News and feature stories 2004

DECEMBER 2004

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UC Tourism Management graduate gets feet wet
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Medical science student wins our top award

Gaye Morrison

December 2004: A student, described by her lecturers, as without a doubt the most academically gifted student they had seen in 30 years of teaching has been honoured with the University of Canberra’s most prestigious award, the Herbert Burton Medal.

Vicki Chrysostomou, who graduated with a Bachelor of Medical Science degree, received a high distinction for every one of her 20 subjects.

In addition to her outstanding academic record Vicki has also been actively involved in volunteer community work, which she started while still in college.

She assisted with kitchen preparation and deliveries for meals-on-wheels and has worked in nursing homes, providing personal care to the elderly residents. Vicki has most recently been providing home-care assistance to disabled and elderly clients through organisations Kincare and Absolute Home Care.

Vicki has a balanced life and enjoys social activities, sports, values family life and the Greek culture.

The Herbert Burton Medal is awarded to a graduating student considered to have achieved outstanding academic results as well as having made a valuable contribution to the University or wider community.

The Medal is named in honour of the late Emeritus Professor Herbert (Joe) Burton, who chaired the committee that recommended the establishment of the University’s precursor institution, the Canberra College of Advanced Education.

As usual the Herbert Burton Medal was awarded on the eve of the University of Canberra’s end-of-year graduation ceremonies in the Great Hall of Parliament House. The ceremonies took place over three days, on Wednesday, December 15, Thursday, December 16 and Friday, December 17.

Burdon Revels

Prizes 2003

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION

Australian Federation of University Women (ACT) Prize
Winner: Mrs Judy Smith
Sponsor: Australian Federation of University Women (ACT) Prize
Contact: Dr Gwen Woodroofe

Sanchia Bolton Memorial Fund Prize
Winner: Ms Tae Kyung Kim
Sponsor: Rotary Club of Artarmon
Contact: Mr C Bolton

DIVISION OF BUSINESS, LAW AND INFORMATION SCIENCES

Andrew F Dennis Memorial Prize
Winner: Nathan Vu
Sponsor: Prof Phil Dennis

Australian Institute of Banking and Finance Prize
Joint winners: Mr David Veigli and Miss Karen Dean
Sponsor: Australasian Institute of Banking & Finance
Contact: Ms Jill Davies

Gordon Aitchison Prize
Winner: Mr Dominic Snowdon
Sponsor: Emeritus Prof Gordon Aitchison

DIVISION OF HEALTH, DESIGN AND SCIENCE

Australian Institute of Medical Scientists (Joyce Ford) Prize
Winner: Ms Vicki Chrysostomou
Sponsor: The Australian Institute of Medical Scientists
Contact: Robert Cusack (NSW Branch)

Eric Best Memorial Medal Prize
Winner: Mrs Eileen Harris
Sponsor: Eric Best Memorial Medal Prize

For further information about Monitor Online, contact the editor: monitor@canberra.edu.au
Come Movember

John Martin

November 2004: About 30 guys from University of Canberra let their moustaches grow long in November. But it wasn't to raise hell, it was to raise money for a good cause.

In fact, they handed over a cheque for $800 to the Children at Risk Assessment Unit at the Canberra Hospital. "We were thrilled," one of the organisers of the so-called Movember, UC student Stewart Brown, said.

Aside from the 30 or so who enrolled to grow their moustaches during the month of November, more than 70 more people turned out at a Mo-Afterparty at Toast in Civic.

Prizes were awarded for Mini-Mox (the smallest moustache), Mo handles, Mo Cup (for the person who raised the most money) and Mo Movie (for the moustache best suited to a movie.)

The Children at Risk Assessment is for kids who have been sexually abused, assaulted or neglected.

Stewart said there was no stopping the contest now.

This year, he said, Movember would be bigger and better. Er, the contest that is; not necessarily the mo's.

Scott Montoya-Val, Michael Lees, Josh Kirkland and Stewart Brown don false moustaches back in October when they launched the Movember fundraiser with a barbecue at UC.
November 2004: One of the new faces of the Canberra convention industry, Cathryn Hendrickson, leads a double life that begins most days when her alarm clock goes off at 3.50am. Less than an hour later, she reports for duty at Oasis pool in Deakin as coach of the top squad for the Burley Griffin Swimming Club.

From November 22 when the morning session ends at 7.15, Cathryn, 21, of Islaic, had to swap her tracksuit for business clothes for her new job at Business Services Executive at the Canberra Convention Bureau. Then, at 5pm, she hoped to be back at the pool for another two-hour session with her 30 swimmers.

"Don’t talk to me about sleep," she said with a laugh. "It is a routine she has honed well throughout her three years of study at the University of Canberra, and that is coming to a very satisfying finale.

Late in 2004, Cathryn won a swag of internal and external awards and graduated with a Bachelor of Tourism Management. She started her new job full of confidence. She pitches for more business convention trade for Canberra and she feels this city has a lot to offer.

About 150 people from University of Canberra and a wide cross-section of the tourism industry saw her receive her latest award - for Outstanding Contribution to the Tourism Industry and Education - at the UC Tourism Program awards on UC on November 12.

The awards were the brainchild of a tourism student in 2001. He thought that perhaps industry groups would respond by sponsoring awards for, say, $50 apiece.

It took a couple of years for the awards to become reality but there has been a surge of interest since - so much so that near $4000 was awarded to UC tourism students on November 12.

Cathryn, being the major prize winner, got $1000. No wonder she was happy. The week before she won the Canberra and Capital Region Tourism Student Award. In October, she was presented with a Gold Leadership award at the UC Tourism Program awards at UC on November 12.

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The convention industry is next.
Amy attracts tourism award

November 2004. A bit more than two years ago, "Amy" Xu Xiaodong spent her working days fixing electronics on passenger aeroplanes in Shenyang in north-east China.

She had worked that job for 12 years after following her father into the industry. It was not exactly boring but Amy decided there was more to life than Airbus 300s and MD90s.

Fast forward to November 2004 and Amy, 33, is now an award-winning University of Canberra tourism student, having spread her wings and opted to study in Australia.

She completed her second year of a three-year Tourism Management degree this year and was recently bestowed with a School of Information Management and Tourism prize at the UC Tourism Program Awards night.

"I was so surprised. There are a lot of other students better than me, for sure," Amy said, modestly. Not true. She has made great progress after a slow start.

It has not been easy. She lives at the Residences on campus at Bruce and finds Canberra rather quiet next to the hustle and bustle of home and the bright lights of the big cities.

Then there’s the language problem. "Xiaodong" is a bit hard for students and lecturers here to get their tongues around and so she is happy to go by "Amy".

Aside from her tourism studies, Amy is also studying Japanese at University of Canberra and has applied to go on to Nagoya in the middle of 2005 as part of an exchange program.

Then she plans to return to Australia to look for a job.

As fate would have it, it will probably be in the airline industry - through from a different perspective.

Hmm, maybe she has not seen her last Airbus after all.
UC clothes designer finds way to beat jobless queues

By Rebecca Stones

8 Nov 2005: Finding decent work as a migrant can be almost impossible, so University of Canberra student Sifundo Kahonde avoided job knock-backs and started his own business.

Within four weeks of arriving in Australia from Zimbabwe, Sifundo began the process of trademarking his own clothing brand, Sifuk.

"To tell you the truth, this is not something I always wanted to do ... it is very difficult for new migrants to get good jobs in Australia - that frustration was motivating."

In Australia, he was inspired by the immediate impact of brand names, but he felt everyone was dressed the same.

"I saw everyone wearing the same thing and that brands have a huge effect, especially Billabong," Sifundo said.

He admitted the business venture, his first, was far from an easy undertaking, but said his studies in Advertising and Marketing Communication at UC had helped.

"My course has opened a lot of awareness on how best to market. I want people to take their own meanings out of the clothes."

While Sifundo marvelled at the huge influence of brand names in Australia, he was careful to state his own belief that clothes do not maketh the man. "You have to feel good about yourself, clothes can't change you. They're just complementary - you can have the most beautiful clothes but still not feel good about yourself."

Sifundo hoped his Sifuk clothes would appeal to people who wanted to be different and not bound by the ideas of others.

While he has not sold many items yet, he said much of his product had so far been distributed for advertising and he hoped to attract business through word of mouth. "It's difficult at the moment as friends want the clothes free and it's a huge loss - but it's free publicity."

He said the overall process of getting his brand started had been costly, in time and money, with trademark fees, visits to lawyers, international trademark advertising and then the process of having his label T-shirts made.

He felt the venture had in many ways been harder than getting a conventional job but believed the long-term benefits would make it all worthwhile.

"I'm not even at ground level yet, I'm still underground [and] there's so much market clutter ... but in five years when I graduate, I won't be just starting out.

"The trademark doesn't expire until 2013, so I still have a long time to market my product."

Sifundo hoped to start up a Sifuk web site in the next few months.

For more information, email: skc_aust@yahoo.com.au

November 8, 2004
Long, hot days don't worry Indonesian town planners during Ramadan

By John Martin

5 Nov 2005: Eighteen Indonesian town planners on a three-month AusAID-funded course at UC did not have to suffer through hot afternoons in class during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

In a thoughtful move, the Centre for Better Cities started their classes early each day so they could go back to their cool apartments by around 3 pm.

The leader of the group, Mr Suryono, of Jakarta, said the gesture was very much appreciated.

Muslims are forbidden to eat and drink, even water, between sunrise and sunset during Ramadan and, with days getting longer and hotter, it can be a difficult time.

The town planners, who come from all over Indonesia, including Sumatra, Java, Malaku, Kalimantan and NTT, are mostly Muslims. They had intensive English language training in Jakarta for three months before coming to Canberra so that all lectures here could be delivered in English. They are also being taken on field trips to look at town planning issues in Australia.

This year, CDC has also successfully tendered for and delivered two AusAID training programs in Indonesia.

The centre has also performed work on an AusAID project in the Philippines as well as being short-listed in a consortium on an Asian Development Bank project.

It has also staged numerous short-term training projects for Korean and Chinese delegations in Canberra to study urban management issues.

CDC director Professor Brian Roberts said the course for the Indonesians here capped off a very successful year for the centre's international training and consultancy program.

"The centre believes it is well placed for an even more successful year in 2005," he said.

Mrs Nur Lienda, of North Malaku province, near Papua, said that there were things the Indonesians could learn from Australia and solutions to problems here.

"It will be hard to change in the short term," she said, taking into account huge differences in population and existing procedures. "Maybe we can change things step by step."

November 5, 2004
Family's fire tragedy retold in award-winning documentary

5 Nov 2005: Clare Young was at her boyfriend's 21st birthday when bushfires swept through her family's horse agistment property 10 minutes out of Canberra, on January 18, 2003. Unable to get home due to roadblocks, Clare waited while her family fought the devastating firestorm.

"They saved the house [but] they lost a lot of horses. The property was really badly damaged," Clare said.

When she asked her father the following day what she could do to help, he asked if she would document it.

"That was all I needed," Clare said of her decision to make a film.

And so she created Firing on All Pins, a nine-minute documentary about her family's experience in the firestorm. On October 23, 2004 the story was awarded best film in the Canberra Short Film Festival's local category by industry judges, Andrew Pike of Ronin Films, Bronwyn Kidd of Flickerfest, and producer and director Di Drew. It was also short listed in the Youth 25 and Under category.

Held at the National Museum of Australia, 55 films competed in four categories, with Mick Elliot's After Dolly winning the National category, Britt Arthur's Not In Front Of The Kids winning the Youth 25 and Under and Anthony Fricker's Saloon winning the ACT Youth Secondary School category. All finalists in the Local category were current or ex-UC students, with UC Media Production graduates Chris Bamford and Shannon Wilson's film Apartment, shortlisted in the national category.

A University of Canberra Communication honours student and preliminary judge for the festival, Clare describes her film, which was screened, on ABC's Stateline on October 29, as "a story about heroism" and "the Aussie battler."

"I wanted it to be positive. I wanted it to make people feel fulfilled, rather than destroyed," she said,

Clare's father Stephen Young, who also features in the film, was fighting fires for almost two weeks with the rural bushfire brigade before the fire reached their property.

"My Dad was taking photos while it was happening, which has given me a huge advantage. It has really helped me tell the story and bring it to life," she said.

"It was just amazing driving [to the property] the day afterwards. It was the most frightful sort of atmosphere. Driving through the trees and they're smouldering and you can still see bits of flame,

"When you have fires that are travelling at 80ks an hour, it doesn't matter if you've got one tank or 10. There's nothing that was going to stop that fire".

Although she was not present at the fires, Clare said the film was her way helping her family.

November 5, 2004

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