A Summer Scholarship Program was initiated in 2009 by the Faculty of Health, Engineering and Science Research Committee to enhance enrolment of quality local students into postgraduate studies and to increase the pool of scholarship applicants in the Faculty. Outstanding current students who were in their third year of study were invited to apply. A small number of excellent second year students were also given the opportunity to participate in the program. The program also aimed to show these outstanding students that research provides a career opportunity.

During the summer of 2009-2010, twelve students participated in the Summer Scholarships Program for a period of 12 weeks. They worked with at least one experienced researcher in the faculty. At least, three other students were offered summer research scholarships from industry, two with Dairy Innovation Australia and one with CSIRO.

On 24th February 2010, these students presented their research findings in the university. It was pleasing to note their excellent research output. Collectively amongst the twelve students with their supervisors, they planned to submit at least 13 papers to conferences this year, and several have shown interests in continuing with these projects in their honours year or final year. At least two had shown interest in pursuing research higher degrees. More importantly, some students had worked with industry or other organizations such as Burnet Institute, Royal Women Hospital, Heart Foundation and Murray Goulburn Nutritional, on their summer research projects.

The Sport and Culture Group (SCG) is a collaborative group of scholars based in the School of Sport and Exercise Science at Victoria University. The unifying aim of the Group is its desire to advance critical understanding of sport through individual and collaborative research and writing projects that explore the role of sport in local and global communities. The work of Group members is multi- and cross-disciplinary, with the core disciplines being economics, history, philosophy, management, and sociology. These disciplines not only drive the operation of many of the School’s research projects but they underpin areas of postgraduate supervision. The Sport and Culture Group was first formed in 1994 and since then has published the Bulletin of Sport and Culture on a bi-annual basis. This journal has grown from a small eight page newsletter to a professionally designed magazine and is now distributed to a mailing list of 500 subscribers. Further details about the Sport and Culture Group and its forthcoming international football studies conference can be found at http://www.staff.vu.edu.au/RobHess/

Dr Bob Stewart, current convenor of the Sport and Culture Group, is an Associate Professor in Sport Studies in the School of Sport and Exercise Science at VU.
ARMS TRAVEL AWARD TO ATTEND 2010 INORMS CONFERENCE

Dr Gayle Morris, Director of the VU Research Office has been successful in obtaining a prestigious $5,000 award to attend the 2010 INORMS Conference in South Africa on 13 April 2010. The conference will be an excellent professional development and knowledge sharing opportunity. Dr Morris will be part of a three member presentation panel discussing the innovative topic: Developing our Future Researchers: Newer university opportunities and challenges.

EVENTS RESEARCH PROGRAM OUTCOMES

BUSINESS EVENTS WORTH $17 BILLION AND MUCH MORE TO AUSTRALIA

A new research report written by Professor Leo Jago, the former Director of the CTSR at Victoria University is being promoted by industry to help provide a deeper understanding of the role and impact of business events; Professor Margaret Deery also contributed to the study.

Business Event Council of Australia Chairman Geoff Donaghy praised the study in a recent address to the Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME) in Melbourne, and commented: “We talk about our trade fares, conferences and meetings being worth billions of dollars to the nation- in fact AUD $17.3 billion a year at last count in 2005”, he said. “But that’s just what delegates and attendees spend on hotels, meals, entertainment and associated travel expenses.”

The findings of the research study recommend that the time has come to change the way business events are assessed, supported and promoted, suggesting that business events had to be assessed on their total contribution to the nation’s wellbeing rather than only what they produced in tourism dollars.

The study goes on to highlight the following recommendations:

- Identification of strategies to foster the improvement of business events that meet nation building objectives identified by government
- An increase of activities that are designed to raise awareness within government and industry about the “beyond tourism” benefits and potential of business events
- Launching a campaign to highlight the important role that business events play in assisting researchers to create and disseminate innovation and convince universities to continue to host international research conferences and
- Encouraging associations and companies to measure the ROI of business events they host in order to capture outcomes and highlight the benefits that can be achieved.


ERA UPDATE

DATA COLLECTION

We are nearing the end of our data collection across the University. The VU Research Office (VURO) is busily loading researcher’s additional publications into the portal as we speak. Thank you to the VU Research Leaders for all your efforts in chasing down missing data and to all the researchers for their time and efforts in this area.

PEER-REVIEW AND BACKGROUND STATEMENTS

We are currently in the process of selecting and contacting key people throughout the University to assist in selecting material for peer-review and to coordinate the drafting of research statements. We expect to release this information publicly at the beginning of April.

Any ERA enquiries should be directed to Dr Melanie McGuire at the VURO on x4704.

AVENUE OF HONOUR: A PHD STUDY

Anne Riggs is a PhD student currently under examination in VU’s School of Social Sciences and Psychology.

This work was first shown as part of Minefields (1999). That exhibition was a visual contemplation of human intervention upon two landscapes; firstly, Central Victoria as a result of the 1850’s gold rush and secondly, of Northern France and Belgium as a result of the First World War.

Avenue of Honour was later exhibited at the Shrine of Remembrance (2004) and Southland Museum, New Zealand (2005) in a slightly varied form in the exhibition Ritual Light and Land. An Artist’s Journey through the Western Front. Here its focus was fully on the toll of war.

Avenue of Honour responds to the practice in towns across Australia to commemorate all soldiers who participated in the First World War, a peculiarly Australian tradition originating in the Victorian goldfield town of Ballarat. Avenues of Honour were planted throughout Victoria between 1917 and 1921, the majority are found in the Central Highlands. Many of these avenues now feature large, established trees and exotic species. They represented a hope in the future as well as a memorial for those who died.

The lower forest of trees in this Avenue of Honour are sometimes thought to be made burnt timber, suggesting something of the devastation of the landscapes from which this work emerged. Each however, is made from clay and painted.

The upper row represents stately exotic trees, their wide and arching boughs. Each tree connects with its neighbour in a gesture of unity and entwinement.

In its new setting at Three Stories Gallery, at the edge of fire-affected Victoria, these trees take on a renewed meaning.

Here these white trees are evocative of both loss and hope. A reminder of the beauty and majesty of the lost landscape, a quiet contemplation of death and memory, but importantly it offers a belief in the future. It is a
reminder of the remarkable capacity of nature and humanity to find restoration after trauma, grief and loss.

VU RESEARCHERS IN CANADA: VISITING FELLOWSHIP IN FOCUS

Associate Professor Iwona Miliszewska from the School of Engineering and Science and Dr Ewa Sztendur from CILT have recently completed an exciting program of educational research and development in the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at the University of Windsor (UWindsor), Canada; the six-week visit was supported by Windsor University’s internationally competitive Senior Visiting Fellowship program. Iwona and Ewa were quickly “at home” at UWindsor, enjoying the hospitality of their hosts, Dr Alan Wright, Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning, and Dr Erika Kustra, Director, Teaching and Learning Development, CTL, as well as fellow researchers, developers, academics, and staff.

Iwona provided advice on the implementation of the OBE framework at UWindsor (especially with respect to engineering programs), supplied OBE reference material, and outlined the usefulness of VU’s Course Approval Management System in realizing OBE objectives. In addition, Iwona shared her perspectives on VU’s Educational Leaders Program as a means of building capacity in educational leadership and delivered a workshop on educational leadership to UWindsor’s academics, research students, and teaching assistants. Entitled “Leadership for excellence in teaching and learning: An introduction to educational leadership”, the workshop familiarised participants with concepts of leadership in teaching and learning and clarified the role of educational leaders in the university context.

Ewa shared her substantial expertise in research design and statistics and delivered a workshop entitled “Doing quantitative research in teaching and learning”. This workshop responded to the needs of participants who planned to be actively engaged in educational research, but had limited formal training in quantitative research methods.

Taking further advantage of their Fellowship visit, Iwona and Ewa travelled to McMaster’s University in Hamilton to participate in workshops on the development of group skills in PBL students and meet with the internationally renowned authority on PBL, Professor Don Woods. They found their discussions with Professor Woods about hands-on approaches for preparing students for PBL of particular interest and benefit.

Iwona and Ewa’s visit to Canada was bookended by their respective birthdays (which they celebrated with their Canadian colleagues), coincided with the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics, and gave them an opportunity to see Niagara Falls, providing an additional dimension to their unforgettable Fellowship experience.

NEW RESEARCH APPOINTMENT IN CTME

Dr Ajay Tikka has commenced as a Research Fellow in Microelectronics within Centre for Telecommunications and Microelectronics (CTME) on 1 February 2010. He recently completed his PhD at the University of Adelaide on the topic “RF controlled microvalve for biomedical applications”. He also holds a MEngSc from VU in microelectronics.

CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSION RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP SUCCESS

Dr Karina Smith (School of Communication and the Arts) has been awarded a prestigious Canadian High Commission Research Fellowship under the Commission’s ‘Understanding Canada - Faculty Research Program’ grant scheme for 2010/11. This program supports individual academics in universities...
and research institutes to undertake short-term research about Canada or aspects of Canada’s bilateral relations with Australia and New Zealand, including interdisciplinary and comparative studies. The research project is titled (Un)Equal Exchanges: partnerships between Canadian Development Agencies/Educators and Popular Theatre Companies/Practitioners. Karina will travel across Canada to interview theatre practitioners and development agency staff as well as conduct archival research at the Universities of Guelph and Ottawa.

JOURNAL OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE

A special issue of the Journal of the Association for the Study of Australian Literature has just been published on the Web. The issue has been edited by Bridie McCarthy, former Research Assistant in SCATA, and John McLaren is a member of the editorial committee. The issue is based on the proceedings of a conference, held in February 2009, on Vincent Buckley, whose biography by John McLaren was published during the conference. The issue, which will later be available in a print copy, includes an essay by McLaren on the theory and practice involved in his biography.

REGISTER NOW TO ATTEND THE GLOBAL WATER SUMMIT 2010 IN PARIS

Be sure to register for the GWI/IDA Global Water Summit 2010 Transforming the World of Water. Co-sponsored by IDA, the Summit will take place April 26-27 in Paris, France, at the Marriott Rive Gauche Hotel & Conference Center.

Not to be missed, this highly anticipated event is expected to include 80 speakers or round table participants covering most of the major markets for desalination. The lively program will focus on cutting edge – and sometimes provocative – strategies designed to transform the landscape of the industry as it relates to sustainability and the tightening relationship between water and staples of energy, food and money.

Topics will include:

- Finance: what are the new financial models that are galvanizing change in the water sector?
- Management: how have water agency leaders revolutionized service while dramatically improving financial sustainability?
- Technology: which technologies are changing the shape of the international water industry?

Topping the list of speakers at the Global Water Awards ceremony is Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan. Always popular, the Global Water Awards ceremony will take place on the evening of April 26 at Le Pavillon d’Armenonville, a grand venue in the Bois de Boulogne to the west of Paris.

Event details and online registration are available at http://www.watermeetsmoney.com/.