sydney University scholarships will be provided to students to aid in purchasing learning materials throughout high school and university.

A Page Fellows Mentoring Program will be established for students progressing to Western Sydney University, enabling them to enhance their leadership skills by mentoring younger students in local high school and primary school settings, empowering the next generation of young women leaders in the region.

"We are excited to be pioneering this project with Western Sydney University and are very grateful for the generosity and leadership of Ms Katie Page and Harvey Norman in establishing the Leadership Academy. It will provide inspiration and amazing opportunities for our students," said Ms Tsoutsas, Auburn Girls High School Principal.

Katie Page is widely known for her role as the CEO of Harvey Norman, where she has been a transformative force in Australian business. Joining the company in 1983 and becoming CEO in 1999, Katie played a pivotal role in the company's international expansion and its embrace of e-commerce, making Harvey Norman one of Australia's most successful retailers. Beyond her leadership in business, Katie's commitment to advancing education and women's empowerment continues to have a profound, far-reaching impact.



Katie Page and scholarship students

GENERATIONAL IMPACT THROUGH PHILANTHROPY

ADVANCING RESEARCH IN WESTERN SYDNEY ONE GENERATION TO THE NEXT

Lyn Ingham learnt a lot about philanthropy from her parents, and in particular from watching her father, Bob Ingham, and his approach to giving back.

“I have my own thoughts and ideas about how I want to give, but my relationship with Western Sydney University really goes back to Dad,” she said.

“He started donating to students and I know that was to encourage others to also. That is why I followed on with it too.”

“He wanted to support students for a couple of reasons. Firstly, because he believed in medical research and he knew that students need assistance, particularly those studying PhDs. It was also because Western Sydney University School of Medicine had such a close relationship with the Ingham Insitute – it just made sense.”

When Bob passed away, Lyn felt it was right to continue his legacy, especially as it aligned with her own thoughts and beliefs.

“I have a strong belief in supporting medical research and by supporting PhD students it supports the pipeline of growing and learning for researchers.”

“I know how hard it is to attain a PhD and the costs involved and I believe we need to give the researchers that extra little push so they can study and do a PhD which will make a real difference. It also gives them a little boost personally, I think, to know they have been chosen because someone else can see they have something to give.”



Bob Ingham AO and Norma Ingham

The next round of Bob and Norma Ingham scholarships will focus on research in the area of geriatrics, based on Lyn's personal experience.

“When I was looking after dad, I found the geriatric specialists were very good because they don't just look at one disease or specialty area, they look at the whole person and looking at everything the person is having done to them, all their medications, all their treatments. They were very good at giving me, as dad's carer, an overview of what was needed and general information and practical advice.”

“With an ageing population, more and more people will be in the same situation as Dad and I were and I think it's important that we focus some research into this area.”

As for why she gives, Lyn says it's all about the end result.

“I do not consider it transactional. The end results that I can see are what it is all about. When I go along to places and see what they are doing and achieving, that is wonderful. Seeing that the donations I have given is going into the bigger picture and how quickly that money has just been used up is incredible. However, it's getting outcomes and that's what it is all about.”

“I know that any sort of research, including PhDs are expensive to do and it's (philanthropy) not money that comes from anywhere else that really helps. It's got to come from philanthropists – we know that the government cannot and will not support everything.”

“I am very lucky to be in the situation that I am in and very lucky to have had the parents that I have had so that I can give to the things that I feel need a bit of help.”

Professor Rod McClure, Dean, School of Medicine at Western agrees that philanthropy is essential for a strong research pipeline.

“Philanthropy in medical research, particularly at the start of the pipeline for PhD scholarships is crucial to ensuring that researchers at the beginning of their journey are able to continue through to develop their work and become an important part of the research community. Philanthropy allows researchers to do the things that other funding does not – and fills incredibly important roles that otherwise would not have the potential to change lives,” she said.

“It's thanks to donors like Lyn, who really understand the process and care about the work that we do, that we can do work like this.”

Associate Professor Tara Roberts works directly with the PhD candidates supported by Lyn and agrees that the support from donors helps in so many different ways.

“The support from philanthropic donors for PhD scholarships allows academics more independence to choose the PhD student that is the best match for their project. For example, choosing a clinician researcher who may not have had a traditional path to a PhD but has significant experience in clinical trials and direct interaction with patients. Also, it allows for us to support working clinicians to complete their PhD part-time so they can continue to have clinics as well as progress their research training.”

“These are valuable resources to support newer research groups and to build research capacity in South West Sydney. They can also allow for PhD students to take on cutting-edge research projects and build the base for future larger research ventures.”

Dharshini Rajkumar

“Receiving this postgraduate research scholarship in immuno-oncology is more than just financial support for me—it's a validation of my work and my potential as a researcher.

It reassures me that the path I've chosen is meaningful and that my contributions to cancer research matter.

This scholarship gives me the financial stability to fully dedicate myself to my PhD without the added stress of funding concerns. It allows me to focus on what truly matters—advancing immuno-oncology research, exploring new therapeutic approaches, and working towards discoveries that could make a real difference in cancer treatment.

Pursuing a PhD is challenging, but this scholarship reassures me that it's worth it. It affirms that my research has purpose, that my work can have a lasting impact, and that I am part of a global effort to improve cancer treatment. This support fuels my passion and determination, making my PhD not just an academic pursuit, but a truly rewarding and impactful journey.

My long-term career dream is to establish a research institute in my home country to give young scientists the hands-on training I never had. As a young biotechnologist, I remember the frustration of wanting to learn but having no access to labs, no mentors willing to guide us, and no opportunities to gain real experience. My peers and I were passionate, but without proper training, we felt lost.

Research is expensive, demanding and requires razor-sharp focus, yet many students are never given the chance to master essential techniques. I want to change that. I want to create a space where students can work with cutting-edge technology, refine their skills, and feel inspired rather than discouraged.

By securing government funding and leading innovative projects, I hope to bridge this gap and empower future scientists. No student should feel unprepared for their career—I want to give them the foundation to succeed.”



Bill and Bruce Hawker

GENERATIONAL IMPACT THROUGH PHILANTHROPY

GIVING BACK TO WESTERN SYDNEY STUDENTS THROUGH THE HAWKER FOUNDATION

Professor Ross Hawker’s distinguished career in medicine would never have happened if it wasn’t for philanthropy and Western Sydney. He grew up in rural New South Wales and won a scholarship to Hurlstone Agricultural College in the 1930s. After topping the state in agriculture, he went on to win a scholarship to the University of Sydney where he studied medicine.

Research and teaching were equal joys for Professor Hawker and during his life he published more than 50 books, book chapters and research papers in his specialist area of Endocrinology and was the head of the Department of Physiology at the University of Queensland for 25 years. Supporting the next generation was at the core of his life philosophy and career.

While medical research and lecturing took Professor Hawker and his wife Ailsa, who supported him throughout his career, to the world’s great centres of learning, they never forgot that it all began with a scholarship to a school in Western Sydney.

This ingrained love of learning, teaching and writing, as well as strong roots in Western Sydney and a belief in the power of scholarships, led Ross’ son Bruce Hawker and grandson Bill Hawker to continue his legacy through creating a scholarship in his memory at Western Sydney University.

Bruce and Bill established the Professor Ross Hawker Scholarship in Medicine to celebrate and thank the Western Sydney community for the support it gave their father and grandfather, whilst also continuing his legacy of fostering up-and-coming doctors, whether they will serve their local communities or work and travel the world through medicine.

“Our family has always believed that it is important to redistribute wealth in an equitable and productive way. It is an intergenerational principle that we share,” said Bill.

“Western Sydney University is firmly based within the communities that form the heart and geographic centre of 21st century Sydney. It has also been home to other members of our family throughout the years and continues to do so.”

“We both sit on the board of the Hawker Foundation and we continue to recommend new projects to support, while also maintaining long-term relationships with organisations such as Western Sydney University.”

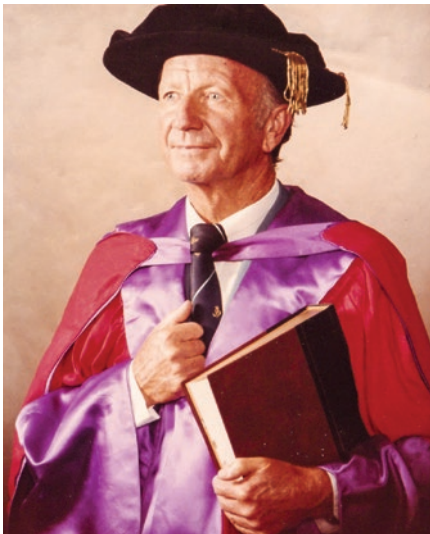
Both Bill and Bruce say a focus on “grassroots” projects that can provide an immediate boost for people who need that extra bit of help to put them on a better footing, remains a priority.

As Bruce says, “It’s hard to think of many more worthwhile and personally satisfying projects than helping produce more doctors - especially in Western Sydney.”

Professor Rod McClure, Dean of the School of Medicine at Western said that donors like the Hawker Foundation help make it possible for many students to continue their studies with less pressure and more opportunity.

“A degree like medicine requires many hours of practical and academic work and scholarships help even the playing field, so that all students can have the best possible chance to achieve and succeed.”

The Professor Ross Hawker scholarship is available to two new or continuing medical students each year.



Top: Professor Ross Hawker

Bottom: Mrs Ailsa Hawker with grandson Bill Hawker and son Bruce Hawker.



Sisters Margaret Barclay, Sister Bernadette Pattison, scholarship recipient Maeve Powell, Sister Lynne Crilley and Sister Susan Miller.



SOCIAL JUSTICE AND INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION FRONT-OF-MIND FOR THE PRESENTATION SISTERS OF WAGGA WAGGA

The Presentation Sisters of Wagga Wagga celebrated their 150 years in Australia in 2024 and close to 20 years of philanthropy with Western Sydney University.

The Presentation Sisters of Wagga Wagga first arrived in regional New South Wales in 1874, where their work was largely in school education. In the 150 years since the arrival of the first five Sisters from Ireland, the Presentation Sisters have expanded their focus on education to advocate for structural change.

They have generously supported Western Sydney University for nearly two decades, by facilitating academic excellence through their consistent support of Indigenous students and academics, through their support of refugee scholarships, academic prize programs and an Academic/Lecturer position in the School of Social Sciences for an Indigenous academic that includes both salary and a generous research allocation.

The philanthropically funded position also supports the selected candidate through acquiring a PhD. With the Presentation Sisters' support, these academics are empowered to develop an academic career, be involved in tertiary teaching, and also engage with Indigenous education initiatives with the wider student body.

Past recipients of the Presentation Sisters'-supported Research/Lectureship position include Associate Professor Corinne Sullivan, an Aboriginal scholar from the Wiradjuri Nation in Central-West New South Wales, and Kaiya Aboagye, of Ghanaian, Aboriginal, South Sea and Torres Strait Islander heritage, who is the Associate Dean, Indigenous Education, School of Social Sciences.

Maeve Powell, the current School of Social Sciences Lecturer and PhD Candidate, is an Aboriginal (Ngiyampaa) academic from Sydney and Canberra with connections to family and Country in Western New South Wales.

With a combined Bachelor of Arts/Economics from ANU (2014) and a Master of Philosophy in Indigenous Studies from The Arctic University of Norway in Tromsø (2017), Maeve is currently completing a PhD at the

Crawford School of Public Policy, ANU with the working title (*Re*) *Mapping the Academic Landscape: A Spatial Approach to Indigenous Belonging at ANU*. Using archival research, oral histories with alumni and walking interviews with current staff members, this work reconceptualises the university as Country, as a site of property within the Settler Colonial capital city, and as a space of Indigenous diaspora.

Speaking of her academic work, Maeve mentions that it is "situated... at the intersection of Indigenous Studies and Critical Geography. My interests are in Indigenous experiences of belonging and diaspora, Indigenous political movements in global contexts and histories of planning and race in Australia. My research and teaching praxis is informed by Indigenous and decolonising methodologies, Indigenous education and critical university studies."

Alongside her research, Maeve teaches at the School of Social Sciences at Western and collaborates with colleagues to "Indigenise and decolonise the curriculum within our planning and geography programs."

"The generosity of the Presentation Sisters is supporting me to finish my PhD and has allowed me to begin imagining and planning my future work directions. My goals are to support Indigenous futures through teaching and research which engages with communities, industry and government," she says.

Western Sydney University is deeply appreciative of the Presentation Sisters' long-term collaboration and charitable support — this decades-long partnership demonstrates a shared commitment to social justice principles, especially around Indigenous-led research and teaching curricula.

VALE MATT METRI



Matt Metri was taken from his family and friends too soon. Matt was kind, generous, motivated, and a proud member of the Western Sydney community.

Matt fought bravely and courageously against a brief illness before passing away at the age of 29, in late 2023. He is survived by his parents Toufic and Georgette; his siblings Samara, Joelle, Martin, and Brendan; his goddaughter Mila; his wife Sandy; his life’s work Metri Legal; and his hopes and ambitions that he left behind for his siblings.

Matt was an alumnus of the Western Sydney University School of Law and a respected solicitor in the North West Sydney community. He graduated with a Bachelor of Business & Commerce (Human Resource Management & Industrial Relations) in 2015 and a Bachelor of Laws in 2017. Matt was admitted as a legal practitioner in 2018 and became the Principal and Director of Metri Legal in 2020. Metri Legal is a provider of specialist legal services spanning disciplines including property, commercial, wills and estates, criminal law and employment; and has won numerous awards including Best Employment Law Firm 2023 at the APAC Insider Legal Awards.

In order to continue his legacy, Matt’s family have established The Matt Metri Memorial Scholarship to honour his commitment to education, his love of Western Sydney University and to helping those in need.

His sister, Joelle Metri, said she and her family created the scholarship to honour Matt’s incredible life and spirit.

“Matt was a bright young legal professional – but more than that, he was also deeply kind, generous with his time, and unwavering in his commitment to fairness. Western Sydney University was the beginning of Matt’s professional journey, but also a place that helped shape his values and ambition.”

“In establishing this scholarship, we hope to support and inspire future law students from Western Sydney who want to use their skills to uplift their communities, just like Matt.”

“We miss our brother every day. This is our way of keeping his spirit alive and ensuring that the energy

he brought to the world continues to ripple outward into the Western Sydney community.”

The inaugural Matt Metri Memorial Scholarship has been awarded to a high potential student Laura Caridi, studying a Bachelor of Laws (Non Graduate Entry).

“This scholarship has empowered me to advocate for marginalised communities, drive systemic change, and contribute to building a more equitable legal system, ensuring that the communities of Western Sydney receive the legal representation they deserve. Just as this scholarship affirms my educational ambitions, I am committed to creating pathways for others and fostering an environment where future change makers can turn their aspirations into meaningful action,” said Laura.

If you would like to learn more about how you can give a gift to honour a loved one or include a bequest in your will to create your own legacy, please contact the Bequest Team at giving@westernsydney.edu.au

BANKSTOWN SPORTS CLUB SUPPORTING LOCAL STUDENTS

Bankstown Sports Club recently established a generous, duration-of-degree scholarship program for a Western Sydney University student studying a Bachelor of Social Work.

Bankstown Sports Club is all about empowering the local community. The Club has supported scholarships for nurses and midwives at the Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital for nearly two decades. Now, Bankstown Sports Club has partnered with Western Sydney University to offer the Bankstown Sports Club Scholarship in Social Work to a homegrown student from the Canterbury-Bankstown LGA.

With both eyes fixed on supporting the local community, this scholarship is designed to assist a Social Work student combat the financial stresses that come with pursuing higher education. This philanthropic initiative from the Bankstown Sports Club is also designed to come full circle: empower those within the community so that they themselves can give back to the community.

At Western, the Bachelor of Social Work sets students up to become social workers who are capable of planning and carrying out programs that will benefit diverse communities. The recently awarded recipient of the Bankstown Sports Club Scholarship in Social Work, Rasha Mourtada, has a strong connection to the Canterbury-Bankstown LGA. She says that “receiving this scholarship means more than just financial relief, it also recognises the effort, hard work, and resilience I’ve shown despite my personal challenges. It allows me to focus on my studies without worry and most importantly, brings me one step closer to making my social work dream come true”.

Michael Hanratty, the Sporting and Community Partnerships Manager at the Bankstown Sports Club, says of the scholarship program: “At Bankstown Sports Club, we understand the power and value of education, and we want to break down some of the barriers to learning that many in our community face. The most prominent of these being cost.”

“Providing access to such a worthwhile and meaningful course, where the financial burden of course fees and associated studying costs like books and travel is removed, is a no-brainer to us.”

Western Sydney University is excited to partner with community-minded organisations like the Bankstown Sports Club. With Greater Western Sydney becoming one of the fastest-growing regions in Australia, establishing philanthropic partnerships with local organisations strengthens the collaborative identity of Western Sydney. The University thanks Bankstown Sports Club for their generous support of our social work students.

SUPPORTING NURSING STUDENTS WITH THE JENNIE GORDON SMITH GRANT

Dr Margaret Mackisack and her family have been long-term supporters of Western Sydney University students through contributions to prizes and scholarships over the years. In 2024, recognising a significant need and gap in support for student nurses on placements, she generously donated \$150,000 to establish the Jennie Gordon Smith Grant for Nursing Students on Placement, to be endowed in perpetuity.

Nursing students form one of Western's largest cohorts and are familiarised with the workforce via placement early on in their study. To meet the accreditation requirement of the nursing degree, a minimum of 800 hours (or 20 weeks) of professional experience placement must be completed. "Not only do our students require a range of clinical experiences to understand the nursing profession, they are assessed on each placement against the standards for practice in order to meet accreditation standards," says Professor Jane Frost, Interim Dean of the School of Nursing and Midwifery. Distributed across the duration of their degree to align with theoretical components, these placements take students across various clinical settings, including rural and remote areas.

Professional experience placements are not only a major time commitment but can also be quite costly for students, many of whom experience a loss of income during this not insignificant period, while also incurring costs of daily needs such as childcare fees, travel and parking charges. Professor Frost acknowledges that, in addition to these, there are also costs associated with attending placements, as students must purchase appropriate uniform, equipment and learning materials to be fully prepared.

Currently completing her placement, student nurse Komalpreet also had to arrange interstate travel, "I took domestic flights for placements and classes which put a lot of financial burden on me".

In the current climate of continually rising costs of living, this can pose a serious challenge for student nurses – one that can often be a dissuading factor in completing their studies. "I often feel that to succeed academically, I must make sacrifices in my family or work life," says Catherine, inspired to pursue nursing following the birth of her second child. "I often worry about my upcoming placement and how it will impact my ability to work and my family's wellbeing."

Dr Mackisack, who comes from a family of experienced nurses, is aware of these challenges and the considerable help that financial support can offer in this instance. "I decided to give money to establish an endowed grant to nursing students on placement because such students were required to work for nothing. It was clearly a situation that was removing keen students from the future nursing workforce. My mother and grandmother both trained as nurses, they were completely supported with board and lodging during their training. From their stories I knew what hard work it was. I am privileged to be in a position to make a gift to help students on placement."

Jennie Gordon Smith, after whom the grant is named, was Margaret's maternal grandmother; a nurse who started her work in 1920 at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children and led an exemplary career in the field for over 30 years. In bestowing her gift to future generations of nurses, Margaret also wishes "for my gift to remember my grandmother, who was a nurse among many other things in her full life."

Both the University and School are deeply grateful for Dr Mackisack's philanthropic gesture and know that it will make a great, positive impact for our nursing students. "Placement is a known financial burden," Professor Frost reiterates, "and bursaries such as this one support our students while undertaking professional experience placement and preparing to be work ready graduates."

No one can testify to this better than students like Jerrica, a mother of two with high academic aspirations, expressing thanks for Margaret's generosity, "it truly means the world to me. Your support is not only helping me pursue my education but also empowering me to continue growing, learning and striving for excellence."



Jerrica Tieu, third year student in Bachelor of Nursing

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WHO ‘CAN’ THE RACHAEL AND DAVID CHIN LAW SCHOLARSHIP



Rachael Chin and the Honourable Justice David Chin believe that the ancient and noble profession of law is strengthened by the inclusion of talent from all backgrounds. Their decision to establish an endowed scholarship at Western was made with the view that philanthropic support best empowers students whose greatest barrier to completing their law degrees is financial.

Before Rachael Chin became a journalist and author, she practised law in both South Australia and New South Wales. Now a judge of the Industrial Court of NSW, David Chin first began his career as a solicitor before becoming a barrister in private practice. Both Rachael and David attribute their career successes to higher education.

With the view that higher education opens doors for people no matter their background, the Chins recently established an endowed scholarship for Law students at Western Sydney University. A generous endowed gift of \$187,500, the Rachael and David Chin Law Scholarship is aimed at students who demonstrate potential but would be unable to complete their Bachelor of Laws without financial support. As the gift is endowed, the scholarship will be offered in perpetuity, allowing more students from the School of Law to receive cost-of-living and educational expense support for the duration of their degree.

For almost a decade, Rachael and David Chin knew they wanted to make a gift to a university with the view of helping law students who are facing real financial challenges. Having discussed their philanthropic views with Professor Ron McCallum, the former Dean of the Law School at the University of Sydney, the Chins were encouraged to consider Western Sydney University as the recipient of their student-centred philanthropy.

Noticing that a university education can be out of reach for even the most capable student, Rachael and David Chin looked to Western Sydney University, where it's known that a third of the student body come from a low socioeconomic background and almost two-thirds are the first in their family to attend university.

“Anytime we’re invited to donor events at WSU, they show us these incredible success stories. Of course you’ve got the superstars, but good students who don’t necessarily get the top marks also need financial support,” Rachael said about choosing Western Sydney University. Significantly, Rachael and David Chin had already decided to make a gift in their wills before deciding to set up a scholarship in perpetuity — “so that we can personally see a number of students succeed in their law degrees.”

As a barrister David engaged law students from Western Sydney University as legal researchers. “I now look forward to seeing many more applications from Western Sydney University law graduates for positions as Tipstaves and Associates to the Judges of the Industrial Court of NSW,” he said.

Professor Catherine Renshaw, Dean of Western Sydney University’s School of Law, thanked Rachael and David Chin for their generosity and said of their gift: “This scholarship offers vital financial support that will empower our students to succeed in their studies and will lay the foundation for future success in the legal field. Our students are innovative learners, and philanthropic gifts like these ensure that our students bring that innovation to the practice of law.”

The first recipient of the Rachael and David Chin Law Scholarship will be selected in Semester 2, 2025. “We’re really excited to see who receives it and how they go, and how they will become one of the many, many exciting success stories that we see whenever we come to Western Sydney University,” said Rachael. “It’s exciting to be a part of the Western Sydney University community as a donor.”

Left: Dean of the School of Law, Professor Catherine Renshaw with Rachael Chin and The Honourable Justice David Chin.

BARTIER PERRY AND WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY ENCOURAGING INDIGENOUS SUCCESS

Sydney law firm and valued Western Sydney University donor Bartier Perry Pty Limited has been a generous supporter of student success at Western for over a decade - originating with the establishment of the Bartier Perry Prize in 2013.

Most recently, the Bartier Perry Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Law Scholarship for new and continuing Indigenous students, enrolled in any undergraduate degree in the School of Business or School of Law, was first awarded in 2022.

Nadine Cooper, Head of People and Culture, Bartier Perry Pty Ltd said,

“Bartier Perry is committed to building a future where students have the opportunity to flourish. By empowering Indigenous students through our scholarship, we believe we are investing in their success, fostering leadership and honouring the rich contributions of Indigenous communities. Education is a powerful tool for change and by supporting Indigenous students, we create a more inclusive and equitable society for everyone.”

Scholarships at Western are key in encouraging student success and retention amongst Indigenous law students in the face of increasing economic pressures.

In 2024, 24 Indigenous students were studying at Western’s School of Law, an increase from 19 in 2023. Of the 24 students, 11 were commencing and 14 continuing their studies.

Jasmine Holten Woods, Bachelor of Criminal and Community Justice/Bachelor of Laws student, Bartier Perry Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Law Scholarship recipient and winner of the Presentation Sisters, Wagga Wagga Award (Female) award in 2020, spoke of the difference the scholarship has made to her life.

“The scholarship has been such a big help over the past year, going towards study materials and living expenses which are essential in helping me to complete my degree. The scholarship has also allowed me to branch out and get involved in opportunities by supporting me with transport expenses.

“I would like to thank Bartier Perry Lawyers for their continued support both financially and within the profession. My experience working with the firm has been amazing and I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to be involved with them. I look forward to continuing my relationship with Bartier Perry.”

Bartier Perry’s commitment to student success at Western, and equity in the legal profession, also includes the Bartier Perry Leadership Scholarship for Women (first awarded as Bartier Perry Leadership Scholarship in 2015), which has been awarded to 10 women who demonstrate leadership qualities and/or involvement with community services and are committed to a career in law.

Western Sydney University is grateful for the kind support of Bartier Perry in ensuring ongoing student success and equity amongst the future lawyers of Western.



Jasmine Holten Woods won the Presentation Sisters, Wagga Wagga Award - Female in 2020. Pictured with her mum Sara and partner Lincoln



VALE DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR ANNE CUTLER

Distinguished Professor Anne Cutler was a renowned speech scientist and a friend and colleague to many at The MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development at Western Sydney University.

When Professor Cutler died in 2022, her family decided to honour her work and legacy, by creating the Anne Cutler Memorial Travel Grant. Anne was passionate about supporting the next generation of researchers and developed the habit of broadening her graduate students' experience by sending them off to other labs for six months during their candidature. So, it is fitting that this grant supports one outstanding PhD Candidate from the MARCS Institute each year, the opportunity to spend 3 – 6 months working at an international host institution as part of their candidature.

Professor Kate Stevens, Director, MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour & Development said philanthropy like the Professor Anne Cutler Memorial Grant makes a huge difference in international research development.

“We hope this award inspires all our PhD Candidates to dream big – to aspire to collaborate with the leaders in their field across the globe. We hope it creates a culture where candidates are confident to reach out to potential international collaborators to start a conversation about the possibility of hosting them. As an annual award, it also allows candidates to plan from the outset of their candidature when they should complete such a visit, and to whom they should reach out to.”

“Without this generous gift we would not be able to offer this annual opportunity for candidates to connect, learn and grow. Competitive research grants provide the resources to answer a research question, but philanthropy such as this, emboldens next generation researchers to dream big and, like Anne, dare to ask and answer new questions that lead to breakthroughs in knowledge”.

“We are incredibly grateful to Anne’s estate for the career-changing opportunity this gift enables.” she said. “We are also excited to see this year’s winning candidate, Lu Lucuta, on this exchange, that will both enhance the quality of their research and doctoral thesis but also allow them to establish a strong international research collaborator network.”

Lu Lucuta is a PhD candidate in Cognitive Neuroscience whose research investigates how the brain makes predictions when processing music and language. They will be visiting world leading researchers at the Université Bourgogne Europe (Dijon, France), the Lyon Neuroscience Research Centre (CNRL, Lyon, France), the Centre for Music in the Brain (MIB, Aarhus, Denmark), and the University of Copenhagen (Denmark), as well as presenting at the International Conference on Cognitive Neuroscience (ICON, Porto, Portugal). Lu will be heading over to Europe in July 2025.

If you would like to learn more about how you can give a gift to honour a loved one or include a bequest in your will to create your own legacy, please contact the Bequest Team at giving@westernsydney.edu.au



Chancellor's team – Thomas Smith; Simon Smith; Chancellor Professor Jennifer Westacott AC; and Amir Rezaie

CHANCELLOR'S GOLF DAY 2024

Western Sydney University was proud to host the second annual Chancellor's Golf Day, presented by Walker Corp, which brought together supporters, advocates and alumni to raise funds for *Coaching Unlimited*, an innovative Indigenous sports coaching education and health promotion program.

The event raised \$60,000 in support of this transformative initiative, which was created in collaboration with First Nations coaches, national sports organisations and university researchers.

Among the special guests was trailblazing Indigenous Australian golfer and Western procurement officer, Skye Lampton, a Dagoman, Wardaman, and Gurindji woman from Katherine in the Northern Territory.

Chancellor, Professor Jennifer Westacott AC expressed her gratitude to the University's generous supporters and alumni who took part in the day.

"As a result of the collective support and generosity of our partners and community, we are able to commit \$60,000 to *Coaching Unlimited*, a transformational program that is helping take the leadership of Indigenous sports coaches across Australia to the next level," said Professor Westacott.

Co-founded by Associate Professor Andrew Bennie, *Coaching Unlimited* is the first program of its kind to provide coaching accreditation and leadership training for First Nations peoples in various sports.

Through Western Sydney University research-led programs, it aims to develop coaching knowledge alongside skills in leadership, mentoring, health promotion and community engagement.

Since 2017, *Coaching Unlimited* has accredited over 110 First Nations coaches in netball, tennis, and football (soccer) from urban, regional, and remote communities.

Chancellor's Golf Day 2024 was presented by Walker Corp and supported by Macarthur Automotive (a member of the Peter Warren Automotive Group), Stockland, Evolve Housing and GJK Facility Services.



Professor Michelle Trudgett, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership; Indigenous Australian golfer and Western Sydney University procurement officer, Skye Lampton; Fiona Towney, Director, Indigenous Futures; and Brendan Thomas, Director – NGNU, Western Sydney University Board of Trustees, and Western Sydney University Indigenous Alumni Award Winner 2022



Walker Corporation team – Allison Anthony, Group General Counsel; David Gallant, Managing Director & CEO; Peter Saba, Group Executive, Development; and Talal Ghattas, with Chancellor Professor Jennifer Westacott AC



THANK YOU

Thank you to all our donors, who support the mission of Western Sydney University.

You can use this QR Code to visit our past Impact Reports and our Donor Honour Roll.



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