LIFE BLOOD
Telling water stories

ALICE’S APPROACH TO URBANISM
Cultivating community buy-in

A PLACE TO CALL HOME
Redefining homelessness
EXECUTIVE COLUMN

(R)EVOLUTIONARY THREADS

‘Change’ is one of those words that evokes mixed reactions. Attach it to ‘climate’ or ‘organisation’ or ‘culture’ or ‘management’ and you’re assured vigorous debate. Open any newspaper and you’ll find evidence that change is constant; perhaps not revolutionary change (though certainly it exists in some parts of the world), but certainly evolutionary change.

Likewise, between the pages of *U*: magazine you’ll discover evidence of evolutionary change right here at UTS, where our physical environment is undergoing unprecedented renewal, our technological infrastructure is evolving rapidly and, conscious that the lifeblood of the university – our workforce – must adapt to meet the challenges of the 21st century, we’re actively reshaping our staff profile.

Lasting, beneficial change demands holistic thinking, strategic planning and cohesive action. This is particularly true for large, multifaceted, complex organisations and UTS is no different in this regard. As Chancellor Professor Vicki Sara recently pointed out to staff and students during the UTS Council Town Hall meeting in August, if UTS were listed on the Australian Stock Exchange, it would rank among the ASX Top 200 by market capitalisation. Evolutionary change requires us to draw together a number of threads, masterfully weaving them together to create a scalable, flexible, sustainable future.

The UTS City Campus Master Plan (CMP) illustrates the many and varied threads we’re weaving to shape our future environment. A $1 billion development, the CMP will deliver a $3.2 billion economic boost for NSW. But, as impressive a contribution as that is, it pales compared to the return on investment – tangible and intangible – that UTS can expect as a result of its efforts.

As the City campus evolves in the years ahead, so too will many aspects of university life for students, staff and the community at large. Re-envisioned learning spaces will change the way students interact with lecturers as well as one another. The creative yet strategic deployment of technology will change how we experience our surrounds – visual, aural and tactile. The Ultimo precinct’s cultural renewal, greatly inspired by the CMP development, will further enhance the experience of working and studying at UTS. By 2018, the UTS City campus will be like no other in Australia. I’m sure many would agree that such change can’t come soon enough.

Another good example is the new UTS public website. Set to launch before Autumn semester, the website will break the mould of traditional university websites and, for the first time, provide our external audiences (prospective staff, prospective students, corporate partners, visitors) with a website designed to meet their needs.

These, and many other projects underway at UTS, demand revolutionary thinking. What do we mean when we talk about new work places and spaces? What will be different and what will we do differently? How can we better service the needs of students and staff? How might we undertake research tomorrow? We have been threading together the answers to these and many other questions as we work towards realising the UTS vision; it’s revolutionary thinking for evolutionary change.

Anne Dwyer
Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Corporate Services)

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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
The next issue will be distributed on 7 November 2011.
Send your story ideas, opinions and events to: u@uts.edu.au
Deadline for submissions is 7 October 2011.
When UTS design and international studies graduate Anna Zhu officially launched her freelance photography business at the beginning of this year, it was a one-woman operation. Now, thanks to some sound advice from the Creative Industries Innovation Centre (CIIC), she’s adding a part-time assistant and has long-term plans to take on more staff and move into a larger business premises.

“It’s really exciting,” says Zhu. “And it’s just in the last couple of months I’ve been able to see that far. It’s taken a while to build up the confidence to say, ‘That’s my goal’.”

Having attended two consultations through the CIIC’s Biztro program, Zhu credits business advisers from the UTS-hosted centre with helping her grow her business and shape her vision for the future.

Biztro gives creative businesses the chance to book free one hour consultations to discuss their business. The sessions are held once a month in capital cities around Australia, with occasional sessions also held in regional areas.

“People don’t often have the time, or make the time, to think about their business and plan what they should and shouldn’t do,” says CIIC Business Adviser Tony Shannon.

“I know when I’ve run businesses, if you were sitting there with your feet up on the desk, leaning back in your chair, and the owner asked what you were doing and you said, ‘I’m thinking about the business’, you’d be sacked on the spot.”

Yet Shannon emphasises such planning and reflection is crucial to growing and sustaining successful businesses. Part of his role within the CIIC is assisting people who work in the creative industries to step outside their business, to “look at it and think about it from a bigger picture perspective”.

As part of the Australian Government’s Enterprise Connect program, one of the key functions of the CIIC is delivering a business review service. However, businesses need to turnover more than a million dollars per year to access this advice.

With 93 per cent of Australian creative enterprises turning over less than that threshold, the CIIC recognised the need to deliver business advice to these companies and businesses missing out. The Biztro program was the solution.

To date, Biztro has provided advice to 131 creative businesses Australia-wide, including 65 in NSW. Clients have come from backgrounds including advertising, design, marketing, film, TV and radio, the arts, software and interactive content.

Zhu first used the service in July 2010 and found it invaluable in making the transition from part-time photography and some design work to a full-time photography business. The initial Biztro consultation helped her access information and develop her skills in marketing and running a small business.

In April this year, although her business was gaining clients and turning a steady profit, Zhu felt she wasn’t “taking control, being proactive and chasing opportunities – I was just saying yes to everything”. She attended another Biztro session to help clarify her goals.

This time, the CIIC business adviser helped Zhu become more systematic and log how much time she was spending on different tasks each day. She gained a sense of control that ultimately allowed her to develop her business.

“Before the session, I knew what I had to do this week and maybe next, but the long-term planning just wasn’t there,” she says.

“Now I can see the big picture more clearly.”

The CIIC Biztro consultation is available on the last Friday of every month and is offered in Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth to creative businesses. To find out more, visit creativeinnovation.net.au

Rachael Quigley
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/10/small-business-big-picture
This year’s event has been tagged Ride to UTS Day in order to encourage more staff and students to support bike riding as a fun and increasingly popular mode of transport in the city.

“While it’s not quite as relaxing as a ride through the countryside, cycling to work can help you cut through queues of traffic, stay in shape and give you plenty more energy throughout the day,” says Sustainability Coordinator in the Project Management Office Amber Colhoun.

UTS Union Recreation and Events Manager Amy Isberg is joining forces with Colhoun to ensure Ride to UTS Day is as encouraging as it is enjoyable.

“We’re bringing back well-known Sydney bike fitter Steve Hogg to give an insightful talk on symmetry and understanding how to correctly fit your bike. Steve is a legend both here and overseas, so it’s a real treat having him involved,” says Isberg.

The talk will be held during a healthy and sustainably sourced breakfast at City campus to welcome all riders and allow them to re-fuel for their normal day of work or study.

With plenty to look forward to once the journey is done, what has been organised for the actual ride?

“While cycling in the city is certainly becoming popular, many of us still aren’t confident enough to ride in traffic,” explains Isberg.

“That’s why we’ve organised three Deputy-Vice Chancellors to lead their own ‘bike bus’ for staff and students to join and ride as a group on the day.

“Shirley Alexander, Patrick Woods and Anne Dwyer will be flying the flag for UTS along three different routes.”

Colhoun agrees rider safety is an important issue and points to the shift in support from local councils such as City of Sydney.

“The free ‘cycling in the city’ confidence courses perfectly complement the new green cycle lanes down roads such as Bourke Street. With a little bit of planning and the right skills, it’s a really flexible way to get around,” says Colhoun.

In the lead up to Ride to UTS Day, she’s working with the existing UTS cycling community to run a bike maintenance workshop, showing how to dust off your bike and get it into shape.

Colhoun believes riding is more than a fun, healthy way to get to work.

“More of us on our bikes means less greenhouse gas emissions. While cars, buses and trains rely on fossil fuels, the bicycle really is the most sustainable form of transport.”

So, what are you waiting for? On your bike!

Ride to UTS Day is part of the national Ride to Work Day. Register now at ride2work.com.au

For more information about riding to UTS, visit green.uts.edu.au

Xavier Mayes
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/10/on-your-bike
ALICE’S APPROACH TO URBANISM

Senior Lecturer Tarsha Finney has spent the last three years studying the growing pains of Alice Springs with UTS Master of Architecture students. She believes there’s no quick fix to its lack of affordable and available housing. Finney is calling for cultural engagement and big-picture thinking for the future of this central desert city.

Alice Springs is remote. By road, it’s about 1500 kilometres each way between Adelaide and Darwin; it’s an almost three hour flight from Sydney or Melbourne. And yet, after Sydney and Darwin, Alice Springs – population 29 000 – has some of the highest residential property prices in Australia. To buy an 800 square metre greenfield site (if you can find one) costs around $300 000.

The Northern Territory Government’s response to this is Kilgariff – a new 180 hectare residential development site nine kilometres out of town, tagged to be releasing 75 residential lots of 800 square metres a year by 2012. Why Kilgariff? The answer from territory and local government is, typically, that it’s available.

Availability and affordability of housing has become an issue in Alice Springs for a series of other more complex and interconnected reasons. Urban drift of poorly serviced remote communities into city centres has accelerated recently. Research is yet to be done in establishing to what degree the 2008 Federal Government intervention into the territory has contributed to this more global phenomenon of movement from periphery to core – yet anecdotal evidence suggests it’s having an effect.

There has also been increased demand for housing from the rise in support services to run the programs associated with the intervention. Almost 50 per cent of Alice Springs is employed by some level of government. Kilgariff does appear to answer this need for a freeing up of the residential property market. Yet to see Kilgariff as a solution is making the wrong assumption when it treats housing and its affordability as the urban problem.

Probably the most important issue affecting housing is the fact that it’s only been 10 years since Native Title was determined in favour of the Mbantuarinya-Arrente people on what would have historically been land available for expansion and development around the city.

Ten years is not very long for a city and the territory to get used to a changed political and diplomatic playing field; a field with new key players who have the capacity to say no to new possibilities. Housing then is not the issue – it’s lack of affordability and availability is simply a symptom.

In Alice Springs, the beautiful rigor of the 19th century urban grid, which lays out the CBD of the city, is thrown like a loose net over and between the sacred land constituting the monumental Caterpillar Dreaming of the Arrente people. For these traditional custodians, this is where ancestral beings travelled the land, naming and shaping prominent elements. Therefore
there are very serious disagreements and differences to be negotiated over appropriate land use. These cut to the absolute heart of cultural practice and belief on both sides of the dispute.

There are two scenarios by which Kilgariff will develop as a residential enclave for Alice Springs. It’s a perfect site for affordable short- and long-term social housing. The city needs this urgently on many fronts, one being Alice Springs’ role as a regional health services hub serving nearly 50,000 people across three states.

The health services sector is the largest employer in Alice Springs and a major source of revenue for the city. As incidents of renal failure expand from the current number of around 120 cases a week to 500 in the next few years, Alice Springs will need to provide more (and more affordable) short-term accommodation to support patients visiting for dialyses.

It has been estimated for every one person seeking treatment, six to 11 people accompany them into town. That’s 1000 people per week right now, some sleeping rough post-dialysis because accommodation is either not available or too expensive. As an answer, Kilgariff – out of the way of the main city and out of sight – will become the city’s poverty sink.

In a second scenario, Kilgariff becomes a middle-class, ‘white flight’ neighbourhood; a gated suburb away from the social dysfunction in Alice Springs. This is backed up by the outcomes of the Enquiry by Design held by the Northern Territory Government earlier this year, a two day event that focused on urban design solutions for this new development site.

Here there was a unanimous view reached that ‘excluding public housing in the short-term would encourage a positive start at Kilgariff’. Creating an isolated community away from the social dysfunction episodically erupting in the centre of Alice Springs is equally not the answer to the problem.

What should be considered then is not what kind of housing is needed in Kilgariff, but rather, what kind of city does Alice Springs want to be? There needs to be a process of community-based thinking undertaken about the whole city that asks this question.

This is the real issue, not a lack of housing. If there is no projective strategic vision for a city, how do you cultivate broad community buy-in to a vision of the city’s future?

There’s no incentive for individuals to let go of the easy-reach ‘no’ button. They need to have something to gain by being involved in the process and outcomes, and will therefore be prepared to negotiate over appropriate land uses.

The easy way out for Alice Springs, the traditional landowners, the local council and the Northern Territory Government is to open the pressure valve and develop Kilgariff. But in doing so, they will slowly bleed the urban life out of the city.

The much harder option is to set in place the mechanisms for an inclusive and serious negotiation of conflicting interests and needs such that a city can be developed sustainably over the next 30 to 50 years; socially, economically and environmentally.

The issue in Alice Springs is how we negotiate real difference and yet remain able to live together. At the moment, Kilgariff is an answer to the question of how to live apart.

Tarsha Finney
Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building
Photographer (T Finney): Sophie Howarth
Alice Springs image supplied by: Tarsha Finney
What do you feel is the answer to Alice Springs’ urban density dilemma?
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/10/aleses-approach-to-urbanism
Over 100,000 people are currently homeless in Australia. 16,000 of these people live in the greater Sydney region. New research by Dr Catherine Robinson into the causes and long-term effects of homelessness show understanding personal trauma could be the key to redefining social perceptions and assisting with government and community responses.

Seeing homeless people on the street is part of life in a big city, however too few of us pause to think about how or why these people are without a roof over their heads. Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences’ Cultural Studies Group Catherine Robinson knows there’s much more to homelessness than meets the eye. She’s hoping to deliver society with a new understanding of the issue.

Robinson has spent the last six years investigating how personal trauma and homelessness are intertwined for many Australians. Though local and international research have linked the two, she says there’s still a lack of legitimate scholarly work not only around how emotional being relates to the likelihood of homelessness, but the emotional dimension of being homeless itself.

“There are people in the world who live through horrendous experiences and those experiences shape them in all kinds of ways,” Robinson explains. “I look at issues of traumatisation and the vital role of interpersonal resonance in doing research as a way of actually learning about other people’s experiences.”

An ex-pat Tasmanian living in Sydney, it was Robinson’s reflection on connection to home that drew her into this complex research.

“For me, place has been an incredibly important dimension of how I am in this world and my own sense of belonging and community. Our homes are our sacred places and so too are the relationships we have with the people in them.”

For Robinson, there is a difference between short-term homelessness, which may be due to financial factors, and long-term homelessness, which can happen to people who have fragmented relationships with community, family and friends. These people are often also survivors of lifetime violence and experience ongoing trauma originating from childhood sexual and physical abuse.

“Homelessness is not just about a lack of housing; it’s understanding a person has often become homeless because of traumatic events that have occurred. Therefore, responding with housing solutions doesn’t actually respond to the kind of primal homelessness they’re experiencing,” she says.

Robinson uses the term ‘primal homelessness’ to try to capture the disorienting bodily and emotional dislocations caused by the impacts of complex trauma. She argues not only do some people experience material homelessness and geographical displacement, they also experience bodily and emotional dislocation because of the effects of traumatic events and the pressures of living homeless.

Robinson has been studying other childhood traumas as part of her research. Working in relief youth accommodation for the Oasis Youth Support Network early in her career, she developed an understanding of the effects of childhood trauma and how it can be a key factor in the likelihood of someone experiencing homelessness later in life.
“Most cases of child abuse, both physical and sexual, take place in the home. Violence and abuse starting from birth or uteri concretely contribute to long-term or repeated homelessness in Australia.

“It was my own emotional response to working in the field which spurred much of this research. If I’m traumatised as a witness to people’s experiences, then that reflects just how horrendous those experiences are.”

Based on her findings, Robinson released Beside One’s Self: Homelessness felt and lived. The book examines the deep and ongoing impact such experiences can have on a person.

“My perspective really hinges on my observation that the emotional impacts of homelessness are not well described, understood or included in policy and service responses to the experience of being homeless.”

By delving into the connection between trauma and homelessness, Robinson hopes her research will inspire a dramatic reassessment of government policy, practice and advocacy in the homeless sector, delivering new ideas on how to better respond to the problem.

“The government needs to look beyond food and shelter to a much more skilled response, one that includes an awareness of trauma and how to better provide services for people who are experiencing it.”

“We need to begin looking at the origin of the issue and trace it to work out how to fix it. Providing support to people is absolutely vital.”

Robinson’s most recent project looks at homeless people surviving violence and calls for the development of trauma-informed service provisions in the homeless sector. Funded by the Public Interest Advocacy Centre and the Homeless Persons’ Legal Service (a branch of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre), the project is in collaboration with the UTS Shopfront Monograph Series 6, an initiative that publishes high impact, community-focused research articles.

“Homelessness has been written about extensively and with the recent census, there has been a renewed focus on the importance of counting homeless people and getting that snapshot view. Further research is needed to qualitatively capture the emotional suffering central to homelessness in order to consider how best to respond.”

She is confident of the government, services and community’s capacity to engage with the emotional and bodily causes and experiences of homelessness and hopes this will instigate change.

“When I think about what it would mean to be placeless, to have no connection to landscape, to have ties to place and people and community completely ruptured, I’m inspired to do something to help governments and the broader community understand and find a solution. I hope that’s what my research will achieve.”

Kirsten Low
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Public Communication)
Photograph (C Robinson): self supplied
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/a-place-to-call-home
What does water mean to us? Many things, as those involved in the unique community-driven film project Water Stories have found. Two Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) researchers have paired with professional filmmakers and Western Sydney residents to develop a powerful story about water in the landscape and the part it plays in our lives.

Water is an element we can all relate to. Much of our body is made of it. We build our civilisations near, even on, water. With no uncertainty, it’s an element woven into our societies and cultures.

So perhaps it’s not so strange that since June this year, a diverse bunch of Western Sydney-siders have been sharing, commenting and voting on ideas to develop a short documentary exploring what water means to them in their community.

Their input on each process of the documentary – from shaping the script to helping choose the music and title – occurs in workshops and online, with help from professional filmmakers.

It all began when ISF researchers Jade Herriman and Katie Ross responded to a call by the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) for cultural projects as part of their Water in the Landscape program. The initiative aims to get the people of Western Sydney thinking and talking about the water all around them and how it affects their quality of life.

"Where is the water in Western Sydney? How do people interact with it? We saw this as a great opportunity to do something quite creative and innovative," explains Ross.

"Katie and I both have a background in sustainability education," says Herriman, "and we’re interested more and more about people’s understandings and beliefs, and how stories about the world actually influence what we do and think."

Ross and Herriman brainstormed different ways to engage with the communities, wanting the project to involve collaborative decision making. In a light-bulb moment, they brought on board Kylee Ingram, founder of Australian Documentaries.

Ross knew Ingram had been dreaming up an idea of crowd-sourced documentary filmmaking, and through their collaboration, Crowd TV was born.

Hosted online, Crowd TV is an experimental hybrid of user generated content and professional filmmaking. A junction where minds meet, the concept is to share ideas for documentaries based on personal experiences, insights and concerns. Members are actively involved and encouraged to work together in each stage of the documentary making processes.

Ingram, who started out in sports television, became concerned by environmental problems while travelling for work and decided to change direction. After completing a master’s degree in sustainable development, she set up Australian Documentaries to help NGOs and government communicate messages around sustainability.

In creating Crowd TV, Ingram hopes exploring issues creatively and at a grassroots level will help build healthier and more resilient communities.
“THE PROJECT IS MORE ABOUT CONVERSATIONS THAN MAKING A FILM. THE FOCUS IS ON WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON, NOT WHAT DIVIDES US.”

Water Stories is the first project to use the Crowd TV platform, yet – if the reaction from those involved is anything to go by – it won't be the last.

Local community member Nilmini De Silva got involved after attending a workshop on the project in Parramatta. Having worked in the water management field for 20 years, she was intrigued by the unique approach and savoured the opportunity to step away from a technical viewpoint.

Her idea for the overall theme of the documentary, ‘Water and culture: the lifeblood of our planet’, was chosen by public vote in pre-production. “I think people have been intrinsically linked to water since the beginning of civilisation. It’s the one substance we can’t seem to live without,” she says.

De Silva has always been drawn to water. “I feel a spiritual connection to it. I’m mesmerised by the sounds of a waterfall, would rather hike along a creek than anywhere else and love spending summer days walking along a beach and splashing in the ocean.”

While De Silva found collaborating with strangers a little outside her comfort zone, it soon became natural for everyone to openly and enthusiastically share their stories.

“The project is more about conversations than making a film, and they’re happening at different stages in different ways,” says Herriman.

“The focus is on what we have in common, not what divides us. Crowd TV is a safe space,” she explains. “Rather than asking, ‘What’s your stance on this issue?’ and people having to stake a claim one way or the other, they can drift towards ideas they find interesting.”

Ross believes Water Stories has been a powerful and effective way of bringing various parts of the community together. Through the Crowd TV process, people have interacted with those they never would have otherwise encountered.

“At the launch, everyone will have the chance to meet each other face-to-face and hopefully continue the connections they’ve developed after the project is finished.”

Filming has stopped, but may the stories continue.

The film, Thirst, will be launched on 10 November. For more details about the documentary screening, email info@crowdtv.com.au

To explore the Water Stories project, visit crowdtv.com.au

Xavier Mayes
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer (J Herriman and K Ross): Joanne Saad
Behind the scenes image supplied by: Australian Documentaries
Water images supplied by: WSROC’s Water in The Landscape project
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/10/lifeblood
He has a corporate resume which includes Managing Director Asia Pacific for British Telecom, Marketing Director at BHP Steel Integrated Steel Division, and Group Managing Director for Telstra. Yet Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology Visiting Professor Stephen Burdon remains down to earth and modest. He sums up his stellar career in four words: “It’s just good fun.”

Burdon was one of 10 Western experts invited to Saudi Arabia in April this year to advise their Minister of Education on higher education policy and international collaboration. “It’s very invigorating to be asked to contribute to ambitious schemes, to discuss different strategies of how to be the best in the world in such an important area as education,” he says.

“The Saudis are very serious about higher education and research, especially in science and technology.”

The figures more than support his opinion. Last year, Saudi Arabia spent 8.3 per cent of its gross domestic product on education, compared to Australia’s 4.9 per cent. And with a specific focus on English-speaking countries and studies in business, science and technology, there are currently 107 000 Saudi citizens enrolled in overseas universities, the majority funded by their government.

“I sometimes worry about the Western world,” Burdon explains. “At one time, China, India and the Middle East controlled about half the world’s wealth, but they went through a dark period and missed the industrial revolution. They’re determined they’re not going to miss out in the digital age, so they’re investing a lot more in technological advancement and higher education than the Western world.

“Their belief – and I think they’re correct – is that information technology, telecommunications and digital content are the foundation blocks of the information age. Whoever leads in these fields will catch the next wave of global development and wealth-creation for their society.”

He’s not exaggerating. Saudi Arabia’s King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, a new state-of-the-art research institution which opened in 2009, has just received a $10 billion endowment from the pocket of its eponymous sponsor and boasts multiple Nobel Prize winners as part of its teaching and research staff.

Burdon’s own academic career spans 30 years. He began lecturing in the early 80s, when UTS was still the NSW Institute of Technology. When he showed an interest in developing a progressive e-business course back in the late 90s, UTS took notice.

“I had this idea to start a cross-faculty course, the first of its kind in Australia. I reported it to the men I called ‘the three wise deans’ – the deans of business, IT, and law at the time – and they all thought it was a good idea. Within two years, enrolments had reached 600 and it was one of the most successful master’s courses developed at UTS.

“Cross-faculty learning is essential because you can’t learn about these types of subjects without a holistic knowledge that spans different traditional university faculty structures.”

Now a part-time academic, Burdon is currently focusing his research on innovation through partnerships and collaboration. “Collaboration is very important in research, and knowledge is now so global and fragmented that if you want to be good in your particular area, you need to speak and work with experts from other disciplines and cultures. It’s enriching.”

Rebecca Lawson
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/10/ask-the-expert
“I’ve always been interested in how the body works and what happens when we get sick,” says Justin Flestado. “And I want to help fix it.”

Inspired by the character of Dr John Carter in the popular television series ER, Flestado, who graduated from UTS with a Bachelor of Nursing in 2010, initially wanted to be a doctor. Luckily, he had a back-up plan after he missed out on getting into medicine.

“I was offered a place at UTS to do nursing, and it was a great decision because I’ve loved it ever since. It’s very challenging, but I do like a challenge.”

Flestado is currently working at the Prince of Wales Hospital, specialising in urology, vascular and gastrointestinal surgeries.

“Typically, our patients have had something in their bowel removed, have had prostate or bladder surgery, or have had their leg ulcers surgically cleaned out. They then come to us after surgery.

“With such a high turnover of patients, you’ve really got to think on your feet and watch out for complications post-op.” He says the fast-paced days are what cemented his decision to specialise in surgical nursing.

“Also, this ward was where I was on my second rotation of my grad program. I love the work and I love the people, so why go elsewhere?”

Consisting of two six-month rotations, the hospital’s new graduate program is a path many nurses take after graduating.

“It helps you transition from being a student, where you’re constantly supervised, to being completely on your own. You pretty much gain most of the basics in the first couple of months. I have to admit, it was very daunting at the start, but you get a lot of support from the senior nurses and educators.”

As a recent graduate, Flestado has been happy to be a part of the Men in Nursing forum presented by the Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Health. The forum targets young male school-leavers thinking of studying nursing at university and gives them insight into what happens in the real world, as opposed to the ‘TV version’ of nursing.

“Let’s face it, TV shows often portray nursing as this mindless occupation where we do whatever the doctor says and questioning the doc’s decision is frowned upon.

“In reality, we’re consulted on what the next step is for the patient and suggest certain things because we’re always at their bedside.”

The other stereotype the forum seeks to break is the attitude that “it’s not manly to be a nurse”, explains Flestado, adding that a fifth of the nurses in his ward alone are male.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the proportion of males in nursing has increased from 7.9 per cent in 2005 to 9.6 per cent in 2009. Flestado says the forum is important because it encourages more male high school students to consider nursing as a profession.

“It’s not a question of gender. It’s whether you’re competent and whether you like it.”

Looking after sick people, Flestado says he now can’t help but have a positive outlook on life. He recalls working one New Year’s Eve and complaining he couldn’t go out as he was also working an early shift the next morning.

“Then we had a 26-year-old backpacker come in complaining of a headache and dizziness. Turns out he had an inoperable brain tumour. So while we can complain about the little things, we should just be thankful for what we’ve got.”

Paolo Hooke
Master of Arts in Journalism
Photographer: Joanne Saad
Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/10/nursing-ambition
Tom Westley is a Residential Networker (RN) in UTS’s Geegal residence. Aptly named, Geegal is the Aboriginal word for ‘shelter’. Hannah Jermyn moved into Geegal the same time as Tom and shares an apartment with him and four other students. Having both left their rural homes for the big smoke, they tell U: about life in student housing.

Tom Westley

It’s an interesting dynamic when you live with other people – it’s different than just being friends. I like to think I’m friends with Hannah.

Meeting Hannah at the start of this year is actually my first housing memory – we met the day I moved in. I was still 17 and had arrived from Bowral. We stayed up chatting the whole night.

Moving to Sydney was a brilliant decision. I only knew pieces of Sydney so putting them together was always going to be an experience. I’d go off for a ‘short walk’ and Hannah would laugh when I’d return three hours and 17 kilometres later. That’s part of what motivated me to become an RN – I know it can be difficult learning where everything is and so I wanted to help others.

Basically the point of RNs is being a human face for student housing, which is needed because it can be this big, amorphous thing. Trying to figure out who to go to with your questions is beyond confusing. As RNs, we take on any problem, from personal issues to building maintenance, and deal with it. As a system it’s quite effective.

There’ve been a few crazy requests. In one of the flat meetings, we had to spend 15 minutes explaining to one guy why he needed to put the toilet seat back down after he’d finished.

We each run our own weekly events, ranging from Spanish classes to resume writing sessions. I do the Cheap Eats night, so every week we go to a different restaurant around the city. Recently I’ve been helping an IT student edit his bachelor thesis. I guess that’s going beyond the call of duty, but Geegal is so small and we all do what we can to help each other.

It’s now at the point where I’ll have residents call me at 1am because they’re upset and they need someone to talk to, and they’ve reached the stage where they’re comfortable to do that.

I was quite sick a few weeks ago and my voice had completely gone. I had residents coming to my door with cups of hot water and honey. We’ve really fostered this sense of community; it’s become a home – and it’s nice to be a part of that. It’s probably the biggest thing I’ll take away from being an RN.

Hannah’s funny. She puts passive-aggressive signs all over the kitchen, but she cooks a lot so the house always smells great. She’s taken over my freezer as well. I’ve got one drawer up the top and she now owns the rest.

She very much says what she thinks. I wouldn’t say she’s blunt, just very honest. I find that a lot with rural and international students – we’re realists and we get along because we’re almost in the same situation with Sydney not being our original home. We’re paying our own way compared to many others being supported financially by their family. I think it’s a situation you’ve got to be in to understand.
I'm really enjoying it. I've got friends in colleges in Armidale that say college life is really intense. I like living in Geegal because we're mostly left to own devices.

I think student life in the residence would be a lot more disconnected without people like Tom. He's our link between student housing and the powers that be. It's nice to know we have a representative, a voice.

Tom seems to always be roaming around, making sure everybody is getting along. He's good like that. He might organise a bbq in our courtyard and invite everyone.

That's one of the biggest advantages. Without the RNs to organise social events, it'd just feel like living in an apartment block. I think it's good for international students to have this kind of stuff. Otherwise they may not know how to go about experiencing different things.

Most students in the residences are international students. Ours is a rare case in that we're all Aussies in our apartment. We're all first-year and we've just jumped into Sydney. They were instant friendships.

I'm from Cobar, a mining town in far west NSW, about 12 hours from Sydney. Growing up there was alright until I reached high school. Then I moved to Armidale to attend boarding school. I've been around a bit.

Regional NSW isn't really my cup of tea, but it was a good place to grow up - you got to be a kid. I took a gap year overseas last year and travelled to Edinburgh to do some study. When I returned home to Cobar a year later, it really hit me how small my hometown is and how much I'd outgrown it. It's still nice to go back, but I find there are less people and less things to do there each time.

I've always wanted to study journalism and UTS is known for having the best course. I didn't actually think I'd be accepted, so it was a nice shock when I got in.

I didn't know whether I'd enjoy living in the city, but I do actually really like it. Geegal is the furthest residence from campus and the smallest one too. There are only 58 of us so it's really homey and you know everyone. It's very much removed from the large, high-density apartment blocks around the Broadway area. Its location in Chippendale, behind the Seymour Centre, is a really good spot. We're close to the city, close to Glebe and Newtown – close to everything, really.

Living with new people doesn't bother me. I know it can be a problem for lots of students, especially when they come straight out of home and haven't had a chance to build up their independence.

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For 21-year-old Daniel Bunoza, going overseas for a six-month exchange gave him the experience of a lifetime.

“I’ve always had a love for travel and I thought if I did an exchange, I’d have a good amount of time to really experience the place and the culture.”

One of two students accepted from UTS, the fourth-year Bachelor of Business/Bachelor of Laws student travelled to London as part of the university’s Global Exchange Program to study at the University of Westminster.

“Sometimes I’d think, ‘Oh I’m on a holiday’, and forget about the study requirements. But there are a lot of opportunities while you’re on exchange to have fun and learn at the same time.”

Bunoza says there were initial challenges before he took off abroad. “It’s a lot of preparation to begin with. You can’t just say, ‘Hey I want to go on exchange’, sign some papers and hop on a plane. It took some time to organise.”

Describing Westminster as almost identical to UTS in terms of its central location and state-of-the-art facilities, Bunoza saw a difference in the style of teaching and learning compared to his study days back home in Sydney.

“The requirements weren’t as stringent over there. There aren’t as many assignments and they’re not constantly monitoring you. You learn at your own pace.”

Having selected International Business as his UTS major to satisfy the business component of his double degree, Bunoza says the exchange complemented his studies and gave him academic insight on a more global level.

“It was great to be taught subjects such as European Union (EU) Competition Law by local EU practitioners. It provided me with a great opportunity to learn more about global businesses and how business is conducted in Europe and throughout the world.”

An avid Harry Potter fan, history buff and self-confessed happy snapper, Bunoza quickly adapted to his new surroundings and, recognising the need to balance his university work with travel, made it his mission to explore as much of Europe as possible.

“I’d spend three weeks in London at a time and then take a short trip. I went to Dublin, Edinburgh, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Nice, Brussels, Rome and Prague – all while I was still studying.”

Despite his European jaunts, Bunoza cites living in London as the overall highlight of the exchange experience. “I describe it as Sydney on steroids. It’s just always on the go; it’s such a buzzing place.”

One memory that will stay with Bunoza is watching the recent royal wedding from outside Buckingham Palace, having camped out overnight to secure a prime position for the huge event.

“I was like, ‘Why am I doing this, this is so crazy!’ But to see the whole process in person as opposed to seeing it all over the media was overwhelming. It was just amazing.”

Back at UTS’s Haymarket campus, Big Ben, Buckingham Palace and all things royal must seem like a distant dream, though he’s armed with hundreds of photos that capture his adventures and newfound international friends.

With graduation only one year away, Bunoza aims to secure a graduate position at the Sydney offices of a large corporate law firm involved in international transactions. “This path would require me to draw heavily from what I’ve learned in my studies of both business and law.”

As for any further travel plans, Bunoza says, “London is now a second home for me – I feel I can always go back. Once you’ve got the travel bug, there’s no cure for it. You’ve got to keep travelling.”
Beating the Odds reveals the life of starting price (SP) bookie Alan Tripp, who “some have called a genius and others a criminal”. His clients ranged from high society to underworld figures. From page one, the reader is right there alongside Tripp in a sometimes glamorous, more often threatening, world of an SP bookmaker. The narrative spans some three decades from the 1980s and captures the changing fortunes and exhilarating atmosphere of the racing industry and those who gamble on it. Garvey’s approach in reconstructing events and conversations in vivid prose and dialogue may not be to the taste of readers who prefer more measured and analytical biographies, but it does give a real sense of what it was like for those involved. From the days of handwritten ledgers to internet betting, the reader learns a great deal about the Australian racing and gambling scene. Selected personal and racing industry photographs are included to put faces to names and enhance the sense of time and place. Garvey narrates the story of Tripp in a right there in the thick of it. His clients ranged from high society to underworld figures. From page one, the reader is right there alongside Tripp in a sometimes glamorous, more often threatening, world of an SP bookmaker. The narrative spans some three decades from the 1980s and captures the changing fortunes and exhilarating atmosphere of the racing industry and those who gamble on it. Garvey’s approach in reconstructing events and conversations in vivid prose and dialogue may not be to the taste of readers who prefer more measured and analytical biographies, but it does give a real sense of what it was like for those involved. From the days of handwritten ledgers to internet betting, the reader learns a great deal about the Australian racing and gambling scene. Selected personal and racing industry photographs are included to put faces to names and enhance the sense of time and place. Garvey narrates the story of Tripp in a way that makes the reader feel as if they’re right there in the thick of it. Her light touch in recreating events allows us to form our own judgement and opinions.

Sharon Rundle
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Nichola Garvey is a UTS MA Creative Writing graduate (2009). She secured her first book deal with HarperCollins two months after finishing her master’s and has been a full-time writer since.

Nicole Watson’s darkly enticing novel The Boundary comes as a wayward turn on the familiar path of crime fiction, leading its readers down an unfamiliar alley that blends murder, ancient Indigenous culture and law into one heady concoction. The novel’s primary focus is on a series of gruesome murders that occur after a court case concerning a bitterly contested native title claim. The investigation is headed by Detective Jason Matthews, whose search for the killer leads him into a confrontation with the lives of the Aboriginal community intimately connected with the disputed land. Alongside this, Watson weaves the story of lawyer Miranda Eversely, whose struggle with alcoholism masks a deeper pain that unfolds as she attempts to overcome her perceived failures. The baffling mysteries within the book are compounded by the author’s sound character development, which allows readers to glimpse inside the varying personalities as they clash, love, reminisce and defy all reader attempts at guessing the killer. The intermingling of Indigenous traditions, legalism and crime are developed in a novel way to provide a backdrop for a searching inquiry into prominent modern issues of justice, inequality and power. The Boundary is a compelling and refreshing read.

Sambavi Seermaran
Faculty of Law

Nicole Watson is a senior research fellow at the UTS Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning and a member of the Birri-Gubba People. The Boundary, for which she won the David Unaipon Award, is her debut novel.

Sometimes you come across a book that has such simplicity, wisdom and directness, it almost allows you to reach out and touch the author. Paul Cox’s Tales from the Cancer Ward is such a book. Written during his illness with liver cancer, it speaks of Cox’s experiences as patient, father, dreamer, filmmaker and lover. Mortality stalks through the pages as it bounds from morphine-induced nightmare horror to philosophical perspicacity, and on to life-loving moments of affective intensity during which the author appears to experience pseudo-religious reconciliation with his surroundings. Cox melts into everyday circumstances with an enhanced sense of vitality and awareness. He makes a passionate statement about the simplicity of artistic fervour, untrammeled by ambitious aggression, exploitation of others, and possessiveness. He explains his devotion to filmmaking as what led to his well intentioned self-abuse: drinking, and staying up all night to finish projects. The book is an extraordinary record of one of the hardest times in Cox’s life and is recommended reading for anyone interested in his filmmaking, in the ravages of experiences we are left with when we get sick, or in what it means to be a cancer survivor saved by the death of another living body.

Rick Iedema
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Paul Cox is a respected director and filmmaker whose career spans over 35 years. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by UTS for his contribution to the Australian and international film industry. His films include Lonely Hearts, My First Wife and the highly acclaimed Innocence.

U:BOOKWORMS
During October, the Co-op Bookshop on Broadway is offering Co-op members a 20 per cent discount on our reviewed books. For more details, email uts@coop-bookshop.com.au
It’s the race that stops the nation, and this year, Aerial Function Centre is hosting a Melbourne Cup lunch on their lawn. Lawn? That’s right: lawn. While there’s no real green to Building 10’s recently renovated level 7, Functions and Venue Manager Sally Grady says they’re shipping in turf for the big event.

“As you come in over the main walkway, there’ll be grass and a marquee on the Aerial balcony. We want people to walk in and feel like they’re actually at the races, not at UTS or a function centre.”

With canapés and a champagne cocktail on arrival, the Aerial Lawn Package also sees guests indulging in a two course lunch. “We want to really get into the spirit of the day so we’ll start you off with a cocktail and continue with beverages throughout the afternoon.”

The celebrations will begin at 12.30pm and wrap up post-race at 4pm. Grady says the function centre screens are the best for watching the event. “We’ve got large high definition screens throughout the venue and we’ll be using all of them. If you go to another CBD venue they’re only going to have a few plasmas, but with us you’ll be able to see the race from every angle.”

To add to the race-side celebrations, Grady says there will be giveaways and competitions on the day. “We’ve got a few sponsors lined up and every guest will go away with a goodie bag. There will also be UTS and Union prizes – one of them being a $100 Union bar tab. That gives people the opportunity to go down to the Glasshouse or the Loft and continue their celebrations.”

And if you’re planning on scooping up best dressed, think silk and feathers. “We’re going to be running a best tie for the boys and a best fascinator for the girls. I’m looking forward to seeing the fashion on the day.”

Apart from being an Australian institution, Grady says the Melbourne Cup is an opportunity to come together and share.

“Last year we were working but we all stopped at 3pm to watch the race. Even if people don’t follow racing, they’ll still stop and sit down with their colleagues, even if it’s just for 10 or 15 minutes to watch the race unfold. It really brings people together and it’s a good bonding day.”

If you’d like to celebrate the Melbourne Cup in style on Tuesday 1 November, book your ticket for the Aerial Lawn Package, 12.30pm to 4pm. Tickets are $85 a head or $630 for a table of eight and $750 for tables of 10. It’s an open event, so UTS staff are welcome to bring friends and external colleagues.

For more information or to book your table, contact the Aerial Function Centre on 9514 1632 or visit aerialutsfunctioncentre.com.au

Izanda Ford
Marketing and Communication Unit
Artwork: Danielle Bluff

Comment on this article at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/10/on-the-money
**WHAT’S ON OCTOBER**

1. **THE FALL BEFORE FALL EXHIBITION**
   Until 14 October / UTS Gallery, building 6, level 4
   utsgallery.uts.edu.au

3. **OCTOBER SESSION COMMENCES**

4. **SEVEN SYDNEYS TALK: THE SUSTAINABLE CITY**
   5pm to 6pm / Building 2, level 3, room 2

**GRADUATION CEREMONIES**
Until 8 October / City campus

**CHINA RESEARCH CENTRE LECTURE: CONTEMPORARY CHINESE JOURNALISM**
9am to 1pm / Building 10, level 14, conference room 201
china.uts.edu.au

5. **SOUND RESOURCES (DAMOCLES – FEEDBACK)**
   Until 29 Oct / DAB LAB, building 6, level 4 courtyard
dab.uts.edu.au/dablab

7. **JOHN HOLLAND TOWER BUILDING COMPETITION**
   12 noon / Alumni green
e: eng.uts.edu.au

11. **GOLDEN EYE AWARDS**
    6.30pm / Chauvel Cinema, Paddington Town Hall, cnr Oxford and Oatley Rds, Paddington
    fass.uts.edu.au/golden-eye

**PHARMACY POSTGRADUATE INFO EVENING**
5.30pm / Building 10, ground level
pharmacy.uts.edu.au

20. **COFFEE FOR A CAUSE**
   All day / Union cafes

25. **CREATIVE ACCOUNTING**
   Until 25 November / UTS Gallery, building 6, level 4
   utsgallery.uts.edu.au

27. **CLARE BURTON LECTURE – EXPOSING NEUROSEXISM WITH CORDELIA FINE**
   5.30pm to 7.30pm / Building 1, level 4, chancellery
e: dinah.cohen@uts.edu.au

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**SAID IT**

**A HELPING HAND**

Is volunteer tourism a way of helping less fortunate communities or does it cause more problems? Here’s what some of our online and print readers had to say.

Many gen Y students, including myself, have spent time volunteering in developing countries around the world and have all come back a little more enlightened. Most of the time I’ve found the volunteers get more out of the experience than the people they’re helping. However this isn’t to say the whole experience isn’t worthwhile. If volunteer tourism is a trend, I’d like to hope it stays around. From what I’ve seen, giving people the chance to extend a hand promotes compassion, tolerance and understanding. Most importantly, it forces people to look at things from a different perspective and see the shades of grey in the world.

Anonymous

Volunteers are often affected by the experience on such a deep level, they become a human advocate for both the country and the cause upon returning home. As this spreads, we begin to see an exponential growth in global awareness. Organisations need to ensure they’re attracting the right people, for the right reasons: people who want to make a difference, not just those who want an exotic holiday. For would-be voluntourists, the responsibility lies with understanding how the projects they’re working on are being integrated into the local community. They should also know how much of their volunteer fee goes towards actual logistics, and how much gets spent on ‘administrative costs’ which never touch the country being helped.

Aaron Ngan

Share your thoughts about any article featured in U at newsroom.uts.edu.au

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**NEXT MONTH’S QUESTION**

What do you feel is the answer to Alice Springs’ urban density dilemma?

Read Tarsha Finney’s opinion piece on page 6 and email your name and response to u@uts.edu.au

Or comment online at newsroom.uts.edu.au/news/2011/10/alices-approach-to-urbanism
Located at the heart of the City campus, the new Thomas Street Building will provide new teaching, learning and research spaces for the Faculty of Science.

The design for the gently undulating building was inspired by the organic forms of a tree grove. Scheduled to open mid-2014, the building will overlook Alumni Green and connect to the existing Science facilities in Building 4.

Artist impression supplied by: Durbach Block Jaggers and BVN Architecture