FRONTLINE SUPPORT
Keeping homeless men healthy

THE GREAT DIVIDE
Improving the justice system for Indigenous women

CLASS AND ACTION
Understanding what the Indigenous experience of the law really looks like
What’s in store for our campus in 2016 and beyond?

For those of you who have been at UTS for a while, 2016 may seem like a ‘quiet’ year on campus. Many staff and students are settled in their new buildings and spaces, there is no major construction and the university is operating smoothly – albeit at a frenetic pace.

However, the construction calm is somewhat deceptive. We’re a bit like the proverbial duck seemingly gliding effortlessly through calm waters while underneath a lot of paddling is going on! A new Blackfriars Children’s Centre, upgrades to the Tower and Building 4, and a refurbished Chancellery are just a few projects keeping us busy in 2016.

We are also soon to embark on another major project right in the heart of our campus – UTS Central.

This significant project will see Building 2 on Broadway completely reinvented, not for any single faculty, but as a 16-level student hub accommodating the UTS library and learning commons, as well as other spaces for innovation, collaboration and research. Subject to planning approval, construction of the new building is expected to get underway in late 2016 following the demolition of the existing building. However, from July, you’ll start to see signs of construction in and around Building 2 as we commence preparation works.

We can’t wait to share more information about the project and the proposed design of the building with the UTS community very soon.

What’s driving the changes to our campus?

I believe our evolving campus is proving a real drawcard for staff and students. And, as the Vice-Chancellor has said, our focus is now on ‘people, people, people’. Over the coming years, we will be increasing our academic staff by some 25 per cent, requiring more learning, research and office space, along with the funding to allow us to achieve our strategic objectives.

Critically, we will be refining details of the 2015 update to UTS’s 10-year business plan to ensure we have a financially sustainable and robust university to drive our academic endeavours.

What was the last picture you took on your phone?

While on one of the many Sydney cycle routes, I stopped at the highest point on the Gladesville Bridge and decided to take a quick photo. And no, it wasn’t a selfie! I ended up with a great shot back over the harbour and city.

What is your secret hobby?

Renovating gives me a welcome chance to use my hands. I spend most of my day using my mind in various ways. Going home and being able to get hands-on brings an immense sense of pleasure, while the change of pace restores some semblance of balance.

If you woke up and had 2000 unread emails but could only answer 300, how would you choose which ones to answer?

That sounds more like a nightmare! Firstly, I would prioritise the ones that only I could answer and then I would focus on those that required a solution to a complex problem.

Patrick Woods
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Resources)
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UTS has joined a nationwide campaign to raise awareness that sexual assault and all forms of harassment are unacceptable. Launched by peak body Universities Australia, Respect. Now. Always also aims to provide clear pathways of support for those who need it.

UTS Counsellor Fiona Robertson welcomes the move. “Sexual assault is a crime and student concerns must be discussed and managed respectfully. It’s great that universities across the country are addressing it proactively.”

Director of UTS’s Equity and Diversity Unit (E&DU) Tracie Conroy agrees. She believes the campaign not only complements but will shine a brighter light on the initiatives and support services UTS has already established.

“Applying a national gaze can only be positive,” she says. “Any campaign that encourages people to report problems and seek out UTS’s support services is fantastic.”

One of UTS’s key initiatives is the SHOUTS awareness-raising campaign. SHOUTS, which stands for Sex-based Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying Out of UTS, blitzes the campus at the start of every session, sending a crystal clear message that harassment of any form will not be tolerated.

In 2013, largely in response to the introduction of a large, new 720-bed student residence, Directors of UTS’s Student Services Unit and E&DU put their heads together to develop a program that would instill the residence with a culture of safety and respect. “As soon as the new residence was planned, the university took a proactive approach to support residents and staff to create a positive culture,” explains Conroy.

With the enthusiastic support of UTS Housing, they started by designing a two-day Sex and Ethics Training Program for Residential Networkers living in UTS residences. “Residential Networkers are students working within our residences. Other students seek them out for assistance, so we wanted them to be knowledgeable and well-supported,” explains Robertson.

The program covers how to manage the issue of consent, how to manage non-verbal and verbal communication; it also explores the different cultural implications around sex, and how sexual assault or sexual harassment is defined in Australia.

“Elements of the program are also being integrated into the UTS Housing application process so UTS is upfront about what our values are and how we expect students to behave,” says Robertson.

“Most recently, we’ve started to deliver an Active and Ethical Bystander session to a broader cohorts of students. This training is about giving students the confidence and skills to assess for safety and if appropriate speak up or act when they see or hear something of concern.”

The Respect. Now. Always campaign precedes the Australian release of the US film The Hunting Ground which explores the prevalence of sexual assault in American universities. The film will be screened at UTS in May and will be followed by a panel discussion that considers the issues in an Australian context.

The final aspect of the campaign is the Strengthening Australian University Responses to Sexual Assault and Harassment Project, run out of the Australian Human Rights Centre at UNSW. Starting with a nationwide student survey, the results will inform a set of guidelines for institutional responses to sexual assault and harassment in Australian universities.

Further information about dealing with sexual harassment or assault, and emergency contacts, can be found at uts.ac/1Nc2nW5

We would encourage you to use the UTS Counselling service if you are seeking support: 9514 1177. If you need help in an emergency, call 000.

Penny Jones
Marketing and Communication Unit
Image supplied by: Universities Australia
Two years have powered by since UTS last asked staff for an honest assessment of their job satisfaction. And so, with the next all-staff survey due to open on Monday 9 May, it’s a good opportunity to find out what’s changed.

Enter Director of the Research and Innovation Office (RIO) David Robson and Associate Professor Gerhard Van de Venter. While UTS benchmarked well against other universities at the institutional level, within UTS itself some results were not so good.

“To be honest, we had a fairly appalling survey result in 2012,” says Robson, who started his job in 2013. “Our results, in part, instigated a complete restructure of RIO. So we were pleased when the 2014 survey showed more positive results.

“One of our remaining low scores in 2014 concerned RIO processes, so we initiated a project that mapped our major processes. As part of this, we looked at how long it took to get a contract signed, and as a result have been able to halve our contract processing time.

“We’ve also run projects on data cleansing and electronic document management which, incidentally, has saved the time-equivalent of 1.6 full-time staff.

“We’ve also looked at leadership training and staff development; cross-unit collaboration within RIO; and, in terms of communication, we now report on progress to our staff and outside RIO.

“We’ve also introduced more structured meetings with faculties and daily stand-up meetings within RIO leadership. All this has been really beneficial.”

RIO’s approach has also improved their physical space – another area that scored poorly in 2012. “We wanted to make our office more people-friendly so we employed six SPROUTS (Student Promotional Representative of UTS) to scan all the files from a huge compactus which sat in the middle of our office into the TRIM records management system.

“Then we got rid of the compactus and transformed the space into a new kitchen that is big enough to accommodate all our staff at any one time.”

As RIO progressed with their transformation, across campus in the UTS Business School, Van de Venter, Head of the Finance Discipline Group, was digesting their 2012 survey results. His approach was to prioritise the biggest concerns first. For his team this included involvement, career development and industry and professional engagement.

“In terms of involvement, we’ve instituted a number of formal meetings, but one of the simple things I’ve done has been to informally ask as many junior staff as possible what they think about new initiatives. It’s astounding how positively they’ve responded to this.”

Van de Venter has also put considerable effort into helping his staff develop their career objectives. “I’ve started many conversations by saying ‘What do you want out of your career?’

Coming to the role with considerable industry experience has helped Van de Venter improve their approach to industry and professional engagement. He has introduced a number of initiatives including a recent research showcase for industry. This event runs along similar lines to the Three Minute Thesis but offers researchers five minutes to promote themselves and their research to finance practitioners.

For Van de Venter, the staff survey is a no-brainer. “The survey’s important because you’ve got to know what’s wrong. If there are any alarm bells ringing, you’ve got to listen or you’ll lose your best staff.”

Robson agrees. “From a perspective external to RIO, it demonstrates that we’re moving in the right direction. Internally it’s really useful to say, ‘Well, we’ve been through a fairly torrid time, but we’ve listened and changed and now we’re coming out the other side.”

Penny Jones
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer: Shane Lo
For Thalia Anthony, the law isn't all about theoretical arguments, it's about people – both her clients and her students. The leading researcher is incorporating real-life practice – including an Indigenous legal clinic and journal – into her teaching to help students understand what the Indigenous experience of the law really looks like.

Law degrees are often stereotyped as strict, rigid and theory-based, however Associate Professor Thalia Anthony has transformed the UTS law degree into a much more hands-on experience.

Anthony began teaching at UTS in 2010, and since then has demonstrated her commitment to Indigenous justice by integrating her own research and teaching methods into UTS’s law degrees.

“What Thalia does is bring emotion to teaching, reminding us that what we are learning at university really does affect other people’s lives,” explains law student Jeffrey Leung.

Anthony is not only highly regarded by her students, but her colleagues too. Last year she was highly-commended for the Medal for Teaching and Research Integration at the UTS Vice-Chancellor’s Awards for Research Excellence.

One of the ways Anthony has done this is through the elective subject, Ngīya – Talk the Law: Editorial Role. The subject is a collaboration with the Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning.

Each semester, a small number of students are selected to take part in the subject. Here they edit, read and research articles relating to Indigenous community justice issues. These articles are then published in Jumbunna’s Ngīya journal.

“The whole aim of the journal is to give the students a hands-on experience that includes responding to the needs of Aboriginal organisations and communities,” explains Anthony.

“The benefits flow to the Australian society, in that we are enabling a society to be more tolerant and accommodating of Indigenous needs whilst also being more responsive to these calls for justice.”

Journalism/law student Sophie Quinn undertook the Ngīya editorial subject last semester. “The journal I worked on focused on the Bowraville murder cases, where three Indigenous children were murdered in the town of Bowraville during the early 1990s,” she says.

“Sadly, it has been over 20 years since their murders occurred, but no one has been convicted of the crimes.

“We were looking at all different legal, political and policy reasons for why a situation like that could happen,” explains Quinn. “It was really interesting; definitely one of the most interesting subjects I’ve done.”

Djarwan Eatock, a law student from the Wiradjuri nation who participated in the Ngīya editorial subject last semester also, agrees. “My heritage is one of the reasons I got into law. I’ve always had an interest in social justice, particularly with Indigenous issues. Although confronting at times, it motivated me to try to bring about justice.”
Eatock, Quinn and Leung credit Anthony’s knowledge, patience and dedication to building strong professional relationships with her students as keys to their success.

“She was so accessible to the point where I felt like the amount of questions I would ask her borderlined on me being annoying,” laughs Leung.

Anthony disagrees. For her, questioning is a part of learning.

“There is a long history of a lacking of cultural competency, especially in regards to how the law deals with Indigenous people and nations,” says Anthony. “My research and teaching aim to inform others that there is no one Indigenous experience, each is individual, and many are stories of resilience.”

Currently, Anthony is working on three major research projects relating to Indigenous people and justice. The first looks at Indigenous women in prison, the second regards night patrols in Central and Western Australia, and the third involves increasing Indigenous input in pre-sentence reports.

Last month, Anthony also participated in the panel for UT Speaks: Fatal Injustice. The public lecture looked at why, 25 years after the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, Indigenous Australians are still dying in custody and how it is that only 30 of the commission’s 300 recommendations have been achieved.

Back in the classroom, Anthony’s working with Jumbunna’s Senior Researcher Craig Longman and Professor Larissa Behrendt to establish a litigation practice and clinic that will enable student interns to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on strategic litigation, including coronial matters.

“Even though it is a small step, if we can create a legal system with lawyers who can better represents clients, and have Indigenous people more involved with decision-making, it will lead to greater justice in our systems.”

It’s a change Anthony is also effecting in how the content of core law subjects. Currently, she is working with other academics to set up a subject to teach students about professional responsibilities in strategic litigation. Anthony hopes it will further improve student cultural competency with regard to Indigenous people.

“Indigenous justice is a responsibility that all non-Indigenous Australians have. It is part of being a citizen of this nation.”

Watch UT Speaks: Fatal Injustice at uts.ac/1PXIC5e

Lexy Akillas
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Journalism)

Photographer (T Anthony): Anna Zhu
Photographer (D Eatock, S Quinn, J Leung): Hannah Jenkins
Indigenous women are the fastest-growing incarcerated demographic in Australia. Yet they’re often the first to be sidelined during legal debates. A new cross-disciplinary research project is set to change the way gender, Indigenous identity and sentencing are analysed, and enable Indigenous women to affect meaningful change in Australia’s criminal justice system.

Australia’s approach to imprisonment is reaching a crisis point, divided along racial and gendered lines. Despite the urgent recommendation of the 1991 Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody to adopt measures to reduce the Indigenous prison population, 25 years later the number of Indigenous people in custody continues to rise.

Indigenous women are now the fastest-growing incarcerated demographic in Australia, and criminal justice reform has failed to address their circumstances.

Commissioner Elliott Johnston, in his report to the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, referred to the fact that “in certain circumstances Aboriginal people may receive longer sentences for the same offence than non-Aboriginal people”.

Accordingly, the Commission recommended that sentences other than prison be promoted for Indigenous offenders. In the context of law and order agendas, governments have not implemented this recommendation, instead they have introduced legislation that has increased maximum penalties, reduced non-parole periods and expanded mandatory prison penalty regimes.

In 1992, the Supreme Court of New South Wales accepted submissions of the Commission and introduced the Fernando principles. The principles are a series of very particular, legal questions that are supposed to account for the unique circumstances of Indigenous offenders and to promote non-prison sentences.

More than 20 years later, in 2013, the High Court’s widely-publicised decision of Bugmy determined that childhood “deprivation” is relevant to reducing a prison sentence. However, it did not give any allowance for considering systemic Indigenous circumstances in postcolonial society.

**In short, neither the Fernando nor Bugmy decisions provided precedent for sentencing Indigenous women specifically, and so sentencing law remains silent on whether gender’s role in the lives of Indigenous women can be accounted for, and how.**

The reality is, the Fernando principles offer little reprieve for the sentencing issues facing Indigenous women. Their experiences of deprivation and systemic circumstances are informed by the contribution that gender makes to their postcolonial experience. And the factors accounted for in Fernando don’t closely resemble the deprivation of Indigenous women at all.

Similarly, a gendered analysis of Bugmy reveals much of Indigenous women’s colonial deprivation – like family violence and the removal of their children – is not played out during childhood (and therefore not relevant to reducing a prison sentence).

The result? Indigenous women are left in a race-blind sentencing gap.

Most Indigenous women in prison have committed minor offences and cycle in and out of prison. Their crimes primarily relate to unlawful driving, property and breach of court orders. These women have a lack of specialised ‘throughfare services’ (like housing, education and financial, family violence and other assistance services) before, during and after prison.

Many have also experienced adverse state interventions, including the removal of their children and over-policing, while simultaneously experiencing little by way of support when they are victimised.

The majority of Indigenous women’s sentences are handed down by lower courts, which are under-resourced to provide support, to supervise or administer
non-prison sentences, and, in some cases, to adequately investigate the Fernando principles or other factors that might reduce an Indigenous woman’s sentence.

Couple this with underfunded Aboriginal legal services and even the flawed sentencing options that are presently available to Indigenous women go under-utilised.

Ultimately, the crisis in the over-imprisonment of Indigenous women who are affected by colonisation reflects an unshakeable pillar of criminal justice around which social justice has been trying to negotiate – individualised justice.

Bugmy and Fernando are interpretations of individualised justice – courts must account for the same sentencing principles afforded to any other offender in order to give a fair sentence. From this perspective, considering some forms of deprivation that are linked to the circumstances of an Aboriginal person is one way to ensure Aboriginal people get individualised justice.

Of course, individualisation is not without its hazards. It seriously restricts the ability of lawyers to advocate based on the long-standing and systemic disenfranchisement of Aboriginal peoples. It also tangles the narrative of sentencing advocacy in a psycho-social conversation about individual faults, illness or weakness that can dehumanise offenders.

Even where those arguments succeed (from a body of case law we can see that for Indigenous women Fernando principles are not often raised) the law’s therapeutic approach is limited by law-and-order politics, resource constraints and a failure to link trauma to offending. That de-contextualised and individualised pathology of colonial trauma should concern us.

So, what can be done to loosen the tightening carceral net around Indigenous women? UTS Associate Professor Thalia Anthony, Director of Jumbunna Research Larissa Behrendt, and myself are setting out on an Australian Research Council-funded project to find out.

Although the project is in its early stages, it heralds a promising shift in the way gender, Indigeneity and sentencing are analysed, and will account for the expertise of the judiciary, legal services and incarcerated Indigenous women alike. Such an analysis has never been more crucial.

In this project, we are also building on established knowledge. We know, based on the literature, that a significant problem underpinning reform efforts is that they are focused on the patterns of risk and deprivation experienced by Aboriginal men.

What is needed is an informed, interdisciplinary conversation about the intergenerational, gendered impacts of colonisation, and the Indigenous relationship to the settler criminal justice system. We are drawing on the expertise of Indigenous women who work in the community to support other Indigenous women, including those who have interactions with the criminal justice system, as advisors who direct this vital research.

We have witnessed the consequences of sidelining Indigenous women in this conversation. To begin to meaningfully address the criminal justice system’s failings, it must be led by them.

Alison Whittaker
Research Assistant
Faculty of Law and Centre for the Advancement of Indigenous Knowledges
Photographer [A Whittaker]: Shane Lo
Background images: Thinkstock

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Where can a homeless person go for healthcare, specialist referrals and access to medication? The Matthew Talbot Hostel runs one of Sydney’s only healthcare clinics for homeless men. A new UTS research project is set to help the clinic better measure the complex health needs of homeless men and ensure their services continue to meet their clients’ needs.
Every night hundreds of people in Sydney sleep in crisis shelters or on the street. A 2015 City of Sydney survey counted and spoke to more than 500 homeless people in just one week. Over 80 per cent were men.

That survey also revealed that the majority of homeless men have a mental health issue, a history of substance abuse, or both. On top of this, many have other health problems such as diabetes, heart disease, or even pneumonia or bronchitis.

“Many clients have a number of co-existing health problems,” affirms registered nurse and Team Leader at the Matthew Talbot Hostel clinic Julie Smith. “It is very common to see a person who has schizophrenia, metabolic disease and a concomitant addiction issue.”

According to Smith, who oversees the clinical work of nurses and visiting health professionals, the hostel is working to bridge the gap between hospital care and no care at all for homeless men.

In addition to offering temporary shelter, pastoral care and legal services, the Matthew Talbot Hostel, which is part of St Vincent De Paul Society NSW, also includes a clinic that provides medical, psychiatric, optometry, and podiatry care.

One of their primary functions involves ensuring homeless men are getting the medication they need – every day of the year.

“We manage and administer about 60 people’s medication a day,” says Smith. “This means it doesn’t get lost or stolen, we can monitor if a person is taking medication consistently, and we also get to check-in with them on a daily basis.”

The team at the Woolloomooloo clinic also treats everyday first-aid issues like headaches, cuts, wound dressings and infections. They work with specialists to deliver preventive health clinics like Smoking Cessation, Metabolic Health, Diabetes, Liver and Influenza.

While the Matthew Talbot Hostel clinic isn’t the first of its kind, recent closures of similar services in Sydney mean it does offer a unique and essential service in improving the health and welfare of men who need it.

That’s why the hostel has teamed up with UTS’s Centre for Health Services Management. Senior Lecturer Michael Roche is leading a research project aimed at better measuring the complexity of health needs among homeless men visiting the clinic and their patterns of accessing services.

The project, officially titled ‘Primary health care for homeless men: An exploration of the service use and health needs of homeless men in inner Sydney’, has been awarded a $10,000 Health Futures Development Grant by UTS’s Faculty of Health.

The research project has already looked back over the last five years of data collected by the clinic, run a voluntary survey amongst homeless men and attempted to spot salient patterns in service use.

“We asked the men to help with providing information about why they went there, what the outcomes were for them and what they perceived had happened to their health over time,” explains Roche.

“This qualitative information really gives colour and depth to what we’ve found in the clinic’s data, and I hope that will give the clinic a much stronger idea of what the men perceive to be the most effective parts of their service.”

Roche’s background as a mental health nurse gives him an in-depth understanding of the complexities involved in measuring barriers to services and health outcomes in such a diverse population.

He explains: “The barriers to accessing a health service are pretty well established, but there’s also the welcoming aspect which is really important as a facilitator: We’re finding it’s not so much about what stops you going to another service, but what makes you want to come to this one.”

Smith concurs: “The outcomes may generate some important questions and directions for further research and funding applications.

“I am hoping that this initial research heralds the beginning of a strong research partnership with UTS looking at important aspects of homelessness and homeless health in Australia.”

Hannah Jenkins
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer (M Roche): Shane Lo
Photograph (clinic) supplied by: St Vincent De Paul Society NSW
Photograph (homeless man): Thinkstock

"WE ASKED THE MEN TO HELP WITH PROVIDING INFORMATION ABOUT WHY THEY WENT THERE, WHAT THE OUTCOMES WERE FOR THEM AND WHAT THEY PERCEIVED HAD HAPPENED TO THEIR HEALTH OVER TIME."
An Executive Assistant (EA) by day and actress by night, Leonie Bringolf is a master of many trades.

“I have a family who cringe at the thought of going near the stage, but I just knew from an early age that I wanted to act,” enthuses Bringolf. “You get to be a whole variety of different people; it’s just so much fun.”

Bringolf is the Vice-President of Radio Active Live – a group of eight actors who produce live radio shows at The Hills Lodge, Castle Hill. The cast, who have been performing together for four years, include Bringolf and Logie winner, and ex-Sons and Daughters star, Steve Comey.

“We perform radio plays live for an audience the way they used to be – actors standing at the mic, with a script in hand and sound clips at the ready. It’s a lot of fun; for us and the audience!”

Later this month, Bringolf is also set to expand her skills, performing four monologues in Jane Martin’s play Vital Signs.

“It’s a compelling and funny suite of theatrical miniatures featuring seven women and one man,” explains Bringolf. “Together we perform a collage about contemporary life and all its warmth and majesty, fear and frustration, joy and sadness.”

You could say acting is ‘all in a day’s work’ for Bringolf, but that wouldn’t quite be correct.

From nine to five, Monday to Friday, Bringolf manages the busy schedule of the Dean of Business. It’s no easy task, but three years into the role and she already has a number of accomplishments to her name.

One of the most notable is the establishment of UTS’s Executive Assistants and Administration Forum – or EAAA for short.

The initiative, led by Diane Hewson and supported by Michelle Coleman, Sue Harris, Samantha Sandford, Fatima Villavert and Bringolf, has been live on Staff Connect since November last year.

“As an EA you spend a lot of the time working independently,” explains Bringolf.

“Last year, I mentioned to Diane Hewson, the Executive Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor, that there was a gap that could be filled – some kind of network for executive assistants where they can work collaboratively and find out relevant information.

“Diane told me they had been considering doing exactly that, but it was just about finding time to get the idea off the ground.”

And find the time they did. According to Bringolf, there are already 65 members who have access to the Staff Connect team site and are invited to attend workshops and social gatherings. So far the EAAA have held two events, with a third – a career-building workshop called Taking Control of Your Career – to be held on 17 May.

“People are putting up tips, and sharing contacts and resources,” says Bringolf. “It’s just great to see.

“We’re all like-minded people, we all need to have the same kind of information and we need to get it fairly quickly with as much support and help along the way as possible. The EAAA makes it just that little bit easier to do so.”

To find out more about EAAA, Radio Active Live and Vital Signs, email leonie.bringolf@uts.edu.au

Peta Gilbert
Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Journalism)
Photographer: Shane Lo

View this article at UTS:NEWSROOM or share it @utsnewsroom
Genevieve Clay-Smith can see no reason why people’s opportunities should be limited by factors beyond their control.

“People with disabilities really lack points of access to employment of choice,” she explains. “It’s pretty unfair that if you’re born a certain way, and society has stigmas about you, you won’t be able to go into an industry that you’re interested in.”

Clay-Smith is co-founder of Bus Stop Films, a not-for-profit organisation transforming the lives of people with disabilities by creating opportunities for them to be included in the notoriously exclusive film industry.

The program combines theory-level study of film with practical filmmaking to give students a real film school experience, all while gaining confidence and self-esteem, literacy and work-ready skills.

“Currently our government is spending $15 billion each year on disability unemployment, and that figure says to me that we’re really not fighting hard enough to develop our people with disabilities and put them in jobs where they can thrive and flourish,” she says.

Clay-Smith’s eyes were first opened to the barriers people with a disability, and their families, face while working on a documentary project with Down Syndrome NSW during her Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Media Arts and Production) degree. During that process, Clay-Smith met Gerard O’Dwyer – a young man with Down Syndrome. Soon after, and in a move that would set the course for her career, she decided to cast O’Dwyer as the lead in her own short film.

The resulting inclusive film, Be My Brother, went on to win Tropfest – the world’s largest short film festival – and was the catalyst for founding Bus Stop Films. By also including crew members with disabilities, Clay-Smith proved that an inclusive approach actually enhances both the process and the end product.

“A lot of times, the most important part of filmmaking is the end result, and nobody cares about what it looks like to get there. But for me, the process – and the treatment of people in the way a film is made – is just as important.

“By including people who might not otherwise get the chance, and treating your crew with dignity and respect, it enriches the entire process. You can come away with a great film, and know that it’s been made in a great way as well.”

Though she has no lived experience of disability, Clay-Smith knows what it’s like to feel sidelined; she grew up without a father, and was bullied and excluded as a child. She says the opportunity to empower others to change their lives has been incredibly rewarding.

“A lot of the people that we work with would never have accessed such an opportunity had it not been for our organisation. It’s a very transformative and life-enriching experience for the students to work towards a common goal as a team, and then to go to a premiere and see the film with members of the community, and be celebrated.”

In recognition of her important work, Clay-Smith was named 2015 NSW Young Australian of the Year, and closer to home, she was named the 2015 UTS Young Alumni Award recipient.

“It’s quite a wonderful thing to share my passion and love for film with others, and see them grow and be enriched through that.”

Nominations are now open for the 2016 UTS: Alumni Awards. If you know a graduate who deserves to be recognised, you can nominate them today at alumni.uts.edu.au/alumni-awards

Jennifer Waters
Photographer: Kevin Cheung

View this article at UTS:NEWSROOM or share it @utsnewsroom
On June 30, 2016, Building 2 will close ahead of its redevelopment as part of the UTS Central project. For Frank Urbina and Brian Moore, both part of the Program Management Office team overseeing the project, the reinvention of the building will be a milestone in more ways than one.
FRANK URBINA
I never forget a face, and when I walked into the Program Management Office (PMO) on my first day at UTS in 2012 and saw Brian, I knew he was the same person I’d studied architecture with at this very campus more than 30 years earlier. He didn’t remember me, but I’ve always been good with faces; even if Brian’s hair was shorter, and greyer, than when I had last seen him!

We started our architecture degree at the then NSW Institute of Technology (NSWIT) in 1976. For the first four years of our degree we were based in the old Darlinghurst Gaol building in East Sydney and also had classes in the Anthony Hordern Building, which was later demolished to make way for World Square. In 1980, our school, having outgrown the then NSW Institute of Technology (PMO) on my first day at UTS in 2012 and saw Brian, I knew he was the same person I’d studied architecture with at this very campus more than 30 years earlier. He didn’t remember me, but I’ve always been good with faces; even if Brian’s hair was shorter, and greyer, than when I had last seen him!

We started our architecture degree at the then NSW Institute of Technology (NSWIT) in 1976. For the first four years of our degree we were based in the old Darlinghurst Gaol building in East Sydney and also had classes in the Anthony Hordern Building, which was later demolished to make way for World Square. In 1980, our school, having outgrown the space in East Sydney, moved into the newly completed Building 2 on Broadway.

In all honesty, my first impression of Building 2 was that it was heaven. This is probably a very different perception of the building to what students have today. But in 1980 the building was brand new and it had so much more studio and classroom space than we had previously. Importantly, having the school based in the one building gave it a greater sense of cohesion.

The NSWIT’s School of Architecture and Building was very highly regarded in the industry, which probably had a lot to do with the influence of the late Professor Neville Quarry. As the head of school he had a philosophy which, put simply, was that the school had ‘no philosophy’. As students, we were given complete freedom in our designs but had a responsibility to defend them. This was an inspiring and progressive way of teaching.

My only memory of Building 2, and the campus more broadly, are the classrooms and studio spaces; that’s because that’s all there was. If you wanted something to eat, McDonald’s on Broadway – which remains there today – was your only option. There were no student spaces, lounges or study areas. Not like today. I recently walked past Penny Lane in Building 11 and saw how full it was with students eating and socialising and I thought, they just don’t know how lucky they are to have all these amazing facilities.

I can only describe working on the re-development of Building 2 as part of the UTS Central project, and alongside my old classmate Brian Moore of all people, as one of life’s many surprises. I was among the first group of students who studied in Building 2 and now I’m part of the project team responsible for reinventing the building. It’s certainly ironic, but comes with a level of satisfaction. It’s great to be able to come full circle and give back to the university.

BRIAN MOORE
I may have studied in the building all those years ago but I wouldn’t say I feel any particular connection to it. So, when Building 2 closes at the end of June and we start preparing for its demolition – which, subject to approval, will take place at the end of the year – I don’t think I’ll feel anything more than the next person. Unlike Frank, I actually didn’t like the building very much when I was a student. Though I think this had a lot to do with missing Darlinghurst, which was where the arts school was based and which had a more creative vibe.

Studying architecture at the NSWIT in those days was a completely different world to the UTS of today. For one, it was more vocational and we all worked full-time. It was a difficult six-year course and we were under immense pressure as we were working four days a week, coming in for classes one full day and two nights a week, and on top of that doing our course work. There wasn’t the time – or space – to socialise after class. You came in, went to class, and went home.

UTS today is light years apart in terms of the facilities available to students – they really are spectacular and encourage students to stay on campus, be it to study or hang out with friends. I look at the plans for the new Building 2 and there is just no comparison to the current building. It will house the new UTS Library which will have a scholarly reading room looking out over Alumni Green, and there will be an expansive learning commons and other great learning and research spaces across its 16 levels.

I definitely see it becoming the new heart of the university. As, unlike our other recently completed buildings which were all faculty buildings, this one won’t have a single faculty presence and will instead be a central hub where people will come and meet from all over the university.

There’s a great satisfaction in seeing Building 2 transform from what I think is a fairly poorly-designed building to something that is going to be quite special and better meet the needs of the university. The quality of what we’re building as part of the Campus Master Plan is why I like working within the PMO so much. Our three new buildings and what’s planned for the future are really high-quality pieces of architecture. And, most importantly, user needs are at the forefront.

As Frank said, we’ve really come full circle working on this project. We started here and it’s quite likely we’ll finish our careers here. Talk about going out with a bang!

Celia Britton
Marketing and Communication Unit
Photographer (F Urbina and B Moore): Shane Lo
Photograph (Building 2 – 1978): UTS archives
Photographer (Building 2 – 2003): Sherran Evans
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“Kindness brings people together,” says 22-year-old engineering student Thomas Da Jose. “It’s the universal currency.” And for the self-described “humanitarian development advocate”, kindness has brought him to Chulalongkorn University in Thailand.

Da Jose is part of the third cohort of Australian university students undertaking an internship and study in the Indo-Pacific region thanks to the Federal Government’s New Colombo Plan (NCP) Scholarship. (Three other UTS students – Bronwyn Mercer, Kayla Rain Williams and Guoxi Bill Wang – are also currently studying in Singapore, Japan and Hong Kong respectively.)

Da Jose is using his scholarship, which for 2016 recipients is valued at up to $67,000, to help him launch a career in international humanitarian engineering.

“I have a deep connection to improving the lives of others, particularly those who are marginalised and disadvantaged,” explains Da Jose.

“With the effects of climate change, flooding incidences are expected to increase so I want to develop a specialisation in disaster reduction, response and recovery, as it’s a topic I deeply care about. I feel the Indo-Pacific as a whole really needs that.”

The NCP Scholarships are an Australian Government initiative that encourages greater engagement between Australia’s brightest students and their Indo-Pacific neighbours.

Throughout his degree, Da Jose has given his time and skills to numerous volunteer projects including Engineers Without Borders, Habitat for Humanity, Humanitarian Affairs Asia, the Australian Thai Youth Ambassadors Program, UTS Peer Network and The Big Lift.

He’s also served as President of the Beyond UTS International Leadership Development (BUILD) Student Society, advocated for women as Team Leader in the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, and was on the UTS Academic Board from November 2013 to November 2014.

“Volunteering has always been a part of my life, but my participation really peaked during my time at UTS,” Da Jose explains.

“When I discovered UTS offers a strong support network and so many platforms to help others, one thing just led to another.”

The young activist, who counts Fred Hollows, Aung San Suu Kyi and his family as his greatest sources of inspiration, aspires to live a life in which he can motivate others to dream big.

“I am a big advocate for believing in yourself, even in light of constant shortcomings,” he says.

“My biggest role models are without doubt my family. We’ve been through many hardships, mostly financial, yet my parents never gave up. The unconditional love and care they show for others has moulded my own calling as a humanitarian engineer.”

Da Jose plans to inspire others to study and work in the Indo-Pacific region by documenting his NCP journey on social media – you can follow him on Instagram @hoeslay, Twitter @thophiee or check out his travel vlog on Youtube at goo.gl/7djhtk

“Not only do I enjoy sharing collective memories and video-editing, but as a scholarship recipient, there’s added purpose to what I hope to accomplish,” enthuses Da Jose.

“We know South-East Asia is a beautiful region, but there is a lack of resources to provide genuine insights of student exchange experiences, particularly for less popular countries such as Thailand, Indonesia and Philippines.

“Through social media, I’m offering insights into how fun exchange in these countries can be, as well as the value it has for our lifelong learning and professional careers.”

Nominations for the 2017 New Colombo Plan Scholarships open in July. For more information, visit bit.ly/1SoMwL

Alex McAlpin
Bachelor of Global Studies
Photographs supplied by: Thomas Da Jose
Gomeroi poet Alison Whittaker’s poetic persona is in turns nimble, cheeky and emotionally honest (sometimes all three at once). However, a political mindfulness stitches the poems of this debut collection together. Walking the line between two cultures, two places (urban/rural) and two languages, such mindfulness is critical, even penetrating the fond but often irreverent poems about her family. In ‘O, Eureka’ Whittaker explores both the divides and bridges that language has created with her Nan: “And O, / the first time I said / a long white theory word / she yarnd stiff to impress me / like, with that word / came authority, and with it, fear”. Contemporary Indigenous politics and identity can be difficult terrain. Without eschewing this complexity, Whittaker uses a combination of vernacular language, experimental syntax and post-colonial sensibility to create poems that are both startling and, dare I say it, fun at times. Alongside this work, sit poems that explore more personal issues, notably queer sexuality, that can occasionally be read as earnest rather than honest: ‘a tired warmth blooms / and from the conical andquirky to the sometimes awkward and occasionally banal. So familiar was each scenario, that each time I picked up Hopscotch, it was as though I’d just received news in an email from one of them, or caught up with one on the phone. Hopscotch begins by plotting five separate stories, chapter by chapter, which at first appear unconnected. Mark, Liza and Jemma all lead very different lives, with varying degrees of affluence and happiness, albeit within cooee of one another. Mark’s high-stress job, but handsome income, appears to be the cause of his unhappiness, while Liza gains enormous satisfaction from her low-paid, but enjoyable work as the director of a childcare centre. Yet blood is thicker than water, as they say, and these five are inevitably drawn together, their lives becoming increasingly entangled through circumstance, relationships and community. Hopscotch is an inviting journey into what could easily be my own life, or that of a friend, over the course of several months.

James Stuart
Marketing and Communication Unit

Lemons in the Chicken Wire is Alison Whittaker’s debut book. Whittaker, the winner of the 2015 black&white! Indigenous Writing Fellowship, is also a Research Assistant in UTS’s Centre for the Advancement of Indigenous Knowledges.

Clare Donald
UTS International

Hopscotch is Jane Messer’s third novel. She completed a Doctor of Creative Arts at UTS in 2002.

During May, the Co-op Bookshop on Broadway is offering Co-op members a 20 per cent discount on all three books reviewed in this issue. Mention U: magazine when you purchase any of these books in store.
For every one per cent the gap is narrowed between rich and poor, there is a 0.38 per cent rise in economic growth.

“So, yes, it’s really worth investing in a more equal society where people’s needs are met,” says Deputy Director of the UTS Designing Out Crime Research Centre Rodger Watson.

Watson, together with Senior Lecturer in the UTS Business School Melissa Edwards and next-generation entrepreneur and founder of creative studio Agency Murray Bunton, will be speaking at UTS’s Shapeshifters public lecture on 18 May.

In the lecture, titled Shapeshifters – Doing Social Good, Watson will share insights into the unique methodology he and his team developed to work with organisations on complex problems. He will cite social impact projects that range from setting up an educational facility in a high-security jail to preventing the poaching of wildlife.

Key to his team’s approach is to begin a project by asking – what is the common good?

“It’s usually around a core human value,” explains Watson. “So, in the example of poaching, rather than look at arresting culprits – which is a value of punishment – we would approach communities that the poachers live in and explore what can be done to make life more economically sustainable.”

It’s an approach used by Edwards and her colleagues in the UTS Business School too. Edwards, an expert in sustainability, management and social impact, takes an approach to research that combines complexity theory, design thinking and appreciative inquiry.

“Rather than focus on the problem itself, we look more broadly and work on the assumption that there is no optimal solution. But the purpose must be clearly focused on inclusive social and restorative environmental impacts. It switches your thinking to consider the context of the issue in relation to the bigger picture.”

The picture that both of these researchers look at is vast. Edwards cites a ‘tear down’ workshop she ran as part of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation Disruptive Innovation Festival with stakeholders in the NSW glass industry. Glass is notoriously energy intensive to recycle – it takes just 20 per cent less energy to recycle a glass bottle as it does to make a new one.

Rather than look at the problem of waste, stakeholders were asked to view the glass production ecosystem. Soon enough people were sharing information and asking questions about the pigments used and where materials were being sourced. “When people collaborate like this,” says Edwards, “problems become opportunities.”

Indeed the key to social impact innovation is large-scale collaboration. “Problems like these don’t just apply to one person,” affirms Edwards. “They can’t be solved by one entrepreneur or one organisation.”

In one of Edwards’s workshops two competing companies identified an opportunity to collaborate. “These great things happen when people are in opportunity-seeking mode – it’s when they get back into the office that they’re limited by conventional business practices.”

Companies and organisations can be reluctant to change their mode of operation. However, Edwards is gathering case studies of social impact innovation that works. “When the social and environmental benefits are clear, the business case emerges and change starts to occur. I’m hopeful, that over time, thinking will change.”

Watson agrees. “In the private sector there is a golden ratio for innovation – 70 per cent is incremental, 20 per cent is transformation, 10 per cent is radical. Our methodology is radical.

“What’s interesting is the return on investment. For that 10 per cent investment you get a 70 per cent return. This approach is next generation. We are training the next generation of social entrepreneurs.”

To register for Shapeshifters – Doing Social Good, email robert.button@uts.edu.au

Frances Morgan
Innovation and Creative Intelligence Unit
Photographer (M Edwards): Amanda James
Photographer (R Watson): David Lawrey
Tree image: Thinkstock
Art & U profiles a piece of work from the UTS Art Collection every issue.

**Fresh Fruit**, 2006, pigment print, UTS Art Collection, gift of the artist 2015

Pat Brassington’s *Fresh Fruit* is a recent acquisition for the UTS Art Collection, and one of three photographic works donated by the artist in 2015. Tasmania-based Brassington is one of Australia’s most highly respected and influential photo-media artists. Her early collage compositions later developed into the digitally manipulated pigment prints for which she is best known.

Blurring the boundaries of reality and fantasy, Brassington’s images explore a surreal, dreamlike logic that interrogates notions of gender and body, and challenges the authority of photography to represent the world ‘as is’. Her aim, she explains, is to “pitch my images just off the verge of normality, into those dense patches where the commonplace goes awry.”

Brassington’s images of bodies are distorted in ways that are both alluring and unsettling, which gives her work a unique aesthetic. The image presented in *Fresh Fruit* is of a satin-gloved hand with two fleshy protrusions emerging between its fingers. The tension between the demure covering of the hand and the wildly pink not-quite-identifiable ‘fruit’ leaves an impression of ambiguous eroticism.

*Fresh Fruit*, and the artist’s two other gifted works *Lure* and *Night Shade*, are currently on display alongside a suite of Brassington’s other works on loan from the Corrigan Collection. You can find them adorning the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences walls in Building 10, level 5.

For more information, visit art.uts.edu.au

Janet Ollevou

**UTS Art**
“As an engineering student, Chicago’s architecture has always been a fascination of mine. Dominating the skyline in this image are two of Chicago’s tallest structures – the famous Willis Tower (formerly Sears Tower) and Trump Tower. I took this photo from the observation deck of Chicago’s third tallest structure – the John Hancock Centre – after sitting in the observation deck for two hours so I could capture just the right moment. This picture was definitely worth the wait!”

Photographer: Sameed Khan, Bachelor of Engineering Diploma in Engineering Practice