

# GradLife

  
University of  
Western Sydney  
Bringing knowledge to life

## inside

### **ACADEMIC ACTIVIST SPEAKS OUT**

Dr James Arvanitakis on  
youth and politics today

### **SOLVING THE UNSOLVABLE**

The incredible story of  
Robert Beech

### **GRADLIFE BENEFITS FOR ALUMNI**

What you will get

law alumni  
making their way  
the Coleman and Greig success story

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The future for young people is a subject close to our hearts at the University of Western Sydney

In this issue of GradLife Dr James Arvanitakis, a lecturer and researcher for the UWS Centre for Cultural Research, examines the question of young people and democratic engagement.

Through a project commissioned by the Whitlam Institute, based at UWS, Dr Arvanitakis investigated what was really going on with the democratic process.

Dr Arvanitakis shares his views and in the process explodes some of the common myths concerning today's young people.

You will also learn of the new research being undertaken at UWS by accomplished non-fiction author Christopher Kremmer, author of best sellers *Bamboo Palace*, *The Carpet Wars* and *Inhaling the Mahatma*.

The remarkable stories of graduates Anita Heiss, Robert Beech and Heath Ducker, and details of the newly-opened SIMS research facility have also been included.

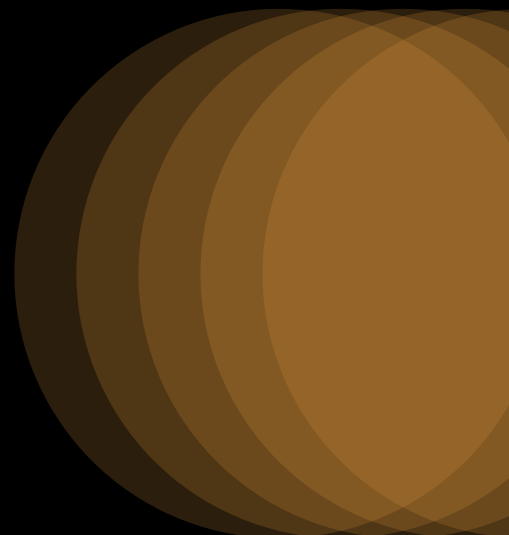
As an Alumnus you will discover details of the range of new Alumni Benefits offered free of charge by simply registering your interest with UWS Alumni.

Finally, a word of thanks for your positive response to the first edition of the new-look GradLife magazine. I hope you will continue to share our vision as ambassadors for UWS.

Professor Janice Reid AM  
Vice-Chancellor  
University of Western Sydney



Professor Janice Reid AM  
Vice-Chancellor  
University of Western Sydney



# law alumni making their way in the west

Rather than taking the well-trodden path to city law firms, UWS law graduates Racha Abboud, Richelle Fitzgerald and Anna Ford have chosen to work in the west as solicitors for Parramatta law firm Coleman and Greig.

"I didn't want to follow in the traditional footsteps of some of the city firms. I wanted to make my own way," Richelle says.

And they are in good company, with a solid group of UWS Alumni also represented among Coleman and Greig's 70 staff. Six UWS graduates are employed as professional staff, with a further seven current UWS law and accounting undergraduates undertaking scholarship placements with the firm.

"The practical skills obtained during my studies at UWS helped build my confidence ..."

Anna Ford

Coleman and Greig Managing Partner Peter Stewart, himself a UWS Alumnus, believes in retaining local talent, and maintains that Western Sydney firms need to provide quality work and quality clients to attract good staff.

"We are not a traditional suburban firm. Coleman and Greig provides the breadth of expertise usually only found in a CBD-style practice, but remains focused on the Western Sydney area, providing the personal attention and value for money of a local firm," Peter says.

"The diversity of student backgrounds is a major drawcard for Coleman and Greig. Students interact throughout their degree and learn the importance of dealing with people from a variety of backgrounds," Peter says.

Those who have lived in Western Sydney are also often aware of local regional nuances, he says.

Racha, Richelle and Anna all grew up in the western suburbs, and continue to live locally. They agree that working in the west provides them with a positive work/life balance, as well as excellent career development in the legal profession.

Peter believes this is a common trend for those living in Western Sydney.

"More and more we are seeing those lawyers who were attracted by the bright lights of the Sydney CBD, opting for quality of life and reduced travel time by choosing to work locally," Peter says.

Both Racha and Anna began their association with Coleman and Greig as scholarship recipients, returning after completing their studies to further their careers with the firm.

Anna believes new law graduates tend to get lost in the big city firms.

"At Coleman and Greig, we have always had a unique and personal relationship with the partners, who are very approachable," Anna says.

Richelle has also worked in these larger firms, and believes there is no difference in the quality of the work. And this is no accident – Coleman and Greig aims to provide an attractive work culture combined with an interesting, growing commercial client base, and opportunities for graduates to 'stretch their legs' as new lawyers.

"Our graduates are provided with the opportunity to specialise in specific practice groups, but still have the chance to undertake a variety of work in the specialist area. We have a flat structure, so our graduates get to see a matter from start to finish. We actively encourage our staff to participate in marketing activities and develop their own niche," Peter says.

Employees are also encouraged and supported if they wish to undertake further study, either through specialist accreditation or a Masters program.

All three Alumni feel the practical focus of their course at UWS not only made their study more enjoyable, but also stood them in good stead once they began work as solicitors.

"The practical skills obtained during my studies at UWS helped build my confidence, as I was able to apply the learning straight away," Anna says.

Coleman and Greig plans to continue its strong support of the University of Western Sydney. Representatives of the firm attend the annual UWS Law Alumni Association Occasional Address and Dinner each year, purchasing a table for their staff and alumni in support of the event.

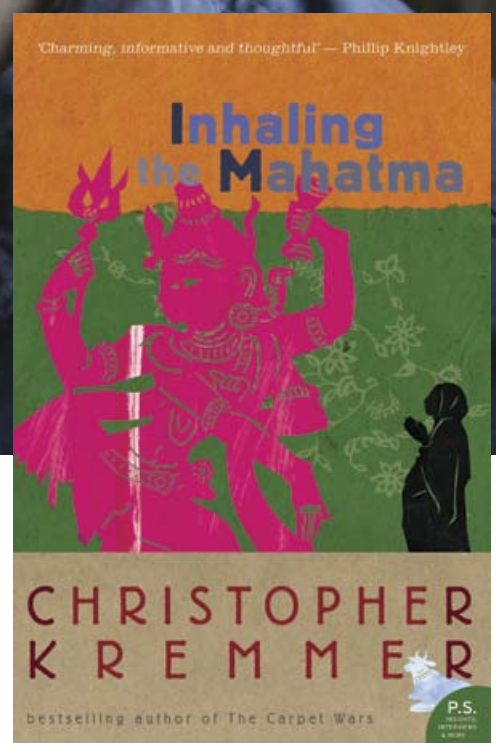
Through the UWS School of Law, the firm also funds a UWS Annual Prize and in excess of \$40,000 worth of scholarship placements, available exclusively to UWS students.

To find out more about the UWS Law Alumni Association and its events, visit [www.uws.edu.au/LawAlumni](http://www.uws.edu.au/LawAlumni). To make a gift to the UWS Scholarship or Prize Program, visit [www.uws.edu.au/give](http://www.uws.edu.au/give).





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# a breath of fresh air

Accomplished non-fiction author Christopher Kremmer is returning to a passion and taking on a new challenge for his Doctorate in Creative Arts at UWS.

Christopher originally completed an undergraduate degree in writing and forged a career as a journalist in Australia and later Asia, with postings in Vietnam and India for the ABC and Fairfax. After 10 years in Asia, Christopher left his home in Delhi and returned to Australia, taking up residence instead in a village in the NSW Southern Highlands.

Though he harboured a passion for writing fiction, Christopher had begun writing literary non-fiction books about his travels, the people he met and the stories he discovered along the way. These books – *Bamboo Palace*, *The Carpet Wars* and *Inhaling the Mahatma* – became best-sellers and were shortlisted for major literary prizes, including The Age and Courier Mail Book of the Year Awards, the New South Wales and Victorian Premier's Literary Awards, and the Australian Book Industry Awards.

But, as the author found, success can be limiting. Publishers wanted more of the same, while his creativity demanded new challenges. And what could be more different to non-fiction set in Asia, than a novel set in Sydney in the 1940s and 1950s. When he inquired about the possibility of tying the project into a doctoral program he was pleasantly surprised to receive numerous offers from institutions around Australia.

Christopher eventually chose to join UWS as a postgraduate researcher in the Writing and Society Research Group, because of the sense of dynamism and opportunity at UWS, and the "cutting edge" work being done by the group's members, many of them high-profile writers and academics.

"It's not coincidental that a group like that should be based at UWS, because if you look at the university's engagement across the board, there is a strong commitment to combining theory and practice and engaging with Australian society. It's hard to contain your enthusiasm when you look around you and see the energy," Christopher says.

"Just being on the campus is like breathing some really fresh air in Tasmania. I love every bit of it ..."

Christopher Kremmer

"Professor Ivor Indyk creates an amazing environment which is something quite unique, putting writers who practise and academics who theorise in the same room. And that's good for both of them."

Currently halfway through his doctoral program, Christopher is exploring the tension between fact and fiction in creating his novel.

"What I want to do is take a story from reality and then research the process by which that becomes a novel. What is the relationship between fact and fiction in this context, and what obligations does it impose upon the writer? The best part of research in this context is what you don't expect to find out and the discoveries you make along the way."

Moving into the academic environment at UWS has had a number of advantages, according to Christopher – not least of which is the amazing pool of research resources at his fingertips, as well as the intellectual and theoretical stimulation provided by the research group.

"This book is going to be so much better for having been produced in that environment. It is going to be so much more aware of its place in literature, and it's also going to be so much more thoroughly researched."

University life has also provided some welcome respite from the isolation that is both the blessing and curse of the writer's life.

"Just being on the campus is like breathing some really fresh air in Tasmania. I love every bit of it – from talking to the academics, to queueing for coffee with the undergrads, it is just sublime," Christopher says.

Christopher plans to complete his doctorate at the end of 2010. As for the next project, he's not sure – even whether it might be more fiction, a return to non-fiction or a bit of both.

"I look around me in Australia and I see novelists writing non-fiction essays, and I see non-fiction writers writing fiction. This is telling us something important about putting the story first before issues of personal identity as a writer. My ideal is to be the 'compleat' writer, which means I can write an essay, I can write a non-fiction book, I can write a novel, I can write some journalism, I might even write a poem. Wherever the stories take me."

# building a bright future

James Kell wasn't originally planning to join the family business — one of Australia's longest surviving family building companies — Kell & Rigby. With aspirations to become a vet, he decided to give building a go for a year ... and was hooked.

"I liked working outside and I like the people and culture of the industry — it's pretty honest and there's tangible evidence of your work," James says.

Now CEO, James is the fourth generation of the Kell family to be involved with the business. Kell & Rigby was originally established in 1910 in Bathurst by two carpenters, William Kell and Leslie Rigby, and is now one of Australia's leading construction companies, with projects as diverse as the State Hockey Centre, Vodafone's Sydney telephone exchange, factories in China, and all the Australian retail stores for Apple, including the iconic George St, Sydney, store.

After he left school, James worked full-time as a carpentry apprentice while studying part-time. He chose the **Bachelor of Building degree** at UWS because of the flexibility it offered and other students sharing a similar experience.

"The students there tended to be part-time, so we would all come into the lectures with our work boots and work gear on, which was really representative of the industry," James says.

This flexibility also allowed James to broaden his educational experience — he was able to study in Germany for a year during his degree, and took some marketing subjects which, while not part of his course, were "probably the most beneficial subjects I did at uni". He also found the cross-section of students at UWS was more representative of the industry than at other universities.

"Having a holistic education of the industry has been good — having worked on the tools and then balancing that out with university education has been helpful."

James Kell

With his degree in hand, James moved to China to set up a project office for Kell & Rigby, which was building factories for large companies such as Black & Decker, Harris Semiconductor and BOC Gases. While he learned Chinese in his six years there, he also gained a much better understanding of what it takes to do business in China, particularly around areas such as procurement.

"There's a saying about China — the longer you're there, the less you understand about it. I think that is really true. All the indications are that China is going to be a pretty formidable player, so it's good to have links there."

James returned to Australia in 2003 to take over the reins as CEO from his father. Since then, he has overseen a major restructure of the company, moving away from the estimating/construction structure traditionally used by building companies, to four sector-focused divisions, each with estimating and construction capabilities and directed by a business manager.

"That's a different approach to client service. We did that restructure two years ago, and it took quite a lot of adjustment, but it allows us to be much closer to the client," James says, adding that his excellent executive team helps the business to run smoothly.

While business has certainly been tough of late due to the uncertain economic environment, with tenders drying up towards the end of last year, James says it is par for the course in the construction industry.

"Builders are a bit like farmers, we like to whinge about the weather. That's just the way things are in our industry."

For others looking to carve out a career in building and construction, James recommends creating an opportunity to live and work overseas, ideally in their chosen industry. And he believes one of the key factors in his success is having a more rounded perspective on business.

"Having a holistic education of the industry has been good — having worked on the tools and then balancing that out with university education has been helpful."

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Since 2004 Kell & Rigby have generously been supporting UWS Building students through the **Kell & Rigby Prize in Climatic Design**. This prize is awarded annually for the best group assignment in Construction Technology. Every year, the UWS Prize Program, through the support of our donors, provides encouragement to a number of our most dedicated and outstanding students. For the successful recipients, the prize is more than just a financial reward. It also provides the student with greater confidence while studying and credibility as a future employee.

Kell & Rigby, established in 1910 is owned by the Kell family. James Kell, CEO, is a graduate of the UWS Bachelor of Building Degree. The University of Western Sydney is grateful for Kell & Rigby's support of our students.









# anita heiss takes indigenous writing to an international stage

Indigenous author, poet, satirist and social commentator, Dr Anita Heiss, recently travelled to the 2009 Black Writers Reunion and Conference (BWRC) in Las Vegas. Her attendance at the conference was supported by the Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education at the University of Western Sydney, where she serves as an Adjunct Associate Professor.

Last year, Anita gave the keynote address on 'Black Words: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Writers and Storytellers Research Community', and this year, ran workshops on 'Getting the Creative Juices Flowing' and 'Writing Your Memoirs'.

The conference was attended by over 100 writers who made their way from major cities and country towns all over North America to participate in workshops on all forms of writing and publishing.

"There is a real mix of people there – some very high profile black writers, and also people who have written numerous manuscripts and are still seeking publication, but what I found interesting was that everyone was incredibly serious about the craft," Anita says.

While she found many similarities in the content of Black American writing compared with Indigenous Australian writing, with stories of oppression, segregation and survival, she also observed a common sense of humour.

As well as attending writing workshops herself, Anita established contact with US agents and others involved in writing centres, which may lead to further teaching opportunities.

At the same time, Anita says, she was also able to "spruik UWS in terms of Indigenous education, so it also puts UWS on the map in an international context".

Anita's association with UWS began when she undertook her doctorate, specialising in communication media. She was the first Indigenous PhD graduate from UWS, writing a thesis on Aboriginal literature and publishing with a comparative study on literature and publishing in the Maori and Canadian Native American cultures.

"That in itself has allowed me to do an awful lot of travelling and public speaking as there is an increase in interest in Indigenous issues and culture in Australia," Anita says, adding that she was extremely well supported at UWS by the college during her degree.

"... the best thing that I have ever done was to enrol in the PhD at UWS, because it opened so many doors."

Anita Heiss

Since then, she has maintained her link with UWS through giving guest lectures, and recently took up the role of Adjunct Associate Professor at the Badanami Centre, which she sees as a way to be involved in advising on the future of Indigenous education at UWS.

"I also see it as a means of raising the profile of the institution, and hopefully I'll be a role model for other Indigenous students who will see UWS as a viable place for them to do their further studies," Anita says.

Anita now splits her time between roles that allow her either to write or to promote Indigenous literature – a glimpse at her jam-packed schedule over the coming month includes time as a visiting writing fellow, giving lectures, working on a novel with students at La Perouse Public School, work as an Indigenous Literacy Ambassador, visits to WA writing festivals, a trip to Spain to give a keynote address on the AustLit – Black Words Research Community, and time in Paris to research her new novel, *Paris Dreaming*.

Gaining a higher degree has been a key part of Anita's success, and she strongly encourages other Indigenous students to take this path.

"The best advice I can give is to say that for me, professionally and personally, the best thing that I have ever done was to enrol in the PhD at UWS, because it has opened so many doors. As elitist as it sounds, there are conversations I can have at nearly any level of the University because I have the title. It's clearly not a fair way or an equitable way to be, but it's the reality of it.

"The reality is you're more employable. It is far more competitive to get any kind of job these days, but if you want to have self-determination for Indigenous people in Australia, you have to be self-determining individuals first. Having tertiary education is a form of gaining self-determination and having a real say in how we live every day as individuals, and we can carry that into our broader workplaces."



# shooting for the top



At just 27, UWS graduate Heath Ducker has a promising law career with a top Sydney law firm, has been involved for over 13 years with youth affairs, and has already published his autobiography, *A Room at the Top*.

These are remarkable achievements in anyone's book, but are even more so given the many obstacles Heath had to overcome along the way: a childhood lived in abject poverty in dilapidated government housing, and suffering sexual abuse at the hands of his best friend's father at the age of 12. As one of 10 children being raised in chaotic, deprived circumstances by his single mother, Heath knew that no one expected much of him – and that he was determined to prove them wrong.

Heath was able to complete his schooling with the assistance of the 'Aunties and Uncles' program, which offers respite services for children in difficult family situations, and the community organisation Youth Insearch. Heath first attended a Youth Insearch camp and later became a leader in the organisation, and an outspoken speaker and lobbyist on youth issues. It was a difficult path – while studying for his HSC, he sometimes had to climb onto the roof of his house to find some quiet, the 'room at the top' his book refers to.

Having tasted success at school, Heath began studying journalism, but soon decided that a law degree would be more beneficial for his future political aspirations, and he graduated with a combined Arts/Law degree at UWS in 2005.

"The lecturers are passionate people, they care about their students ..."

Heath Ducker

"It matched up well with my ambitions for the future – I wanted to work in occupations where I could influence change. Law is one of those occupations, but it sets you up more generally to understand how society operates. So it's always going to be helpful from that perspective," Heath says.

He enjoyed the smaller classes and passionate, supportive teachers he encountered while studying law at UWS.

"The lecturers are passionate people, they care about their students, and there is that one-on-one time, you get the direction and tutoring you need," Heath says. "It was a very hands-on degree and it set me up easily to work day-to-day in a law firm."

Following graduation, Heath secured a graduate position with top-10 law firm Gagens Lawyers. He has completed various rotations through the firm, and is currently working in commercial property development.

Heath is a strong believer in the importance of speaking openly about poverty and sexual abuse, and through his speaking and advocacy on youth issues as a teenager, shared his own story with many people.

As a result, Heath's extraordinary achievements came to the attention of ABC TV's *Australian Story*, which aired a documentary on his life, introduced by the then-Prime Minister John Howard. He had met with Mr Howard on a number of occasions to discuss youth affairs and issues around drug and alcohol addiction.

Following the *Australian Story* documentary, Heath was approached by a publisher to write his autobiography.

He says he had two main reasons for writing the book: "One is to remove the dark cloud of judgement around poverty and sexual abuse, to create some understanding, and to show that people who have experienced those things are no less than everyone else.

"It was also to show young people who have experienced what I have experienced that they are not alone, that their past doesn't have to be their future, that life is always about choice, and they can choose what their life is about," Heath says.

As for Heath's life choices, a political career is definitely still on the agenda, but in the interim he plans to continue his legal career, perhaps in the area of human rights law and policy advice.

Perhaps inevitably, his background has influenced and inspired these choices.

"This drive and desire to create social change comes from the things I experienced as a child, and the knowledge that they are inhibitors to people's potential and the potential of society as a whole."

# keeping more than one ball in the air



Photo by Michael Chetham

Ask Anny Slater what she does for a living, and you could get two very different replies. She might tell you she is a screenwriter, director and producer; or she might tell you she is an intellectual property lawyer and trade mark attorney. Both are true.

Despite longing for a career in entertainment, Anny's family originally encouraged her towards something more sensible. Completing a Bachelor of Applied Science in Chemistry and later an LLB, she first began work as a trainee chemical patent attorney and then as an intellectual property lawyer.

With a continuing interest in entertainment, Anny secured a year-long mentorship with an executive at FoxIcon, a joint venture between 20th Century Fox and Mel Gibson's Icon Productions, and soon after enrolled in the Master of Arts in Screenwriting at UWS, graduating in 2001.

At this time she started a sole law practice, Slaters Intellectual Property Lawyers, as well as her own production company, Moondance Pictures. Since then, she has split her time between the two businesses, and says there is a 'symbiotic' relationship between the two.

"I think it's just peculiar to me that in order to be happy I need to be doing both," Anny says. "It does cross-pollinate – and expands the knowledge that I have in both areas."

Financially, having a career in the law has also made it easier to ride out the tough times in the entertainment business.

"It's very difficult to make a full-time profession out of entertainment in Australia or anywhere, and there's a lot of competition for a few places. So it's not inappropriate to have something that will give you income for a reasonable life," Anny says.

Anny has achieved quite extraordinary success in both fields. In 2008, Slaters Intellectual Property Lawyers was awarded Best Enterprise at the Australian Business Awards, and in 2009, Anny was placed on the State Government's Honour Roll for her outstanding achievements in law, arts and community service. Most recently, she was named Woman Lawyer of the Year in Private Practice by the Women Lawyers' Association of New South Wales as judged by the NSW Attorney General's Department, the NSW Law Society, the NSW Bar Association and the Corporate Lawyers Association.

Her portfolio of film work has also received a slew of honours, including induction into Australia's National Collection held at the National Film and Sound Archive, but her Australian political comedy, *The Ball*, has been perhaps her most successful to date. Originally shot in 2002 and completed in 2003, it was short-listed for nomination in the best live action short category of the 2004 Academy Awards, and nominated for a United Nations Media Peace Prize. The film has screened at more than 60 film festivals around the world, and was sold to Australian TV and released on DVD in Europe.

Most recently, *The Ball* was personally chosen by Oscar winner Michael Moore to screen at his 2009 Transverse City

Film Festival, which resulted in Anny later teaching at Moore's film school in Michigan.

"It's been an incredible film and quite a lesson for me, because I had never been on a filmset before," Anny says, adding that it was shot over a day and a half, with rain and lightning interrupting part of the second day's shoot.

"It has provided interest and travel for me since 2003 all over the world, and subsequently I made another film which was much more ambitious and it's still in post-production. So there is something to be said for short and uncomplicated."

Currently, Anny is working on completing her next film, *The Seven Trials of Roman Pilgrim* ([www.theadventuresofroman.com](http://www.theadventuresofroman.com)), featuring a score by jazz impresario James Morrison. The script already won its category as best screenplay at the Moondance International Film Festival and at the Disney sponsored Santa Clarita International Family Film Festival in Los Angeles. She is also working on a music video based on the music of Paul Grabowsky and Katie Noonan.

For those considering a second career, Anny believes it is never too late to start.

"I started late in life, because I was captured by expectations of what I should be doing rather than what I really enjoyed. But in the space of eight years I have managed to make a success of my two great loves, entertainment and law. It feels just as good now as it would have if I was experiencing it at 18 – the emotions are still the same."

# solving the unsolvable

When Robert Beech is awarded his Doctorate in Mathematics at the UWS Spring graduation in September, it will be a very proud day.

Not only did he return to higher education at the age of 55 and overcome significant disabilities to complete his Honours degree and PhD, but he solved a mathematical problem previously considered unsolvable – and has shaken up conventional scientific thought in plasma physics.

Robert's story is incredible. He began an undergraduate degree in mathematics at Queen's College in Belfast in 1963, but dropped out in his second year. He migrated to Australia in 1970, and although he tried again to be admitted to university, was unsuccessful. He spent most of his working life as a factory worker, until he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease at 54 and medically retired.

Having been placed on a disability pension, he decided to give higher education another go.

**"You're never too old to learn. The body might be shot to pieces but the brain still works."**

Robert Beech

"I went to Mount Druitt TAFE College, and asked them what their toughest course was," Robert says. It was the two-year Advanced Diploma in Electrical Technology, but when he was told he could complete 18 months of TAFE and 18 months of university study and receive a degree, he jumped at the chance.

He completed the three-year Bachelor of Science in Mathematics with a sub-major in astrophysics in two years, followed it up with an Honours year, and began his PhD in 2003 – all with the support of the UWS Disability Service.

For his PhD, Robert chose to investigate why radio signals phase in and out, working on Schrodinger's Equation. In 1933, Erwin Schrodinger received the Nobel Prize for his equation demonstrating the wave properties in matter. It was a differential, non-linear equation – one thought to be impossible to solve.

Because there were no other mathematicians undertaking PhDs, Robert was placed in the Physics department under the supervisor of Frederick Osman. Using the computer program Mathematica, Robert started trying to produce the solution to this equation – a tall order given that other academics had slaved for 40 years to solve it. Even Robert's own supervisor said it simply wasn't possible.

But solve it he did. And not only did he find a solution, he was able to prove it by creating his own program to generate an animated graph representing his finding.

Robert then spent four years writing his thesis, titled 'Extensions of the non-linear Schrodinger Equation using Mathematica' and, as he typed with only one finger, it was a slow process. In the meantime, he published extensively on the finding and received international attention for this work. His papers were published in the extraordinarily prestigious Cambridge journal, *Journal of Plasma Physics*.

**Phys. Lett. 235A, 569-573 (1997): Eqs.(2-4)**

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{d\psi_z(t)}{dt} &= -i\hat{H}\psi_z(t) + \\ &+ i\hat{q}z(t)\psi_z(t) - i\hat{q} \int_0^t ds \alpha(t,s) \frac{\delta\psi_z(t)}{\delta z(s)} \\ M[z^*(t)z(s)] &= \alpha(t,s); \quad M[z(t)z(s)] = 0; \quad M[z(t)] = 0 \\ \hat{H}_{tot} &= \hat{H} - \hat{q}\hat{F}_{res}; \quad \alpha(t,s) = \langle \hat{F}(t)\hat{F}(s) \rangle_{res} \end{aligned}$$

He says one of the best things about this experience is being able to call himself Dr Robert Beech, particularly after he was told he was unemployable.

"My family are delighted. They said, 'Why are you going back to school at your age?', but when they saw how far I was going, they were cheering me on," he says.

Although his general health has deteriorated over the years, Robert also continues to amaze his neurologists: "Thirteen years after my diagnosis [with Parkinson's disease], my brain should be shot to pieces, but it's not. They can't understand it."

He agrees that his work has kept his mind active, and says there are still other problems he would like to solve – such as issues with plasma screens.

"It's a similar problem but much more complex. But the harder it is, the more the sense of achievement when you get it," Robert says.

As someone who has exceeded expectations to achieve such amazing things later in life, Robert encourages others to do the same.

"I never thought I would be graduating with a PhD at the age of 66. If you feel you can do it, you go for it. Don't let anybody stop you. You're never too old to learn. The body might be shot to pieces but the brain still works."



# a new career in nursing

A redundancy turned out to be a surprising opportunity for Dean Hartnett.

Dean had worked in the manufacturing industry for 12 years, but when the machine he worked on was closed and he was offered relocation or redundancy, he decided to grab the chance to do something different with both hands.

“If you have the opportunity, I would more than recommend it.”

Dean Hartnett

Dean says he had always been interested in becoming a nurse or a paramedic, but circumstances had prevented him from returning to study.

“I knew I wanted to do something else, but I couldn’t really leave because I had a wife, two kids and a mortgage, and I couldn’t afford to leave my employment until they offered me a redundancy,” Dean says.

Dean’s redundancy made it possible for him to consider pursuing this new career. He hadn’t studied since leaving school in 1991, but took the Special Tertiary Admissions Test, and was accepted into a Bachelor of Nursing in 2006. Dean commuted from his home in Nowra to the Campbelltown campus during his degree.

While his first year was quite a challenge, Dean says returning to study was definitely the right choice.

“If you have the opportunity, I would more than recommend it. Obviously it is a bit of a culture shock and it was hard, especially writing my first essay. I think I finished it at 4am, it was due at 9am, and I had to drive up to Campbelltown to hand it in. But once I overcame the first one and knew what the tutors and lecturers expected, I found it quite rewarding, stimulating and enjoyable.”



At the end of his first year, Dean was awarded the Pendragon Nursing Scholarship. “It was very beneficial and basically meant I could finish my studies full-time,” Dean says.

After completing his degree in 2008, Dean was accepted into a graduate scheme for Intensive Care nursing at Shoalhaven Hospital. He says learning all the aspects of critical care in a country/rural area is quite different from the experience he gained during his clinical placements in Sydney.

“We get a diverse range of people coming in, from people with diabetic ketoacidosis to post-surgery ventilated patients and cardiac patients. It’s quite challenging – you have times when there is a lull and there are plenty of intense moments,” Dean says.

“I am enjoying it. Compared to manufacturing where you could pretty much click your mind off when you went through the turnstiles, in nursing you have to be a critical thinker and you have to really think about what you’re doing and what is best for your patient.”

# the activist academic

Dr James Arvanitakis is a postdoctoral researcher and lecturer at UWS in the School of Humanities and Languages.

He is also a member of the UWS Centre for Cultural Research and an active member of Aid/Watch, a research advisor to Oxfam and founder of The Commons Institute – a think-tank that studies and protects the role of public spaces and utilities in society. Through this work, James has examined areas of social justice such as citizenship, young people and democratic engagement, human rights and environmentalism.

He came to academia after swapping his finance career for work in human rights, and says his extensive involvement with human rights organisations, which essentially thrive on volunteers, showed that rhetoric about young people being self-absorbed was simply unfounded.

“Working with Oxfam on programs such as the International Youth Partnerships and Youth Engagement Project, I found that there are so many young people all over the world doing amazing things that I wanted to explode that myth,” James says.

Being engaged in public debate is a key part of the job for James, who describes himself as an ‘activist academic’. This takes the form of active involvement in initiatives such as Power Shift 2009, Australia’s first national youth climate summit, held at the University of Western Sydney in July.

James regards this as a great example of young people practising a ‘politics of the everyday’, or tackling challenges outside the traditional political framework.

“Apart from going out and doing the research and writing about it, I see that part of my role is to get knee-deep in the process of working with people to bring about change and implement recommendations.”



Recently I was invited to speak at a community-based meeting about the future of democracy in Australia. After discussing some of the trends that confront our democracy – both positive and negative – I was asked an all too common question: “Why are young people not interested in politics?”

While a simple question, it is one that essentially misses the point. This is because research shows that young people are interested in politics, but are turning their back on formal political processes – or what is described as big ‘P’ Politics. This is because they either feel that their efforts are not appreciated or such Politics seem so disconnected from everyday realities, involvement seems pointless. Further, there seems to be a general distrust of politicians and Politics, as well as a sense that not only is no one listening, but real policy alternatives are being ignored in favour of the status quo.

Such trends were highlighted in a recently published report commissioned by the Whitlam Institute, based at the University of Western Sydney, looking at democracy and young people. The research showed that young people believed politicians were less interested in outcomes than on being ‘re-elected’. Importantly, we found that while such trends are accentuated among young people, they are evident across the broader population.

Such attitudes towards Australia’s democracy can best be described as a ‘citizenship deficit’: that is, while people are interested, current practices undermine our sense of political engagement and empowerment. This places our sense of citizenship in deficit as we feel no sense of obligation because the system seems to be ignoring us. Consequently, the question that we need to be asking is, ‘How is democracy failing?’

So while young people may be politically engaged and active, they are changing the way this occurs. Rather than taking part in Politics by joining political parties and attending branch meetings – a prospect that makes even the most seasoned political activist cringe – we see a different politics emerge: a politics of the everyday (or small ‘p’ politics).

Nowhere is this passion for politics more evident, nor the disconnection between what is seen as an everyday reality ignored by formal Politics, than in the Power Shift conference organised by the Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC).

Power Shift is an example of how young people are practising this ‘politics of the everyday’. That is, the politics of my life and the community around me – and in a globalised world – this community goes well beyond a local suburb and crosses borders.

In this way, ‘climate change’ is not a challenge ‘over there’ to be addressed only in Canberra or Washington, but occurring here and now. Climate change is seen as part of the everyday and needs to be addressed as such.

In terms of formal Politics, Power Shift may not rate a mention in comparison to a beat-up Mazda. But it echoes the findings of our research: that young people are responding to challenges in a way that must be acknowledged though is rarely recognised as relevant. Practices include everything from organising boycotts (‘buy-cotts’), to online petitions and direct actions such as altering personal behaviours. In so doing, they are turning to ‘new global’ leaders such as Al Gore and Tim Flannery rather than politicians who are seen to be unwilling or unable to respond. While this type of engagement can be considered positive, it means that we are seeing an entire generation losing faith in our political systems and our leaders – a trend that must be addressed.

“Young people will continue to lose faith in our democracy unless we see political reform.”

James Arvanitakis

While events like Power Shift present us with insights into the passion that young people still have for politics, they also have clear implications for the future of our democracy: there is a need to address the issue of a citizenship deficit or risk increasing levels of disengagement and frustration towards formal Politics. Young people will continue to lose faith in our democracy unless we see political reform.

The response from many will be that, “If it ain’t broke, why fix it?” The truth is, that while our democracy may be able to handle shocks from a financial crisis to long-term environmental disasters such as droughts, slow emerging trends are like a slow, undetected leak. If ignored, the consequences could be deeply damaging to our community.

So what are the solutions to such trends? The first is to take the opinions of this significant section of the population seriously: stop considering young people as ‘citizens-in-waiting’. Rather, give them a chance to participate in genuine political decision-making: take their opinions seriously and give due weight to their contribution.

The second is to not treat the process of engaging young people as an ‘add on’ or consult them separately. Rather, such engagement should be embedded in consultation processes that include young people as part of a broader constituency and meets young people in the spaces they are already engaging in. One way this could happen is to place government reports in the hands of young people, and to work through the key findings with them in virtual community meetings. Once this occurs, the space should be opened up where such papers are interrogated and governments are required to respond to the recommendations – not necessarily accept them, but take them seriously.

The third recommendation is a radical revision of civics education. The previous federal government spent \$31 million on a civics and citizenship education program with a clear objective of creating ‘active citizenship’. The results from the 2004 national testing of students clearly demonstrated a key policy failure and misdirection of funds on the part of the Howard government. While the content is strong, the reason for the failure is in both under-resourced teachers and the fact that the content considers politics as something to be engaged in later on in life. Rather, young people should be encouraged to explore their passions and see how they can work through various political processes to make change.

This process means that it may be time to ‘politicise’ the classroom, giving teachers the freedom to express their opinions. This does not necessarily mean that teachers will push pre-determined agendas or ‘political barrows’, but that opinions need to be encouraged and expressed openly. Politics is, after all, an important part of life and something we need to understand and engage in. In so doing, we show a belief that young people have the nous to be able to discuss and debate politics with the ability to make up their own minds. The incredible response to Power Shift shows that this is already happening in class rooms, and to pretend otherwise, undermines these efforts.

Democracy is not a once and for all aspect of any society. Even in a robust community like Australia, slow trends that occur may slip under the radar. No matter where you stand on the issue of climate change, Power Shift highlights the need to alter the system to engage young people and take their efforts seriously. Otherwise our citizenship deficit will not be addressed. We may then find that the very people we expect to solve future problems may either lack the necessary skills, or be unprepared to accept the challenges because they have been ignored for far too long.





# dr ken langford joins uws board of trustees

In August this year, Dr Ken Langford was elected to the UWS Board of Trustees as the graduate representative. He will hold this position until 30 June 2013.

Ken has an extensive career as an agricultural/science educator, and has been involved with UWS since 1970. He first completed undergraduate studies at Hawkesbury Agricultural College, then went on to complete a Grad. Dip. Ed. He returned to UWS after teaching agriculture and science at St Marys High school near Penrith for 16 years, completing a Masters by coursework in Agricultural Education. Ken was then promoted to Lecturer in Systems Agriculture.

"My time at Hawkesbury was a very stimulating and challenging one. This period from 1991 to 2005 was awash with creativity, innovation and dramatic challenge to and changes in traditional approach to tertiary curriculum design, delivery, assessment and reporting. Such innovations as the incorporation of perspectives into systems thinking, experiential learning, effective communication and competency development into an all encompassing learner centred curriculum, had a profound positive influence on my educational understanding and professional practice," Ken says.

He says this time also uncovered his passion for rural development and designing ways to improve the relationship between managing change and learning, and particularly providing many opportunities for international rural development projects.

Some of these include a project to improve food security in South Africa, professional practice development with local extension officers working in the oil palm plantations in Rabaul, Papua New Guinea, and undergraduate curriculum development with staff, students and farmers in regions around The Tamilnadu Agricultural University, India.

"One of the more interesting experiences was to incorporate experiential learning concepts into the design of a subject that I offered in a Master of Public Health program in Hong Kong. UWS has helped me develop approaches to problem solving, decision-making and managing complexity not only in my own situation but in assisting others with theirs. As an educator I found this very satisfying," Ken says.

Most recently, in 2008 Ken completed a PhD at UWS, which focused on the development of conceptual framework for the design of tertiary curricula that incorporate professional practice learning within 'on' as well as 'off' campus communities.

"This conceptual framework is designed to generate 'lifelong learners' who are 'job ready' at graduation, have no 'shelf life' and no 'use by date'. My research was conducted in traditional university campuses in India and California," Ken says.

Ken currently serves in two positions: as a teacher at The Mount Druitt Tutorial Centre and as an Education Officer in the Badu Mangrove Field Studies Centre in Sydney's Bicentennial Park.

"Many of the approaches to learning and the skills in graphical representation and modelling complexity that emerged from my UWS Hawkesbury experiences have been incorporated into staff development, kindergarten to senior high school lessons and in Board of Studies-based programs for both of these positions."

Ken is currently a committee member of the UWS Hawkesbury Alumni Chapter, having served as both Chair and Secretary previously.

He says his main role on the Board of Trustees is to provide a graduate perspective on issues for consideration.

"I am extremely keen to contribute and hopefully make a positive difference. My many high school contacts and professional networks in the western suburbs and throughout NSW could be of use. My daughter is currently studying at UWS and can keep me informed of the relationship between the espoused and the actual. My experiences as a teacher in the western suburbs, an undergraduate, postgraduate, staff member and subsequent employee in the western suburbs may provide an interesting 'go to whoa and beyond' pathway perspective," Ken says.

# alumni chapter news

## UWS ENGINEERING STUDENT NAMED SYDNEY'S BEST

University of Western Sydney graduate James Pirozzi has been named Sydney's Engineering Student of the Year by Engineers Australia.

James completed his Bachelor of Engineering degree with First Class Honours, receiving an overall mark of 90 per cent for his thesis looking at water flows across eastern New South Wales.

Mr Pirozzi's work enhanced the flood estimation techniques for 56 small to medium sized catchments in the area, in order to help design structures such as small bridges and culverts.

"It's been 20 years since the information about eastern New South Wales has been updated, and there have been significant advances in the way flood estimations are made," James said.

His 252 page thesis has since been adapted by University of Western Sydney PhD student Khaled Haddad and Senior Lecturer Dr Ataur Rahman, and will be used to inform the fourth edition of Australian Rainfall and Runoff document.

The Head of the School of Engineering at UWS Professor Brian Uy says it's the second time the University has had a winner in the field.

"The University continues to produce high quality graduates, which is a tribute to the quality of both the students and the academic staff," he said.

James is now in the running to be named Australia's Engineering student of the year at an upcoming awards ceremony in Canberra.

Earlier this year, James was handed the Undergraduate Water Prize by the Australian Water Association.

## UWS SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING ALUMNI

The UWS School of Engineering Alumni chapter is on a mission to bring together as many of its alumni as possible to help celebrate some important milestones.

Not only does the current School of Engineering Building X at Kingswood celebrate its 15th birthday in 2009, but the School will also welcome a new building in 2010, with the renovation and refurbishment of Building Z, which will feature new laboratories, design studios and research and workshop facilities to house the newly established Civionics Research Centre.

With over 100 members already, the School of Engineering Alumni chapter is free to join and open to all UWS graduates

from the Engineering, Industrial Design and Construction disciplines. Members are kept informed of news, upcoming activities and other opportunities, and it provides a great opportunity to get in touch with old friends and build new professional networks.

As part of its drive to encourage alumni to join, the chapter recently offered new members joining before the end of October the chance to win a BridgeClimb. Over 100 members signed up during this promotion.

Continuing its 'bridge' theme, the School of Engineering Alumni chapter will be holding a special event in December to commemorate the construction of a footbridge at the Kingswood campus.

[www.uws.edu.au/KeepInTouch](http://www.uws.edu.au/KeepInTouch) OR  
[www.uws.edu.au/EngineeringAlumni](http://www.uws.edu.au/EngineeringAlumni)



# UWS News



“I intend to work with everyone to build on the firm foundations of my exceptional predecessor ...”

Alison Jones

## INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED CLINICAL TOXICOLOGIST JOINS UWS AS DEAN OF SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Internationally recognised leader and educator in clinical toxicology, Professor Alison Jones has taken up the role of the new Dean of the School of Medicine at the University of Western Sydney.

Alison Jones joins UWS from the University of Newcastle, Australia, where she was Professor of Medicine and Clinical Toxicology. Her distinguished medical career included time as Director of the National Poisons Information Service (London), and Head of Medicine at London's Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital.

As well as being an active member of two research centres at the University of Newcastle, Alison has advised on issues such as poisoning and chemical incident response, chemical anti-terrorism, risk assessment and risk communication to governments and government agencies, professional bodies and industry both within Australia and the UK.

She was most recently appointed as a director of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), one of Australia's premier research centres on strategic and defence policy issues. Despite these commitments, she has also maintained an active role as a clinician, involved in the management of poisoned and general medical patients at the Calvary Mater Newcastle Hospital.

Alison says she is delighted and honoured to have been chosen for the role at UWS, and is looking forward to working with the talented researchers and teachers to achieve even greater success and distinction for the School of Medicine.

“I intend to work with everyone to build on the firm foundations of my exceptional predecessor, Professor Neville Yeomans, and to ensure that the UWS School of Medicine produces skilled and caring doctors with highly effective communication skills who deliver the highest possible level of patient care. This is in keeping with the aspirations of our founders and those who continue to support us today,” Professor Jones says.

The first cohort of medical students will graduate at the end of 2011.

Professor Jones says she is pleased to be joining the University of Western Sydney at such an exciting time – not only for the University, but for the higher education and health sectors generally.

“While health services in Australia are increasingly under pressure many decisions regarding medical training and standards take place at a national level, so it is very important for the profession to interact with government in such discussions and with groups involved in caring for patients and preventing ill health.”

Professor Jones says one of her greatest joys continues to be her daily interactions with students, and she says she is looking forward to meeting and getting to know the University's 300-strong medical student cohort as it grows in the years to come.



## VALE NEIL BAUMGART

Professor Neil Baumgart, foundation professor of education at the Nepean campus of the University of Western Sydney, died this year aged 72.

Neil entered academic life in 1968 as a Lecturer in the School of Education at Macquarie University, later becoming Associate Professor and Head of the School of Education. After roles with the Ministry of Education in Victoria and as Chairman of the Australian Directors of Curriculum, he joined UWS.

Throughout his working life, Neil was involved in overseas consultancy missions in developing countries, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. He participated in projects developing and evaluating education policy and programs for the World Bank, AusAID, the Asian Development Bank, the British Department for International Development, the governments of Laos, Cambodia and the Maldives, the Australia-Korea Foundation, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the Asia Education Foundation. He continued this work until last year.

Despite retiring in 1998 as an Emeritus Professor, Neil continued this overseas consultancy work until 2008.

Neil was appointed a member of the Order of Australia in 2004, for service to educational research and development in Australia and to the advancement of educational programs in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region.



## HOW ARE WE DOING AS A NATION? CHECK WESTERN SYDNEY

As the region with Australia's highest rates of new migrant processing and family formation and significant challenges relating to infrastructure, housing and employment, Western Sydney is the nation's most critical urban site.

According to Professor Phillip O'Neil, director of the Urban Research Centre (URC) at UWS, "In many ways, getting Western Sydney right over the next two decades will be an important barometer for the Australian nation in its attempt to produce sustainable quality living, in a new era of climate change issues and probably ongoing economic uncertainty."

"Western Sydney is the ideal place for the rollout of advanced sustainable infrastructure systems. As yet, however, government planning for these is well off the pace," Phillip says.

"Western Sydney should be the place where people are able to go to secure quality, affordable housing. The fact that we are finding the area is producing the biggest affordable housing problems shows how warped the Australian housing market has become."

Solving the problem is relatively simple, according to Phillip – with a combination of the right schemes to provide low-cost, high-quality, sustainable housing, quality rental accommodation, socially assisted housing, and home ownership schemes for new home buyers. While the NSW Housing Ministry is starting to adopt some of these ideas, much more needs to be done.

"The old way of carving up hectares of farmland and converting them into sprawling new brick cottages on the edge of the city not only fails the environment, it fails the young home buyer. The solution is to encourage a greater mix of new dwellings in Western Sydney with different types of density configurations, and to build these in locations that help to build Western Sydney's regional cities, rather than repeat the mindless sprawl of the 50s and 60s," Professor O'Neill says.

Looking forward to 2030, if these challenges can be properly addressed, "Western Sydney will be seen as a collection of rich sustainable regional cities, each with their own economic specialisations and thriving in their own right with quality lifestyles, good amenity and a rich variety of cultural and educational facilities," he says.

# UWS News



The new SIMS facilities at the University of Western Sydney

## NEW RESEARCH FACILITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

NSW's reputation for global leadership in groundbreaking scientific research was reinforced with the launch of new \$1 million facilities at the University of Western Sydney.

Minister for Science and Medical Research Jodi McKay said the University's new Secondary Ion Mass Spectrometer (SIMS) facilities will enable scientists to perform powerful molecular analysis of any material.

"This is an exciting development for scientific research in NSW and in Australia," Jodi said. "The applications for use of the SIMS are wide, from helping forensic scientists accurately identify samples from a crime scene to protecting our unique environment by analysing pollutants found in our wildlife.

"Its location in Western Sydney will allow scientists to perform internationally competitive research without expensive travel costs and builds on our already strong reputation as an international centre of metrology."

Jodi says the new facility includes a laboratory for specimen handling, a viewing area, lab space for visiting researchers and offices for staff managing the facility.

"This \$1 million investment by the University of Western Sydney is an excellent example of the kind of globally relevant research we undertake in NSW," she says.



UWS IELTS Centre Official Opening: The Hon Laurie Ferguson MP and Professor Janice Reid, Vice-Chancellor, University of Western Sydney

## FIRST DEDICATED ENGLISH LANGUAGE TESTING CENTRE OPENS AT UWS

The University of Western Sydney's UWSCollege launched the region's first dedicated English language testing centre in October in a move that supports Greater Western Sydney's migrant and refugee settlement programs and services for new arrivals.

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Centre was officially launched by Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement and Federal Member for Reid, The Hon Laurie Ferguson, at the UWS Westmead precinct.

IELTS is an internationally accredited test for students who need to demonstrate their proficiency in the English language, and is recognised by education institutions, employers and government agencies.

UWS Vice-Chancellor, Professor Janice Reid, said the new centre was yet another way in which the University was opening up opportunities and access to higher education for the people of Greater Western Sydney.

"Australian Bureau of Statistics data reveal that 34 per cent of people in the Greater Western Sydney region are born overseas and 29 per cent come from a non-English speaking background, which is a higher proportion than other parts of Sydney," Professor Reid said.

"The IELTS Centre will greatly assist new migrants, refugees and overseas students on the path to greater participation in the community, work and further education."

The CEO of UWSCollege, Dr Kerry Hudson, says the facility is the first dedicated IELTS test centre in Australia with permanent administration and testing spaces.

"The centre caters for about 350 candidates a session, and in a typical test the participant will sit through individual tests for listening, reading, writing and speaking," Dr Hudson says.



# UWS News

## MEDICAL STUDENTS BEGIN WORK IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

For some third-year medical students from UWS, their first taste of work in real-life medical settings has solidified their ambition to practise in the Greater Western Sydney region after graduation.

The students have recently undertaken their first clinical placements in hospitals, GP clinics and community services across the region, spending 12 weeks working alongside general practitioners, specialists and medical teams.

The program is supported by the Sydney West and Sydney South West Area Health Services, and with placements in General Medicine, Surgery and Medicine in Context, gives students a deeper understanding of the health and wellbeing issues facing residents of Greater Western Sydney, as well as hands-on experience in a range of medical settings.

According to Dr Louella McCarthy, Manager of the School's Community Participation Program, for the Medicine in Context placement, students spend one day each week in General Practice and three days with community health service providers in areas such as aged care, disability services, women's health and migrant health.

Medical student Jesse Hall has just completed his Medicine in Context placement.

"I was placed with the Macarthur Disability Service for six weeks – it's a fantastic service and the staff are incredibly supportive and helpful. It was my first experience working with people with disabilities. It was challenging but a great experience and very rewarding," says Jesse.

"I was concurrently working at a GP clinic. Previously, I only had experience in the acute sector with the broader Greater Western Sydney population. In general practice, you have time to develop a relationship with patients, and apply a broader healthcare approach.

"My third placement was with an aged care facility, Carrington Centennial Aged Care. I learned a lot about the regulations and standards in aged care. I participated in reviewing and writing a policy on multidisciplinary care conferencing, which was very interesting," says Jesse, who intends to practise in his local community of Campbelltown after graduation.

Fellow medical student Elise Maehler also grew up in the Greater West region, and her placement at Campbelltown Hospital has confirmed her intention to work close to home.

"It was a good experience. I felt part of the medical team. I worked in the cardiology, general medicine and immunology wards. Clinical experience provides more effective learning than out of a textbook. You apply all your knowledge. It was a steep learning curve and was really exhausting.

"Although the staff were overloaded, they were really helpful. They teach you everything."

## UWS STUDENT RECOGNISED FOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE

UWS industrial design student Brandon Clark was named as one of the 13 finalists for the 2009 Australian Design Award – James Dyson Award, which rewards outstanding talent among future Australian designers.

The prestigious award highlights projects from tertiary students of design in Australia that are most closely aligned with Dyson's philosophy of complete design – a philosophy that a product should not only look good but also use innovation and technology to provide significant advantages over the product it replaces.

Brandon's project was the 'The Ultimate Limb', a foot prosthetic that improves an amputee's ambulation over rough and demanding terrain without compromising day-to-day usability.

The Ultimate Limb was regarded as an excellent design solution because it can be used for both everyday use and for specialised activities, including outdoor recreation. With an innovative interchangeable sole, the prosthetic limb can be used both with and without footwear, and on varying surfaces and terrains.

Advancements in osseointegration and direct neural control implants mean that the Ultimate Limb could be assimilated into the body to provide an opportunity for users to recapture their lost mobility.

As a finalist for the award, Brandon's project was featured in the annual Australian International Design Awards Yearbook, which is distributed to the design industry, manufacturers and potential clients, and in product exhibitions associated with the awards. Brandon also received media exposure and networking opportunities with design luminaries, providing a great head-start for his career.

## AFL LEGEND TO WORK WITH UWS

AFL great Kevin Sheedy's appointment as inaugural coach of Team GWS has sparked much excitement around the campaign for a new AFL team in Greater Western Sydney in 2012.

In keeping with the partnership between the University of Western Sydney and the AFL, Kevin Sheedy and many other Team GWS staff and supporters will be working with the University across a wide range of areas including:

- Further strengthening relationships with schools in Greater Western Sydney
- Leadership and scholarship opportunities
- Indigenous outreach and mentoring programs
- Educational pathways for AFL players
- Multicultural programs
- Sport science and biomedical education and research
- Nutrition, physical education and healthy living programs

Team GWS, through its partnership with UWS, has recognised the University's impressive network across Greater Western Sydney and the important position UWS holds in the community. Team GWS has welcomed the 36,000 UWS students and 120,000 Alumni in building the first AFL team for Greater Western Sydney.

Kevin Sheedy joins Team GWS as a legend of the game and one of the AFL's most enduring coaches, but more importantly as a pioneer of fostering community engagement through sport. His leadership and dedication to Indigenous and diversity programs and commitment to Greater Western Sydney will soon become evident to Team GWS supporters.

Team GWS and its new coach are committed to developing community initiatives in Greater Western Sydney, focusing on health, harmony, education and employment. Collaborative partnerships with key business and community leaders will be integral to the successful delivery of this vision and will provide real benefits to the community of Greater Western Sydney.

The list concessions afforded to this new club along with the academies Team GWS is setting up across Greater Western Sydney, will allow local youth to play AFL football while staying in their own area.



# Whitlam Institute

WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY



The Whitlam Institute within the University of Western Sydney is a dynamic public policy institute that commemorates the life and work of one of Australia's most respected Prime Ministers, The Hon. Gough Whitlam AC QC, and pursues the causes he championed during his parliamentary career and years of service as a statesman to the people of Australia.

Through the Whitlam Institute Program we strive to be a leading national centre for initiating dialogue, debate, research and scholarship to promote and develop bold and creative public policy. The Program comprises a range of policy development and research projects as well as outreach activities that include public education programs and special events.

Your support is valuable to us and will help the Institute in its efforts to improve the quality of life for all Australians.

You can **support** the Whitlam Institute by:

- Making a donation
- Purchasing our merchandise and publications
- Subscribing to our e-magazine

[www.whitlam.org](http://www.whitlam.org)

University of  
Western Sydney  
Bringing knowledge to life

# preserving national heritage



As you walk up the original sandstone walkway from the Parramatta River, the Female Orphan School, which dates back to 1813, is imposing, surrounded by heritage-listed trees and landscaping. What was once a derelict, vandalised mess has been carefully restored by UWS to its former glory, and is the oldest three storey brick building in Australia.

The Female Orphan School is just one example of the historic buildings peppering the Parramatta and Hawkesbury campuses of UWS, dating back to colonial times.

Since UWS took ownership of this significant building in the early 1990s, it has undergone significant refurbishment, with a third of the internal space and the entire external façade refurbished. With 2013 marking the 200th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone by Mrs Elizabeth Macquarie, the university hopes to complete the internal refurbishment of the west and east wings of the building.

"It has been lovingly restored back to its original condition. We removed a number of low-cost additions made during the building's life. We have spent millions of dollars on the building to date, and we are now seeking funding of at least \$1 million just to restore the west wing," says Peter Eeles, Interim Director of the Campus Development Unit.

The core of the building is currently used for office space and small functions, but Peter says in future the university would like to see some adaptive re-use of the building as a function centre or museum.

To date, the building's restoration has been recognised with a number of awards, including a prestigious UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Award, a National Trust Heritage Award and a Parramatta City Heritage Award.

**"We have spent millions of dollars on the building to date..."**

Peter Eeles

The Female Orphan School has a fascinating history. While the foundation stone was laid in 1813, the building was not completed until 1818, when 70 girls moved into the building. The design of the school was based on Elizabeth Macquarie's family home, 'Airds', at Appin in Scotland.

In 1850, boys were introduced to the orphanage, and it became known as the Protestant Orphan School. Then in 1887, the school was closed, and the building was reopened in 1888 as the Rydalmere Psychiatric Hospital, being used for this purpose for nearly 100 years with extensions added to the building, until it was closed again in 1987.

Peter says there are still signs of the building's later life, with small holding rooms fitted with thick, heavy doors and small peepholes, and one of the challenges with the site is balancing its original use as an orphanage with its time as a psychiatric hospital in the restoration, as both form important parts of its history.

Some of the other buildings surrounding the Female Orphan School building are also historically significant.

"Some of our teaching buildings are the original classrooms associated with the Female Orphan School," Peter says.

The Hawkesbury campus also features original buildings extending back to 1890 from its previous life as Hawkesbury Agricultural College.

The former Principal's Residence at Hawkesbury Agricultural College, built in 1894, has been restored to its former grandeur, and now operates as Yarramundi House, a function centre. Other original buildings including Federation cottages and a weatherboard building called Stable Square have also been restored, and are now used for administration and student accommodation.

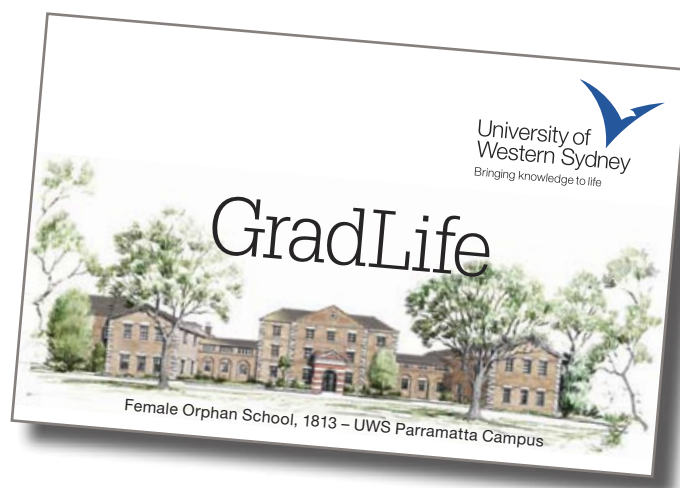
With a major grant received for the development of the Centre for Climate Change at Hawkesbury, in some ways this harks back to the origins of the site.

"We are looking to integrate some of the buildings for reuse as part of that centre. Because it comes from a horticultural and agricultural background, we will be putting a substantial number of experiments and activities out there, and really lifting the profile of the Hawkesbury campus," Peter says.



# Grab your UWS GradLife Card

The UWS GradLife Alumni Benefits program is back and better than ever. You should soon receive your brand-new GradLife Card, featuring the historic Female Orphan School site at the UWS Parramatta campus. Being a member of the UWS GradLife program entitles you to a range of special alumni benefits, including discounted membership to the UWS Library and Gym, discounts at the UWS Bookshop, as well as invitations to special university events. All graduates of UWS are eligible for a GradLife Card, so visit [www.uws.edu.au/GradLife](http://www.uws.edu.au/GradLife) to apply for yours today.



BENEFIT	DETAILS
<b>UWS Library Access Discount</b>	Discounted annual membership to any of the UWS Campus Libraries for \$50 (as opposed to \$100 full fee). This includes book borrowing rights, as well as access to a limited range of electronic sources not currently available to other subscribers.
<b>UWS Bookshop Discount</b>	10% Discount on all purchases.
<b>UWS Connect Fitness Gym Discount</b>	Alumni to be offered same price as students for membership of UWS Connect Fitness facilities.
<b>Travel Discounts through exclusive UWS Alumni Portal</b>	Exclusive comprehensive Alumni travel portal through World Travel Professionals.
<b>Careers and Employment Services CareerHub</b>	Free continuing access to career services and UWS Career Hub – with the potential to build this service into a significant resource for both students and Alumni.
<b>Invitations to UWS Alumni Events and Networking Opportunities</b>	GradLife members will receive invitations to various UWS Alumni Events – Chapter Functions, Reunions, Seminars, Networking Opportunities, and other Alumni activities, including opportunistic discounts to theatre and sporting events, UWS Exhibitions and specific UWS 20th Anniversary events.
<b>Access to information on Discipline Specific Professional Development Activities</b>	GradLife members will receive information and any available discount on upcoming professional development opportunities facilitated by various Alumni chapters and networks, including Law, Engineering and Education. Liaison with UWS College and UWS Colleges to inform of professional development courses as they become available.
<b>Volunteering and Mentoring Opportunities</b>	Help UWS students through the Aspire Program and a range of volunteering opportunities currently under development by UWS.
<b>Discount Magazine Subscriptions iSubscribe</b>	5 to 10% discount from i-Subscribe prices.
<b>E- Newsletter and Alumni Alerts</b>	Members will be kept up to date with the latest UWS Alumni news and promotions through a quarterly e-Newsletter.
<b>UWS Venue Hire</b>	Alumni discounts will be available in future.
<b>Keep In Touch with Friends</b>	Through staff at the UWS Alumni Unit, Alumni can reconnect with old classmates, search for long lost university chums, or make contact with those who were in their course, area of study, or graduating class.

For more information and the entire list of benefits please visit

[www.uws.edu.au/GradLife](http://www.uws.edu.au/GradLife)

# recent events



London Alumni Dinner – (from L to R) Brent Goldman, Professor Janice Reid, Ian Patterson, Suzanne Snowden, Anne Bonanno, Sonia Wilkie, Carrie Le, Stuart Anderson.

## UWS ALUMNI LONDON DINNER, SEPTEMBER 2009

UWS Vice Chancellor Janice Reid recently hosted a London Alumni dinner in the United Kingdom. The dinner provided UK Alumni with the opportunity to re-connect with the University and network with others who share similar experiences.

Here is a brief rundown on some of those in attendance at the dinner:

**Brent Goldman** My current role is corporate finance partner at BDO LLP in London. BDO is focused on mid-market businesses and I focus my time on working with companies with a market value of £20m to £500m and spend a large part of my time working on cross-border transactions.

**Sonia Wilkie** Since graduating from a Master of Arts (Research) degree at the MARCS Auditory Laboratories, Sonia has been enjoying London's digital arts scene, while working for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

**Anne Bonanno** I completed a Bachelor of Social Sciences at UWS Bankstown in 2001 and subsequently went on to work for the Australian Customs Service in Sydney at Sydney Airport. For the past three and a half years in London I was a Migration Consultant. I have recently returned to Australia with my fiancé and I hope to gain employment within either the Australian Customs Service or the Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

**Stuart Anderson** I am a native Brit, born and raised in Liverpool and studied Natural Sciences (Physics) at Cambridge University. I have been working for an international energy company for around 18 years, mainly in IT but more recently in Trading Risk Management. I have had a lifelong interest in Astronomy and completed my Master of Astronomy with UWS in 2002.

## 'LET'S TALK TORTS' SEMINAR SERIES AUGUST – OCTOBER 2009

Hosted by the UWS Law Students' Association and UWS Law Alumni Association, the 'Let's talk torts' seminar series recently concluded in late October with guest speaker Stuart Littlemore QC.

The series included a number of public seminars where UWS Alumni and students had the chance to discuss the nominated topics with distinguished experts. The main issues of interest related to the ability of the civil justice system to protect ordinary people from abuse by powerful interests.

For more information on the UWS Law Alumni Association, including upcoming events and activities, visit [www.uws.edu.au/LawAlumni](http://www.uws.edu.au/LawAlumni)



The Honourable Michael Kirby



Associate Professor Franz Poehchacker

## UWS EQUITY AND DIVERSITY OPEN FORUM: IS AIDS OVER? SEPTEMBER 2009

UWS Alumni on the behalf of UWS Equity & Diversity were invited to attend the 2009 Open forum 'Is AIDS Over?' on Thursday 10 September at Parramatta Campus.

The night provided an opportunity for the community to hear guest speaker The Honourable Michael Kirby, recently retired Justice of the Australian High Court and renowned human rights champion, deliver an address on AIDS and prevention – big challenge for the world community.

Justice Kirby said "the ongoing AIDS epidemic is a human rights challenge for the world with 2.7 million people infected every year".

## POSITIVE RESPONSE TO INTERPRETING SYMPOSIUM

The Interpreting and Translation Research Group hosted its second annual research symposium "Applying Research to Interpreting and Translation Assessment and Training" from 25-26 September 2009.

The keynote speaker was Associate Professor Franz Poehchacker, a renowned scholar in interpreting studies from the Centre for Translation Studies at the University of Vienna.

He spoke about the essential role of research in interpreter education, which is rapidly moving away from the traditional 'master-apprentice' view of interpreter training and towards research-based teaching and assessment methodologies.

The symposium attracted over 100 delegates, comprising academics, students and practitioners from around Australia. The program consisted of one plenary lecture, 15 paper presentations and three workshops.

A number of themes were strongly highlighted at the symposium: the need to conduct further applied research to inform the teaching and assessment of interpreting and translation; the desirability of cross-disciplinary research in this area; and the exciting growing interest in applied research as evidenced by the current research projects around the country which deal with issues of training and assessment.

The symposium received very positive evaluations, such as "It's wonderful to see something like this being supported by the University. A terrific contribution to research and its application".



# alumni online



## NEW FACEBOOK FAN PAGE

UWS Alumni have recently launched a new Facebook Fan page.



The new page has been created, in addition to the existing Facebook group, in order to upgrade our communication services and allow us to better communicate with our Alumni. This includes news feed posts, updates, and interactive discussion boards which we invite our Alums to contribute to.

Over 100 users have already become a fan on the page, and we hope to continue to grow the page. Our Facebook group continues to also grow, with more than 1200 members.

The new Fan Page can be found at  
**[www.facebook.com/UWSAlumni](http://www.facebook.com/UWSAlumni)**

## TWITTER FOLLOWERS CONTINUE TO GROW



Our UWS Alumni Twitter followers continue to grow in number.

The Twitter profile provides our Alumni with an additional social networking tool and updates service which can be accessed online, or via certain mobile phones.

We encourage all users to follow us, tweet us @UWSAlumni, and help us spread the news even further by re-tweeting (RT) our posts to your followers' network.

Follow UWS Alumni Tweets at  
**[www.twitter.com/UWSAlumni](http://www.twitter.com/UWSAlumni)**

# future events

## 2009 events

Our calendar of events for 2009 has drawn to a close, but stay tuned to the Alumni website for 2010 events.

[www.uws.edu.au/AlumniEvents](http://www.uws.edu.au/AlumniEvents)

## 2010 events

### April 2010

Autumn Graduation Ceremonies, UWS Parramatta

### May 2010

Cooperative Alumni Network (CAN) Function

### May 2010

UWS Foundation Dinner, in support of the School of Law, Sydney

### June 2010

20th Anniversary UWS/Hong Kong Baptist University-SCE Alumni Dinner, Hong Kong

### DATES TO BE ADVISED

Although specific 2010 dates are yet to be advised for the events below, be sure to keep an eye out for updates on our website in the New Year.

[www.uws.edu.au/AlumniEvents](http://www.uws.edu.au/AlumniEvents)

- Beijing Alumni Dinner
- Ozmate Australian Indonesian Alumni Awards
- Singapore Alumni Dinner

### ADDITIONAL EVENTS AND UPDATES

will be available to view on the UWS Alumni website at [www.uws.edu.au/AlumniEvents](http://www.uws.edu.au/AlumniEvents)

### TO REQUEST AN INVITATION

to any of our events listed here, or on the UWS Alumni website and social networking pages, please email us at [alumni@uws.edu.au](mailto:alumni@uws.edu.au)

### RECEIVE REGULAR UPDATES ON UPCOMING UWS ALUMNI EVENTS

To ensure that you receive regular updates on upcoming UWS Alumni events, please visit [www.uws.edu.au/KeepInTouch](http://www.uws.edu.au/KeepInTouch) to join the GradLife program or a relevant UWS Alumni Chapter.

# UWS Alumni **keep** **in touch**

Update your details, join chapters and stay connected online at

[www.uws.edu.au/KeepInTouch](http://www.uws.edu.au/KeepInTouch)

The University of Western Sydney holds our Alumni in high esteem, taking pride in each graduate as they progress beyond their studies and into their chosen career. Assisting more than 120,000 graduates, UWSAlumni aims to keep all Alumni 'in touch' with UWS.

If you do not have internet access you can remain connected with your university as a graduate and a member of our Alumni – please fill in the form below. Every new member of the UWS Alumni is also invited to join the GradLife program. Membership is free, with members gaining access to exclusive Chapter Membership, UWS Alumni benefits, and events.

## PERSONAL DETAILS

UWS ID (former Student Id Number, if known)		
Family Name		
Given Name		
Name on Degree (if different to above)		
Date of Birth (Day/Month/Year)	/	/

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Home Number
Work Number
Mobile Number
Email Address (Please provide your home email address as your student email will expire shortly after graduation)

## ADDRESS INFORMATION

Street/Address Lines (including unit number and/or street number)	
Suburb	State
Postcode	Country

## Chapter Info

- ☐ I would like to become a member of the **GradLife Alumni Program** to receive access to a range of graduate benefits

**Please return your completed form in the Reply Paid envelope provided**