COUNTER ATTACK
Improving the health of women with cardiovascular disease

PUBLIC GOOD v PRIVATE PROFIT
The pros and cons of gene patenting

PEOPLE POWER
How one teacher is improving education in Australia and Africa
“2010 is set to be a watershed year for UTS.” This is how I opened my column in the first issue of U: this year. With the benefit of hindsight, I can say it has been all that and more.

The foundations laid over the last 10 months are now taking shape and real progress is evident.

Our capital development program has exceeded expectations. In June, Dr Chau Chak Wing donated a staggering $20 million to support UTS’s investment in a Gehry-designed building for the Faculty of Business.

Dr Chau gave a further $5 million to UTS to create an endowment fund for student scholarships. In recognition of his philanthropic leadership, UTS Council resolved to name the new building the Dr Chau Chak Wing building. I am pleased to report that next month Frank Gehry and his team return to Sydney to unveil its design.

Early in 2011, UTS will complete its first City Campus Master Plan (CMP) project. The new Multi-Purpose Sports Hall under Alumni Green will provide a terrific new amenity for students. I am especially pleased that the first CMP project to be delivered will be student-centric and aimed at enriching campus life for the UTS student community.

Its design (as suggested by its name) will facilitate a range of activities including teaching and learning, sporting, entertainment and cultural activities. With the student housing project scheduled for completion by end-2011, and a number of other CMP projects gaining momentum, our state-of-the-art campus will soon deliver benefits to today’s students as well as the generations of students to follow.

The foundations laid in 2010 to support the UTS Strategic Plan, ‘Own the Future’, will provide UTS with a solid platform from which to advance its agenda in the years ahead. We remain focussed on internationalisation; we have strengthened strategic partnerships forged this year in China and aim to develop new relationships in India and Europe in 2011 and beyond.

Our learning, teaching and equity ambitions also have made solid headway this year. Going forward, UTS will further advance the UTS Model of Learning through ongoing curriculum renewal, greater access and inclusion, and further development of the graduate skills and attributes relevant to professional practice in the global workplace.

Our commitment to delivering programs that meet the needs of society will see UTS introduce a number of new courses in fields such as pharmacy, biomedical engineering and design thinking.

Our research agenda has also gained traction. The UTS research strategy has been fine-tuned and received a substantial investment injection. In 2011, we will focus on six strategic research elements – direction, approach, culture, researcher skills and development, research communications, and international connectivity – enabling us to leverage our successes to date.

All this has been achieved, and will continue, in a framework that supports core principles such as environmental and organisational sustainability, engagement and quality.

UTS is building its future. We gain momentum with every step, and with forward motion comes energy. Harnessing this energy to realise our vision will be our next challenge – a challenge we welcome.

Ross Milbourne
Vice-Chancellor and President
Photographer: Chris Bennett
THE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY'S VISION IS TO BE A WORLD-LEADING UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY.

OUR PURPOSE AS A UNIVERSITY IS TO ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING TO PROGRESS THE PROFESSIONS, INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITIES OF THE WORLD.

OUR VALUES – TO DISCOVER, ENGAGE, EMPOWER, DELIVER AND SUSTAIN – GUIDE OUR PERFORMANCE AND OUR INTERACTIONS WITH EACH OTHER, WITH STUDENTS, OUR PARTNERS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY.

NEXT ISSUE
This is the last issue of U: for 2010. The next issue will be distributed on 7 March 2011. Send your story ideas, opinions and events to: u@uts.edu.au
Deadline for submissions is Monday 31 January 2011.

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If you have walked past Alumni Green recently, you will have noticed some fundamental changes. Most obvious has been the large, excavated pit adjacent to building 4.

However, with the roof for the Multi-Purpose Sports Hall (MPSH) now in place and construction having moved mostly underground, the return of the lush green lawn is rapidly approaching.

Scheduled for completion at the end of March 2011, the MPSH is the first new facility to be completed under the City Campus Master Plan.

Located beneath Alumni Green and next to the existing UTS Fitness Centre, the sports hall will be home to a state-of-the-art indoor sports court with connecting tutorial and change rooms. A gym and a dance studio will feature on a mezzanine level above the court.

Upon completion of the sports hall, the Alumni Green will be returned. However it won’t mean business as usual – underground a whole new chapter for UTS will commence.

“We associate construction with elevation of a structure, so I’ve welcomed the chance to do something different here, working mostly at ground level and below,” says Senior Project Manager, David Hughes.

“There have been challenges – a fairly small construction area coupled with surrounding buildings – but it will be a great moment to see the first of the master plan projects finished.”

As its name suggests, the Multi-Purpose Sports Hall will be a lot more than a basketball court. Two people eager to promote that message are the UTS Union’s Director of Programs and Sport, Elizabeth Brett, and Professor in the Faculty of Business’ School of Leisure, Sport and Tourism, Aron Murphy.

“The number one priority for this new facility is teaching and learning,” says Brett with conviction.

Murphy adds: “This combination of large indoor sports court, dance studio, gym and tutorial space will give us a real innovative edge on teaching. We can take what happens on the court into the classroom and vice versa. The new facility will also be the hub of physical activity and recreation at UTS and will accommodate a range of new and exciting research opportunities.”

Brett says, “UTS sports clubs will benefit from the new facilities, but so will the entire UTS community through social sports opportunities.”

The Union, who are responsible for the day-to-day management of the venue, aren’t fazed by the combination of potential users.

“You could say we’ve been in training for the day we have an on-campus sports facility for years now,” says Brett. “When you look at how well we manage the current off-campus sports facility – the Sydney Boys High stadium – you realise that having a brand new, purpose-built sports hall on campus is going to work.

“Come the end of March, we hope to start putting that theory into practice.”

Claire Sargent
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Andrew Worssam
Architect perspective: PTW
“I paid a library fine with a tin of quail eggs, how many people can say that?” asks Assistant Library Technician, Andrew Ensor.

Last year, Ensor was among scores of staff and students who took part in the library’s Food for Fines initiative. The program enables staff and students to pay off up to $30 of library fines by donating non-perishable food items to Mission Australia (any additional fines can be paid using EFTPOS or with money deposited on your student card).

This year, Food for Fines will run from Monday 29 November to Sunday 19 December. Collection points will be located behind the loans desks at both the City and Kuring-gai campus libraries.

Food for Fines coordinator and the library’s Digital Resource Register and Reserve Coordinator, Stephen Fardouly, says, “Last year, hundreds of food items, 13 large boxes worth, were donated in lieu of fines.” He hopes to better the result in 2010. “This year we’re extending the donation period by one week and starting it during Spring semester exams. We hope this will encourage a lot more people to participate.” However, you don’t need a fine (or a spare can of quail eggs) to donate. Fardouly says the only requirements are that the food is non-perishable, undamaged and has a used by date of at least six months.

Mission Australia’s Marketing Manager – National Community Services, Tabitha Feher, says this year’s donations are likely to go to the Mission Australia Centre (MAC). Last year’s collection provided the centre (which is located two kilometres from UTS in Denham Street, Surry Hills) with two weeks’ worth of cooking staples.

Formerly known as Campbell House, today the MAC is a ‘hub’ for first-time homeless men, providing accommodation, support services and education (including cooking classes).

Feher says, “At any given time, the number of residents is between 30 and 35, so food costs for us are a fairly significant burden, but absolutely necessary.

“A lot of the gentlemen residents at the Mission Australian Centre have come from situations that you and I probably couldn’t even imagine. Being able to take care of yourself by cooking healthy, nutritious meals is a really big factor in breaking the cycle of homelessness.

“If you think about your own home, we tend to nurture each other through food. There’s nothing nicer than being greeted by a home-cooked meal. Imagine what life would be like without that. The Mission Australian Centre is fantastic in that respect. It connects people to a sense of home when they haven’t had one for an awfully long time.”

Fardouly sees Food for Fines as a “win-win.” “I get public transport and I see people begging in the street and homeless people around here and it just feels good to give them a hand.

“The fines are a necessary evil. It’s to do with equity – so students will return the items so others can use them.

“But I also think programs like Food for Fines help show that the library and its patrons care about the community we live in and are prepared to do something to help.”

Feher says, “Our services are very much now about long-term outcomes. It’s not about the soup kitchen approach. It’s very much about how we support Australians who are in need, to live a life that is self-sufficient.

“By donating good, canned food, UTS can be a part of a longer-term solution. So we definitely encourage everyone to take part.”

Fiona Livy
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
The human body is comprised of 20 000 genes, 20 per cent of which are owned by biotech companies. As the international uproar over gene patenting grows louder, Natalie Stoianoff argues the solution lies not in changes to the law, but in rethinking Australia’s medical system.

Can or should human genes, or for that matter any genes, be patentable? What are the implications? Are they any different to other medical or pharmaceutical patents? What are some solutions to the debate?

On 6 September, the Four Corners report, ‘Body Corporate’, focussed on the controversy surrounding the biopharmaceutical company, Myriad’s, patents for the breast cancer genes BRCA 1 and BRCA 2. Recently, the decision of a single judge in the US found the patents were invalid, a significant blow to Myriad and potentially all biotechnology enterprises engaging in genetic research.

It’s understandable this decision is now on appeal.

In Australia, a Senate inquiry into gene patents commenced in November 2008, but the report has been abandoned. With the dissolving of Parliament, the committee decided it couldn’t provide a comprehensive report and is waiting for it to be re-referred for consideration.

Gene patenting is a contentious issue – in the courts, in the Senate and in our homes. However, before you side for or against it’s important to understand what patents are all about.

Yes, they are a monopoly but they are a limited monopoly designed to recognise the efforts of the inventors in our society. Simultaneously, they require those inventors to disclose the details of their inventions for all to see and then use after the (now 20 year) patent period. It’s actually a social contract that has operated in western society for 400 years.

Though competition law has been expected to deal with most issues, there have been inadequacies and abuses, most often associated with the operations of ‘big business’.

To obtain a patent, a set of criteria must be met. Namely, the invention must be novel compared to knowledge known at the time of application, it must be non-obvious to a person skilled in the relevant field of technology (this is also referred to as displaying an inventive step) and it must be useful or industrially applicable.

In Australia, the first question asked is whether the invention is appropriate to patent. Under our World Trade Organization (WTO) obligations, as in other countries like those members of the European Patent Convention, all forms of technology are patentable unless specifically excluded (for example those that are contrary to morality or ordre public).

When first confronted with applications for gene patents, the Australian patent office – IP Australia – has to ask whether the alleged invention is a manner of ‘new manufacture’. This term originates in English patent law found in the Statute of Monopolies of 1623.

In Australia, the leading case interpreting this concept dates back to 1959. National Research Development Corporation vs Commission of Patents (NRDC case) dealt with a new use for a known chemical as a selective herbicide, which rendered fields of fodder crops free of weeds.
The High Court of Australia allowed the patenting of such an invention on the basis that it was an artificially created state of affairs possessing its own economic utility. This may go some way to explaining why the gene patenting debate invokes such a strong reaction.

Genes are complex chemicals made of deoxyribonucleic acid or DNA. They control function, reproduction and development of living organisms and accordingly exist naturally. So how can their isolation, purification and reproduction outside the organism be equated with an invention? Surely this is a mere discovery process of something that is naturally occurring?

The NRDC case notes the difficulty in making a distinction between discovery and invention – if it’s merely abstract information without practical application, then there is no invention. IP Australia accepts that DNA and genes which have for the first time been identified and copied from their natural source and then manufactured synthetically as unique materials with definite industrial use, are patentable.

The same arguments apply to natural product chemistry where active chemical agents have been discovered and recreated synthetically to produce the pharmaceuticals we use today. In a 1988 joint statement of the patent offices of Japan, the US and Europe, it was considered that purified natural products are not regarded as products of nature, or discoveries, because they do not in fact exist in nature in an isolated form.

Rather, they are regarded, for patent purposes, as biologically-active substances of chemical compounds and eligible for patenting on the same basis as other chemical compounds. A similar logic could be applied to genes.

Certainly, patents for pharmaceuticals have come under fire internationally, particularly during the height of the African HIV/AIDS crisis. This particular experience highlighted the lack of accessibility to expensive life-saving patented drugs.

However, action was taken by the United Nations and WTO to enable cheaper access to these life-saving pharmaceuticals through a modification to compulsory licence rules available through the patent system. Perhaps this is the mechanism to be pursued in relation to life-saving genetic tests?

Even if there is a change in policy which results in excluding genes, per se, from patentability, the application of those genes in, for example therapeutic methods, genetic tests and the like, could still be patented if the other elements of patentability are met.

In fact, where gene patents have been revoked it has often been due to a lack of novelty or inventive step or a failure to properly define the invention being patented. The same holds true for applications involving genes. Consequently, this would not change the accessibility to the tests for the breast cancer gene unless the test itself was considered to not meet the criteria for patentability.

What is required is a rethinking of our medical system and a policy determination from our government to perhaps subsidise such tests in much the same way that our pharmaceuticals are subsidised through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

While governments are not willing to take the lead in funding research into human health through to clinical trials, manufacture and distribution, we are left with the private sector doing it for society. Companies are, after all, there to make a profit.

These issues and others relating to private versus public interests, are the theme of discussion at the Balancing Rights and Interests in the 21st Century Roundtable Conference to be held by the Intellectual Property Media and Communications Research Network in the Faculty of Law on 29 and 30 November.

Professor Natalie Stoianoff
Chair of the Intellectual Property Media and Communications Research Network and Director of the Master of Industrial Property Program
Faculty of Law

Photographer (N Stoianoff): Jessica Evans
DNA image: iStockphoto
Barcode image: Paul Boosey
“Information is knowledge and knowledge is power.”

Sessional Lecturer in Education, Sue O’Neill, is a firm believer that “education is the key to change. If you want a country to move forward, you have to educate people.”

It’s an approach she has applied inside and outside the lecture theatre.

Last April, O’Neill received a UTS Learning and Teaching Award and in July, an Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) citation. Both recognised her success in transferring the theory in her Managing Challenging Behaviours, Classroom Management, and Environmental Education classes into practice.

O’Neill describes receiving the UTS award as one of the most fulfilling moments of her career.

The idea came about in 2008 when O’Neill, her husband, Michael, and two sons, Jack and Kyle, were backpacking through Africa. After spending two weeks in Botswana and Zimbabwe, the family spent their final three weeks in Tanzania.

As is her habit on every overseas adventure, O’Neill spent one afternoon visiting a local primary school in North East Tanzania – Kitopeni Primary School.

“I got to visit the classes and the kids, which was great. I even ended up giving an impromptu geography lesson to a senior class. However, the basic facilities teachers and students were working in made me wonder how their kids could get ahead in this world; education is the solution to poverty.”

As we left for the day, I asked the principal what her one wish for the school was. Her reply was ‘electricity’. The nearest power pole was about 50 to 100 meters away.

We exchanged email addresses and I said I would see what I could do to make her dream come true.

On my return home, the principal emailed me a quote to wire-up the whole school with electricity. It was close to $10 000. Not the sort of cash most of us have lying around for charitable donations!

“So when Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Equity), Shirley Alexander, rang me and told me I had won the UTS Learning and Teaching Award, I fell off my perch.”

Lecturer in the Institute for Interactive Media and Learning and ALTC liaison officer, Katrina Waite, assists in the preparation of applications for both the UTS and ALTC awards. She says, “The UTS Learning and Teaching Citations and Awards highlight the value the university places on sustained and exemplary efforts in learning and teaching, by both permanent and sessional staff.

“They’re designed to provide a pathway to national recognition through the Australian Learning and Teaching Council Citations and Teaching Awards schemes.”

People Power

Real-world education and real-world impact. Sue O’Neill shows how life outside the lecture theatre is better preparing students for the workforce, and how life within UTS is helping her overseas colleagues to succeed.
Recipients of the UTS awards each receive $3000, which they can use however they choose. Some may use the money to attend a conference or purchase resources, but it’s really the individual’s choice.

For O’Neill, the choice was easy. “I was really quite chuffed that I had the freedom to do with the prize money what I felt was right for me. I knew I could at last get the ball rolling. “I’m pleased that I can use it to further the teaching of my colleagues in Tanzania.”

Though the process of transferring the money to Tanzania is “really tricky and complicated”, the donation has already made an impact. Three classrooms now have electricity and O’Neill hopes the rest will be wired up by the end of the year.

‘After that, the next challenge in the puzzle is to look at what sort of sustainable power sources we can get for the school. It’s one thing for someone like me to come in and say, ‘look, here’s your wish, here’s your electricity’, but they need to be able to pay for it.

“I’m hoping there are some great minds at UTS that can help me figure out what the right solution is.

“There are 1400 kids in this school and about 18 teachers. The least I can do is try and give them some basic materials to work with.

“Just imagine having to operate a classroom without electricity. Here, most teachers would refuse to work like that. But over there, that’s the reality.”

Last month, O’Neill’s work was further recognised when she received a high commendation for the Social Inclusion Award at UTS’s Human Rights Awards.

“I want our future generations of teachers, both here and overseas, to come out really positive and with fantastic knowledge about what they can do. I not only want to help them make learning for their students fun and engaging so the kids want to be there, but so they really enjoy turning up to work every day just as much as I do.”

Here in Australia, O’Neill is achieving her goal by giving students practical, problem solving skills they can use in their classrooms. It’s most evident in the elective subject she teaches, Managing Challenging Behaviours.

In the class, which O’Neill describes as “my real niche”, students work in teams to develop a plan to change a child’s difficult behaviour. The approach mirrors the collaboration required in schools.

“I actually want to try and connect it to some really good, practical, research-based approaches. It can be as boring as chewing on a dry Sao, so it’s been my challenge to make it really interesting.

“I use written scenarios, but they’re often based on the kids I worked with during the 10 years I spent as an Itinerant Support Teacher (Behaviour) with the NSW Department of Education.

“I try to create a really diverse range of challenging behaviours, like managing impulsive or obsessive behaviours or even quirky personalities. They’re the sorts of things graduates are likely to come across in any classroom.

“That way, when they’re faced with these sorts of behaviours, rather than going ‘oh my gosh what am I going to do?’, they’re going to be able to approach it with a really cool, calm head. They’re going to say, ‘right this is just a problem I have to solve and I actually know how to solve it’.

The feedback I get by the end of the subject is that although they might be rattled initially, they’re going to be okay. They know there is an answer.

O’Neill attributes much of her success to listening to her students.

“I always encourage my students when they’re doing the Student Feedback Survey, to actually give me as much feedback as they can in the comment section, whether it’s good, bad or ugly, because I want to do better.

“They’re paying good money to be enrolled in these subjects and I feel like I’ve got a responsibility to make sure that I give them, as much as I can, what they need to know and to make it as practical and useful as possible.”

O’Neill says one of her current fourth-year students is planning to volunteer as a teacher at Kitopeni Primary School in 2011.

“I plan to make a trip back next year too.”

This time, she hopes to have a suitcase filled with teaching resources donated by her UTS colleagues.

“These kids can’t paint or draw because paper’s at a premium. So I plan to take books but also paint brushes and powdered paint they can mix with water.”

O’Neill says, “It’s unfathomable for most people to realise how tough teachers in developing countries do it.

“Individuals can make a difference; it takes determination though.”

Fiona Livy
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer (S O’Neill): Katia Sanfilippo
Photograph (Tanzanian school children) supplied by: Sue O’Neill

“It’s unfathomable for most people to realise how tough teachers in developing countries do it.”
“MANY OF THESE WOMEN ACTUALLY ATTRIBUTED HEART DISEASE TO STRESS, DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY – ALL PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS”
Cardiovascular disease kills more women than breast cancer. It’s a scary statistic; one that the Centre for Cardiovascular and Chronic Care (CCCC) is hoping to change by developing cardiac awareness programs targeting women from different cultural, social and linguistic backgrounds.

In 2008, 47 per cent of heart disease deaths in Australia were among women. Though strategies like cardiac rehabilitation are widely endorsed by, and funded through, Australia’s health care system, it is estimated that only 20 per cent of women access them following a heart attack, heart failure or stroke.

CCCC Director and Professor of Cardiovascular and Chronic Care, Professor Patricia Davidson, and her team have been working with a range of organisations, including the Heart Foundation, to better tailor and target interventions for women.

“Improving the health of women with cardiovascular disease encompasses a lot of things related to cultural issues, supporting behaviour change, that sort of thing.

“Women require a specific approach. The reasons for this are complex and multi-faceted and range from access to transport through to the fact that many women feel uncomfortable doing exercises in front of men.

“Social support and addressing psychological factors are also more important for women coping and adjusting to heart disease. For example, they like the support they receive from other women in a group setting.”

Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, Dr Michelle DiGiacomo, is working with the Aboriginal Medical Service Western Sydney (AMSWS) to develop a culturally-appropriate smoking cessation intervention. They’re looking at issues associated with stress management as well as addressing cardiovascular risk reduction in Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander women.

“We have to recognise that Aboriginal women have a range of different issues they’re dealing with, and sometimes people prioritise their health issues very differently. They can also fail to recognise some of the symptoms and the severity, signs and behaviours they’re doing or not doing.

“The health and wellbeing of their family is also quite important. Aboriginal people really prioritise family and the children – especially when women are caregivers for multiple children, such as grandmothers who often take care of kids.

“I think this is the case for women in general though – they prioritise their family’s health and needs before their own.”

Though DiGiacomo and Davidson helped the AMSWS develop their ongoing quit-smoking program, Butt Busters, back in 2005, the percentage of Indigenous Australian smokers is currently 45 per cent.

“The number of smokers has really come down amongst the non-Aboriginal population – it currently stands at 21 per cent. We haven’t seen the same result with the Aboriginal population. That’s a huge issue and related to access and the appropriateness of services.”

One solution is the Tidda Girls Women’s Exercise Program. It started soon after the quit-smoking program because “it was something the Aboriginal community wanted to do,” says DiGiacomo.

“The Aboriginal Health Workers coordinated the whole thing. When the AMSWS closed for the day, we would set up our steppers, weights and walking track and the certified cardiac rehab nurse would take people through and lead the circuit class. Women came every week.”

The need to explore coronary heart disease (CHD) risks in culturally-diverse populations is encouraged by UTS lecturer, Dr Leila Gholizadeh. She has been examining the concept of CHD risk perception in Middle Eastern women and how it is underpinned by cultural beliefs and practices.

After conducting focus groups with Turkish, Persian and Arab Middle Eastern migrant women, Gholizadeh found they attributed their risk of obtaining CHD to psychological status rather than lifestyle factors.

“I noticed that many of these women actually attributed heart disease to stress, depression and anxiety – all psychological factors – rather than lifestyle factors, such as hypertension, cholesterol and so on.

“It tells me that stress, depression and anxiety are the main issues for these women at this stage. This is something they experience in everyday life, so they can see only these factors as the main reasons for any other major disease, including cardiovascular disease.”

Gholizadeh also identified financial and social factors as barriers to reducing CHD risk amongst Middle Eastern women.

“In this culture, men usually make the decisions for women’s health issues, and this is a big cultural barrier for women accessing the available services. Some of them also believed in fatalism; so they weren’t willing to utilise the services, thinking that if something is going to happen it will happen and they can’t actually do anything about it.”

Gholizadeh says the main reason for conducting her study was that health professionals had identified Middle Eastern women weren’t attending cardiac rehabilitation services.

“If my applications for funding grants are successful, I hope to do more study to improve the perception of risk and awareness of heart disease amongst these women.”

CCCC Project Director, Phillip Newton, says this type of research ensures the centre (which recently moved to UTS and is now a joint research venture with Curtin University), remains at the cutting-edge of cardiovascular and chronic care research.

“We have an interdisciplinary approach where we incorporate medical, psychological and social sciences to address complex problems.

“The centre is really about trying to improve the management of cardiovascular and chronic diseases and hopefully improve the quality of life for people with these diseases. Despite the improvements, there’s still a long way to go.”

Katia Sanfilippo
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
"To make it in the world of design you have to put in 200 per cent, be stubborn and develop rhino-toughness to sustain the knockbacks. And you have to want to make a difference."

Fashion Lecturer in the School of Design, Armando Chant, certainly ticks the boxes as an accomplished designer. Who else but the best is handpicked to work on collections by Alexander McQueen and Versace?

Chant’s talent was recognised in 1997 when, after completing a degree at the University of Brighton in the UK, he was accepted into London’s Royal College of Art.

"Although there were many highlights at Brighton, I truly loved the royal college; they were two of the best years of my life."

Not only did the royal college give Chant the opportunity to refine his skills, it opened doors for him to work in his dream destination: Italy.

"At the college they had an old-school wooden box full of little cards that had the details of where every student had moved to. I copied the cards, flew to Italy, rocked up at these addresses and said, ‘right, you don't know me, but I’ve just graduated from the royal college and I want to work for you!’ I look back now and I think, ‘wow this is it for me. I treat my students not as students but rather as young emerging designers. I insist that if they want to compete alongside the labels from the UK, France, and Italy, then their work, now, has to stand up to that level.”

As the 2010 graduate fashion show’s creative director, Chant is charged with ensuring the work shown on the night will excite the industry and public attending. Given students in previous shows have been offered interviews with designers like Belinda Seper and Nicola Finetti, it’s a role that Chant isn’t taking lightly.

"The fashion show is a wonderful opportunity for the final-years to meet with industry. They can stand up with confidence, say who they are and show off their work. And, as their teacher, when their garments come onto the catwalk it's such a satisfying feeling; they’ve done it and it looks amazing.”


Alex Hyvonen
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Open sewers, 'bucket baths' and a seemingly endless supply of spicy food; life in India is a far cry from Andrew McMillan’s comfortable upbringing in Cremorne, Sydney.

The business and civil and environmental engineering graduate moved to India last January to take up a placement through Engineers Without Borders (EWB).

Within his first two days in Hyderabad, in southern India, McMillan recalls seeing an elderly woman defecate on a public footpath and a child filter contaminated well-water through a cloth.

At the time, McMillan says, "I hoped, perhaps optimistically, that it would be disinfected with a chlorine tablet if it was to be used for drinking."

Despite some differences in hygiene and cultural practices, McMillan says, "I can’t say I ever really felt particularly challenged by that stuff."

Perhaps that’s because the 29-year-old has spent the past seven years helping disadvantaged people here in Australia.

Before leaving to work with EWB, the young engineer was coordinator of one of the St Vincent De Paul Society’s Night Patrol teams, which offer food, drinks and conversation to those living on the streets.

He was also part of a home-visit program in Woolloomooloo and Darlinghurst and was a crisis telephone counsellor with Lifeline.

The same empathy led McMillan overseas.

"Whilst studying, I wondered how I might be able to use the engineering discipline that I loved in a development context."

"I volunteered with EWB as they have a good community-based development philosophy and they had a great position available in my field of water management."

McMillan’s placement began in India. From January to June he lived in Hyderabad while working on improving small village water treatment plants. In July he moved to Bharatpur, Nepal where he is now working with the non-government organisation, Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH), to develop a water safety plan for the rural village of Ayodhyapuri.

The plan will help locals prevent source water contamination, treat water sources so they meet quality targets, and prevent re-contamination of drinking water during storage, distribution and handling.

While most of McMillan’s time is spent in NEWAH’s Bharatpur regional office, he has also undertaken some field work.

"Ayodhyapuri is only a 40 kilometre trip from Bharatpur, but it can take up to six hours to get there. You need to take a couple of local buses, the roofs of which are usually covered with people, and there’s a river crossing by buffalo cart in between."

Last month, McMillan was awarded the 2010 Young Alumni Award in recognition of his work. He was nominated by his childhood friend, Donnie Maclurcan, who accepted the award on his behalf.

"Being away has strengthened my feeling that we shouldn’t live in ignorance of the issues that are faced by many in this part of the world,” says McMillan.

"It’s somewhat overwhelming to try to grasp India. The size, complexity and exoticness are almost inexplicable.

"Though I couldn’t do without my laptop, I’ve learnt that it’s quite okay to not have a fridge, TV, shower – ‘bucket baths’ are the norm – sometimes power, as well as other home comforts.

"In my opinion, this is real-world engineering at its best."

Fiona Livy
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographs supplied by: Andrew McMillan
Models of success
Index 2010 is the School of Architecture’s end-of-year exhibition. Now in its second year, the curated display is a showcase of up-and-coming architects and a chance for top graduates to meet with industry. Senior Lecturer in the School of Architecture, Tarsha Finney, and Divisional Marketing Manager for Boral Building Products, Glenn Simpkin, talk to U: about why the event is so unique.

**TARSHA FINNEY**

Some of the innovative work to be displayed is not what you’d expect.

We have large models and renderings coming out of a studio in Beirut where some of our students are working. They’re based around the critical argument of transport-orientated design, and look at the proposal for a Mediterranean union created by a high-speed rail link around the edges of the Mediterranean Sea, through cities like Beirut and Tripoli in Lebanon.

We might also show some of the first-year work. They’ve been building huge laser-cut plywood models of ideas for an island, and how to create density – lots of inhabitants or housing units – in a very small space.

I’ve been one of the curators of the end-of-year show for two years. I reckon we get at least 1000 people come through over the three-day event, starting with the opening on 3 December. This year it’s all going to be in Kensington Street, in the Clare Hotel, and in a series of spaces including the street itself – we’re working with the City of Sydney and Redfern police to close the street off.

Index 2010 differs from other architecture schools’ end-of-year exhibitions because we curate the work, rather than present all of the graduating students’ work – which is what the other schools in Sydney do.

This year there’ll be a series of critical arguments, such as the cultivation of density. Density used to be driven by the neighbourhood unit. Now we’re saying it’s around transport hubs where multi-story residential developments are going up. Each theme will be answered by work from students in first year as well as students in the masters program, demonstrating a diversity of approaches to the problem.

The Index Forum is something new too. Held on the Friday afternoon at 1pm, the three 45-minute conversations will involve key decision makers in relevant fields from around Australia. For example, we’re hoping to get together each of the state government architects, sponsored by Boral and other key supporters, to discuss how one drives density and where the successes have been for different cities around Australia.

The big night for our top-performing graduates is the preview event where we invite sponsors and industry. They’re hungry for top-quality graduates. Last year it was really successful – all of our top grads got work out of it. But I think Index 2010 is important for raising the profile of the School of Architecture in general, and for strengthening our relationship with the profession.

**GLENN SIMPKIN**

Our involvement with UTS’s architecture shows began last year when UTS approached us. Given our strategy to develop new and innovative products and to engage the architectural community, it made sense to be involved – young professionals will either use our current portfolio of products or discuss with us what they require for the future.

UTS’s annual exhibition of student work is an important opportunity for both students and industry to meet, and to compare and consolidate interests. For example, given the great range of innovative designs that will be on display, Boral is very interested in the types of buildings and construction materials the students feel would be appropriate to deliver their designs. This is critical for us to feed into our new product development process.

This is why we like to work with institutions like the School of Architecture at UTS. Of course, it’s important for us to have the students exposed to our brand, but more than that, it gives us the opportunity to see what the next dynamic generation of students are interested in, and therefore what they’re going to be pushing into the practices they join in the next few years.

UTS is a progressive university focussed on large local and international urban infrastructural projects. Boral is, of course, really interested in this too. Although we get an understanding of markets like the USA and South-East Asia through having a local presence, the trends that may be coming out of Australia, as demonstrated through this exhibition, could be relevant to these operations.

Our company is a sponsor of the Index Forum and I’ll also be a participant in one of the forum conversations. We’ll be looking at the relationship of the School of Architecture (as a general concept) to the field of architecture and the construction industry. One of the things really demanded of the school is research output – where do you find research output in a skills-based practice like architecture, and where do we find that within an educational environment? We’ll be talking about where the relevancy is for us.

As a site of research, schools of architecture open up the possibility for new ways of thinking through traditional building and construction systems, and for promoting heavier materials like the ones Boral specialises in. I think the forums will create that much-needed link between the academic and commercial worlds.

Katia Santillippo
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
James Hitchcock wants to put the fun back into protesting. Environmental activism has been a part of his life since high school but now he’s branching out, combining this passion with his latent musical talents to put some heart, and soul, back into activism.

“I’ve started playing the bass drum in a marching band. We’re all still learning but it really is a lot of fun.

“Protesting about environmental issues can leave you a bit jaded and this really restores the balance; you’re still interacting in a public space. Hopefully people will respond positively to the music and, as a full-time science research student, I get to use a different part of my brain.”

Hitchcock’s research comes at a crucial point in Australian water management. Earlier this year he was awarded the Peter Cullen Postgraduate Scholarship, established by the NSW Government to honour the memory of renowned water scientist, Professor Peter Cullen. The freshwater ecologist had a significant impact on Australian water resource management and (much like his latest scholarship recipient) was a passionate advocate for Australia’s natural waterways.

“Professor Cullen was a founding member of the Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists, advising governments on how to address a dwindling water supply and ongoing drought. The Wentworth group have been instrumental in shaping the Murray Darling Basin Authority Plan, which will be released this month. It’s tipped to be the greatest shake-up in water management in Australian history. It aims to return water to the environment to restore the health of the Murray River and its parched estuary, the Coorong.”

It’s fitting then that under the mantle of this scholarship, and at such a critical time for water-sharing plans and river management, Hitchcock will be conducting his research into the estuarine inflows in the Bega and Clyde Rivers, in southern NSW.

“An aspect of the scholarship which I’m really looking forward to is the mentoring program run by the Wentworth group.

“It’s a chance to be able to chat with leading thinkers and learn a completely different set of skills because eventually I want to work in water policy and management, to draw the link between science and how it can be applied.

“It’s an enormous privilege to win this award and a fantastic opportunity for a young scientist;” and for a young activist hoping to hone his skills in the field and on the drums.

Marea Martlew
Faculty of Science
Photographer: Joanne Saad
At first, one might think being a ‘happy refugee’ is oxymoronic. Are not asylum seekers supposed to be starving, helpless and eternally sorrowful? Anh Do’s honest writing style, however, weaves together his own stories with the living, throbbing hopes and dreams of three generations of his family. He brings charm to the typical tale of those seeking refuge and making a new home in Australia. Do retells the heartbreaking struggles of his family, writing about their life-threatening journey across the seas and the bravery of his single mother raising three children on sweatshop wages. For a book titled The Happiest Refugee, Do sure tells some appalling stories. The comedian also brings light to the pressures of being a migrant kid growing up in a multicultural, but dominantly white, society. Yet, despite these serious issues, Do sees the funny side and convinces the reader that, ‘Hey, this kid’s had a great life’. Though Do writes in the polished manner of a seasoned comic, it is his honesty and humility that shines throughout his memoirs. You’ll find yourself crying at one page and laughing hysterically at the next.

Language as a Local Practice is truly a fascinating work which disrupts established ways of looking at language, society and various everyday practices. The fascination starts with the cover picture by British-Nigerian artist, Yinka Shonibare, who adapts a famous painting of a Scottish clergyman skating on a lake (the figure is headless so as to remove any questions of race and identity). Language as a Local Practice discusses how elements that are part of our everyday landscape have local-(global) linguistic meanings: graffiti on a church wall, ATMs around the corner, Kerala elephants, and hip-hop. Each is local but represents linguistic mobility at the global level. The book deals with the spatiotemporal impact on local language practices and with the agentive possibility of change through practices. One of its most impressive features is that it presents new ways of conceptualising language; rather than conceiving language as prior systems tied to ethnicity, territory or nations. Pennycook suggests they are practices emerging from the process of local interactions. In this view, all language practices are local. This interpretation relocates language practice in time and space, puts new senses on history and location, and demonstrates new ways of conceptualising language.

Appraising Research offers a valuable contribution to the study and teaching of academic English. Academic English presents several challenges; it’s not at the level of text structure (the formal stages of the argument) that users of English have problems, but at the level of discourse. One of the key features of academic writing is establishing and maintaining a position in relation to the argument. We are taught to be objective, to avoid using the language of opinion (‘I think’, ‘in my opinion’, and first person pronouns, ‘I’, ‘me’, ‘we’) and instead exercise more caution and distance. On the other hand, we are expected to adopt a position and state that clearly and unambiguously. This position needs to be an appraisal and evaluation of reference texts drawn together to construct and frame the adopted thesis. This is not an easy task – cognitively or linguistically. Appraising Research is a fluent and thorough work, comprehensively covering all aspects of the academic English genre including disciplinary differences between the humanities, the sciences and social sciences. To maintain and support the higher education industry we need teachers who are appropriately qualified to deliver quality academic English courses. Appraising Research is an excellent resource.

David Larbalester
INSEARC

Susan Hood is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences’ Language Studies Group. The applied linguist specialises in language and literacy teacher education, academic literacy and discourse analysis.

Anh Do graduated from UTS in 2000 with a Bachelor of Business. Do’s autobiography, The Happiest Refugee, is his debut book.
Until January, the Powerhouse Museum will be home to 12 hand-crafted objects created as part of the Creative Industries Innovation Centre’s (CIIC) Make It! initiative.

The CIIC, which is hosted by UTS, is part of the Australian Government’s Enterprise Connect program. It provides business advice and support services to creative businesses.

Earlier this year, the CIIC embarked on the nation-wide Make It! project to coincide with the launch of its website, creativeinnovation.net.au.

“We wanted to build a dialogue with the creative industries across Australia in order to let them know that the Creative Industries Innovation Centre was open for business, and to outline how we could help,” says CIIC Programs and Partnerships Director, Adam Blake.

The centre sent boxes of Staedtler Fimo modelling clay to a range of creative Australian companies including craft makers, jewellers, design agencies, film makers, performing arts organisations and publishers.

Recipients were asked to make an object that represents their creative practice.

“There was a really wide range of people who submitted, and the submissions were absolutely incredible, but incredibly different,” says Blake. “Each uniquely represented elements that shape creative work from both business and artistic perspectives.”

It was this positive response that motivated the CIIC to team up with its partners, the Powerhouse Museum and Staedtler, to organise the display.

Blake says, “The project is a vehicle for us to reward and promote creative leaders, but we can use that message to start talking about creativity and innovation, which is a big part of the initiative that we’re funded through.

“The exhibition fits with our aim to put creative industries on the map and to give us something simple and tangible to do that with.

“It’s an exciting way to engage them with what we’re doing. The project is a unique way of continuing to both engage creative industries and then promote them back out to the world.”

Blake says, the Make It! project and display are important because they show the CIIC understands creativity, and they reinforce the centre’s role in the creative industries.

One exhibition contributor is Sydney-based designer, Damien Butler. His model was inspired by an interior space for a bar he was designing during the Make It! campaign.

“I decided to use it as a model-making tool for designing some of the furniture that would be in that space so it was a playful way of expressing my creativity on a project I was working on.”

Sydney-based strategic design consultancy, Digital Eskimo, is another company whose model will be on display.

Principal and Creative Director, David Gravina, says, “As a creative problem solving methodology, design is exploratory yet systematic, and as such it allows us to repeatedly generate new ideas, quickly prototype multiple possibilities, and ultimately create new outcomes that did not exist before.

“Design, and design thinking, have the potential to amplify humankind’s creativity so that we may embrace, and even solve, the messy and complex problems of our times.”

For more information, visit www.creativeinnovation.net.au

Brendan Wong
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Journalism)/ International Studies

Object created by: Digital Eskimo
Image supplied by: Creative Industries Innovation Centre
NOVEMBER

1 Make it! display
Until January 2011
Powerhouse Museum, level 3, Cafe
Showcase, 500 Harris Street, Ultimo
www.creativeinnovation.net.au

3 Clare Burton memorial lecture
5.30pm to 7.30pm
The Chancellery, Tower, level 4
e: joanna.leonard@uts.edu.au

5 Seeking investment and applying for commercial grants
11.30am to 12 noon
Building 2, level 7, room 6
e: leigh.angus@uts.edu.au

9 Attracting industry partners to grants: Pitfalls and rewards
11.30am to 12 noon
Building 2, level 7, room 6
e: leigh.angus@uts.edu.au

10 Exam anxiety workshop
12 noon to 1pm
Building 2, level 7, room 110
e: student.services@uts.edu.au

12 Spring semester exams
Until 3 December

18 EHS for supervisors and managers
9.30am to 11.30am
HR training room 2, building 10,
level 6, room 430
e: jann.joy@uts.edu.au

19 The importance of legal documents within the commercialisation process
11.30am to 12 noon
Building 2, level 7, room 6
e: leigh.angus@uts.edu.au

24 EHS essentials
10am to 11am
HR training room 2, building 10,
level 6, room 430
e: jann.joy@uts.edu.au

26 Sharing the love: Offshoot benefits of research commercialisation
11.30am to 12 noon
Building 2, level 7, room 6
e: leigh.angus@uts.edu.au

29 Food for fines
Until 19 December
Blake and Kuring-gai campus libraries

30 UTSpeaks: Killing skippy
6pm for a 6.30pm start
University Hall, building 4, level 2
e: robert.button@uts.edu.au

MY MAIN HOPE, for the immediate future, is that this government overturns voluntary student unionism. It is unacceptable that student organisations continue to struggle to provide valuable services and facilities on campus. Students deserve the best education in and out of the classroom!" 
Felicity Evans, Student, Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Journalism)

“Both parties made it clear that they're happy to enforce systems that give freedom to capital, not people. I've got plenty of hope for the future, it just doesn't have anything to do with the government. Or the 'country' for that matter.” 
Ben Schuman, Team Member, Scholarships Office, Student Services Unit

“I'm hoping the government can look into important issues such as technology, especially with the broadband network. Our ailing public transport system also needs to be fixed somewhat as it's nowhere near as efficient and stable as other major cities in the world.” 
Raymond Lam, Graduation and Ceremonial Officer, Governance Support Unit

“'As a 'Yank,' and recent permanent resident of Australia, I don't know what to make of the last federal election, although I did find it strange that, leading up to the election, the Prime Minister could be removed from office without a vote in parliament, the cabinet etcetera. Long-term, I think a Bill of Rights or Human Rights Act should be considered for Australia, although I am just becoming familiar with the arguments for and against.” 
Mark Tirpak, Student Engagement and Development Officer, Student Services Unit

“With political parties having enjoyed absolute governing mandates for so long, it will be hard for politicians and citizens alike to accept that Australians may have become more pluralist over big issues like climate change, population and nuclear power.” 
Stuart Nettleton, Senior Lecturer in the School of Systems, Management and Leadership, Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology

Email your events for March to u@uts.edu.au by Monday 31 January 2011.

WHAT’S ON

MOVING FORWARD

The 2010 federal election has, undoubtedly, been one of Australia’s most contentious. As the nation comes to grips with a minority Labor Government, we want to know your hopes and fears for the country’s future.

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RESEARCH IS INTEGRAL TO ACHIEVING UTS’S VISION – TO BE A WORLD-LEADING UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY. BUILDING ON AND PROVIDING THE DETAIL UNDERPINNING UTS’S STRATEGY, RESEARCH 2010-2015 WILL HELP US DEVELOP A GLOBAL REPUTATION FOR EXCELLENCE.

FEATURING SIX KEY THEMES – HEALTH FUTURES, SUSTAINABILITY AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT, CREATIVE AND CIVIL SOCIETIES, BUSINESS INNOVATION, COMMUNICATION AND INTELLIGENT SYSTEMS, FUTURE SERVICES AND INDUSTRIES – THE NEW RESEARCH STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS UTS’S UNIQUE POSITION WITHIN NSW, AS A UNIVERSITY THAT PRODUCES RESEARCH UNDERPINNED BY TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION.

VISIT WWW.RESEARCH.UTS.EDU.AU/STRENGTHS

Photographer (Smartslab): Kirsty Beilharz
Photographer (computer chip): Chris Bennett
Photographer (Interactivation Studio): Bert Bongers