



Student Awards Ceremony

2024 Academic Year

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE

Order of Proceedings

Welcome and Introductions

Welcome Address

Keynote Address

Donor Awards and Prizes

Concluding Remarks





Acknowledgement of Country

With respect for Aboriginal cultural protocol and out of recognition that its campuses occupy their traditional lands. Western Sydney University acknowledges the Darug, Eora, Dharawal (also referred to as Tharawal) and Wiradjuri peoples and thanks them for their support of its work in their lands (Greater Western Sydney and beyond).

Message from the Executive Director, Advancement



At Western Sydney University, student success is at the heart of everything we do. The Student Awards Ceremony are a chance to celebrate the hard work, dedication, and achievements of our hardworking and ambitious students – recognising not just academic excellence, but also the passion and perseverance that will shape their and our collective futures.

These awards would not be possible without the generosity of our donors. By funding prizes and academic awards, donors play a vital role in encouraging students to aim high, supporting their aspirations, and giving them an edge as they step into the workforce. To our donors—thank you for believing in our students and helping them reach their full potential.

The Western Sydney region continues to grow and evolve, so do the opportunities for our students. The University is focused on preparing graduates who are adaptable, innovative, and ready to make an impact. These awards help ensure our students have the recognition, motivation, and confidence to take on the challenges ahead.

To our award recipients – congratulations! We are proud of all that you have achieved and can't wait to see where your journey takes you next.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CBurden'.

Christian Burden
Executive Director, Advancement
Western Sydney University



David Finlay Memorial Award in Horticulture

Donor	Hawkesbury Benefactors This prize was established by the benefactors of the Hawkesbury campus and the friends and family of the late David Finlay. It is intended to support an outstanding student in the area of Horticulture.
Prize	David Finlay Memorial Award in Horticulture
Criteria	Awarded to the most outstanding student in Horticulture.
Recipient	Farah Mahjabin

Dr Ashok Kumar Shrestha Prize in Food Science

Donor	<p>Western Sydney University School of Science</p> <p>The School of Science have established this annual award in the name of Dr Ashok Kumar Shrestha in recognition of his contributions to the education of many students, as well as his research, in the area of food science. Dr Shrestha was a Senior Lecturer with the School for 8 years, with a very impressive research publication track record. With the support of his family and the University, the School of Science and Health is proud to recognise the achievement of an outstanding student in honour of Dr Shrestha.</p>
Prize	<p>Dr Ashok Kumar Shrestha Prize in Food Science</p>
Criteria	<p>Awarded to the most outstanding student in the second year of a nutrition and food science undergraduate degree program.</p>
Recipient	<p>Anastasia Vickers</p>

Ellice Swinbourne Award for Excellence in Chemistry

Donor	Ellice Swinbourne Memorial <p data-bbox="230 488 1039 831">Emeritus Professor Ellice Swinbourne AM was principal of the Nepean College of Advanced Education, a preceding institution of Western Sydney University, from February 1980 to December 1985. Emeritus Professor Swinbourne's career included a period in industry followed by a wide range of experience in higher education in areas such as teaching, research and management, and also planning at institutional and government levels. Prior to commencing as Principal of Nepean College, Professor Swinbourne was Vice-President (Academic) at the New South Wales Institute of Technology (NSWIT). His initial interest in the provision of higher education in Western Sydney was sparked in those years at NSWIT when he became aware of the travelling times endured by students from Western Sydney. On commencing as principal of Nepean College, Professor Swinbourne hoped to apply his background and experience in higher education to the cause of further developing the general provision of higher education in Western Sydney.</p> <p data-bbox="230 858 1039 935">Professor Swinbourne maintained his strong relationship with Western Sydney University and his support of students over many years. Sadly, Emeritus Professor Ellice Swinbourne passed away on 17 January 2010.</p>
Prize	Ellice Swinbourne Award for Excellence in Chemistry
Criteria	Awarded to most outstanding graduating student in Chemistry, enrolled in the Bachelor of Science.
Recipient	Regan Soballa

Environmental Health Australia Outstanding Achievement Award



Donor	<p>Environmental Health Australia</p> <p>Environmental Health Australia (EHA) is the premier environmental health professional organisation in Australia which advocates environmental health issues and represents the professional interests of all environmental health practitioners. EHA is committed to the professional development and status of its members and the enhancement of environmental health standards and services to the community through advocacy, promotion, education and leadership. The professional organisation has been in existence since 1936 and has undergone several name changes over time to reflect the changing nature of the organisation and its membership. EHA is a founding member of the International Federation of Environmental Health (IFEH).</p> <p>EHA supports entry into the environmental health field through the Higher Education Sector. Western Sydney University has been granted accreditation for their environmental health course which ensures that their graduates have achieved a high level of skill and knowledge as required to work as an environmental health officer in Australia.</p> <p>ehansw.org.au</p>
Prize	Environmental Health Australia Outstanding Achievement Award
Criteria	Awarded to a student for outstanding achievement in the Bachelor of Science (Environmental Health).
Recipient	Skye-Ann Anderson

Lorna Byrne Leadership Prize



Donor	<p>UWS Hawkesbury Foundation - Lorna Byrne Memorial</p> <p>The Lorna Byrne Leadership Award was instituted by the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology (NSW Division) in 1989 to honour the memory of Lorna Byrne. Ms Byrne was one of the first two women to graduate in Agricultural Science from the University of Sydney, graduating in 1921. She was recognised as a leader in rural extension services and the development of rural broadcasting. Ms Byrne was awarded the CBE for services to Agriculture and the Community and was a lifetime supporter of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Sciences (AIAS). She was the only women to be honoured as a Fellow of Hawkesbury Agricultural College. In 2007 AIAS transferred the ongoing Trusteeship of the Award to the UWS Hawkesbury Foundation. The award is now offered annually by the foundation to a Hawkesbury undergraduate student who is demonstrating strong leadership skills and leadership potential.</p>
Prize	<p>Lorna Byrne Leadership Prize</p>
Criteria	<p>Awarded to a Hawkesbury campus undergraduate student in the second or third year of their degree, who is also enrolled in the Bachelor of Creative Leadership (BCL) degree and demonstrates strong leadership skills and potential.</p>
Recipient	<p>Jared Simpson</p>

Lynch & Mitchell Prize for Excellence in Food Sciences

Donor	Lynch & Mitchell Award Fund Committee Laurie Lynch and Robert Mitchell were the driving force in founding the Food Technology course at the Hawkesbury Agricultural College. Their aim was to train food technicians for the Australian food industry, who would enhance the technical and managerial status of the industry. To achieve this objective, much personal effort and time was willingly given by both. This award is therefore granted to those who excel in Food Science and Technology and adhere to the high standards set by these pioneer educators.
Prize	Lynch & Mitchell Prize for Excellence in Food Sciences
Criteria	Awarded to the most outstanding graduating student in a nutrition and food science undergraduate degree program.
Recipient	El-Ali Malek

NSW Food Authority (Food Regulation Partnership) Prizes



Food
Authority

Donor	<p>NSW Food Authority (Food Regulation Partnership)</p> <p>The NSW Food Authority (Food Authority) is a state government agency established to provide New South Wales with the best food regulation system in Australia. As Australia's first completely integrated or 'through-chain' food regulation agency, the Food Authority is responsible for food safety across the entire industry, from primary production to point of sale.</p> <p>The Food Authority partners with local government councils who regulate the retail food sector. The environmental health officers employed in this role at councils generally undertake the Bachelor of Natural Science (Environment and Health) at Western Sydney University.</p> <p>The NSW Food Authority (Food Regulation Partnership) prizes seek to promote food surveillance as a career path and help to address the shortage of environmental health officers in the workforce. The prizes aim to facilitate communication between enforcement agencies, tertiary institutions and the Food Authority, and to ensure students starting a career in environmental health have appropriate undergraduate training and network opportunities.</p> <p>foodauthority.nsw.gov.au</p>
Prize	NSW Food Authority (Food Regulation Partnership) Prize for Best Food Safety Project
Criteria	Awarded to the student with the most outstanding food safety project in Practicum 1 (NATS3055).
Recipient	Gilbert Luong
Prize	NSW Food Authority (Food Regulation Partnership) Prize for Food Safety
Criteria	Awarded to the most outstanding student in the unit NATS3020 Food Microbiology and Safety.
Recipient	Gina Herrmann
Prize	NSW Food Authority Food Regulation Partnership Prize
Criteria	Awarded to the most outstanding graduate in the Bachelor of Science (Environmental Health).
Recipient	Courtney Thomas

NSW Police Force Award for Forensic Science



Donor	<p>NSW Police Force</p> <p>The NSW Police Force, through its Forensic Evidence and Technical Services Command, uses forensic science and technology within a law enforcement environment. Their highlytrained and skilled investigators and technicians provide important support to criminal investigators, the community and the justice system through the examination and analysis of crime scenes and exhibits, and presenting this information to the court.</p> <p>The NSW Police Force is proud to present this prize to the most outstanding graduating student with a major in Crime Scene Investigation to recognise the importance of forensic work undertaken every day by dedicated men and women of the NSW Police Force to make our community a safer place.</p> <p>police.nsw.gov.au</p>
Prize	<p>NSW Police Force Award for Forensic Science</p>
Criteria	<p>Awarded to the most outstanding graduating student with a Major in Forensic Science.</p>
Recipient	<p>Chloe Bromage</p>

NSW-ACT Branch of the Australian Society for Microbiology Undergraduate Student Prize



Donor	<p>The Australian Society for Microbiology NSW-ACT</p> <p>The NSW-ACT branch of the Australian Society for Microbiology is actively involved in promoting all fields of microbiology through various means, such as organising and supporting regular meetings which provide a venue for a variety of presentations by local, national and international speakers. The branch also supports many awards, publishes a quarterly newsletter 'Syntrophy' and promotes microbiology at schools, TAFEs and universities.</p> <p>asm-nswact.org.au</p>
Prize	<p>NSW-ACT Branch of the Australian Society for Microbiology Undergraduate Student Prize</p>
Criteria	<p>Awarded to the most outstanding final year student of an undergraduate degree program in Microbiology.</p>
Recipient	<p>Samuel Baillie</p>

Peter Donnelly Memorial Prize in Food Sciences

Donor	<p>Peter Donnelly Memorial</p> <p>Peter Donnelly joined the Western Sydney University Hawkesbury Food Technology Department as a laboratory attendant in 1980. He completed the Food Technology Certificate in 1981 followed by the Bachelor of Applied Science (Food Technology), graduating with Distinction in 1991. Mr Donnelly worked as a tutor while researching his honours thesis, in which he demonstrated that a spent medium from the manufacture of cheese starter could extend the shelf life and enhance the acceptability of smallgoods. Mr Donnelly graduated with first class honours and shared the Charles and Allison Scott Memorial Prize for Environmental Protection. In 1993, after receiving a CSIRO Post- Graduate Studentship, he began his PhD on a Western Sydney University Hawkesbury- CSIRO project 'Meat Quality and Flavour'. Mr Donnelly sadly passed away on 24 September 1993 at the age of 32. He left a deep and lasting impact on those who had the privilege to know him. He was a well-rounded person and, as a teacher, he established a strong rapport with students. He was a caring, humble person with a cheeky sense of humour who believed obstacles were merely things to overcome. He was anxious to see each person achieve his or her potential.</p>
Prize	<p>Peter Donnelly Memorial Prize in Food Sciences</p>
Criteria	<p>Awarded to the most improved graduating student from the nutrition and food science undergraduate degree program.</p>
Recipient	<p>Dur e adan</p>

PG Gilder Memorial Awards



Donor	<p>UWS Hawkesbury Foundation – PG Gilder Memorial</p> <p>The PG Gilder prizes honour the life and work of Percy George Gilder (PG). Originally from England, PG was himself a scholarship winner. He gained a classical education and then worked in London until 1899, when he came to Australia to attend Hawkesbury Agricultural College. It was at Hawkesbury that he became known as PG. He excelled academically as Dux of the college in 1901 (the year in which he wrote the college song) and as a gold medallist on the college’s first merit board. In 1904, PG became a resident officer at the college and later the college’s English master. PG participated in many college activities and held the role of secretary of the Old Boy’s Union from 1910-1913. PG remained a member of the Union (now Hawkesbury Alumni Chapter) for the rest of his life. PG left the college in April 1913, when he moved to Sydney to join the Department of Agriculture as editor of The Agricultural Gazette.</p>
Prize	<p>PG Gilder Award 1</p>
Criteria	<p>Awarded to a year 2, Hawkesbury campus undergraduate student enrolled in an Agriculture, Horticulture or Environmental degree who has demonstrated the most significant improvement in GPA between years.</p>
Recipient	<p>Lacey Lowe</p>
Prize	<p>PG Gilder Award 2</p>
Criteria	<p>Awarded to a year 3, Hawkesbury campus undergraduate student enrolled in an Agriculture, Horticulture or Environmental degree who has demonstrated the most significant improvement in GPA between years.</p>
Recipient	<p>Helen Campbell</p>

Zacharias N. Chrisostomou Memorial Prize in Medical Science



Donor

Ms Despina Chrisostomou

Zacharias Nicolou Chrisostomou was born in rural Cyprus in 1929. The son of a poor family, he was pulled out of school at age 8 and spent the rest of his childhood working the farm and tending to the animals. At age 18, Zac migrated to Australia and, after trying his hand at various jobs across the country, he finally settled in Sydney to raise his family. Zac was a passionate believer in the role of education in raising one’s quality of life, and so he encouraged his children to pursue the education that was denied to him. It was with immense pride that he witnessed his youngest daughter Despina graduate in 2001 with a Bachelor of Science degree, and again in 2012 with a Master of Business (Marketing) degree, both earned at Western Sydney University.

Throughout his life, Zac was beset with medical problems including diabetes and coronary heart disease, and he passed away in 2014. Zac deeply appreciated the care he received from the healthcare professionals at Westmead Hospital, and so Despina dedicates this prize to excellence in medical science scholarship in the Western Sydney region.

Prize

Zacharias N. Chrisostomou Memorial Prize in Medical Science

Criteria

Awarded to the highest performing student in Year 2 of Medical Science.

Recipient

Madiha Karimi



GIVING TO WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

Western Sydney University changes lives and shapes the social, economic, environmental and educational development of the region in which we live, and the world.

You are part of this journey.

The gift of knowledge empowers our students to embrace opportunity, growth and change. Your support of Western Sydney University students through awards, scholarships and research encourages them to strive for excellence and reach their potential.

For information on how you can support Western Sydney University and our students, please contact the Office of Advancement.

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