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Cartoon (by JayBee)

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For further information about Monitor Online contact John Martin, Monitor Editor, on: monitor@Canberra.edu.au
Audit positive, but concerns raised

By Louise Rugendyke

The Australian Universities Quality Assurance auditors have handed in their report card on the University of Canberra and the results are mostly positive.

UC was rewarded with 11 commendations – focusing on the university’s delivery of a professional education, a supportive learning environment, its positive engagement with the local and regional community and early research.

Vice-Chancellor Roger Dean said AUQA’s findings were a firm endorsement of the university’s strategic planning and focus.

“The panel has clearly noted UC’s professional education mission, its support for its students and staff and its community outreach,” he said.

“I am also very pleased the AUQA has commended UC on the adoption a ‘comprehensive and cohesive Quality Assurance Framework’,” Prof Dean also added.

AUQA’s recognition of UC’s focus and direction provides the grounds for great confidence in the university’s ability to meet the challenges of future changes and developments in the higher education sector.”

Conducted in March, the audit was part of an Australia-wide examination of the nation’s universities and explored the university’s self-monitoring and self-improvement strategies.

Approximately 300 staff and students, as well as Council members and community representatives, were interviewed over three days as the auditors dissected UC’s performance in teaching and learning, research, student services, human resource management and information management.

Four courses were also examined in detail: Electrical Engineering and Telecommunications, the Bachelor of Nursing, the joint Bachelor of Early Childhood Studies with CIT and the Master of Internet Communication.

Several areas of the university featured prominently in the commendations: the Centre for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Scholarship (CELTS), student services, the Academic Skills Program and the Ngunnawal Centre.

CELTS received high praise for its “support of academic development, research supervision, innovative teaching and learning, using flexible learning, the use of WebCT for online development and for its induction programs for newly appointed academic staff”.

The audit panel noted they “obtained consistent and convincing evidence that … CELTS is contributing significantly to the quality of the education provided by the university.”

The academic skills program, which provides academic support and learning resources for all students, was commended for the “consistently high regard in which its services are held by students.”

Similarly, the Ngunnawal Centre was commended for the “specialist support available to the university’s Indigenous students and their community.”

However, UC was also the subject of several recommendations.

The university’s Brisbane campus, International Office, library and the part-time nature of the Dean of Students position were among the 22 areas singled out in the recommendations.

Concerns were raised over the “policy tension” that UCBC creates within the UC’s mission statement of providing higher education within ACT and the region.

It was recommended the International Office “consult more closely with existing and new international students to enhance the responsiveness of its services to meet the expressed needs of students.”

Although prior to the audit UC had already identified the library as a “priority area for improving service,” the audit panel “strongly endorsed these self-review findings”.

The panel noted further that, “consideration needs to be given to the adequacy of the match of the collection to the courses taught and to access issues associated with increased downloading by students.”

During their visit the panel found the Dean of Students position was only part-time, as opposed to its full-time description in the university’s performance portfolio.

While the panel found the current Dean of Students was “making a very valuable contribution to student welfare,” the lack of awareness among students about the Dean’s role was due to its part-time nature.

Therefore, it was recommended by the panel that UC consider restoring the position to a full-time role.

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

Problems & Technical Issues?

Content & Data Custodian

Last Updated on August 26, 2003
Breathing life into ashes

By Louise Rugendyke

A project designed to make Graphic Design students think about what Canberra’s January fires meant to them has been recognised with a place in ArtSci in the City, which forms part of the Australian Science Festival.

The collection of 80 Burn Out posters will be displayed in Civic’s Canberra Centre from August 12 – 24.

It follows a successful two-week showing in the University of Canberra’s design space in Building Seven and displays at Weston Creek’s Community Centre and in the foyer of the Canberra Theatre.

Negotiations are also underway for a possible showing at the ACT Legislative Assembly.

Associate lecturer Anita Fitton said the success of the project was “more than I could have hoped for.”

Ms Fitton gave the student’s a brief for the project in week one of Semester One, while the event was “still fresh in their minds.”

The brief asked the students to produce a “stunning yet poignant image of this disaster.”

“Your response could range from trauma to indifference. I do not want you to produce clichés; I want you to push your concept, simplify your concept and engage your audience,” the brief stated.

Ms Fitton described the project as a “bit of a risk”, but she said she wanted to throw the students “in the deep end”.

“I wanted to shock them out of their complacency … and because [the fires] affected everyone differently.”

The results ranged from the intensely personal to tongue-in-cheek and indifference.

Images of burnt streetscapes and smoking ruins were juxtaposed with mock ads for Nokia mobile phone car chargers (for when an emergency strikes), burnt t-shirts bearing the slogan ‘I went to Canberra and all I got was this t-shirt’ and another lamenting the lost knives and forks.

Ms Fitton said she very impressed with the final results.

“It was a really exciting thing for them to do – the pride in the projects was quite apparent,” she said.

“It has been really exciting and a wonderful boost to the students’ self-confidence.”

Ms Fitton said the students were also really encouraged by the positive response they have received from the public.

“It’s been bigger than we ever expected,” she said.

“I never believed we would end up on WIN news or travelling with the science festival.

“We’ve had an amazing response from the public and everyone has been so positive – it’s more than we could have asked for.”
The University of Canberra was recently successful in securing three research grants in the Australian Research Council’s second round of Linkage Project grants.

Two grants of $360,000 and $188,000 were awarded to the National Centre of Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM) and the other, worth $290,000, to the Corporate Governance Project, which involves a collaboration of three centres.

The first of the NATSEM projects, Regional Dimensions: New Models for Analysis of the Spatial Effects of Policy, Socio-Demographic and Economic Changes, will provide state and territory governments with detailed synthetic socio-economic data down to the street block level.

According to NATSEM Director Professor Ann Harding, it is “a very exciting new project”.

“In the future, governments will be able to use this data for needs based planning, for example, where to put services for children at risk, older people, or where to build schools,” she said.

The research will also improve the ability of government departments to assess the current and future impact of possible policy reforms and likely social, demographic and economic changes at a detailed regional level.

The second NATSEM project, Care Needs, Costs and the Capacity for Self-Provision: Detailed Regional Projections for Older Australians to 2020, will build a model that estimates the income, assets and the cost of care of older Australians at detailed regional level and up until 2020.

“The aging of the population is a really big issue,” Prof Harding said.

“This project will help to forecast how many older Australians there are and where they’ll live, which is essential information for government.”

She said NATSEM’s success was primarily because both projects “are concerned with really important public policy issues”.

“Governments are always grappling with where to put scarce resources,” she said, “and both of these projects involve developing highly sophisticated decision-support tools.”

Without ARC funding neither project would have gone ahead, and Prof Harding said she was extremely excited by the centre’s success.

“I danced around the room when I found out!” she said.

Professors Bryan Horrigan and John Halligan, two of the four chief investigators for the Corporate Governance project, were also very pleased to receive funding.

“We were really excited,” said Prof Halligan.

“We knew the project was a good one. The quality of the research partners is very high. We had all put a lot of work into it and had a feeling it was both timely and worthwhile.”

The aim of the project, Corporate Governance in the Public Sector: An Evaluation of its Tensions, Gaps and Potential, is to enhance corporate governance in Commonwealth public sector bodies, leading to better management of public resources and more effective public administration.

It will analyse corporate governance’s impact on public administration and develop an integrated cross-government framework for corporate governance and customised guidance according to organisational type.

According to Prof Horrigan, the project’s main focus on corporate governance draws on lessons and differences across the public and private sectors.

“Corporate governance of organisations is very topical in the public and private sectors both domestically and internationally,” he said.

“This is particularly due to recent corporate collapses in the private sector such as Enron, HIH and OneTel, the introduction of new corporate governance principles and guidelines, and the recent Uhrig review of corporate governance in key federal public sector bodies.”

Prof Horrigan stressed that the most important part of this project was that it involved an inter-disciplinary collaboration between key governmental and industry partners and three UC centres: the National Institute for Governance, the Centre for Research in Public Sector Management, and the National Centre for Corporate Law and Policy Research.

The other chief investigators are Professor Meredith Edwards, whose work as head of the National Institute for Governance will provide a strong basis for the current project, and Geoff Nicoll.

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Ruge ndyke, Monitor Editor, on lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

Monitor Online - ARC grants awarded to UC students

By Kate Andean

Corporate Governance chief investigators Bryan Horrigan & John Halligan.
Famous paintings donated to UC library

By EJ Sewell

The University of Canberra Library feels more like a gallery than a house of books. 

Hanging from the white brick walls are newly acquired paintings, each rich with the taste of Australian art icon, Andrew Sibley.

UC Art Curator Johanna Owens heralded Sibley’s donation of five of his paintings as “generous”, but said she felt “a bit greedy”.

“I was speaking with him and I asked would he consider donating the paintings on the Cultural Gifts Program,” she said.

“He invited me to go to Melbourne to make a selection from his personal collection.”

She chose five paintings; each, which she said, held great importance in its own genre.

The centrepiece of the collection, The Australia Pieta, was formerly on loan to St Peter and Paul’s parish, South Melbourne. It is an oil on canvas piece and stands 196 cms tall.

Ms Owens said it is an important painting because it is a comment on social values prevailing in Australia about black deaths in custody during the late 20th century.

“It’s a message that many of us would prefer not to acknowledge,” she said.

“I think in a way it’s part of our dark side.”

Ms Owens said the university, as a public institution of learning and inquiry, is an appropriate place to house such a thought provoking, large work of art.

“We now have work spanning 30 years,” she said, “It’s good to have the opportunity to see his work over a period.”

Born in Kent, England, in 1933, Sibley migrated to Australia in 1948 and held his first solo exhibition in Brisbane in 1960.

He has been a lecturer at RMIT and was announced Head of Painting, within the Faculty of Arts and Design at Monash University’s Caulfield campus in 1997.

Ms Owens said he is definitely not a “mainstream” artist and his work simply states: “This is how it is, now it’s over to you”.

“He’s just followed his own essential being,” Ms Owens said. He is best known for his paintings of non-idyllic people and is said to be the ‘champion of the ordinary citizen’.

“I’ve never painted ‘heroes’ of the classical kind,” Sibley said in an article in a 1990 article in Melbourne’s Age.

“I’ve always dealt with people off the street. There are no rewards, sunsets, no easy-escape mechanisms in my paintings.”

Sibley’s work, Walls (and Beyond), was on display at the Solander Gallery in Canberra earlier this month.

Ms Owens said Sibley’s donation has helped the relatively “small but growing” collection of art held at UC.

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

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Problems & Technical Issues?
Content & Data Custodian

Last Updated on August 26, 2003
Elaine relishes the Australian way

By EJ Sewell

A bikini clad Elaine Ee Ai Ling steps out onto the beach.

Feeling self-conscious, she casts her eyes along the sand. She smiles as she sees a slightly larger lady running towards the water, proudly clad in a colourful swimsuit.

Elaine is an international student from Malaysia; she has never worn a bikini.

She now studies Public Relations at the University of Canberra, and is slowly coming to grips with Australia’s laidback culture, and the fact that a bikini is the norm.

Elaine is from the small town of Sihawan, 20 minutes from the sea. A town so small her mother knew she had ridden a scooter only two minutes down the road from a friend’s house to her school (with no licence) the moment she stepped foot into her home that afternoon.

“I know to be very well behaved in my town,” Elaine laughs.

Her father was a naval officer so Elaine moved with her family to where he was posted to places including Germany and Singapore and finally settling in Sihawan.

Before her birth her family were living in Singapore, but her mother was rushed over the border for her delivery.

“Mum was rushed over the border to give birth to me and then we returned to Singapore,” Elaine says without a stir, “it’s cheaper to give birth in a local hospital,” she explains.

So her life began in a very different manner to an Australian, but her childhood games were much the same.

She mixed with local kids and instead of fancy toys (her mother didn’t like “expensive toys”) she played batu seremban, or seven stones, much like knuckles, but with a soft touch.

“We get our mums to sew small pillows of rice so it’s nice and soft,” she smiles.

Elaine moved to Malaysia’s capital Kuala Lumpur to study a diploma in mass communication, majoring in PR, at the end of high school.

“I went alone,” Elaine says, surprised by her strength. She says because her parents were originally from Kuala Lumpur, and it was expected that she would venture to the city to study.

“People thought I would be really wild and go out every night!”

She is currently living with an Australian family, but for Semester Two, Elaine is moving on to Ressies.

“I’ve experienced living in a home, now I’m experiencing living on ressies,” she says with excitement.

“I like the life here in a sense, I like going for a walk, I like the scenery here. It’s not so crowded and the people are not rushing around.

“I mean, you have kangaroos at uni!”

The kangaroos have been an exciting highlight.

“My first week I was going between buildings and kangaroos were right beside me and I was like ‘Oh my God, what are these Kangaroos?’,” she giggles.

Elaine has studied English since she was in kindergarten, so the language barrier is nearly non-existent, with only a few small hitches.

“I only have problems understanding people who speak too fast,” she says

“This guy was telling me his car was so feral and I’m like what on earth is feral?

“No, I’m like, ‘But the dictionary says it’s a wild animal,’ and he was talking about his car!”

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Problems & Technical Issues?

Content & Data Custodian

Last Updated on August 26, 2003
A belief in truth, justice & the ethical way

By Kate Andean

When ACT Supreme Court Judge Ken Crispin was a child he wanted to be a pilot.

"But I'm an asthmatic and hopeless at heights, so it was a bad choice of career," the 57-year-old laughs.

When he grew up, he chose law. "I thought, 'I could do that'!"

The Justice studied law by correspondence while living in the country, which he says he found extremely challenging.

"I was about the time of mobile telephone and yelling at policemen," Justice Crispin said.

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Cartoon (by JayBee)

Cartoon copyright Jaybee 2003.

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

Problems & Technical Issues?
Content & Data Custodian

Last Updated on August 26, 2003
Wild about waterbird wetlands

By Louise Rugendyke

A “major holiday resort for waterbirds” is the focus of a new $1.6 million project headed by two University of Canberra academics. Associate Professor Martin Thoms of UC’s CRC for Freshwater Ecology is joint leader of a study into the Narran Lakes on the Lower Balonne Floodplain.

The project, in conjunction with Monash University, the Murray-Darling Freshwater Research Centre laboratory at Goondiwindi and funded by the Murray-Darling Basin Commission, aims to discover “what makes the wetland tick.”

Situated near the Queensland – New South Wales border, the wetlands share the Narran River’s flow with the region’s pastoralists, farmers, indigenous communities and towns. Water is drawn regularly from the river for irrigation needs, while the towns of Toowoomba, Dalby and St George rely on its flows. The nearby wetlands, home to 34 different species including frogs, mammals, invertebrates, and up to 500,000 breeding pairs of waterbirds, also relies heavily on the river’s flow.

A/Prof Thoms describes the wetlands as “a major holiday resort for [native] waterbirds,” and “an international holiday resort for migratory water birds,” with breeds from Siberia, Japan and China regularly flocking south for the winter.

“It’s a major hotspot,” he said. “And we want to find out why. Why is it so important?”

He said it was important to determine how much water could be drawn out of the river for irrigation before it started to affect the way the lakes function.

“Pulling water out of a river that supplies wetlands can create a real conflict,” he said. “The question is how much water does [the wetland] need?”

Joining A/Prof Thoms in the project is UC’s A/Prof Ralph Ogden, who is coordinating the knowledge exchange component of the project. He aims to combine the team’s research results with the knowledge of the local residents to create a whole picture of how the wetlands operate.

“The challenge for us is to combine the research results with the knowledge of local people to improve the overall outcome,” A/Prof Ogden said.

“The team aims to work closely with the area’s pastoral, agricultural, urban and indigenous communities.” The study is the largest environmental project funded by the Murray Darling Darling Basin Commission.

“The overall project has a total budget of $4 million,” A/Prof Thoms said. “Some of my colleagues in Australia and overseas said, ‘How the hell did you get that?’” “It’s a big project.”

A/Prof Thoms was also recently awarded another grant to study another closely related project – the bio-diversity of flood plains. The $400,000 project, funded by Land and Water Australia, will focus on the floodplains of the McIntyre River, which is also situated on the Qld-NSW border.

By using remote sensing equipment and geographic information systems, he aims to identify which areas of the floodplain need management priority or conservation status.

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

Problems & Technical Issues?
Content & Data Custodian

Last Updated on August 26, 2003
Passionate nursing student awarded Fellowship

By Kate Andean

University of Canberra nursing masters student Jo Gibson will be heading overseas next year after being awarded a Churchill Fellowship for palliative care education and nursing practice development.

The Fellowship is awarded by The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and provides financial support to “ordinary Australians from all walks of life to undertake a period of overseas study”.

Ms Gibson is one of five Fellows from the ACT this year.

Senior nursing lecturer Laurie Grealish said the award was well deserved.

“The Churchill Fellowship is about making a contribution to the community,” she said. “[Jo] is a leader.”

Ms Gibson said she was “really excited” to win a Fellowship, but was humble about her achievement.

“I wanted to study a course in America and visit practice development units in England and Northern Ireland, which is one of the criteria” she said.

“And I’m really passionate about what I do.”

Ms Gibson said she was looking forward to the experience of travelling and studying overseas.

“To actually go and do a course at Harvard Medical School will provide enormous networking opportunities, and the same with the travel to the UK,” she said.

“When I go into further postgraduate study, or even in the work I do now, I will already have contacts.”

She will travel in April next year after she completes her masters degree, and will have all of her travel expenses and her course fees in the US covered.

Ms Grealish said overseas study would enable Ms Gibson to conduct further research into the practice development model of education, which looks at “how people learn to get better”, and ultimately help her patients.

“She will bring back ideas and information from the hospices she visits,” Ms Grealish, “and make sure Canberrans who are dying receive cutting edge care.”

“This will really put her in place as a leader in the ACT nursing community, as well as the palliative care community.”

Ms Gibson has been a nurse for 16 years and her area of interest, palliative care, involves looking after people who have a terminal illness with no cure, and their family.

She said it is an area she sees as extremely important and rewarding.

“It’s an opportunity to work with the whole person, which is something I really believe in,” she said. “Patient and family led care is something that appeals to me.”

“It is an area of great privilege. The people we care for teach us just as much as we teach them, about what it is to be human.”

Ms Gibson encouraged all other students to apply for a Fellowship.

“It provides an opportunity to develop your own leadership skills and broaden your horizons,” she said. “And it’s a great chance to travel and for self-development.”

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

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Problems & Technical Issues?

Content & Data Custodian

Last Updated on August 26, 2003
Golden performance at Uni Games

By EJ Sewell

The University of Canberra men’s touch team are still smiling after their gold medal winning performance at this year’s Eastern University Games held in Coffs Harbour earlier this month.

After finishing third last year and second in 2001, team member Gavin Dovey said the feeling of winning was “hard to explain.”

“We’ve lost a few important games in the past,” he said.

“But we got the monkey off our backs. It was pretty special.”

“We put a lot of hard work into the win.”

The 5-4 victory over the University of Newcastle gave the team entry into the Australian University Games to be held in Newcastle later this year.

Mr Dovey said expectations were high for this next challenge.

“The competition is a lot harder,” he said.

“We’ve been second and third in the past few years.

“If we finish anything less than that the boys will be pretty disappointed.”

However he is quietly confident about the possibility of a positive result.

“We could definitely win at AUGs,” he said, a feat which would crown the UC men’s touch team the best university touch team in Australia.

And Mr Dovey believed if that were to happen, it would be greatly deserved.

“We take it pretty seriously,” he insisted, “we’re out till five in the morning and then up to play at nine!”

Health and Sports Coordinator of the UC Union recreation centre, John Stelzer, said he was pleased with UC’s performance, and was especially happy for the men’s touch team.

“They have always been the bridesmaid and they finally cracked it,” he said.

Following the men’s lead, the women’s touch team came a gallant second, while the women’s volleyball, men’s basketball and the mix netball teams all claimed third prize.

Mr Stelzer said the UC team were very well received in Coffs Harbour and the students didn’t get up to too much mischief.

“I was ecstatic with the behaviour of the students,” he said.

“I give credit to all the team’s managers, they make life a lot easier.”

Mr Stelzer said UC will be sending up to 120 people to Newcastle for the AUGs.

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

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Problems & Technical Issues?

Content & Data Custodian

Last Updated on August 26, 2003
700 guests, a trumpet fanfare & maybe a baby

By Kate Andean & EJ Sewell

The crew organizing the mid-year University of Canberra graduation ceremony, to be held on July 31, are ready for anything.

"We have contingency plans for people turning up on the day without telling us first," said Project Manager for Graduation Christine Wittich.

"Their textama is there and we can just slip it in."

They're even prepared for a student who is due to give birth on the day.

"She rang us up and said she would graduate in December, but we told her not to worry," Ms Wittich said.

"We are very accommodating," said Graduation Officer Serena Chong.

Wendy Ward, the other Graduation Officer, admits that’s all just part of the job.

"We do as much as we possibly can to get students through," she said.

UC has held mid-year graduations since 1997.

"The university prides itself on having two graduations a year," said Ms Wittich. "People don’t have to wait six months to graduate. It’s often only a few weeks after they finish."

But that means double the work.

With 60 per cent of graduating students expected to attend one of three ceremonies on the day, over 700 people may need to be accommodated at one time.

Preparation is an ongoing process that starts months before the big day, at the conclusion of the December graduation.

"When one [ceremony] is over we automatically start preparing for the next one bit by bit," said Ms Chong.

"Paperwork goes out to the divisions and the academics have to check that students are eligible to graduate pending exam results," Ms Ward said.

"We get the word they’ve passed and we kick into action."

Ms Wittich admitted this tight timetable was their biggest hurdle.

"There’s a lot we can’t do until after exams," she said, "so we have to fit a lot into a short time."

The team see graduation as something that unifies the whole university.

"It involves people right across the university, the divisions and their administrative staff, the union and convocation," said Ms Wittich. "We sort of bring it all together, but a lot of people help."

Music is another key element of graduation that needs to be perfect on the day.

Director of the UC music society, David Tattersall, is organizing the instrumentalists for the ceremony and said music adds to the occasion.

"It’s part of the ambience of the whole thing," he said, "it’s important in that sense."

But Mr Tattersall admitted that it would be best if the musicians played second fiddle to the graduates.

"The focus is on the people who are graduating," he said.

"I want it to go right so no one notices. That’s the critical feature, that’s priority number one."

The musical program for the ceremony includes an opening trumpet fanfare composed by Vice-Chancellor Roger Dean, who Mr Tattersall said, is "a well known musician."

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor. on lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au.
Distance makes the heart grow fonder

By Kate Andean

It took George Papadogiannis an exchange to help for the 24-year-old to truly value his home country.

"It made me appreciate when I came from, and made me want to come back and see more of Australia," he said.

And the Industrial Design student says he was forced to endure a lot of stereotypes during his trip.

"Everyone thinks all Australians are surfers," he laughed. "And we don't hear cold weather, we all live on the beach and play with water." He said.

I met a lot of people from Italy, but everyone loved Australia and Australians.

After working a couple of jobs to save up enough money, George attended the Istituto Europeo di Design in Italy, for one semester from September 2002.

He saw going on exchange as more than just an opportunity to add value to his degree.

"I wanted to broaden my horizons in terms of life skills and what I was studying," he said. "And I wanted to see different things, do a bit of traveling and experience culture."

He chose to leave the language barrier and travel to Italy because of the country's reputation in the design world.

"It is seen as a Mecca for design and what I'm studying," he said.

George found the exchange to be beneficial to his degree as he was able to take subjects not offered at UC, which gave him a different perspective on what he was studying.

"I studied transportation design over there and I've always wanted to get into that," he said.

The school he attended was small, and didn't have the facilities of UC such as the bar or the refectory.

"It was strange because it was a much cleaner environment," he said. "Everyone knew everyone, pretty much."

And George admits that language did pose a few problems.

"The language thing—that's not a bit daunting," he laughed.

He listened to tapes before he left Australia and spent two weeks learning Italian in Florence, but then he was thrown in the deep end.

"I had a friend introducing the classes for the first month or two," he said. "And I was fortunate that at the school a couple of teachers spoke English, which helped me a lot."

By the end of the semester, George shared a flat with another student from UC in the Northern city of Turin, and saw a great deal of Italy over the semester, including Rome, Venice, Florence and Sienna.

But he has no hesitation in choosing his favourite memory from the trip.

"The thing that made it was the people, the friends I made," he said.

George found the exchange to be beneficial to his degree as he was able to take subjects not offered at UC, which gave him a different perspective on what he is studying.

"The language thing—although not the greatest because I met a lot of people who spoke English, but I could understand most things," he said.

By the end of the semester, George had finished exchange at UC.

He chose to brave the language barrier and travel to Italy because of the country's reputation in the design world.

"I wanted to broaden my horizons in terms of life skills and what I am studying," he said.

George saw a flat with another student from UC in the Northern city of Turin, and saw a great deal of Italy over the semester, including Rome, Venice, Florence and Sienna.

Although he said he missed the coffee, he also missed the people.

"I miss the people," he said. "The friends I made there, the people I met.

"And I miss the coffee—definitely the coffee," he laughed.

George says he came back from his exchange with a different perspective, and encourages others to do the same.

"I think I have changed a fair bit," he said. "I'm much more open to things—when you go on exchange, you're on your own, you rely on yourself. If you want something you have to go out and get it yourself."

An exchange is a great way to challenge yourself, to meet people, to experience things personally and academically, and to see places, he said.

And you may be lucky enough to find love too.
Cartoon (by JayBee)

The Drum

This is not what I had in mind when I said I was going to settle down with my lap top!

Cartoon copyright Jaybee 2003.
Get Real!

By Louise Rugendyke

Stories about drag queens, moonfish and Princess Penelope and her best friend Percy’s shoe obsession could be the next big thing in children’s picture-books if some of the University of Canberra’s students have their way.

UC’s third year Creative Writing and Graphic Design students have again collaborated for the fifth annual Get Real! Project in writing and illustrating children’s picture books.

The students were partnered off several months ago and had to create a children’s picture book of a publishable standard and ready for display in Building Seven’s Design Space.

“It stretches them beyond what they think they can do and they fully embrace it as a real job,” said Graphic Design lecturer Julie Bradley.

She described the standard of the student’s work each year as “always terrific … they always outdo themselves.”

Creative Writing lecturer Belle Alderman said the project was “professionalism at its best,” as it gave students the experience of “working to tight deadlines and producing a high-level of quality work.”

From a creative writing point of view, Professor Alderman said the students also had to really think about leaving “gaps” in their writing – gaps that could be filled with pictures.

Another challenge for the students was to subject their work to the scrutiny of a publisher, Mark Macleod of Hodder Headline Australia.

A specialist children’s publisher, Mr Macleod returned again this year to judge the projects.

Since it’s launch in 1999, Get Real! has achieved commercial success with the publication last year of Ringle Tingle Tiger, which was written by Mark Austin and illustrated by David Miller.

Mark wrote the tiger tale while he was studying ‘Writing for Young People’ at UC in 2000.

The book was first exhibited at the Get Real! competition and was published by Lothian Books in May 2002.

This year’s winners were judged on August 6, and they are…

Winners:
Best Image Maker (illustrator): Claire Verrell, ‘Moonfish’ (sponsored by the UC Co-op Bookshop).
Best Visual Text (writer): Sue Butler, ‘Kids Like Me’ (sponsored by the UC Co-op Bookshop).
Best Collaborative Work: ‘Surprising Rhyming’, writer Peter Allen, illustrator Rebecca Kenny (sponsored by the UC Co-op Bookshop).
Writer’s Encouragement Award: Tegan Mattila, ‘Babysitters are for Babies’ (sponsored by the ACT Writer’s Centre).
Image Maker Encouragement Award: John McGregor, ‘Imagine If’ (sponsored by the Children’s Book Council of Australia, ACT branch).

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Issues & Technical Issues?
Content & Data Custodian

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"Moonfish" by Sarah Hart and Claire Verrell.

"Imagine If" by Liza Flanagan and John McGregor.
Dig deep for students in need

By Louise Rugendyke

A challenge has been thrown out to the University of Canberra community to help fund UC scholarships.

UC Dean of Students Dr Leah Moore has urged staff, student groups, community organisations and alumni to contribute to UC’s Access Equity Scholarships to help make “life a great deal easier for more of our students.”

Dr Moore has even put her money where her mouth is and funded the Dr Leah Moore and UC Scholarship for Women in Non-Traditional Areas of Study.

And now she is challenging others to join her.

“Apart from the warm inner glow that comes from such a gesture, there is also the pleasure derived from knowing the university is obliged to match your funding under the Partnership Program,” Dr Moore said.

“This is a neat way of doubling funding for the Access Equity Scholarships.”

Dr Moore said it wasn’t until she became Dean of Students that she realised how much demand there was for the scholarships.

“One of the most pleasant duties I had to discharge this year was helping to award the UC Access Equity Scholarships to approximately 65 UC students,” she said.

“However, in the process of administering these scholarships it was sobering to note the demand exceeded the pot of funding presently available.”

Dr Moore urged the UC community to follow in the footsteps of the Smith Family and Tumut Shire Council, who have both raised money for Access Equity Scholarships, and contribute to the scholarship fund.

“I believe there may be other staff, student groups, families, community organisations or UC alumni that could contribute as little as $1500 - $500 a year for three years – and make life a great deal easier for more of our students in the process,” she said.

UC Vice-Chancellor Roger Dean has also joined in, by funding a similar scholarship to Dr Moore.

“I challenge you to scrape a little off your consultancy accounts, redirect the Christmas Club funds, borrow a little from the ‘holiday in the Bahamas’ stash and contribute to an Access Equity Scholarship today,” Dr Moore said.

Those interested in donating to the scholarship fund should contact Kay Hyland at the UC Scholarships and Prizes Office on 6201 2612.

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lrr@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

Problems & Technical Issues?

Content & Data Custodian

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Jenny Webb finally wears the gown

By Kate Andean

For Jenny Webb, it was a "wonderful feeling" to finally graduate from her community education (health promotion) degree, after she began studying over a quarter of a century ago.

Jenny, whose student number is 75, enrolled in primary teaching at the Canberra College of Advanced Education in 1975 while pregnant and working.

Although she only did one art subject a semester, she admits it was hard work, especially the practical elements.

"By the end I was so pregnant everyone had to help me pull the squeegees across the screen printing board," she laughs.

After the birth of her first child, Jenny came back to uni, while still breastfeeding, but says she couldn’t cope and left early in 1976.

"Education was all free back then," she said, "so you could whip in and out nice and easily."

When her second child was five-years-old, Jenny started an anthropology degree at ANU, but lasted only five lectures before she discovered she was pregnant with twins and succumbed to terrible morning sickness.

She later applied to the University of Canberra to study health promotion when her twins were seven months old.

Jenny completed one subject a semester for two years, before she decided to "go bush" with her four kids.

In 1999 she returned to UC to finish her degree, and says as she was finishing her 250-page final report, graduation was firmly on her mind.

"I just kept seeing myself in this gown!" she laughs.

Jenny’s particular area of interest was helping students from different cultures settle into university life in Australia and do well in their studies.

Her final report, which she hopes will be officially launched soon, looked into this area.

Through her work Jenny says she has "met some of the most wonderful people", and she spent most of graduation day loudly clapping and cheering as some of her "children" received their testamurs.

"I am like their surrogate mother," she said, "so I’m allowed to be embarrassing!"

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Problems & Technical Issues?
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Last Updated on August 26, 2003
Graduation – July 31, 2003

By Elaine Ee Ai Ling

It took two years of overseas travel and work experience in an international law firm for Nicole McCurdy to realise her passion.

The University Medallist, which is awarded to a student with a GPA of 6.0 or higher and who is studying a degree with honours or an honours degree, graduated with First Class Honours in her Bachelor of Laws degree.

Born in Poland and raised in Canberra, Nicole travelled and worked in Europe while deciding on her career path.

Her experience working in an international law firm while overseas ignited an enduring interest in law, which led her back to study at the University of Canberra.

She chose UC because of the practical focus of its law degree and the approachability of the teaching staff.

Nicole’s most memorable experience at UC was of mooting in the Law School’s moot court and watching other students from the viewing gallery.

“It was a great learning experience that forced students to understand the legal issues and provide succinct and logical submissions before the court,” she said.

Nicole is now completing legal workshop in order to be admitted to practice as a solicitor.

She works in the legal services section of a Commonwealth government agency and is interested in attaining excellence in her chosen career.

However, Nicole was not the only University Medal recipient.

Bachelor of Applied Science (First Class Honours) graduate Tara Goodsell was also recognised for her outstanding academic achievement.

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lrd@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

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Monitor Online - Pete's no V8, but he loves the fast lane

Issue 10, Vol 13, July 2003

Pete's no V8, but he loves the fast lane

Sports Media student Peter Wales says if he were a V8 he would "only be running on about three cylinders".

By EJ Sewell

University of Canberra sports media student Peter Wales doesn’t want to be known as "someone’s funny mate".

He wants to love what he does, whether that is journalism, comedy or sport.

And the heart condition that was supposed to cut short his life is now just another laughing matter to a guy who finds the funny side in everything.

He spent only eight weeks in his birth town of Griffith before he was moved to Sydney because he was "pretty sick".

"I was born with a congenital heart defect," he explains. "To be super technical, my main two arteries are around the wrong way and my left ventricle doesn’t work and my right ventricle is enlarged to compensate.

"If I were a V8 I’d only be running on about three cylinders."

Doctors were not very positive about his chance of survival during his first few years.

"I was a child so I don’t really remember it, but mum and dad told me," he says.

"One doctor said to my parents ‘cherish every moment’ because I’m not going to be around very long."

But he has defied the odds and at 27-years-old he has played representative baseball for Country NSW, which he says offered him his only chance of playing competitive sport.

"I can’t do aerobic sport or contact sport but baseball is so specialised," he says. "I was able to go away and make rep teams as a relieving pitcher. You can play an important part of the game and only be on there (the field) for 20 minutes."

As well as baseball, Peter has made a name for himself on the comedy scene winning the 2001 ACT Raw Comedy event.

"I think because my heart is stuffed whoever made me made me funnier than normal," he says.

But he admits to really make it as a comedian it has to be your full-time profession.

"I did a few shows and enjoyed it but it really is dog eat dog," he explains.

"I wasn’t at the stage where I wanted to commit to it, and if you don’t, you’re just going to be fodder."

He is sure he will be able to use his journalism qualifications with his comedic ability in the future.

"Whatever I do I’m sure I can combine humour with the journalism side of things," he says.

He has already made the first step with Queanbeyan community radio as an expert commentator for the ACT Australian Football competition, where he says humour came in very handy during his first broadcast.

"I turned up to have a look and they were a commentator short," he laughs. "They gave me some headphones and said ‘you can do the expert commentary’."

Wherever his skills take him, Peter just wants to enjoy the journey.

"They say do what you love," he smiles. "Can you get paid for sleeping and watching Foxtel?"

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Last Updated on August 26, 2003
Cartoon (by JayBee)

The Drum

Oh look kids! Meals on Wheels!

Cartoon copyright JayBee 2003.

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Problems & Technical Issues?
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Last Updated on August 26, 2003
The true story of the Kelly’s armour

By Louise Rugendyke

It is a popular belief that a bullet from a thousand tales, but what about a suit of armour?

One of the most enigmatic and controversial topics in Australian history is the suit of armour that once belonged to Joe Byrne, a member of Australia’s most famous bushranging gang, the Kelly gang.

University of Canberra Professor Dudley Creagh, a conservation scientist and metals expert, has been investigating the Kelly’s armour for nearly 10 years. His research has been supported by the National Gallery of Australia (NGA) and the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF).

A number of myths or stories have grown up about the armour, and the true story of the Kelly’s armour was not known. Creagh and his team have spent two years examining the armour.

The suit of armour is made of steel, and consists of a helmet, front and back plates, and a large chest plate. The helmet is fastened to the front plate with a Large button, and the back plate is attached with two row of buttons.

It did not cover the arms or legs, was heavy and cumbersome, and the limited vision restricted the free use of firearms and movement. In the end, the armour had proved to be a liability and not a help to the Kelly gang.

In the final stand - the Glenrowan Hotel siege of 1880, Joe Byrne was shot in the neck and died from a shot to the groin. It also gave some confirmation of the manner of Joe Byrne’s death.

Stories of them galloping around on horses [dressed in the armour] and are probably not strictly true. Effectively, [the armour gave them] no mobility and little vision, and fired at it.

Joe Byrne’s helmet.

The study showed that the steel had been reworked at around 700 degrees Celsius, which was consistent with the theory the Armour was made in a forge. Creagh says.

The crudity of execution of the fabrication is convincing evidence that a blacksmith and his forge were not involved.

The Kelly story, technically speaking, is about how they adapted and overcame technical problems in the bush, he says. One of the problems with history written by historians is that little is written about how people adapted and overcame technical problems and put them to practical use.

The idea of using a suit of armour is akin to giving away a working tractor these days. Because even if people were totally supportive of the Kelly Gang, they wouldn’t be handing over a working plough share: it is akin to giving away a working tractor these days.

The crudity of execution of the fabrication is convincing evidence that a blacksmith and his forge were not involved.

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Mark Thompson (left) sprints to the finish line at the 2003 City to Surf.

City to Surf to Athens

By Kate Andean

While over 50,000 other runners were struggling up Heartbreak Hill in this year’s City to Surf, University of Canberra student Mark Thompson was sprinting to the finish line.

After a grueling 14km, the race came down to the last 200m. Mark gained second place, just three seconds behind Tanzanian winner Patrick Nyangaeo, in the closest finish in the race’s history.

“It was the proudest moment in my career,” the 24-year-old said. “I was on an absolute high.

“If I saw my parents, I was like, ‘Mom, Dad, watch this!’

“I was pumped. I was on a high.

“After I calmed down I was a little frustrated that I hadn’t taken it [first place]. But even though I was only second, there’s nothing that beats that in my career.”

The physical education student admitted his muscles were a little weary the next day, something that should comfort those less-experienced runners who hobbled around for a week.

“If you don’t pull up sore after a race, you didn’t put in your best,” he said.

But for Mark there was no time to rest as six days later he defended his National Cross-Country title in Melbourne.

He finished fourth overall, not far behind 40-year-old Steve Monagetti who came out of retirement for the race, and Nyangaeo again.

But the 24-year-old said in terms of atmosphere, nothing beats the City to Surf.

“Apart from major championships you can’t get anything like it in Australia,” he said. “The crowd were going nuts!”

This year was Mark’s second City to Surf. He finished third last year and learnt a lot after he broke away early and wasted energy.

“Last year was really disappointing,” he said. “You have to pace yourself … the race really starts after 25 minutes.”

He says he was confident about his chances before going into the race this year.

“My race tactic this year was to stay in there with the lead bunch and work out when to strike,” he said. “I was confident I could out-sprint the rest … I was gonna back myself.

“But [Patrick Nyangaeo] was better on the day, all credit to him.”

Mark began running as a 12-year-old, but his “first really big commitment” to the sport was moving from Victoria to Canberra with an AIS scholarship.

Although he lost his funding, he says it was “for the better” and he now trains in a strong group, including double Olympian and national 10,000m champion Shaun Creighton.

He admits it is a tough sport.

“You really do have enjoy it … the hard slog of it,” he said. “The moments like the City to Surf are few and far between.

“The thing I do enjoy is the friendships you make … and once or twice a day, not only pushing yourself, but catching up and having a laugh.”

Mark even manages to see a positive side to the early starts.

“Cold winter mornings in Canberra are pretty tough,” he admits. “But there’s nothing like getting up on a –4C morning and watching the sun rise.”

While he added a few hills into training before the City to Surf, Mark says he remained focused on the bigger picture, Olympic selection in the 10,000m this summer.

“There’s no guarantees with making the Olympics,” he said. “But I’ll keep my fingers crossed and put in the hard work.”

And as for returning to the City to Surf, Mark says although it may not be next year, he’ll be back and he’ll get something to prove.

“I’ve come third, I’ve come second,” he said. “I’ve gotta win this thing!”

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Ruggendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

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Problems & Technical Issues?

Content & Data Custodian

Last Updated on August 26, 2003
Fuelling the green dream

By Louise Rugendyke

At first glance you would not think a 1980 yellow Mercedes Benz with a wall-to-wall interior of brown carpet is leading the way in alternative fuel consumption.

Instead of belching thick diesel smoke out of its exhaust pipe, it runs on recycled cooking oil and leaves little smoke or smell in its wake.

The car belongs to third-year Landscape Architecture student Adrian Webster, who has been spreading the biodiesel message far and wide to high school students in Canberra, the South Coast and the Southern Highlands.

"[The students] responded really well," said Adrian. "They seemed to grasp the concept and they kept asking why isn’t [biodiesel] in petrol stations."

A petroleum-diesel alternative, biodiesel could play a major role in reducing the amount of pollution produced by the big diesel guzzling vehicles, like trucks and buses.

It is produced using vegetable oils like canola, palm or cottonseed, and then mixing it with alcohol (ethanol or methanol) and a catalyst like sodium hydroxide or potassium hydroxide.

Biodiesel enthusiasts can easily produce the fuel in their backyard and run their vehicles for as little as 20 to 30 cents a litre.

"It’s better than petro-diesel," said Adrian. "It’s environmentally friendly, it can be made from recycled cooking oil, it’s renewable and it can be grown, produced and sold in Australia so there are good economic benefits to be gained as well."

As well as economic benefits, Adrian believes the fuel could be "quite relevant" when it comes to cleaning up the air in densely populated areas, like inner-city Sydney, as it would reduce the amount of air pollution.

"It’s a good stepping stone to alternative energy sources," he said, adding it tied in well with environmental themes from his Landscape Architecture studies.

"There are lots of benefits – for both city and country."

Europe has already grasped the concept, with petrol stations already selling it at the bowser alongside petro-diesel, super and unleaded.

Adrian became interested in biodiesel after he heard a story about it on radio station Triple J’s Morning Show.

He contacted the Australian Biodiesel Consultancy to see how he could become involved.

One of the first steps was swapping his small, unleaded Hyundai Excel for the diesel-run, behemoth-like Mercedes.

He has been running it on biodiesel, or a biodiesel blend, since July and so far has not encountered any problems.

"I feel pretty confident driving it so far," he said, with an extra fuel filter the only modification needed.

"But what [biodiesel] needs is people backing it, willing to give it a crack."

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

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Last Updated on August 26, 2003
Water Olympics to create a splash in Science Week

By EJ Sewell

Every Olympic games has its highlights and controversies.

Sydney had Cathy Freeman’s 400 metre gold medal performance and let’s not forget Canadian Ben Johnson’s disqualification for doping use after winning the Olympic 100 metre final in 1988.

But the real controversy happened at the inaugural ACT Science Week Water Olympics where Canberra’s water was unplaced.

University of Canberra Associate Professor for resource and environmental sciences Bill Maher was one of three UC judges involved and he firmly believed Canberra’s water was easily as good as the other top waters.

"Canberra should have been in the equal top," he said.

While Melbourne water was granted the gold medal, with Darwin silver and Hobart bronze, it was the un-placed Canberra water that caused a stir.

"The majority [of judges] thought Canberra, Darwin and Melbourne were the best," A/Prof Maher said.

But an additional two judges were called in to make the final decision.

"You couldn’t really tell the difference between the top waters," A/Prof Maher conceded.

"But the organisers needed a result." A/Prof Maher conceded.

Dr Fiona Dyer from UC’s CRC for Freshwater Ecology shared A/Prof Maher’s thoughts.

"There was some dissent at the end," she said, "a number of people had put Canberra’s higher."

But she did agree with the gold medallist.

"Melbourne’s was the best. It had no odour and its taste was clean and refreshing", she said. "Canberra’s had a slight smell of chlorine to it."

The smell of the water was very important to the final judges decision along with appearance, flavour, aftertaste and mouth feel.

Dr Tom Nelson, also from the CRC for Freshwater Ecology, said the feel of the water in the mouth was very important "If it just slipped off your tongue that’s great," he said.

He was also surprised Canberra’s water was not in the top three.

"We thought it was the best," he said.

But while it wasn’t officially judged the best, Canberran’s should feel comfortable that the water they’re drinking is of high quality.

And if you want the ultimate water, Mr Nelson suggests you find a good pair of hiking boots.

"Way up in the mountains away from all the human influences, that’s where you’ll find the best water. Away from humans," he laughed.

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Last Updated on August 26, 2003
Real life forensics is not like in the movies

By Kate Andean

On a sunny Saturday afternoon Professor James Robertson wondered why his audience had "nothing better to do" than hear him solve one a life's little mysteries; CSI: Fact or fiction? "The answer is fiction if you want to leave now!" he laughed.

But an enjoyable time was had by all as the General Manager of Forensic Services at the Australian Federal Police gave an insight into "what forensic science is, and what it isn't." Speaking at the University of Canberra as part of National Science Week, Prof Robertson dispelled many common myths, often created by popular television shows such as CSI: Crime Scene Investigation.

"Most people think forensic science is cutting up bodies," he said. "We sometimes deal with bodies, but we don't do the cutting up."

In reality, he said the forensic scientist's purpose is to establish the elements of a crime, to associate or disassociate defendants from the crime, and to help reconstruct the crime scene. "It's normally about disassociating people [from the crime], so the police can deal more quickly with the real suspects," he said.

But according to Prof Robertson, often the first challenge is determining whether a crime has actually occurred. He told the story of forensic scientists called out by police who believed they had a murder victim. The 'victim' turned out to be a blow up doll. "All forensic science starts off at the crime scene, but the reality is when we turn up we don't know whether a crime has been committed," he said.

Once that has been established, Prof Robertson said the scientists look for "trace products," such as fibre from clothing, body fluids and fingerprints. Although he believes there "is more to forensic science than DNA" he admits it does play a major role.

He said a person's DNA is not as unique as their fingerprint, but as the technology improves, identification is becoming easier. "You don't need to be able to see a stain to get a sample today," he said. "You just need to know where people shed skin cells to get DNA."

"In the future, the CSI vision of getting instant results will be realised, but we're not quite there yet."

"But the best forensic evidence is still fingerprints," he said.

According to Prof Robertson, a major issue for the forensic scientist is being able to present their findings in court in a way that can be understood by the jury. "We have to take what can be quite complex at times and put it into a context of, what does it mean," he said.

"No matter how good the science is that underpins it, at the end of the day it all comes down to whether the jury understands it."

Currently many Australian forensic scientists are working overseas, including in the Solomon Islands, and last year they were responsible for identifying the 88 Australians killed in the Bali terrorist attack. Prof Robertson said the work that was carried out in Bali shows why forensic science is such a popular topic, in Hollywood and the real world. "It is a tremendously exciting profession," he said. "But, at the end of the day, we deal with real life."

"The things we deal with have a real impact on people."

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

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Last Updated on August 26, 2003
Cartoon (by JayBee)

The Drum

Madame! Butt me no butts!

Cartoon copyright Jaybee 2003.
Spun out

By Louise Rugendyke

Andrew Wilkie was sitting in his car, crouched behind the steering wheel and feeling like he was in a very bad movie.

Perched in a quiet street in Canberra, he had his Office of National Assessment (ONA) business card stapled to some ONA stationary with the words “I want to talk” written on the paper.

The former army colonel and soon-to-be former intelligence officer with the ONA was contemplating what he was about to do: turn whistleblower on the Federal Government and reveal the truth behind their case for a war on Iraq.

He got out of the car and dropped the card in Channel Nine journalist Laurie Oakes’ mailbox. It was March 7 and the war on Iraq was soon to begin.

Fast forward to September 3, and Wilkie is at the University of Canberra recounting to journalism and public relations students his experiences as a whistleblower and the art of ‘spin’.

His accusations, that the Howard Government effectively ‘spun’ the case for a war on Iraq, has kept him in the media’s gaze for the last six months.

‘Spin is different things to different people,’ he says.

“Spin: A false statement in order to deceive” – it’s the Macquarie Dictionary’s definition of a lie.

Over the last six months there have been lots of terms thrown around, but ultimately that’s what ‘spin’ is.

Wilkie’s four major claims centred on what he saw as the government’s predilection for playing fast and loose with the truth.

He says the government skewed the truth by removing ambiguity from intelligence reports, misrepresented the truth, used the truth selectively and finally, fabricated the truth.

“The government skewed the truth about Iraq by taking the ambiguity out. … There were very large intelligence gaps, lots of unknowns.

“The intelligence was full of ‘could’, ‘possibly’ and ‘maybe’ – it was very qualified and many of those qualifiers were dropped when the government spoke publicly.

“It was very subtle manipulation … the government rebuilt the threat [and] created a mythical Iraq.”

Of greater concern to Wilkie was the government’s outright “fabrication of the truth.”

In particular he describes the public linking of Al Qaeda to Iraq as “clearly nonsense.”

His concerns were enough to land him in Laurie Oakes’ letterbox: Andrew Wilkie was sitting in his car, crouched behind the steering wheel and feeling like he was in a very bad movie.

The former army colonel and soon-to-be former intelligence officer with the ONA was contemplating what he was about to do: turn whistleblower on the Federal Government and reveal the truth behind their case for a war on Iraq.

By Louise Rugendyke

Andrew Wilkie.
Negotiations stall over salaries

By Louise Rugendyke

University of Canberra management have been told to "come back with an offer that's reasonable for all" in the latest round of enterprise agreement negotiations.

Although negotiations are in early stages, the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) has signified their intention to fight three major points: salaries, the management of change and workload.

However, it is the salary issue that is proving to be the most contentious.

UC NTEU branch president Gowrie Waterhouse said the current salary increase offer of three per cent over three years was "completely unacceptable."

"University management has to value its staff," he said, "and they're not with this offer."

"There will be dire consequences if they don't look after their staff ... in particular if they want to consider themselves an 'Employer of Choice' they have to put staff first."

According to the NTEU, the nine per cent on offer to UC staff was "inadequate" when compared to the Australian National University's offer of 18.5 per cent to their staff and the Australian Defence Force Academy's 15 per cent offer.

"It's not remotely comparable to what's happening around town," Mr Waterhouse said.

The nine per cent offer also compared unfavourably to the 17 and 18 per cent offers being touted at Sydney universities, he added.

"What does [nine per cent] say to the market?" Mr Waterhouse asked.

"One, you won't attract the best people and two, we will lose our best people -- that is the risk."

"Nine per cent sends out a real signal and no-one could seriously suggest that's a positive signal."

Mr Waterhouse said he hoped university management would consider and accept the NTEU's preferred option of a 14 or 15 per cent salary increase over three years.

"We anticipate they can move up," he said.

"There is scope within the budget's forecast -- particularly with management's very positive view of the future."

"If their view of the future is so positive, they should put their money where their mouth is."

On a more positive note, Mr Waterhouse acknowledged there had been "suitable, significant progress," on the management of change issue.

He said procedures were to be implemented so that staff could be involved earlier in the management of change processes.

"People hate it when they are the last to know," Mr Waterhouse said.

"We want staff represented and engaged earlier and more thoroughly in the [management of change] process ... and that's quite significant in the context of a good workplace."

However, along with salaries, the issue of workloads, for both academic and general staff, was still a "sticking point," Mr Waterhouse acknowledged.

For academics the student to staff ratio had increased over the past five years, he said, and this increased the workload both inside and outside of the classroom.

"We need a cap, a more serious cap, than currently exists."

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

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Problems & Technical Issues?

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Last Updated on September 23, 2003
Monitor Online - Funding helps the show go on

By Kate Andean

The University of Canberra will continue to support the Canberra International Film Festival despite handing over control of it in 2002.

According to the Festival’s Artistic Director and film production lecturer Michael Sergi, UC organised the Festival for six years but last year “felt running it wasn’t part of its core activities”.

“But [the university] was keen to see the Festival continue and thought that it had a better chance of growing outside of it,” he said.

UC is now a major sponsor of the event, which is being organised by a non-profit committee and is funded by the ACT Government, corporate sponsorship and ticket sales.

Mr Sergi believes the change in structure will improve the festival.

“We have been able to engage a special events management company to deal with marketing and promotions,” he said. “The festival is probably more in touch with the local community as a result.

“But it’s new territory, so we are still finding our feet.”

As part of the Festival, which runs from October 31 to November 9, international feature films, many of them award-winning, will be screened at Electric Shadows in Civic.

Films from a broad range of countries will be shown, including France, Denmark, Japan, Mexico, Romania, Argentina, Israel, Germany and the United States.

One of the highlights will be “In This World”, by British director Michael Winterbottom, which tells the story of Afghan refugees and has already won a Golden Bear film award in Berlin this year.

Mr Sergi said the Festival provided Canberrans with a great opportunity to “see films of an outstanding quality with not necessarily conventional story lines and topics”.

“The Festival is important because for the majority of films that will be screened, this will be the only chance audiences will get to see them in the cinema, if at all,” he said.

He is hopeful that the event will continue in the future, but said that would require “two key ingredients”.

“It needs people to come and see the films, and the corporate community to value it,” he said.

“With UC guaranteeing to continue its support of the Festival in years to come, there’s a good foundation to encourage other company’s to value it and get behind it.”

The UC Alumni Society is also supporting the Festival by providing sponsorship, which it has done since the event’s inception.

“We were there at the start,” said the Society’s Wendy Southern, “so we wanted to continue the relationship we’ve built up over the years.”

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

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Last Updated on September 23, 2003
Showing the world what Aussies are made of

By Kate Andean

In Australia, university representative sport is usually a relaxed affair, with social events often taking priority over the competition. But as two University of Canberra students are discovering, things are a lot different in North America.

Journalism student Marie Skelton has been selected in the women's volleyball squad for the upcoming season at George Mason University, in Virginia, United States, and she's already found the pace hectic.

"It's just crazy how seriously they take it over here," she said.

"We've just had two weeks of pre-season - that was two, three hour training sessions a day plus weights three times a week.

"We were completely exhausted after that! But now classes have started, we're back to one training a day and weights twice a week," she said.

Marie saw going on exchange as an opportunity to experience different things.

"I eventually want to be a foreign correspondent, so I thought overseas travel and experience would be good," she said.

Once she was accepted as an exchange student at GMU she contacted the volleyball coach, and later sent videos and playing references.

"I know the coach actually rang my coaches in Australia a few times," Marie said. "But really, it's a leap of faith when international players are concerned.

"The coaches [in America] aren't 100 per cent sure about what they're getting, they're just hoping to be lucky I guess."

But with an impressive volleyball career at home, including playing for the Canberra Cougars in the Australian Volleyball League since 1997 and representing Australia at the World University Games, it was impossible to leave Marie out.

She's found it pretty easy to fit into the team that topped their conference, the Colonial Athletic Association, last year.

"The team's been really great!" she said. "They do laugh at me a lot and want me to do the Crocodile Hunter voice."

"It's definitely a lot different in North America," she said. "It's just crazy how seriously they take it over here!"

Science student Eric Malcolm said he was "really honoured" to be selected in the University of Guelph basketball team for the upcoming Canadian season.

"I'm pretty excited! And really honoured to be able to do it," he said. "I'm pretty excited!

"I'm really going to fit in with the rest of the team. But he admits he 's already come out with a few Aussie lines, like about the Crocodile Hunter!"

"It's been really great! The team are great girls who train really hard. They also have the best overall GPA of the sports teams at GMU, so they're smart too!"

"They do laugh at me a lot and want me to do the Crocodile Hunter voice."

"I eventually want to be a foreign correspondent, so I thought overseas travel and experience would be good," she said.

"I'm really excited! And really honoured to be able to do it."

But he admits he's not too sure how he's going to fit in with the rest of the team.

"I've just been talking to the coach and he's already come out with a few Aussie lines, like about the Crocodile Hunter! He laughed.

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rupenjeke, Monitor Editor, on lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

Monitor Online - Showing the world what Aussies are made of

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Problems & Technical Issues
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Last Updated on September 23, 2003
Kate won't shelve the idea of getting up early

By EJ Sewell

At 6:00am on a Friday morning after a uni bar night, the last thing on most students' minds is the library. But not for Kate Sutton.

She is a Sports Management student who is employed as one of the library's shelving staff.

And with all the 'quiet' signs you could be forgiven for thinking the library was a really strict and dull place.

But at 6.30am in the morning the library comes alive with Kate cruising the aisles singing and laughing with her fellow 'shelvers'.

"It's fun, not boring," Kate insists.

She began working at the library at the start of 2003 and this semester she has taken on full-time work, which is five mornings per week from 6.30am to 8.30am, plus one day of the weekend from 9am to 1pm.

"It's a good pay but the hours are a bit sucky some of the time," she says.

Her early morning role includes organizing the books that have been left out by students the previous day.

"We pull all the books back on the shelves," Kate says, "and make sure the books are tidy and in order."

She is also in charge of organizing the newspapers and filling the photocopiers.

Every morning she works on the same level, C, and says this helps her get into a "rhythm".

"It feels a bit more like home," she laughs.

Her supportive team enhances this homely working environment. "Everyone's really good in our team," she says.

And working in the library has its positives.

Kate says she is now more aware of where to look when she's researching for assignments.

"You get to learn so many things," she says, "you know where everything is and how to access it."

As well as the lift Kate has an insight into the study habits of different disciplines.

"You sort of get to know when assignments are due," she laughs. "Because a group of books will be left out. Tourism is usually really messy - I think it's because the books are really small!"

And the neatest?

"Probably the neatest is the sports areas," she smiles. "Sports always seems to be considerably neater and that's not biased!"

Although Kate says her job is fun, don't expect to pass the library and hear the chatter until about 7.00am. She says it takes about "half-an-hour for everyone to warm up."

And the early mornings offer a chance to see people in a different light.

"You get to see everyone's worst sides," Kate laughs. "Like bad hair ... [but] there's nothing that's embarrassing."

As well as the library Kate works at McDonald's and has a new role with UC's student ambassadors.

As an ambassador she will organize students to give talks at schools and also act as a tour guide for the university.

Kate thinks her numerous jobs and university studies keep her on the ball.

"I wouldn't be so prepared or organised," she says. "It's really good for time management."

But the early mornings do take their toll. "It's nice to go back to bed sometimes."

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on tel@adminserver.canberra.edu.au.
Cartoon (by JayBee)

The Drum
Paleolithic Business Planning

Ok, gentlemen, I'd like us all to focus on our core deliverable.

Cartoon copyright Jaybee 2003.

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Problems & Technical Issues?
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Last Updated on September 23, 2003
Staff should focus on benefits, not pay

By Louise Rugendyke

University of Canberra staff should look past the proposed 10 per cent salary offer and instead focus on the benefits the university offers its staff, like casual loading and maternity leave.

Speaking on behalf of university management, UC’s director of Human Resources Karl Dubravs was responding to the National Tertiary Education Union’s calls for an increase in the salaries offer in the latest round of enterprise bargaining.

Mr Dubravs called the union’s comments about UC not valuing its staff as “really divisive” and he urged all staff to look beyond what they received in their pay packets each fortnight.

“There are many ways you can value staff,” he said.

“Through the environment and working conditions you create – we are looking to improve these all the time.

“To suggest the university doesn’t value its staff is really divisive.

“The university does value its staff in many ways – through its physical environment, its HR policies, the opportunities it provides for outside study, employee assistance programs – I could list 30 or 40.

“We are all about valuing our staff.”

In terms of the 10 per cent salary offer (recently raised from nine per cent following a Commonwealth Grant, see box), Mr Dubravs said the university examined its finances and put forward a figure that was considered “financially prudent.”

 “[The 10 per cent offer] was something [the university] could afford without too much risk,” he said.

He added there was scope for the university to expand on this offer depending on income and “new growth”.

“If there is a new flow of money we should be able to share it [with staff],” Mr Dubravs said.

“We have no desire to hoard [money] away, we wish to share it.”

He also disputed NTEU claims that UC’s Brisbane Campus (UCBC) and Innovation Centre (UCIC) were drawing money away from staff salaries.

Both UCBC and UCIC were about providing the university with a new income stream, he said, and it was “short sighted of the union to attack those innovations.”

Currently the union and UC management are meeting once a week, Mr Dubravs said, and he had hopes the negotiations would be concluded by Christmas.

“It’s possible [we could finish by Christmas],” he said.

“But there are still some key, core issues that could keep us apart for a long time.”
Tales of a convent life

By Kate Andean

Obedient, chaste, silent and nurturing.

According to Dr Christine Trimingham Jack, these used to be the qualities of a "good catholic girl".

The Head of Primary Education at the University of Canberra recently launched her book, Growing Good Catholic Girls: Education and Convent Life in Australia, and said up until the late 1960s girls were only taught to be nurturers.

"We were brought up to be good catholic wives and mothers," Dr Trimingham Jack said.

Based on her doctoral thesis, the book is a history of the convent school Kerever Park, and focuses on the "lives of students and teachers, and an analysis of the context ... that influenced the formation of consciousness".

"It was the setting of my own childhood experiences so I wanted to analyse how that had shaped me both as an adult and child," she said.

Located in Burrawang in the NSW Southern Highlands, the boarding school catered for girls between four and 12-years-old, and the author attended from the age of seven.

Originally from Sydney, Dr Trimingham Jack was sent to the Kerever Park due to its small class sizes.

It was an extremely difficult time for her.

"It was a very strict life," she said. "The nuns were not allowed to leave, so we never left the grounds. The nuns weren't allowed to be close to us.

There were only 55 girls at the school, and Dr Trimingham Jack said they became close.

"Because we only had each other we made very, very firm, life-long friends," she said. "We were like family."

But they were still all very homesick and missed out on a great deal of family life.

"All of us dealt with it in our own way," she said. "We used to count off the days until we went home."

In writing Growing Good Catholic Girls, Dr Trimingham Jack combined her own experiences with those of other past students, teachers and workers at the school.

Along with conducting in-depth interviews, she researched documents attached to the convent and literature read at the time.

Dr Trimingham Jack said she found writing her first book a "really enjoyable" experience, and learnt a lot.

"I learnt about the importance there was at the time of expressing your love by putting yourself last," she said. "And how significant early childhood experiences are on adult life.

She is currently working on an edited book, Making Teachers, which looks at the ways "teachers are constructed and construct themselves", and will be published within the next two years.

But does Dr Trimingham Jack think she grew up to be a "good catholic girl"?

"Not in the 1950s way," she admitted. "but I think my interest in social justice grew from there, and the notion of fighting for your principles."

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

Monitor Online - Tales of a convent life
Oliver’s fox hunt captures award

By Louise Rugendyke

Massaging fox faeces may not sound like the most glamorous job in science, but it has earned a University of Canberra PhD student a science and innovation award from the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

Oliver Berry, from UC’s Applied Ecology Research Group, was alerted to his winning status several months ago but had to wait until mid-September to collect his award from Parliament House.

His project, ‘How many foxes are there in Tasmania? DNA detection of an invasive pest’ aims to pinpoint the number of foxes living in Tasmania by creating a DNA marker to identify individual foxes.

And this is where the massaging bit comes in. Scats (faeces) collected in Tasmania are posted to Oliver where he places individual scats into a plastic bag containing a saline solution. He then “gently massages” the scats in order to wash the cells from the outside and collects the DNA.

“It’s not a glamour job,” Oliver laughs. However, glamorous or not, it will help answer an important question – how many foxes are there in Tasmania?

“It’s a simple question but it’s an important question,” Oliver said.

The island was thought to be fox-free until September 2001 when a fox was shot in northern Tasmania – confirming the animal had been illegally introduced.

A major threat to the island’s biodiversity and its pastoral and tourism industries, the fox has since eluded eradication and has proved a headache for researchers who have been trying to monitor the fox’s numbers and behaviour.

Relying simply on fox scats, hair and sightings was proving to be too inaccurate, so, with UC’s Dr Stephen Sarre and the Fox-Free Taskforce, Oliver developed a DNA-based test that distinguished fox scats from other Tasmanian carnivores.

“By identifying foxes from their scats, we effectively have a longer window of time in which to ‘sight’ foxes in any given location and can map their distribution so that control operations can be better targeted,” Oliver said.

However, Oliver has taken his research one-step further and he is now working on developing DNA markers, called single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs), that can identify individual foxes, instead of just foxes generally.

The study is an Australian first and, according to Oliver, “offers great promise” because they only require “minute quantities” of DNA, such as those found in scats or hair.

“I hope to use these novel markers to census foxes in Tasmania and to determine whether the large number of sightings reflects a large well-established population or a few widely dispersing individuals,” he said.

“This information will enable ongoing control operations to be more strategically targeted, which will have significant benefits for pastoralists, wildlife and tourism.”

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lru@admnserver.canberra.edu.au

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In politics, the customer is not always right

By Louise Rugendyke

Political parties, in an effort to respond to the electorate’s wants, are turning to marketing and spin to tailor-make their policies.

Operating under the belief the ‘customer is always right’ they are conducting focus groups to decide policy in effort to either get elected or hold on to government.

However, the marketing approach could have dire consequences for both the government and the public, according to Dr Jennifer Lees-Marshment, a UK specialist in political marketing.

Discussing ‘Substance not spin: political marketing as a relationship between citizens and the government’, Dr Lees-Marshment was addressing the newly formed University of Canberra Government Communication Research Group.

She said politicians were looking towards marketing “as a way forward” in order to win and stay in government.

By employing traditional marketing techniques such as surveys, focus groups and target mailings, political parties were then using the information gained to “develop the product to suit the consumer.”

This “market intelligence” is then transformed into policy, she said, and while it may seem like a good idea, in reality large sections of the public “aren’t being represented in the political system.”

“Initially the relationship between the two [government and public] is good,” she said. “The public thinks that everyone in politics is doing what we want, however it raises a lot of questions.”

According to Ms Lees-Marshment, this business-like approach will soon backfire, when the leader of the party needs break with public opinion and show leadership in areas that are unpopular.

She cited UK Prime Minister Tony Blair as a good example of how political marketing can come full circle – from public hero to villain.

Following two landslide election wins, his Labor government was riding high on a wave of political spin and marketing, promising to deliver the British public what it wanted – to rebuild the health and education systems and no more increases in income tax.

However, the war on Iraq changed all of that.

Where the public was used to the pretence of getting what it wanted, Blair over-ride public opinion by showing leadership backing the war.

“[Government] is not like a business, you need to show leadership,” she said.

“Sometimes [the Government] needs to challenge what the market wants to balance the market’s needs.”

“Tony [Blair] went against public opinion and the public didn’t like his change of approach,” she said.

In order to correct this imbalance, Ms Lees-Marshment believes political parties need to “renegotiate the balance” and take back the “onus or responsibility.”

“Government’s can’t always give the public what they want,” she said. “The consumer isn’t always right.”

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

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Last Updated on October 7, 2003
Samantha and Louie the Fly talk Health

By EJ Sewell

A long holiday on a peaceful pacific island sounds like the perfect opportunity to unwind and escape the cold Canberra winter. But for Samantha Keane, spending six weeks in Vanuatu meant building pit toilets and running health workshops in a small rural community.

The 26-year-old University of Canberra student recently returned from a leadership training program, run by Youth Challenge Australia, and admitted it was no holiday. "It wasn't a travel tour!" she said. "Our days started at 5:30am and often didn't finish until 11pm, if not later. But you're there to learn about the people, you're there to do a job and you do it."

Samantha is in her second year of a Bachelor of Community Education (Community Development), and saw the Youth Challenge Australia program as an opportunity to discover if it "was really, truly what [she] wanted to do with [her] life."

The scheme aims to give young people the opportunity to go overseas and involve themselves in community development in rural areas, including capacity building, infrastructure and environment projects. After being selected into the program and placed in Vanuatu, Samantha admitted she was a little apprehensive about the trip. "There was a lot of mystery about going," she said. "You don't know what you're in for and so you go prepared for anything and everything."

But an orientation program, a conference with development organisations based in Vanuatu and a five-day wilderness first aid course helped Samantha settle in before her group of eight travelled by yacht to the island of Espiritu Santo. They spent around three weeks in a small community of eight women, six men and 31 children.

They were two hours by truck from the town of Luganville, and one-and-a-half hours from the nearest telephone. The team helped the community by building Ventilated Improved Pit toilets in cooperation with the locals. "We had the technical knowledge on how to build them, but had never built anything," Samantha said. "So we used the building knowledge of the community. We worked together."

They also ran health workshops aimed at educating the village about their main health concerns; malaria, diarrhoea, skin and chest infection, filariasis and worms. "We taught them really basic health such as covering your mouth when you cough," she said. "Things that we learn when we are children, but they don't get taught."

Other workshops were held to educate the community about preparing for disasters such as cyclones, floods and earthquakes.

For Samantha, the whole trip was a life changing experience. "It reinforced my love of culture, rich culture," she said. "The people have such a wealth of knowledge and expertise that is often forgotten. There's so much in the world to see, and so much diversity and culture. But we are losing our culture and becoming Westernised."

"It's awesome to see people can live semi-traditional lives and be content with that," she said. Samantha recommended the Youth Challenge Australia program to anyone, especially those interested in international development. "It's the opportunity of a lifetime," she said. "It'll allow you to experience real communities in real rural areas with real issues."

"If I got the money, I'd be gone again tomorrow!"

Currently volunteering at the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, Samantha is looking into the AusAid Youth Ambassador Program, and said her dream is to work with children overseas, preferably in South America. "My philosophy is that there are too many children in the world that go to bed hungry, or don't have a bed, they are sleeping on the streets and have no love. I think I should do something about it."

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

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Cartoon (by JayBee)

The Drum

Hey dude, I'd get those moles looked at if I were you!

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Last Updated on October 7, 2003
Getting published is said to be the hardest task for budding writers. So at the University of Canberra the School of Creative Writing pushed its students to their limits in its latest offering of published creative work: FIRST: This is Writing.

For Media Production student Nick Ellis, the publication gave him the opportunity to trial some of his comedic ideas, which turned out to be a huge hit.

"I was basically trying to convince the staff that I could do a comic," he said, "and to prove to myself too."

The title of FIRST: This is Writing, encapsulates Nick’s issues with educating people that comics are writers.

"Not many people think of it as a form of writing," he said.

"A lot of the time you come up against that sort of stuff.

"But comedy is a medium, it can be about anything, if [this story] was kind of trying to present that to people."

From 140 anonymous submissions the book of 23 stories and poems was compiled and Mick said he was impressed with the final result.

"I think the standard’s really high this year," he said.

"The first time I read Claire Thompson’s Nightscapes I thought ‘That’s just nuts. I wish I’d written that!’"

For Claire, she too feels the same way about her peers’ work, and was thrilled with the final product.

"Some of the people are good uni mates of mine," she said.

Claire views appearing in FIRST as a stepping-stone to greater things.

"You start by writing a short story and get it published in a uni journal," she said.

"It’s the little victories."

But she said she had to overcome the negative stigma associated with the chance of gaining employment in the industry before she focussed on getting published.

"For a lot of my degree I was put off by that [the talk of being unemployed]," she said.

"In the beginning it really gets you down, you kind of change your goals a bit."

And having reassessed, Claire is ready to make her mark in the literary world.

"The biggest turning point for me was when I finally realised that it was important to me," she said.

So writing can be tough sometimes, especially when the words just don’t come out right. And Clare Young knows all about it.

Her piece, words,words,words is about the process of inspiration.

"It’s ironic because that poem is about that moment of inspiration," she said.

"You don’t get moments like that all the time.

"You can’t decide when you’re going to be inspired."

She thinks the FIRST publication is a great opportunity for young writers to get their work published.

"It’s pretty cool having your name at the top of a page in a publication," she said.

But the most exciting part of the whole experience for Clare was seeing her friends and colleagues work in print.

"You sought of feel a bit proud and attached to the other writers in your year," she said.

"And seeing something published with your work and their work is awesome."

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Problems & Technical Issues?
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Last Updated on October 23, 2003
Plea to reunite refugee with family

By Louise Rugendyke

A terminally ill Canberra refugee has become the focus of a fundraising drive to reunite him with his wife – who he hasn’t seen for over a decade.

Dau Atem, a University of Canberra Community Advocacy student, came to Canberra from the Sudan as an offshore refugee in February 2002 with three of his children.

Dau was separated from his wife in late 1980s when he was arrested as a political prisoner.

Five years later when the civil war broke out, Dau’s daughter Adut, who lives in Canberra with her father, was also separated from her mother, who worked as a nurse at the local hospital.

For two years Adut walked with her cousin Abuk, and many other refugees before reaching the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, run by United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

In 1998 Dau walked through the camp gates looking for his wife and children.

Reunited with his daughter, and later two sons, the family stayed in the camp for a further two years being accepted into Australia through the offshore refugee program.

About one month ago, Dau’s wife Akur walked into Camp Kakuma and was recognised by two Australians from the Centre for Refugee studies, who then contacted the Atem family in Canberra.

However that same month Dau,56, complaining of back pain, was admitted to Woden Valley Hospital to be treated for tumours discovered on his spine and hip.

The prognosis isn’t good for Dau, doctors don’t expect him to live much beyond Christmas, so in effort to reunite the family a fundraising drive has been launched by Canberra migration agent, Marion Le.

"[Dau’s] amazing," Ms Le said, “he’s incredibly resilient.”

“He has a strong commitment to his family, including the orphaned children of his brother.”

She said when Dau came to Canberra he “hit the ground running” and enrolled at UC at the first opportunity.

"He really sees himself as a citizen of the world … he wants to be there to help other people, and especially to go back and help people in his country.”

His daughter Adut is also keen to have her parents look each other in the face one last time.

Speaking on ABC’s Stateline, Adut said, "The worst thing that could happen is if my father is not going to see my mother. That’s the worst thing ever that could happen."

According to Ms Le the Immigration Department has agreed to process Akur and four of their 13 children (the 13 includes nieces and nephews of the couple), under the Humanitarian Program.

However, unlike the Refugee Program, this means all medicals and air fares need to be paid for up-front.

Ms Le estimates this will cost between $6500 and $10,000.

The family underwent the medical tests earlier this month, Ms Le said, and they were now awaiting the results and possible confirmation of a trip to Canberra.

If you would like to help reunite the Atem family, donations can be sent to Marion Le, PO Box 3095, Balconnen, ACT, 2617.

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

Problems & Technical Issues?
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Staff strike over workplace reform

By Louise Rugendyke

Classes were suspended across the university, as staff and students formed a picket line at three of UC’s entrances – the biggest strike action at the university for over 10 years.

UC NTEU Branch president Dr Michael O’Donnell said the strike was “directed against the attacks by the [federal] government on the independence of universities and their autonomy.”

The tying of government funding to university workplace reform was the main cause for action, Dr O’Donnell said, which he called “draconian” and “interference at a micro-level”.

He said he hoped the strike brought a sense of community to the university and showed the government and university management the proposed workplace reforms were “not on”.

“We need to work together to defend our workplace rights and show that we are not individuals to be picked off – which is what we are facing,” he said.

“The workplace reforms are a way to undermine quality and a way to undermine the wages and conditions of new staff in the future.

“If the university wants to be an employer of choice, [these reforms] go against all of that.”

In an open letter sent to UC Vice Chancellor Roger Dean, the union outlined some of their concerns:

“Our concerns include but go beyond the defence of our working conditions and professional standards.

“The workplace reform requirements place detailed and comprehensive restrictions on the way in which university staff conduct their work, and on the way in which they are employed in our universities.

“They are a clear violation of the internationally accepted principles of institutional autonomy and university independence.

“In particular, the union’s grievances centred on:

- The undermining of staff and employers to negotiate minimum standards through a collective agreement;
- Restricting the right of both institutions and the unions to agree on quality improvements such as capping casual employment and extended paid maternity and parental leave;
- Stripping back standards of redundancy, termination and workplace consultation in ways that are inconsistent with the principles of academic freedom and collegial decision making and;
- Reducing the right of unions to represent their members in grievances and disputes at their institution.

Dr O’Donnell said he was further frustrated by the federal government “bending over backwards” to accommodate doctors and their insurance crisis, a courtesy they were failing to extend to university employees.

“We’re also professionals and we should be treated accordingly,” he said.

“We’re doctors too.”

However, the strike wasn’t just about university staff, Dr O’Donnell said.

It was also to raise awareness about the federal government’s higher education reform agenda and the effect it would have on students if implemented.

Dr O’Donnell said the proposed increased in HECs fees was “not sustainable … students will need a second mortgage to get a university education – the government needs to be sent a strong signal.”

Although he had no plans to join the picket line, University of Canberra Vice Chancellor Roger Dean said he supported the “thrust” behind the NTEU’s Day of Action.

“I do support the thrust [of the strike action],” he said.

“The government’s proposed workplace reforms are largely irrational and intrusive and I’ve said that before and in a submission to the Senate.”

However, Prof Dean said he didn’t think the strike was “productive”, and he hoped that staff “acted responsibly to ensure that the people that depended on them – and not just students, equally their colleagues – were not inconvenienced.”

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

Problems & Technical Issues?
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Last Updated on October 23, 2003

UC staff on strike on 16 October.
New SA Committee vows to carry out promises

By Kate Andean

The whiteboard in Adam Verwey’s office is covered in a long list of the things he needs to do over the next two weeks.

The new Students Association President admits it’s all a little overwhelming.

“When we wrote that list, that’s when the excitement wore off,” he laughs.

But Mr Verwey, who was voted in with his 2004 committee last month, says he was “very happy” to be elected as President and feels it is a position he is qualified to fill.

“I’ve been on the SA for two years and worked out the kinds of things I’d like to achieve,” he says. “I thought the best way to achieve them was as President.”

Along with sorting out some internal matters, there is a lot Mr Verwey plans to do for University of Canberra students.

“I want to find a real solution to the printing problems on campus,” he says. “We have one of the highest printing costs of all universities.

‘And with the focus placed on online journals and WebCT, it should be cheaper.’

He is also keen to ensure that the Muslim prayer room he has been involved with all year opens on time and the students are provided with what they were promised.

Mr Verwey also sees the amount and quality of childcare available at UC as an important issue.

“The university is looking at having private childcare facilities on campus,” he says. “This is concerning as it will aim for profit rather than being flexible for students.”

And, he says the higher education reforms must be monitored as they “make their way through parliament”.

“We need to really try and make students aware and involved, and do something productive to stop them,” he says.

Mr Verwey is confident the committee elected, which contains members of all the major parties that ran, can have a positive impact on campus and achieve its goals.

“If everyone on the committee can work together we have the resources to do some really good lobbying,” he says. “A lot of the election promises made were good, and the parties overlapped in what they promised.

“It’s going to be a really good year if everyone follows through with what they promised to the students.”

For further information about Monitor Online contact Louise Rugendyke, Monitor Editor, on: lar@adminserver.canberra.edu.au

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Last Updated on October 23, 2003
Todd's tourism triumph

By EJ Sewell

Todd Wright got the travel bug fresh out of high school. And now his passion for the new and interesting has paid off with him capturing the ACT Tourism Student of the Year award. His prize was one of two individual awards given out at the Canberra and Region Tourism Awards.

He said that travelling sparked his initial interest in tourism.

"Travelling is one of the biggest tourist things you'll do in your life," he said.

But it was choosing tourism as an elective subject in his Public Relations degree that really got him involved.

"I'm a PR student by trade," he said, "but tourism has been one of my passions."

He is actively involved in Club Tourism, the tourism society at the University of Canberra.

"The club supports opportunities for tourism students to get work experience as well as social experience," he said.

And he thinks his work with the organisation, as well as other work experience, helped him win the award.

"It [the award] was something that I was hoping I would win," he said.

"I thought I'd done a lot over the past three years."

For Todd, "a lot" includes working at Rydges Lakeside Hotel in Canberra as well as a stint of work experience with the Australian Capital Tourism Corporation.

"I designed a brochure for backpackers coming to Canberra," he said.

But he believes his success in the awards was due to the combined efforts of study as well as work experiences.

"When I came to uni I had a lot of industry experience," he said.

"I've been able to use my previous experience to support my tourism studies."

As well as his studies, Todd works at the UC Union as a project officer, where he was the brain behind the 'tour de farce' mini bike race - those funny little bikes you see scooting around the concourse during Stone Week.

"Last year we came up with the idea," he said.

"And now it's carried on to five states around Australia."

His idea for the race was supported by Red Bull and he is now a student brand manager for the company.

"I've been working with Red Bull - another of my excuses for not doing uni work," he laughed.

Todd will now head to Perth for the Australian Tourism Awards in February.
Cartoon (by JayBee)

The Drum

(mis)adventures with super glue

Cartoon copyright Jaybee 2003.
Monitor Online - Health study attracts major ARC grant

By EJ Sewell

The Federal Government has recognised the innovative research being conducted by the University of Canberra by providing Australia Research Council grants to three Professors.

Professor Ann Harding, Professor Peter Putnis and Professor Dudley Creagh have been awarded funding as part of the 2004 ARC discovery and linkage grants.

Prof Harding says the financial support was very important.

"The project’s worth more than half a million dollars," she said.

Her project looks at the distributional impact of health outlays made by the government and aims to help the policy makers with crucial decisions.

"This is very exciting because not all that much attention has been paid to socio economic status and health status and costs," With the Medicare crisis and the government looking to stop bulk billing, Prof Harding’s research is very timely.

"If we’re going to work out who uses health services and what these health services cost the government," she said, "and therefore what benefits flow to the poor and the rich from government health outlays.

And Prof Harding said it should give the government a greater understanding of where its money is going.

"It should give us a better idea of the health status of people and the health services they use," he said.

"The whole point is with the aging of the population everyone is expecting there to be great pressure on health outlays," she said.

And this model is to help the government make fair and sensible decision about health programs."

While Prof Harding’s focus is very much on the issues facing Australian society now, Prof Putnis’ project looks at overseas news in the press in Australia and its conditions of production from 1860-1910.

He said the research would allow for an understanding of how decisions were made in relation to what news was being filtered to Australia.

"It’s important because what people read or see on the news effects public opinion and perception."

The decision to send troops to the Sudan in the 1880s is one incident Professor Putnis is interested in.

"A lot of news was out of date and sensationalised and it affected the decision making process and Australian soldiers fought overseas," he said.

He said the grant has made it possible to search the Reuters archives in London and the Fairfax archives too.

"I’ve got access to the Reuters archives," he said, "I’ll be going there every year for the next three years."

The development of the Telegraph and other technologies will be a focus of the research.

The third ARC grant has been given to Prof Creagh, who is joined by Dr Heath, Mr Batterham and Mr Hallam in conducting research into the dehydration of dyes and pigments in inks on paper, in photographic media and on painted surfaces.

For further information about Monitor Online contact Angela Erini, Monitor Editor, on: Anj.Erini@Canberra.edu.au

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Last Updated on February 16, 2004
Refugee appeal raises over $5000

By Louise Rugendyke

A fundraising appeal to reunite Sudanese refugee Dau Atem Yong with his wife has raised over $10,000.

A University of Canberra Community Advocacy student, Dau is terminally ill in Woden Valley Hospital and is not expected to live more than a few months.

His wife Akur, who he hasn’t seen for more then a decade, recently walked into the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, which is run by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

The couple and their children were separated during the Sudanese civil war in 1990s and believed each other dead.

Now the race is on to reunite Dau and two of his Canberra-based children with Akur and four of their 13 children (the 13 include nieces and nephews of the couple) – before it is too late.

A UC fundraising campaign launched last month has so far seen $5000 raised and together with other Canberra donations – the $10,000 target has been met to bring the family to Canberra.

One of the coordinators of the UC campaign Linda Devereux said Dau was extremely grateful for the support he had received.

UC medical staff who have visited Dau in hospital said he asked for this message to be passed on to his friends and supporters: “I am] very humbled and deeply moved by the care, concern and the interest that people have shown [me] and to [my] family.”

Ms Devereux said the response from the UC community was “very encouraging” with several large donations flowing in.

“Hopefully [the reunion] will happen quickly,” she said, “and the family will get here in time to see Dau.”

UC medical centre is also collecting donations of household goods and clothes for the family.

For further information about Monitor Online contact Angela Erini, Monitor Editor, on: Ani.Erini@Canberra.edu.au
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Last Updated on February 16, 2004
Only UC's top athletes get the blues

By Louise Rugendyke

A Wallaby, three international rowers, an Australian gymnast, volleyballer and orienteerer have all been awarded the University of Canberra's highest sporting honour – a UC Union Full Blue.

The Full Blues, presented to athletes who have reached the highest representational level in their sport, were awarded at the UCU's annual club and sports awards evening on October 24.

Australian rugby union player Matt Giteau was among the Full Blue recipients.

This year Giteau has become a regular feature of the Wallaby squad and a valuable member of the ACT Brumbies side. He made his debut for the Wallabies against England in 2002 and has started off the bench on three occasions prior to the World Cup.

Donna Martin, Mitchell Punch and Tom Westgarth rowing took them to the other side of the world this year, as they all competed in international regattas in Switzerland, Italy and Belgrade.

Martin was part of the Australian women’s world cup quad scull side, which won the world cup rowing finals in Lucerne, Switzerland.

The team's victory was made all the more special as they beat the German side who hadn't lost a race in 12 years. Unfortunately injuries kept Martin out of the world titles in Milan, which also doubled as the Olympic qualifiers.

Originally identified in the Australian Institute of Sport’s talent search program, Punch competed at the world rowing titles in Milan.

Even though it was only his first year in senior level rowing, Punch was part of a team that finished forth at the titles.

Westgarth added international representation to his growing list of rowing achievements in 2003.

In July he continued his international success when the Australian Under 23 team won gold in the quad sculls in Belgrade.

Gymnast Joel Moss was selected to represent Australia on three occasions this year – at Canada's Jurassic Classic, the World Championships at Anaheim, USA and at the University World Universities Games in Dageau.

Moss' team success included coming 22nd in the World Championships and 16th in the teams at the World University Games. Individually, he was the highest placed Australian at the Jurassic Classic, he won the floor at the national titles and also achieved top-40 rankings in the three apparatus events at the World University Games.

Volleyballer Anna Maycock has represented Australia during competitions in Hong Kong, Japan and Vietnam. The best result came when the team finished fourth at the Hong Kong International.

Oskar Booth's orienteering improved markedly this year as he was selected in the Australian side for the World Junior titles in Polva, Estonia. He finished 20th in the 4km final and 88th in the 11.9km event.

Several other awards were also bestowed on the night.

Athlete of the Year: Donna Martin (rowing).

Half Blues, for athletes selected in Australian university squads or those selected in the Australian University Games Silver and Gold merit teams: Scott Crowe (athletics, long jump); Paul Farrah (touch football); Dave Hong (touch football); Heath McDonald (swimming); Christopher Panton (mixed netball); Jessica Robinson (mixed netball); Zlatko Tadrovski (basketball); Simon Hockings (rugby union); and Peter Marapodi (rugby union).

Gold Leadership, recognising the behind-the-scenes people who organise a club's raffles, fundraisers, trips and events: Nicole Fracchia (Advertising and Marketing Communication Society) and Leah Millard (Outdoors club).

Faculty Club of the Year: Club Tourism and the Advertising and Marketing Communication Society.

Sporting or Recreational Club of the Year: UCUC Devils Community Volleyball Club.

Cultural/Hobby Club of the Year: China Club.
Testing times for UC Muslims

By Kate Andean

End of year exams are tough enough, but imagine sitting them on an empty stomach. That’s the prospect facing the University of Canberra’s 1500 Muslim students as Ramadhan, their fasting month, coincides this year with the exam period.

But according to public relations student Ezan Saliaty, it’s not as hard as it seems. “I don’t think it will affect me too much,” she said. “I have been nurtured with this since I was young, so I’m used to it.”

Throughout the month, those observing Ramadhan cannot eat or drink from sunrise until sunset. The period begins the day after the sighting of the new moon, expected to be October 27 this year, and finishes at the next moon with the big Eid Fitr celebration.

International Student’s Adviser Noor Fleming said Ramadhan was a time for Muslims to “ponder the more spiritual side of life.” “It is a whole month of fasting where you are supposed to refrain from all physical pleasure during the day,” she said, “and contemplate on all aspects of the soul.”

According to Ms Fleming, most Muslims will wake up in the middle of the night for a light breakfast, and at the end of the day gather together for dinner and special prayer ceremonies.

As summer approaches the days will get longer, but Ms Fleming, herself a Muslim, says the start will be the toughest. “The first few days are the hardest,” she said. “You don’t realise how much of your day is taken up by eating and drinking … you’re mind is focused on it.”

But Ms Saliaty said it was the beginning that was the easiest. “The first few days are easier because I really want to do it,” she said. “It’s the middle that is the hardest.”

The 23-year-old from Singapore began fasting during Ramadhan as a six-year-old, but at first she was only in “training” and fasted for half a day.

She now chooses to do it because, as one of the five pillars of Islam, it is a religious requirement. “This is the only way I can be a proper Muslim,” she said. “It’s an opportunity for all Muslims to start again.”

And even with her two exams, and Stonefest, falling within Ramadhan this year, Ms Saliaty is happy to observe the tradition. “Spiritually it feels good,” she said. “I feel closer to God.

“And if you are fasting and going through hardship, you know He’s looking after you because you feel He is closer to you.”

Ms Fleming agreed and said that while other students and staff should be understanding of those observing Ramadhan, the exams should continue as normal. “It is a requirement that [those fasting] proceed with life … you’re not supposed to take a holiday,” she said. “Whatever your duty is you have to fulfill it.”

For further information about Monitor Online contact Angela Erini, Monitor Editor, on: Anj.Erini@Canberra.edu.au

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And so we have come to the end of another Monitor year. Which also means it’s time to farewell our two Journalism interns – Kate Andean and EJ Sewell.

Kate and EJ have been outdone themselves this year in enthusiasm, talent and hard work in putting our little paper together.

As third-year journalism students, they have gone beyond the call of duty on many occasions – even turning up at 7.30am on a Friday morning to proof read the paper when we were running a little behind schedule one week…

EJ has been rewarded for all her hard work (clocking up many work-experience hours on top of her university and Monitor hours) with a sports cadetship at the Shepparton News. Starting on November 10, she will be spending her Saturdays around Shepparton’s sporting grounds, taking on the hard-men of the Goulburn Valley football league.

Kate has also finished the journalism component of her double degree, and has the next two years ahead of her to contemplate the finer points of law.

A big thank you also goes to Carolyn Wilkinson, Monitor’s photographer, graphic designer and the only-one-who-knows-how-use-Photoshop-properly.

And finally a big thank you to all the behind the scenes people who don’t get their name in paper, but help me out enormously: Rob Crespe, Helen Makin, Wendy Southern, Derek Trow, Robin Poke, Jenny Stergiou and Julie Lovell.

And finally, it’s goodbye from me. After two years at Monitor I’ve decided to hitch my wagon, finally tidy up my desk and move on.

I’ve had a wonderful time here, met many great people and learned lots along the way.

So thank you to everyone who has “volunteered” to be interviewed, photographed or contributed to Monitor – I think you’ve helped make it a great little fortnightly read!

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