Artists reflect on new national portrait prize

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MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

One positive development in higher education since the mid-1990s has been the emergence of national mechanisms to recognise and reward outstanding teaching and learning.

While it is true that many university teachers and supervisors regard their vocation as a privilege, the importance of tangible appreciation from their students, peers, institution, community or government cannot be overestimated.

I have been gratified to be part of a national movement to give greater recognition to exemplary teaching, and it has been at least equally as satisfying to witness UQ become the hallmark for the finest in teaching and learning.

UQ again came up trumps in the latest round of national teaching and learning awards, adding to our record for attaining more awards of this type than any other Australian university. Congratulations to the four winners of Carrick Awards for Teaching Excellence, and all eight members of the two teams that won Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning.

Due to the performances of these and other teachers, UQ has now earned almost one in seven of the nationwide accolades since they began 11 years ago: 27 from a total of 179, exceeding the combined tally of the next two institutions. And when the newest winners were announced in October, it was barely days since a series of triumphs in the main national research rounds had been unveiled – a further testament to UQ’s culture of integrating outstanding research with equally remarkable teaching.

October was also the month during which we bestowed the annual UQ Awards for Excellence in Teaching and Awards for the Enhancement of Student Learning. The recipients of these awards and commendations are superb teachers, and history shows they are now in strong positions to attain national awards for teaching and learning.

A characteristic of passionate teachers and researchers is their desire to share insights and discoveries with the broader community. A similar ethos of community enrichment motivates the University’s cultural activities, of which the UQ Art Museum is just one element.

The art museum’s latest major contribution to cultural heritage is Australia’s first self-portrait prize, which was judged in October by the director of the National Portrait Gallery, Andrew Sayers, and will be presented every second year. Like numerous other positive developments in the recent evolution of UQ, it was enabled by philanthropy. Chuck Feeney donated $5 million and sowed the seed for the prize. Then, the grande dame of Australian art, Margaret Olley, declared she would purchase the winning work as a gift to the UQ Art Museum. Such generosity emboldens UQ’s capacity to serve our local and global communities, as well as our students and alumni.

Professor John Hay, AC

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Studying abroad is often a special experience, but it proved a life-changing one for UQ student and 2008 Queensland Rhodes Scholar Anna Kloeden.

While volunteering at a Chinese orphanage on exchange in 2005, Ms Kloeden realised her passion for human rights law, and will use the scholarship to continue her studies at the University of Oxford next year.

Ms Kloeden will complete a Master of Laws at Oxford, focusing her research on how to strengthen the trade links between Australia and China without compromising the human rights of those involved.

“China is shaping up to be a superpower in our region in the next five to 10 years and the Australian government understands the importance of focusing on that relationship,” she said.

“It’s increasingly important to us economically in terms of trade and politically as well, and the more people who have the capability to manage that relationship the better.”

Ms Kloeden holds a Bachelor of Arts (Chinese) from UQ, and will complete her Bachelor of Laws studies at the end of the year.

Ms Kloeden is the seventh consecutive Queensland winner from UQ, and joins five state-based scholars and another three from Australia-at-large.

Rhodes to human rights

NO LIMIT FOR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

UQ has become the first Australian university to make it easier for students to apply for research scholarships all-year-round.

Most universities traditionally announce research scholarships in March and October. At UQ, prospective research students can now apply at any time of the year using one form covering the student’s application for admission and a scholarship.

The Dean of the UQ Graduate School, Professor Alan Lawson, said streamlining the process was designed to better serve students.

“We will become the first Australian university to enable students to apply for scholarships every day of the year, rather than in a single, mad scramble in late October,” Professor Lawson said.

Professor Lawson said the new scheme gave students the flexibility to start when they liked, after the two-week assessment of their application.

“UQ wants to be even more flexible than other universities that dictate how and when students can enrol or apply for scholarships,” he said.

“We think future students should be able to apply for scholarships when they like and when they are ready, and then start when it suits them and their advisory team.”

He said filling out one form for admission and a scholarship would also save time by cutting bureaucracy.

In 2008, UQ will provide about 500 new scholarships in addition to those offered by schools, faculties, individual research groups and external agencies – worth more than $20 million in total.

UQ has more than 3600 research higher degree students, graduating more than 400 PhD students each year – a 100 percent increase on just over a decade ago.

The University has the second-highest number of PhD students and highest number of international PhD students in Australia.

Its researchers supervise more doctoral students per head than colleagues at other Australian universities.

For further information about research scholarships available at UQ, visit www.uq.edu.au/grad-school/
UQ has topped the nation in the prestigious 2007 Carrick Awards, reasserting its dominance as the home of Australia’s most-awarded tertiary teachers. UQ won six Carrick Awards for Teaching Excellence, and Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning, announced in October by the Federal Minister for Education, Science and Training, Julie Bishop.

Twelve UQ academics were in the winners’ circle: four with individual Awards for Teaching Excellence, and eight in two teams to gain Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning.

UQ Vice-Chancellor, Professor John Hay, AC, said the result was “an authoritative measure of UQ’s sustained performance as the best university for award-winning teachers.”

“Attaining this result in the 2007 awards continues UQ’s record of winning more national awards for teaching than any other Australian university in the awards’ history,” he said.

“A key to UQ’s success is that we recognise and reward excellence; each of the 2007 winning individuals and members of both teams have previously won a UQ-wide teaching award.”

Students in a large range of courses learn from the 2007 winners, whose areas include education, information technology, agribusiness, veterinary science, biology, chemistry and physics.

The prizes to UQ total $150,000.

• Awards for Teaching Excellence
  Dr Karen Moni (Social Sciences). As the School of Education’s Director of Secondary Programs, Dr Moni focuses on preparing students for teaching service, and also co-ordinates English curriculum courses and young adult literature courses for Bachelor and Graduate Diploma of Education programs. She develops independent, critical thinkers, creative professionals, and life-long learners, and she is a great ambassador for Education and an advocate for English and Literacy.

  Dr Paul Mills (Early Career). Dr Mills, of the School of Veterinary Science, delivers potentially difficult material in a clear, well-structured and lively manner. One of his many innovations is a virtual microscopy resource, which is supported by the seven Australasian Veterinary Schools and veterinary professional associations. It gives students online access to key histological specimens without the need for a microscope.

  Dr Glenn Coleman (Biological Sciences, Health and Related Studies). Dr Coleman’s main undergraduate teaching responsibility is in the area of veterinary parasitology, where he has introduced online learning resources and web-based assessments that run in conjunction with parasitology practical classes. He seeks student feedback to critically evaluate and modify his teaching strategies, and encourages students to see their fellow students as partners in learning.

  Dr Peter Sutton (Physical Sciences and Related Studies). Dr Sutton, of the School of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering, was pivotal to development of the curriculum and the philosophical underpinnings of the Information Environments Program at UQ Ipswich. He was also responsible for the redesign of the Computer Systems Engineering curriculum and the development and initial delivery of its key courses. Dr Sutton’s courses include an anonymous online feedback page, with SMS text messaging also utilised for this purpose.

  • Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning

  Dr Valda Miller, Elwyn Oldfield, Dr Averil Cook, Dr Marie Kavanagh, Graham Jordan (The First-Year Experience). Evidence associates regular student attendance at Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) with stronger academic outcomes, lower attrition rates and stronger recruitment of students to later years of study in related areas. PASS is embedded in the core curricula of most large first level biological and physical sciences, economics, business, geography and town planning courses. It involves high-achieving second and third level undergraduates acting as role models and collaborators for students in large first level science courses. The student leaders provide learning activities and monitor study techniques.

  Associate Professor Ray Collins, Associate Professor Tony Dunne, Dr Kim Bryceson (Educational Partnerships and Collaborations with Other Organisations). The team has developed a unique approach to industry collaboration with the leading employers of Bachelor of Agribusiness graduates. Over the past 13 years, the Agribusiness program’s industry partners have funded almost 300 final semester Agribusiness students to carry out 61 research projects on their behalf in 16 different countries. Groups of four or five students address a commercial research question in an international setting. Industry partners provide the projects and are also involved in assessment.

UQ teaching awards, see pages 12-13.
ROCK-SOLID PARTNERSHIP

UQ has announced a $1.5 million partnership with Golder Associates Pty Ltd to boost graduate numbers and research in the growing field of geotechnical engineering.

The five-year partnership will increase the number of UQ students specialising in geotechnical engineering and promote applied research in geomechanics to meet industry needs.

It will also see the appointment of Professor David Williams to the Golder Chair in Geomechanics, and the creation of a new Geomechanics Centre.

Geomechanics is the study of the behaviour of soil and rock that underpins the branch of engineering known as geotechnical engineering, which is vital to the design and delivery of civil infrastructure and mining development.

Professor Williams, who has a long-established research and teaching career at UQ, will take on the role of Director of the Centre, which will conduct undergraduate teaching and cutting-edge research in the field.

Executive Dean of UQ’s Faculty of Engineering, Physical Sciences and Architecture, Professor Stephen Walker, welcomed the partnership and said it would ensure quality outcomes for both organisations and industry in general.

“The UQ – Golder partnership will greatly expand the University’s capacity to provide industry with graduates specialising in geomechanics, and research outcomes that will in turn support the unprecedented level of development at local, national and international levels,” he said.

Managing Director of Golder Associates, Darren Watt, said it was up to industry and consultancies to increase the number of graduates specialising in geomechanics and promote research to the levels needed in today’s economy.

“Through funding the Centre and via active participation in undergraduate teaching and research, we hope to assist the University to build a centre that is recognised for its excellence in geomechanics,” he said.

The partnership will provide for additional academic and postdoctoral appointments as well as increased scholarship opportunities, with Geomechanics Centre researchers to work closely with colleagues from Engineering and Earth Sciences and the Sustainable Minerals Institute.

TAPPING INTO WATER RESEARCH

One of the world’s leading water infrastructure companies, Veolia Water France, will fund a $2.5 million Chair in Water Recycling at UQ.

The new professor based at UQ’s Advanced Water Management Centre (AWMC), directed by Professor Jurg Keller, will be joined by a team of up to seven researchers by early next year.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor David Siddle, signed an agreement establishing the chair with Western Corridor Recycled Water Pty Ltd Scheme Operator Project Director, Jean-Michel Seillier, at a ceremony held at UQ on November 2.

Professor Siddle said the professorship, initially funded for five years, was believed to be the first of its kind in Australia and indicated the importance placed on research finding solutions to the continent’s dwindling water supplies.

He thanked Veolia Water Australia, a subsidiary of Veolia Water and scheme operator of the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project, for its foresight in partnering with UQ on the initiative.

Professor Siddle said through centres such as the AWMC, the University was ideally positioned to benefit from increased recognition of the importance of water and water conservation by society.

The new team would also provide a new focus for postgraduate studies, he said.

“UQ has the facilities and expertise to advance research into how we can better manage our precious water resources for future generations,” Professor Siddle said.

Western Corridor Recycled Water Director, Mark Pascoe, commended the AWMC for its international reputation, and said he believed the new chair would drive not only research but improved understanding of the benefits of purified recycled water.

“Water is essential to living and an adequate supply of clean potable water is vital,” Mr Pascoe said.

“As demand increases and supplies from traditional sources fall, consideration has to be given to alternative practices that are safe, palatable and sustainable.

“I am confident that, with the focused attention from the chair, boundaries will be challenged through innovative research, and the positive results will benefit whole communities.”

Mr Pascoe said the UQ research program would drive continual optimisation of a current, world-class advanced water treatment plant at Bundamba, improved techniques for ensuring water quality, investigate environmental impacts and anticipate regulatory changes.

“The program will also play a role in developing a wider network of expertise in water recycling and could well be the vehicle for raising Brisbane’s profile as a world centre for excellence,” he said.

Western Corridor Recycled Water Pty Ltd is constructing Australia’s largest recycled water scheme, the Western Corridor Recycled Water Project encompassing more than 200 kilometres of wide diameter pipeline, three new advanced water treatment plants, and six existing wastewater plants in an innovative move to drought-proof southeast Queensland.

Professor Keller said the professorship dovetailed with AWMC research in areas such as sewer management and the removal of organics from drinking water.

“The current water crisis has brought about a major shift in many aspects of the water industry in Australia, most notably in southeast Queensland,” Professor Keller said.

“The imminent introduction of large-scale, high-quality water recycling including the provision of purified recycled water into our water supply represents a dramatic paradigm shift in urban water management systems.”

The AWMC is an international centre of excellence in innovative water technology and management. During more than 10 years of research in the field, it has developed leading expertise in education, research and consulting.
Sydney artist Ben Quilty has won Australia’s first self-portrait prize, which was officially announced at the UQ Art Museum on October 20.

Quilty’s Self Portrait Dead (Over the Hills and Far Away) was selected from 30 entries judged by Andrew Sayers, the Director of the National Portrait Gallery, and forms part of a special exhibition to accompany the $40,000 prize.

Mr Sayers said the winning work was “a real tour de force”.

“It shows extraordinary skill and maturity to paint a work in what are literally livid colours, with great visceral gobs of paint over just the primed canvas,” he said.

“The work gives a compelling contemporary expression to one of the age-old themes in portraiture – the artist’s awareness of mortality.

“It is a very worthy portrait from within a very fine selection of Australian contemporary self-portraits, to form the beginning of this initiative by the UQ Art Museum.”

A previous finalist in both the Archibald and Wynne prizes, Mr Quilty is currently completing an Australia Council Studio Residency in Barcelona.

Renowned Brisbane artist, Margaret Olley, admired the work’s “concept, use of paint and great presence” and said she would buy the painting to donate to the “marvellous” UQ Art Museum.

“It’s called Self Portrait Dead but it’s more so the artist probably asleep, from potentially having had a few too many drinks,” said UQ Art Museum Director, Nick Mitzevich.

Mr Mitzevich encouraged members of the public to visit the exhibition, which complements the University’s existing self-portrait collection, the only one of its kind in the country.

“Self-portraits are compelling, not simply because of the insight they give us into how artists see themselves, but also because of what they say about the world they live in – incorporating all of the contemporary debates about representation and identity,” he said.

Generously supported by the Margaret Hannah Olley Foundation, the UQ National Artists’ Self-Portrait Prize will be held every second year, with all works entered to be available for acquisition by the University.

The exhibition appears at the UQ Art Museum, St Lucia, until February 10, 2008. Admission is free.
New Head named

UQ has appointed Dr Jonathan Hill as the new Head of the School of Veterinary Science.

Dr Hill, who will take up his appointment early next year, will oversee a $75 million project to relocate the School to the Gatton campus, expected to be in place by mid-2009.

Dr Hill is a UQ alumnus, having graduated in veterinary science in 1985. He gained a PhD in veterinary physiology from Texas A&M University in 1999, and is also a member of several specialist professional associations and societies.

Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor-elect Professor Paul Greenfield welcomed Dr Hill’s appointment and commended his research record in advanced reproductive technologies.

He said this would open new opportunities for collaborative research with the CSIRO which would be of particular benefit to the beef industry. Executive Dean of the Faculty of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Veterinary Science, Professor Roger Swift, said Dr Hill had considerable professional experience in universities and research organisations in Australia and overseas.

“His reputation as a widely respected veterinary reproductive physiologist, both within Australia and internationally, puts him in an excellent position to develop new research directions and assist future veterinarians studying at UQ,” Professor Swift said.

Dr Hill was previously employed as Stream Leader for Advanced Reproductive Technologies and Beef Breeding Engineering with CSIRO Livestock Industries and CSIRO Food Futures National Research Flagship respectively.

Once at UQ, Dr Hill will be a key member of the team responsible for the construction of a host of state-of-the-art facilities at Gatton including teaching and research laboratories, an equine clinic and hospital and a small animal clinic.

The planned relocation of the University’s School of Veterinary Science from St Lucia to Gatton moved a step closer in October through a $3.5 million Federal Government grant.

Federal Education Minister, Julie Bishop, said the funding had been allocated to assist in the construction of the Veterinary Science Equine Clinic and Hospital at Gatton.

Chair of the School of Veterinary Science Relocation to UQ Gatton Project Committee, Professor Trevor Grigg, said the Equine Clinic and Hospital was an important part of the $75 million relocation development.

Professor Grigg said the University was seeking further Federal and Queensland government support, as well as running a dedicated capital fundraising project.

Professor Grigg said the University had already committed $20 million to the relocation, which was targeted for completion in mid-2009.

“It will not only support the School’s vision, but will significantly enhance the School and the wider community and the veterinary industry,” he said.

Once completed, UQ Gatton will undoubtedly host the most comprehensive animal teaching and research facility in Australia and probably the Southern Hemisphere.”

Professor Grigg said UQ had trained more veterinary science students than any other Australian university, with graduates now working in 53 countries.

The Capital Campaign President is philanthropist and retired prominent businessman, Dr John Reid, AO, and the University has appointed an experienced Campaign Director, Janice Wilson.

The campaign will be officially launched at Brisbane’s Customs House on November 26 at a luncheon for distinguished guests representing government, the corporate sector, wider community and the veterinary industry.

Executive Dean of the Faculty of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Veterinary Science, Professor Roger Swift, said relocation of the School’s core facilities to Gatton had significant advantages.

An artist’s impression of the new Equine Clinic and Hospital at UQ Gatton

VET SCHOOL VISION

THE RELOCATION OF UQ’S VET SCHOOL TO A STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITY AT GATTON IS GATHERING MOMENTUM.

Professor Swift said a $33 million Centre for Advanced Animal Science (CAAS) was also being developed at Gatton in conjunction with the Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries.

“It is estimated the School will bring about 700 additional people to the campus, many of whom will live in the Gatton area,” he said.

Once established, the School, in conjunction with the CAAS (due for completion in July 2008) would be a leading international facility, Professor Swift said.

“It will meet standards required for all major accreditations of the veterinary science program, including those of the United Kingdom and North America,” he said.

“In addition, the location of the Equine Hospital and Clinic at Gatton will result in growth of equine-related activities in the region.”

Professor Swift said the relocation development would incorporate state-of-the-art teaching facilities and modern research infrastructure.

“It will increase the ability to integrate activities of the School with animal teaching and research conducted within the CAAS, and the schools of Animal Studies, Land, Crop and Food Science, and Natural and Rural Systems Management, already based at Gatton,” he said.

“It will not only support the School’s vision, but will significantly enhance the School and campus contribution to the Lockyer/Brisbane Valley/Darling Downs communities.”

For further information about the project, contact Janice Wilson on (07) 3346 7692 or janice.wilson@uq.edu.au

“UQ Gatton will undoubtedly host the most comprehensive animal teaching and research facility in Australia”
Australia’s leading minerals research institute is about to enter a new stage with the retirement of its founding Director.

Professor Don McKee will step down as Director of UQ’s Sustainable Minerals Institute (SMI) next month after six years in the position.

He will be replaced by Professor Chris Moran, who currently leads the Centre for Water in the Minerals Industry (CWiMI), one of six centres in the SMI.

Professor McKee said he was delighted to be able to pass on the directorship to such an eminent scientist.

“In his time at SMI, Chris has built CWiMI to a point where it is already providing national leadership in developing water practices and policies within the Australian minerals industry,” Professor McKee said.

“It has been an honour to be involved in defining a vision for SMI such that it has become an acknowledged centre for all issues associated with the sustainable development of mineral resources.”

Professor Moran said he was excited about taking up the SMI leadership.

“In so many aspects of modern industry, sustainability is a key to success,” he said.

“The deep technical roots established in the development of the SMI and the ongoing resources industry boom set the stage for a new phase of sustainability thinking and action.

“The industry is ready for integration and there is no other organisation, globally, with such technical credibility that is better positioned to provide the ideas, engineering solutions and world-class students than the SMI.”

The SMI was established in 2001 to expand the University’s already enviable reputation, built over 50 years of industry partnerships, in researching and developing new technologies for the sustainable development of mineral resources.

SMI board chairman Nick Stump welcomed the appointment of Professor Moran, and said he was “highly suitable for the role of taking the SMI forward into its next stage of development.”

UQ Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor-elect, Professor Paul Greenfield, thanked Professor McKee for his incredible work in building the profile of the SMI in both the research and mining communities.

“Professor McKee has led the SMI from the drawing board to a position now as one of the major players in mining research and development both in Australia and internationally,” Professor Greenfield said.

“I am looking forward to working with Professor Moran as the Institute evolves.”

UQ continues to attract the dominant share of the State’s high achieving Year 12 students to its programs, according to latest data compiled by the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre.

Of the 498 school leavers earning an Overall Position (OP) of 1 and enrolling in tertiary study for 2007 through QTAC, 304 students, or 61 percent, chose to study at UQ – three times more than any other Queensland university.

QTAC data showed that enrolment at UQ for students receiving results in the top three OP bands was also almost three times greater than that of its nearest competitor.

Data showed that 1022 students (57.5 percent) with OP scores of one, two or three were admitted to UQ this year out of the total pool of 1780 students in these bands enrolling in Queensland universities through QTAC.

UQ slightly increased its share of OP1–3 students between 2006 and 2007. In the OP4–7 band, UQ also had the highest share — 39.5 percent, or 977 of the 2471 students enrolling through QTAC.

UQ Vice-Chancellor Professor John Hay, AC, said the latest data reflected that the State’s most academically able students continued to make UQ their top choice.

The QTAC figures come as UQ climbed 12 places in the latest Times Higher Education Supplement, now ranking 33rd in the world – an improvement of 16 places from just four years ago.

“UQ continues to refine and improve its offerings, has state-of-the-art facilities, and employs quality teachers and researchers as recognised in national and international rankings,” Professor Hay said.

“Our staff members have earned far more national teaching awards than any other Australian university, while our faculties and cluster of research institutes indicate the depth and breadth of our expertise.”

UQ is a founding member of the Group of Eight, a group of leading Australian universities. It is also one of only three Australian members of Universitas 21 – an international network of comprehensive, research-intensive universities committed to world-best practice.

“A UQ Options evening will be held on December 18 at the UQ Centre, St Lucia, from 5pm–8pm to help students get the best results from their OPs. For more information, visit http://www.uq.edu.au/study/options/
The world's oceans are becoming more acidic, with potentially devastating consequences for corals and marine organisms that build reefs and provide much of the Earth's breathable oxygen.

The problem is caused by the gradual build up of carbon dioxide (CO2) in the atmosphere, dissolving into the oceans.

Scientists fear it could be lethal for animals with chalky skeletons which make up more than a third of the planet's marine life.

The issue was among several explored by Australia's leading coral scientists at a public forum hosted by UQ's ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies (CoECRS) in October.

"Recent research into corals using boron isotopes indicates the ocean has become about one third of a pH unit more acidic over the past 50 years. This is still early days for the research, and the trend is not uniform, but it certainly looks as if marine acidity is building up," said Professor Malcolm McCulloch of CoECRS and The University of Queensland.

"It appears this acidification is now taking place over decades, rather than centuries as originally predicted. It is happening even faster in the cooler waters of the Southern Ocean than in the tropics. It is starting to look like a very serious issue."

Corals and plankton with chalky skeletons are at the base of the marine food web, which supports krill, the "glue" that holds the edges of coral reefs together in turbulent water – actually began to dissolve.

"The risk is that this may begin to erode the barrier of the Great Barrier Reef on a grand scale," he said.

"As an issue it's a bit of a sleeper. Global warming is incredibly serious, but ocean acidification could be even more so."

During the forum the participating scientists unanimously called for a number of measures to be put into place, including the introduction of immediate greenhouse emission targets, an increase in the number of no-fishing or "green" zones, and the banning of harvesting reef megafauna such as dugongs, turtles and sharks.

Globally, the welfare of 500 million people is closely linked to the goods and services provided by coral reef biodiversity, with tourism on the Great Barrier Reef contributing approximately $6 billion each year to Australia's economy.

An additional $7195 million is generated from recreational activity and commercial fishing in the area, with the economic activity tied to more than 65000 jobs.

The centerpiece of coral spawning events is the full moon.

"Analysis of coral cores shows a steady drop in calcification over the last 20 years," said Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg of CoECRS and The University of Queensland.

"There's not much debate about how it happens: put more CO2 into the air above it and it dissolves into the oceans.

"It isn't just the coral reefs which are affected – a large part of the plankton in the Southern Ocean are also affected.

"These drive ocean productivity and are the base of the food web which supports krill, whales, tuna and our fisheries. They also play a vital role in removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, which could break down."

Professor Hoegh-Guldberg said an experiment at Heron Island, in which CO2 levels were increased in the air of tanks containing corals, had showed it caused some corals to cease forming skeletons.

More alarmingly, red calcareous algae – the "glue" that holds the edges of coral reefs together in the dark sky. The genes, known as a cryptochromes, occur in corals, insects, fish and mammals – including humans – and are primitive light-sensing pigment mechanisms which predate the evolution of eyes.

"Many of these genes developed in deep time, in the earliest phases of organised life on the planet," CoECRS and James Cook University scientist Dr Bill Leggat said.

"They were preserved for hundreds of millions of years before being inherited by corals when they developed about 240 million years ago, and are still found today in modern animals and humans. They are an indicator that corals and humans are in fact distant relatives, sharing a common ancestor way back."

ACID OCEANS WARNING

SPAWNING CORAL LIGHT UP UNDER THE FULL MOON

A team of Australian and Israeli researchers has discovered what could be the aphrodisiac for the biggest moonlight sex event on Earth.

An ancient light-sensitive gene has been isolated by researchers from the ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies (CoECRS) that appears to act as a trigger for the annual mass spawning of corals across the Great Barrier Reef shortly after a full moon.

The genes, known as a cryptochromes, occur in corals, insects, fish and mammals – including humans – and are primitive light-sensing pigment mechanisms which predate the evolution of eyes.

In a new paper published recently in the international journal Science, the team, headed by Marie Curie Scholar Dr Oren Levy of CoECRS and UQ, reported its discovery that the Cry2 gene, stimulated by the faint blue light of the full moon, appears to play a central role in triggering the mass coral spawning event, one of nature's wonders.

"This is the key to one of the central mysteries of coral reefs," said Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, who leads the UQ laboratory in which the genes were discovered.

"We have always wondered how corals without eyes can detect moonlight and get the precise hour of the right couple of days each year to spawn."

What allows corals to do this simultaneously along the immense length of the Great Barrier Reef has been a scientific mystery until now, although the remarkable synchronisation at certain times of the year suggested that moonlight might be a key factor.

"Exposing corals to different colours and intensities of light and sampling live corals on reefs around the time of the full moon, Dr Levy found the Cry2 gene at its most active in Acropora corals during full moon nights."

"We think these genes developed in primitive life forms in the Precambrian, more than 500 million years ago, as a way of sensing light," he said.

"In humans, cryptochromes still operate as part of the circadian system that tunes us to the rhythms of our planet, though their light-sensing function appears lost to us."

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An additional $7195 million is generated from recreational activity and commercial fishing in the area, with the economic activity tied to more than 65000 jobs.
Spectacular Indigenous art from far North Queensland has captivated audiences in New York during the latest leg of a UQ Art Museum international tour.

Our Way: Contemporary Aboriginal Art from Lockhart River was officially opened at Stony Brook University on October 17 by Australia’s Ambassador to the United Nations, the Honourable Robert Hill.

Our Way debuted at UQ in May and has since been shown at the National University of Singapore en route to Stony Brook where it was the first major exhibit to be displayed in the Charles Wang Center.

The exhibition surveys the work of a group formerly known as the Art Gang, which is led by internationally recognised painters Rosella Namok, Samantha Hobson and Fiona Omeenyo.

Curator Dr Sally Butler, who was in New York with Namok and UQ Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Michael Keniger, said the colour and perspective of the exhibition made it a unique addition to the North American art scene.

“New York audiences are exposed to an extreme degree of diversity in their arts so it is difficult to present something entirely new and different to them. However Our Way does this,” she said.

“The work appeals to the contemporary high energy life of New York but it also has figures and forms that are unknown to New Yorkers, and that incite curiosity to find out more about the art and the world of the artists.”

The travelling collection contains 42 pieces – including paintings, prints and sculptures – which provide Indigenous insights into the bushfires, coral reefs and rainforests of “Sandbeach Country”, 800km north of Cairns.

“Whilst many Aboriginal communities produce art of great colour, Lockhart River artists use a distinctive saturation of intense colour that they derive from the spectacular tropical surroundings of their country,” Dr Butler said.

The Art Gang success story began with a Queensland government training initiative in the early 1990s with the community now running a thriving cultural centre which markets works around the world.

“Our Way shows how education, research and the arts can work together to help Aboriginal communities, and we’re extremely proud to be bringing this exhibition to a global audience,” Professor Keniger said.

“Allowing audiences in Brisbane, Singapore and now North America to see these works establishes important and ongoing collaborations between cultures, artforms and institutions.”

Our Way: Contemporary Aboriginal Art from Lockhart River next travels to the Kluge Ruhe Museum at the University of Virginia where it opens on January 15.

“The work appeals to the contemporary high energy life of New York but it also has figures and forms that are unknown to New Yorkers”
THE UNIVERSITY REWARDED A DEDICATED AND INSPIRATIONAL GROUP OF ACADEMICS AT ITS ANNUAL TEACHING AWARDS IN OCTOBER.
This year, the UQ Awards for Excellence in Teaching and Awards for the Enhancement of Student Learning recognised five individual and two group winners.

Six commendations for excellence in teaching were also announced during the awards ceremony at Customs House in October, which was addressed by Queensland Minister for Education and Training, Rod Woldt.

The announcements came within weeks of UQ again topping the nation by winning a total of six Carrick Awards for Teaching Excellence and Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning.

Students from a wide range of both undergraduate and postgraduate study programs offered through UQ including medicine, occupational therapy, Japanese language translation, food science, education, social work, and psychology learn from the 2007 University-wide teaching winners.

An outstanding recipient of one of the five Awards for Excellence in Teaching in 2007 was Director of the Aboriginal Environments Research Centre within UQ’s School of Geography, Planning and Architecture, Associate Professor Paul Memmott.

Dr Memmott has inspired an independent field of study into Aboriginal built environments against a shifting understanding of geography and in honour of his pioneering work received a Commendation for Excellence in Teaching (Indigenous Education) in conjunction with his overall award.

Where possible, his teaching is informed by field experience – a recent initiative being the establishment of the Arid Zone research station at Camooweal in western Queensland.

His new book, Gunyah, Goondie + Wurley, published by University of Queensland Press, turns on its head a widely held belief that Indigenous people were devoid of houses or towns when Europeans first reached Australian shores (see story page 24).

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor Michael Keniger, said the awards provided crucial recognition for teachers, many of whom went on to compete for and win national teaching prizes.

“This confirms the value of the internal scheme in terms of recognising and rewarding teaching excellence,” Professor Keniger said.

Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), Professor Deborah Terry, said UQ students, and ultimately the wider community, benefited from UQ’s exceptional quality of teaching.

The full list of 2007 winners are:

Awards for Excellence in Teaching ($10,000 each):

Dr Marie-Louise Dick (School of Medicine).

Dr Dick has ensured the general practice course within UQ’s Bachelor of Medicine / Bachelor of Surgery program remains in touch with community expectations as well as the learning needs of individual students.

Dr Madan Gupta (School of Land, Crop and Food Sciences).

Dr Gupta won a 2006 Carrick Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning and, together with two colleagues, developed an interactive seed identification key using a computerised database. Dr Gupta has since integrated the software into his teaching of seed science at UQ Gatton.

Dr Cliff Mallett (School of Human Movement Studies).

Since joining UQ, Dr Mallett has initiated, developed and implemented an innovative and highly successful suite of online postgraduate programs in sports coaching in conjunction with the Australian Sports Commission.

Associate Professor Paul Memmott (School of Geography, Planning and Architecture).

Dr Lisa Nissen (School of Pharmacy).

The 2002 Young Pharmacist of the Year and an outstanding communicator, Dr Nissen has a flair for explaining complex information in simple terms.

Commendations for Excellence in Teaching were won by Associate Professor Karen Healy (School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences); Dr Matthew Horney (School of Psychology); Dr Jayne Keogh (School of Education); Dr Greg Marston (School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences); and Professor Philip Poronnik (School of Biomedical Sciences).

The following projects were recognised with Awards for the Enhancement of Student Learning ($10,000 each):

Masters of Arts (MA) in Japanese Interpreting and Translation e-Learning Translation Project (School of Languages and Comparative Cultural Studies). Unique within Australian universities in its use of flexible delivery in the teaching of translations, project initiatives include the use of a web cam to allow students and instructors to see and talk with one another “face-to-face”. This facilitates a more personal rapport.

The Industry Experience: Engaging Graduating Occupational Therapy Students in Authentic Industry Partnerships (Division of Occupational Therapy, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences).

This initiative helps solidify students’ growing sense of professional identity following their completion of their prerequisite two semesters of full-time professional practice.

In addition, The School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences this year instituted Excellence in Teaching Awards to recognise outstanding individuals and teams within the School.

Those awarded include:

Dr Liz Ward, who was part of a national team that received a 2007 Carrick Grant and a Commendation in the UQ Teaching Excellence Awards. Dr Ward was further recognised for her outstanding teaching evaluation results, receiving an Individual Award for Teaching Excellence.

An Early Career Award for Teaching Excellence (for staff within their first five years of an academic career) was presented to Donna McCook, whose use of role-play scenarios provides a creative and interesting learning experience for students.

A Team Award for Teaching Excellence or Enhancement of Student Learning was won by Associate Professor Sylvia Rodger (Team leader), Associate Professor Jenny Ziviani, Dr Pauline Watter, Dr Gail Woodyatt and Dr Julie Marinac. The award is further recognition of this multidisciplinary team’s sustained excellence in provision of innovative learning experiences, in particular promotion of inter-professional knowledge, practice and teamwork, which has received international recognition.

The Awards for Excellence in Teaching were established in 1988 and the Awards for the Enhancement of Student Learning began in 2001. Both awards are funded by the University.
The University of Queensland has strengthened its ties with the local community after signing a new three-year sponsorship agreement with the Ipswich Art Gallery.

Professor Alan Rix, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Ipswich, said he was pleased UQ had been given an opportunity to develop its partnership with the gallery and to increase the region’s interaction with the University.

“We have been discussing the program of exhibitions to be held in the coming months and I can see that the UQ Gallery will allow us to reach out to local business, families and the community in a whole new way,” Professor Rix said.

“It is a pleasing coincidence that the next exhibition to open in the gallery is of selected works by multimedia students graduating from the University’s Ipswich campus, which is a perfect showcase for our students and the space,” Ipswich Art Gallery Arts, Community and Cultural Services Committee Chair, Cr Charlie Pisasale, said the UQ Gallery within the Ipswich Art Gallery provided a space which could include both contemporary and new media art forms.

“This is an exciting development and a wonderful commitment to the development of Ipswich’s cultural profile,” Cr Pisasale said.

“The gallery will feature about six exhibitions per year making use of the new media capabilities of the space.”

One of the most visited regional art spaces in Australia, the Ipswich Art Gallery presents a dynamic program of changing exhibitions and heritage displays, special events, performances, family activities and workshops.

Negotiated through the Ipswich Arts Foundation, the UQ Gallery will feature a dynamic program of contemporary and new media exhibitions.

Multimedia and Interactive Design: Works by Graduating Students opens in the UQ Gallery on November 17 and continues until February 3, 2008. Admission is free.

The Ipswich Art Gallery is open from 10am to 5pm, and is closed only on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year’s Day and Good Friday.

For further information, visit www.ipswichartgallery.qld.gov.au/

GALLERY GROWS IN IPSWICH

in brief

LECTURES THAT LAST
The University has purchased a $550,000 system for recording lectures in large, centrally-controlled teaching rooms.

Senior Manager Academic Administration Phil Taylor said that following an extensive review process, the Lectopia lecture recording system was selected as the best choice for the University.

Mr Taylor said the equipment would allow academic staff to record lectures by either audio and screen content or audio and video, and then post their presentations via BlackBoard for student revision.

The system is being purchased through a Learning and Teaching Performance Fund allocation awarded to the UQ last year, and will be implemented in phases beginning in 2008 with large lecture theatres.

PARKINSON’S SPEECH STUDY
UQ researchers are seeking volunteers diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease who have difficulty with their speech.

The School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences project will examine lip, tongue, and jaw function in individuals with speech difficulties as a result of the disease.

The study will provide a better understanding of the impact of Parkinson’s Disease on speech and enable the development of effective treatment strategies.

Assessments will be conducted at the St Lucia campus at a time convenient to volunteers. Travel costs will be reimbursed.

For further information contact Mili Kuruvilla on (07) 3346 7489 or m.kuruvilla@mailbox.uq.edu.au

MEDICAL SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM
Some of Australia’s leading medical historians met at UQ in October to attend a major symposium on the use of human body parts in medical science.

Dr Sarah Ferber, symposium coordinator and medical historian from UQ’s School of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics, said the public forum looked at the achievements and controversies associated with the use of human body parts in the past and present.

A feature was a presentation about the UQ Anatomy Donors Annual Thanksgiving Service.

“Through this, UQ plays its own major part in acknowledging the importance of the role of donors in furthering medical science and education,” Dr Ferber said.
Mrs Allen has barely finished her PhD, but is already planning a trip back to Brisbane to continue her groundbreaking koala research.

Mrs Allen has spent the last three-and-a-half years with Dr Steve Johnson’s koala research group, which has created a revolutionary artificial insemination (AI) technique for the marsupial and started the world’s first koala sperm bank.

Her PhD, began through the School of Animal Studies, focused on the factors that influence male koala fertility which have been vital to the success of the AI program.

Mrs Allen and the research team produced the first marsupial pouch young using sperm that had been chilled for three days.

The group’s goal is to freeze koala sperm indefinitely for use in future AIs and to safeguard the koala’s future genetic diversity.

Mrs Allen said she researched wild koalas in order to select the best male koalas for breeding based on a range of physical characteristics and time of year.

“My study was about getting more information on the males’ fertility to better the koala artificial insemination technique,” Mrs Allen said.

Originally from San Diego, California, Mrs Allen first came to Australia as a study abroad student in 2002.

“I absolutely fell in love with UQ, Brisbane and koalas when I volunteered at the koala study program under Dr Frank Carrick,” she said.

“When I went home I decided that I had to go back and I wanted to work with koalas so I contacted Dr Johnston.”

Mrs Allen started at UQ in 2004 and after one year of study, gained a UQ Confirmation Scholarship that provided about $19,000 a year for living expenses.

She said UQ was her number one choice because it was more flexible than American universities.

“In America, I think the researchers like you to tie into the research they’re currently doing,” she said.

“Whereas here, Dr Johnston is into a lot of things. As long as you can provide him with a research idea that looks worthwhile, he’ll go for it.”

She said she was most proud that the AI program had produced baby koalas and was appreciative of the opportunity to gain invaluable links with government and industry contacts.

“I learned so much from the contacts I gained and without them, my project would not have been possible.

“If I could continue doing PhD research forever I would. I love it here. My life and my friends are here.”

Mrs Allen would like to return to UQ and do postdoctoral research with Dr Johnston or work for the Queensland Government doing koala research for management and conservation of the species.

She expects to finish her PhD next month and has returned to the United States after marrying in Las Vegas.

CENTRE’S FUTURE LINKED TO DAM

The future of three threatened animal species would be the focus of a proposed $35 million UQ research centre funded by the Queensland Government.

The Freshwater Species Conservation Centre, next to the planned Traveston Crossing Dam on the Mary River in southeast Queensland, would aim to enhance the conservation status of the Queensland lungfish, the Mary River turtle and the Mary River cod.

The dam is proposed by the Queensland Government, which announced the UQ-run research facility in October in response to concerns about the dam’s potential impacts on the three species.

The centre will benefit from the strategic advice of a scientific advisory committee, and although its composition is yet to be finalised, lungfish experts Emeritus Professor Gordon Grigg from UQ and Macquarie University’s Professor Jean Joss have agreed to membership, along with Dr Col Limpus, of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

Announcing the centre, Premier Anna Bligh acknowledged that “Professors Joss and Grigg have made clear their opposition to the construction of the Traveston Crossing Dam”.

“The centre’s research would be targeted primarily at determining how the dam and its impoundment could be modified in order to maintain naturally breeding populations,” said Professor Grigg, who recently retired from UQ after a distinguished career which included, in 1985, the first publication about spawning behaviour in Queensland lungfish.

“Clearly, if a major piece of infrastructure like this is going to be built, they’re going to have to work out ways to mitigate the effects of that dam on those listed species.”

Effectively a UQ research station, the centre would utilise – but not duplicate – UQ’s high-tech facilities and established expertise in ecology research.

The dam will not proceed unless approved by the Federal Environment Minister, who will consider a proposal from the Queensland Government, which has released an environmental impact statement for public comment.
SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

A UQ academic has received the inaugural Eric Anderson award for the best article in the Australasian Journal of Environmental Management.

Dr Andrew Griffiths, of the UQ Business School, and teammates Associate Professor Suzanne Benn and Professor Dexter Dunphy of the University of Technology, Sydney, won for their piece offering a pathway to companies building corporate sustainability.

They argued that a change-agent and leadership skills were highly important in achieving a massive corporate shift to more sustainable practices.


TESTING TIME

TetraQ, the integrated pre-clinical contract research provider based at UQ, has become the first organisation of its kind in Australia with the accreditation to provide ELISA testing services.

ELISA (Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay) tests are used to measure concentrations of substances such as hormones, bacterial antigens and antibodies, with a high degree of sensitivity and accuracy. These tests play a major role in the development of vaccines and drug therapies for the treatment of inflammation, allergies and viral diseases.

TetraQ Executive Director, Professor Maree Smith, said the extended accreditation will allow ELISA assays to be developed and conducted locally rather than being sent off-shore.

MENTORING MINDFULNESS

Researchers from the UQ School of Psychology are seeking parents with children aged four to 10 to participate in a group-based introduction to mindful parenting.

This program is part of a research study investigating the effects of a mindfulness-based intervention on parental emotion regulation and a range of areas of parent and child functioning.

For further information contact Carrie Rainbow on 0407 671 061, mindfulparent@psy.uq.edu.au, or visit http://www2.psy.uq.edu.au/research/mindfulparents/index.htm

MISS MALAYSIA EYES WORLD CROWN

A recent UQ political science and economics graduate is using the Miss World contest to promote her country and raise child rights issues.

Miss Malaysia Deborah Henry wants to end poverty and put Malaysia on the map when she vies against another 100 women for the Miss World crown in Kuala Lumpur next month.

The 22-year-old has been busy modelling and preparing for the final since being crowned Miss Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur in May.

“My focus now is very much on getting enough dresses, practising my talent, putting together a charity video and reading up on Malaysian info and facts,” Ms Henry said.

“It’s definitely going to be a great experience and it is an opportunity to voice our opinion and represent our countries.”

Ms Henry beat 16 Malaysian finalists based on her decorum, punctuality, personality and public speaking.

She said she was shocked to win considering she was a last-minute entrant and almost fainted during the pageant opening.

She sponsors children from Mozambique, India and China and is also helping World Vision Malaysia reach its goal of sponsoring 5000 children by the end of the year.

“I am a child rights advocate and currently speak to inform and create awareness among the Malaysian public, something which is lacking,” she said.

She said Malaysia was a developing nation that should be recognised globally not just somewhere north of Singapore or below Thailand.

She has modelled since she was 17-years-old in London, Brisbane and Kuala Lumpur and has now learned to deal with snipes and stereotypes about beauty pageants.

“Many people still sound shocked that one can be beautiful and smart,” she said.

“Thankfully I have good genes. But, I don’t eat junk food, I try to eat healthily and I work out a few times a week at my local gym.”

This is her first pageant and the last for the Miss World competition.

Ms Henry lived at Albany Creek while in Brisbane and said she enjoyed UQ’s mix of old and new at the St Lucia campus.

“I liked the additional exercise when travelling to my next class,” she said.

“I love the weather, and the laid back lifestyle. Mostly, I enjoyed the sincere and fun loving people I met.”

Her long-term goal is to become a journalist and host documentaries focused on development and poverty-related issues, possibly related to her sponsored villages.

“Studying political science really solidified my principles on justice and equality and I want to work towards creating a more sustainable world for those less fortunate,” she said.

Ms Henry is currently living in Malaysia while splitting her time between full-time modelling and obligations for the pageant.

“I have many friends who are former Miss Malaysia’s, and now it feels like I belong to the club. I also feel proud to be representing Malaysia,” she said.

The 2007 Miss World winner will be announced on December 1 in Sanya, China.
green solution
to feral pig problem

Green snags and simulated pig noises are being used to keep feral pigs from tearing up the Daintree Rainforest.

UQ PhD student Andrew Bengsen has trialled new green, sausage-shaped baits that target wild pigs but are not eaten by most of the other 300-odd animals that co-exist with them.

“Feral pigs are a huge problem up here both environmentally and economically,” Mr Bengsen said.

“They chew up huge areas of the forest. It looks like the Western Front in some areas. They knock over rows of banana trees and tear up pastures for cattle.”

Mr Bengsen said he was trying to make poisoning an option for feral pig control as trapping only had a limited, localised effect due to their rapid reproduction.

He has trialled non-toxic versions of the baits, developed by Animal Control Technologies Australia and the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre (IACRC), in the rainforest and in surrounding banana plantation and cattle properties.

The baits are green cylinders that weigh about 250 grams, are 10 centimetres long and made of fishmeal and grains.

“Having animal and vegetable products in it deters specialist feeders such as wallabies and other strict herbivores. Pigs are happy to eat anything,” he said.

The cylinders are tinted green to deter animals that use colours to identify food and are buried 10 centimetres below the forest floor so only pigs can smell and dig them up.

Mr Bengsen said there were still eight species that ate the baits, and he was considering adding chemical repellents for birds and other animals and using sounds of pigs feeding to deter rodents and bandicoots.

A full-time external student through UQ’s School of Animal Studies, Mr Bengsen has been recognised with a national award for his research — the inaugural CEO’s Prize for Excellence as an IACRC Student.

The prize includes a $3000 travel grant, which he said would probably go towards attending the Wildlife Society Conference in the United States next year.

WEEDING OUT EXOTIC PESTS

A novel approach to fighting African Lovegrass has won UQ PhD student Jennifer Firn a $10,000 grant from the Federal Government.

Ms Firn was named the Queensland winner at the 2007 Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, held at Parliament House on September 18.

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Peter McGauran, said the awards provided grants for scientific research and aim to develop better on-farm technology and practices.

Ms Firn will use her award to investigate whether exotic weed African Lovegrass can be out-competed by two native species, Pitted bluegrass and Kangaroo grass.

“Native grasses are better adapted to the harsh climate and soil conditions that characterise Australian ecosystems,” Ms Firn said.

“If the right species can be found, it could be valuable for building competitive pasture communities that are able to stave off invasion while at the same time ensure sustainable production levels.”

As part of her PhD, Ms Firn has set up a large field trial on a property in the Millmerran district which includes 192 plots and 48 different treatment combinations.

“The main aim of my research is to identify the mechanisms responsible for the invasion of African Lovegrass,” she said.

“The glasshouse project this award supports will complement this work by providing more detailed information on the competitive ability of African Lovegrass under more controlled conditions.”

Additional research funding has been received from the CSIRO, Condamine Alliance, Queensland Murray Darling Council, Wildlife Preservation Society and the Ecological Society of Australia.
Medicinal education at UQ is moving into a new and exciting era, an era full of possibility for the University. The largest entry cohort of medical students (about 400) will join the School in 2008.

Many of my colleagues in other medical schools find this figure quite remarkable by international standards, and there is no doubt that it has sharply focused my attention on refining and rethinking the way we do things.

Over the past year or so, we have embarked on a program of consultative partnership to roll out a new clinical school model that will underpin our ongoing commitment to excellence in medical education.

While the clinical school concept is not unfamiliar territory for some other schools, it is a relatively new delivery mode for UQ.

To cope with the large demand for clinical training places, the School has had to open its ears (and doors) to fresh thinking on the big challenges associated with servicing demand for quality graduates.

Given the size and breadth of our coverage, formal recognition of our clinical teaching network within the hospital system is, I believe, one of the most important contributions we will make as an organisation to the medical workforce reform agenda over the next five years.

Recognition and autonomy of our clinical schools with strong local leadership and adequate resources to maintain and build capacity locally is the key to our continued success.

This initiative is well advanced and widely embraced by our partner organisations, especially in the health services sector.

The contribution made by so-called "peripheral hospitals" to medical training is incredible, the potential is huge, and our investment in them must reflect the overall importance of these partnerships to the UQ community as a whole.

Our new clinical schools will extend from the north of the Sunshine Coast, through central Brisbane and west to Ipswich. Already one of the established features of life in rural and remote medicine is the Rural Clinical School which offers teaching to around 100 students in sites at Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Roma, and places in between.

I expect UQ to have seven clinical schools in all. Each will be led by a senior academic clinician based on site, around who a support team comprising administrative staff, student coordinators, and academic staff will be built.

The broad aim is for third and fourth year medical students to do most, if not all, their clinical training within an individual clinical school. Establishing research infrastructure in and around the schools is planned to further enhance the overall student experience.

For example, community development work within local communities through fundraising with the various hospital foundations has huge potential.

As well as the logistical and organisational challenges of managing such a large group of students, we also need to meet the challenge of providing a highly personalised and high quality learning experience.

Our continued success in this is inevitable – and my optimism is based on the results we have had in re-energising the Problem Based Learning and Clinical Skills Coaching parts of the medical program in recent years.

Student evaluations are now consistently outstanding and there are a range of strategies in place to extend this to the rest of the teaching program.

“"Our new clinical schools will extend from the north of the Sunshine Coast, through central Brisbane and west to Ipswich”

Our investment in the Innovation in Teaching and Learning project will provide a new blended study environment in years one and two by bringing together the best of face-to-face and online learning.

The project will be delivered in time for year two in 2008, and shows how we work with students to ensure the redesign meets their needs, as well as the benefits of outsourcing project management for what is a very complex IT and educational design project.

Finally, our focus on internationalisation in years three and four seeks to distinguish the School from many of our competitors. While it is early days, the School is aiming to provide an international placement option to enable all students to complete at least one of their core clinical rotations overseas.

These are not electives, but rather formal student exchanges whereby our students study our curriculum and sit our exams in an overseas partner institution.

These are just some of the ways the School is seeking to cement its ranking in the top four in Australia and a ranking band between 50 and 75 globally.
CVSDudes secure win

A home-grown business already servicing 43,000 software developers globally has taken out $100,000 in UQ Business School’s Enterprize competition.

CVSDude provides version control and enhanced security for software developers all over the world.

CEO Mark Bathie said CVSDude overcame the problems associated with geography.

“Whether team members are located in Dubai, London, Bangalore, or Brisbane, our system effectively puts them all in the same room together,” Mr Bathie said.

“So far, we’ve worked with individual developers and SMEs – the Enterprize win will fund the development of a product to suit big corporate clients.”

The CVSDude team is made up of Mr Bathie, Guy Marion, and UQ Master of Business Administration student Abhishek Sodhani.

Mr Sodhani said working with CVSDude gave him a terrific opportunity to apply what he had learned during his studies.

Winner of the i.lab prize, TenasiTech Pty Ltd, has come up with a way to dramatically increase the strength of thermoplastic polyurethane elastomers while maintaining flexibility.

Team member and inventor Darren Martin said the soft, strong product has multiple applications, one of which is the humble golf ball.

“The support of UniQuest and Australian Institute for Bioengineering and Nanotechnology at UQ helped us develop the technology, and enabled us to achieve this milestone,” Mr Martin said.

TenasiTech company director Craig Belcher said the potential markets for the product included leisure and sporting applications, textiles, industrial, automotive, and biomedical applications, and consumer goods such as disposable nappies.

“With the i.lab prize we can really focus on developing the company as a viable enterprise that is likely to have a significant impact on all these industries,” he said.

The i.lab prize consists of a 12-month residency at the technology incubator (named Incubator of the Year in 2006) along with access to invaluable mentoring and coaching opportunities.

CVSDudes secure win

GREEN MACHINES
POWER FUTURE

An international consortium established by a UQ scientist is developing a clean source of energy that could see future fuel and water needs being generated by solar-powered bio-reactors and micro-algae while absorbing CO2.

Associate Professor Ben Hankamer, from UQ’s Institute for Molecular Bioscience, has established the Solar Bio-fuels Consortium which is engineering green algal cells and advanced bio-reactor systems to produce bio-fuels such as hydrogen in a CO2-neutral process.

“The development of clean fuels to combat climate change and protect against oil price shocks is an urgent challenge facing our society,” said Associate Professor Hankamer, who co-directs the Consortium with Professor Olaf Kruse from the University of Bielefeld in Germany.

“Many countries are already aiming to replace 10 to 20 percent of their existing energy production capacity with CO2-neutral energy systems by 2020. But this is very likely not nearly enough.

“Some reports indicate that 50 to 66 percent of current energy production capacity may have to be CO2-free by 2020 to avoid the worst effects of climate change. We need new technologies to do this.”

Fuels make up about two-thirds of the energy market, yet most low-CO2 emission technologies, such as nuclear power and clean coal technology, target the electricity market. In contrast, the solar bio-hydrogen process uses solar-powered bioreactors filled with single-celled algae to produce hydrogen from water.

Algae naturally capture sunlight and use its energy to split water into hydrogen and oxygen, however this process is not efficient enough to make it commercially viable.

The Consortium uses this natural reaction, but is developing ways of enhancing its efficiency to a level where the process will be economically attractive.

This will be done with the help of a $286,000 Australian Research Council grant received in October.

“We have conducted detailed feasibility studies that show that, once key technical milestones are overcome, this technology could achieve economic viability, which will increase further with the introduction of carbon trading schemes and the predicted rise in the oil price,” Associate Professor Hankamer said.
INDIGENOUS HEALTH DIVIDE NARROWED

UQ is leading the way in tackling the Indigenous health crisis through the use of information technology.

The award-winning National HitNet (Health Interactive Technology network) Development Program, led by UQ in Cairns, is addressing a gap in health status and the "digital divide" between Indigenous and other Australians.

Program Director, Helen Travers, of UQ's School of Medicine, recently presented a HitNet paper at the 13th International Conference for Virtual Systems and Multimedia.

"The use of innovative information technology is now well established in health," Ms Travers said.

"However, while the gap in health status between Indigenous and other Australians is both significant and unchanging, there is limited application of these new approaches to addressing this national health priority."

 Dedicated to bridging the information gap, HitNet promotes health and wellbeing to disadvantaged populations through creating and sharing information in ways that empower individuals, families and communities.

This is achieved through the implementation of touch-screen kiosks in Indigenous communities delivering multimedia health promotion material on topics including alcohol, sexual health, mental health, diabetes and smoking.

The material requires minimal formal literacy and information is conveyed through animated stories, interactive games, narrative learning modules and photo stories, making the kiosks a popular source of entertainment as well as a health promotion tool.

HitNet aims to install 26 kiosks in Queensland and Western Australia by the end of 2007, and has plans to expand the program to the Northern Territory in 2008.

There is also interest in placing kiosks in several North Queensland correctional centres with higher numbers of Indigenous inmates.

HitNet received the Queensland Government Industry Prize at the International Conference for Virtual Systems and Multimedia on September 26. More information about the program is available at www.hitnet.com.au

DINOSAURS DOWN UNDER

Queensland is home to an international research project on the evolution of Australian dinosaurs and their link to those from other southern continents.

In a unique Australian–American project, researchers from UQ and Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, are hoping recent fossil finds may put dinosaurs from Down Under on the international map.

Palaeontologists Dr Steve Salisbury, from UQ, and Dr Matt Lamanna, from Carnegie Museum of Natural History, have begun excavations of rich fossil beds near the central-western Queensland town of Winton that they believe may shed new light on the evolution of Southern Hemisphere dinosaurs.

"Like its modern fauna, Australia's dinosaur assemblage has traditionally been thought of as very distinctive and unusual," Dr Salisbury said.

"Some Australian dinosaurs have been considered relics of groups that went extinct much earlier in other parts of the world, while others have been seen as early representatives of groups that are more typical of the Northern Hemisphere.

"These interpretations are not consistent with what we now know from the other southern continents."

"During the time that most of Australia's dinosaurs existed, there is strong evidence for animals moving between many of the landmasses that once comprised the southern supercontinent of Gondwana – of which Australia was a part."

According to Drs Salisbury and Lamanna, there is now an expectation that some of the dinosaur groups known from places such as South America should also have representatives in Australia.

"The dense fossil deposits that we are beginning to explore near Winton should help us to test some of these ideas," Dr Salisbury said.

Dr Lamanna, who is the curator of one of the largest dinosaur collections in the world, said the quantity of dinosaur bones found so far near Winton was "spectacular."

"This is a really exciting discovery," Dr Lamanna said.

"I have never worked at a site that has such a dense accumulation of bones as the one that we are now excavating near Winton."

"Indeed, when I was there this past July, I had to keep reminding myself that I was in Australia."

"Australian dinosaurs are extremely poorly known compared to those of all other continents except Antarctica, so literally anything we discover has the potential to be very, very significant. I can't wait to get back."

Dr Salisbury said UQ's connection with the Carnegie Museum of Natural History would open up new research avenues for Australian palaeontology.

Footage of the team's excavations near Winton was shown on the ABC's science program Catalyst on November 1.

Drs Salisbury and Lamanna's research is partly funded by an Australian Research Council grant, and is being conducted in collaboration with the Isisford Shire Council.
Stroll through bushwalking

UQ lecturer Dr Melissa Harper uses quirky characters and humorous stories to provide the first historical account of Australian bushwalking in her latest book. The Ways of the Bushwalker: On foot in Australia is an extension of Dr Harper's 2002 PhD thesis, and reveals how bushwalkers have shaped Australian ideas about the land.

“The earliest European arrivals were often quite hostile towards the bush – it was alien to them,” Dr Harper said.

“Bushwalkers really promoted the idea that the bush was beautiful – a place to relax and rediscover yourself. They encouraged people not to be scared of it, but to treat it with respect and understanding.”

The book comes to life through the inclusion of primary sources such as diary entries, club newsletters and photographs, with many of the documents proving difficult to track down.

“It involved lots of digging, especially for the 19th century documents,” Dr Harper said.

“For example, a diary may not have been about bushwalking so you’d have to search for anything that referred to walking trips. I was able to find a lot through library archives and club archives, and, a couple of times, I found people through advertising in the paper.”

While Dr Harper doesn’t consider herself a “real” bushwalker, she does have a strong connection with the Australian landscape.

“I grew up in the suburbs of Sydney, but always had immediate access to the bush. It was certainly not something I feared,” she said.

As for the future of bushwalking, Dr Harper doesn’t envisage the pastime dying out anytime soon.

“I think the more urbanised we become the more we crave the sense of escape. It fuels a desire to go and explore the bush environment,” she said.

The Ways of the Bushwalker: On foot in Australia is published by UNSW Press.

“CULTURAL DESERT” IN FLOWER

Australia’s cultural history need no longer be regarded “a tale of two cities” thanks to Dr William Hatherell’s recently released book, The Third Metropolis.

Based on a PhD completed through UQ’s School of English, Media Studies and Art History in 2003, the book explores the development of Brisbane between 1940 and 1970.

“Anything written on Australia’s cultural history has largely been about Sydney and Melbourne, or a comparison between the two,” Dr Hatherell said.

Published by The University of Queensland Press, the book combines three intertwining aspects of Brisbane’s history in an effort to explore the cultural significance of the city.

“It bring together elements of Brisbane’s actual history – political, demographic and economic; its cultural history – the history of societies and art galleries; and literary representations,” Dr Hatherell said.

“Brisbane is often seen represented in images as a ‘cultural desert’ but I don’t think that’s quite right. There was a lot of cultural activity during the period.”

Brisbane’s artistic pursuits, particularly during the post-World War II era, provided added inspiration for the project.

“Meanjin, the cultural journal, was launched in Brisbane in 1940 and moved to Melbourne in 1945,” Dr Hatherell said.

“Authors such as David Malouf, Rodney Hall and Thea Astley have represented 1950s Brisbane through literature. I was interested in exploring quite an active period in Brisbane’s cultural life.”

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND BOOKSHOP CURRENT BESTSELLERS

1. **Dirty Beat** Armanno, V. UQP (PB) Fiction $32.95
2. **If Trees Could Speak** Beale, B. Allen & Unwin (PB) Earth Science $39.95
3. **Blood of Flowers** Amirrezvani, A. Headline (PB) Fiction $32.95
4. **End of America** Wolf, N. Penguin (PB) Non Fiction $24.95
5. **Quiet Girl** Hoeg, P. Random (PB) Fiction $32.95
7. **Pretty in Pink** Eisdale, B. Headline (HB) Non Fiction Gift $19.95
8. **Key to Rondo** Rodda, E. Scholastic (HB) Childrens Fiction $29.99
9. **Gunyah Goondie & Wurley** Memmit, P. UQP (HB) Aboriginal Studies $90
10. **George’s Secret Key to the Universe** Hawking, L. Doubleday (PB) Childrens $27.95
TOP 10 FINISH AT UNI GAMES

The Gold Coast was the setting for this year’s Australian University Games, with the 240 athletes of Team UQ putting in strong performances.

The UQ team placed ninth among 40 in the overall competition, with the men bringing home gold in the athletics, hockey, tennis, table tennis and water polo competitions.

The women were equally impressive, reigning supreme in athletics, fencing, touch football and water polo.

Team UQ also claimed gold in the mixed ultimate frisbee competition, defeating returning champions, Macquarie University, 14–8 in the final.

The UQ Athletics team retained the overall title for an astonishing ninth year in a row, with a particularly strong showing from the women, who finished with three times as many points as their nearest competitor.

UQ Athletics Head Coach, Pat Clohessy, said he had never seen a more dominant performance.

“It was an incredible overall team performance; the women won medals in almost every single event. They were simply outstanding,” Mr Clohessy said.

Team UQ also achieved medals in basketball, volleyball and lawn bowls.

Overall, Team UQ claimed nine divisional championships, were runners up in another three and also recorded three third placings.

Considering all teams which placed higher than UQ in overall standings fielded 320 or more athletes, this was a particularly noteworthy achievement.

Rowing Blue remembers

Ashgrove’s John Gustavus Percy competed in the prestigious Intervarsity Regattas for The University of Queensland Boat Club (UQBC) as coxswain for the men’s eight in 1933.

Now aged 93, Mr Percy still vividly remembers the regattas, often held on the Brisbane River near the St Lucia campus.

“The Intervarsity Regattas (held between Australia’s best rowing clubs) were always a big affair, one of the highlights of the year for the University,” Mr Percy said.

Not one of the richer clubs, the University’s participation in the 1933 competition on the Nepean River in New South Wales was possible only through donations from people outside of the club.

“Our club didn’t have the resources of some of the interstate clubs, but we always had great support,” Mr Percy said.

Coming in fourth that year, the UQBC crew were rewarded for their efforts with Sporting Blues, the highest honour for outstanding achievement in University sport.

Mr Percy was only 19 when he received his Blue from UQ, where he went on to compete with the UQBC for five years while studying dentistry from 1932 to 1936.

Two years later on June 6, 1935, which was Mr Percy’s 21st birthday, the UQBC men’s eight rowed to victory in the Intervarsity Regatta ahead of the host crew Melbourne, after which his team mates took him out on the town for celebrations.

“We beat the Melbourne crew, who came in third, which was a big deal. The boys took me out on the town that night to celebrate my birthday. It was a great day,” Mr Percy said.

This year, the University honoured its earliest recorded living Blue recipient at the Blues and Sporting Awards Dinner on November 2.

The event focused on recognising pre-1960s Blues recipients, and athletes who received a sporting Blue throughout the 1990s.

Mr Percy carries the oars during his UQ days
Rebel on the rise

UQ SPORT scholarship holder James Hanson capped off a fantastic inaugural season with Australian Rugby Championship (ARC) team the Melbourne Rebels, being named the Most Improved Player at the club’s annual awards ceremony.

The youngest member of the Rebels squad at just 19 years of age, Mr Hanson excelled in the national competition as his side defied the critics to make the grand final, before falling 20–12 to competition favourite, the Central Coast Rays.

Mr Hanson was inspirational at hooker in the final and scored the opening try of the match, beating Rays outside centre Ben Jacobs and outpacing the defence to sprint 30 metres.

Mr Hanson said he enjoyed his first year in the ARC and felt fortunate to have been a part of the first professional rugby union team playing out of Melbourne.

“It was a major learning curve living and playing alongside guys with Super 14 and Wallaby experience such as David Croft and Matt Cockbain.

“I think their professional attitude rubbed off on to most of the players which really got the best out of everyone,” he said.

Assistant coach of the Melbourne Rebels Nick Leah has coached Mr Hanson since his time with UQ Rugby Club and said his award for Most Improved Player was well deserved.

“James has been superb in his first year of ARC,” Mr Leah said.

Prizes

• Clem Jones Sporting Scholarships: Open to students who have the academic ability to perform at a high level in their chosen sport. Applicants must intend to join and represent a University Sporting Club. Worth: $5000 per year for three years. Closing: February 15, 2008.

  Information: ugscholarships@uq.edu.au or (07) 3365 1984.

• George Essex Evans Scholarship: Open to students undertaking an Honours program in English. Preference given to applicants who have shown outstanding ability in the field of Australian literature and culture and who intend to continue in that field. Based on financial need in addition to academic merit. Worth: approximately $1500. Closing: March 14, 2008.

  Information: (07) 3365 1984.

• Alfred & Olivia Wynne Memorial Scholarships: To assist Maryborough and district students who can demonstrate financial need, in the following categories and order of preference: (a) Full-time undergraduate students; (b) Part-time internal undergraduate students; (c) Postgraduate internal students. Both new and continuing students may apply. Academic merit also considered. Closing: March 21, 2008.

• Constantine Aspromourgos Memorial Scholarship for Greek Studies: Open to UQ Bachelors or Masters graduates who are undertaking a postgraduate program involving Greek studies. Worth: approximately $4500. Closing: March 28, 2008.

  Information: (07) 3365 1984 or ugscholarships@uq.edu.au

In brief

AWARD FOR PIONEER

Pioneer of the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) and 2007 Queenslander of the Year, Professor Matt Sanders, has received another prestigious award, this time from the Australian Psychological Society (APS).

Professor Sanders was presented with the President’s Award for Distinguished Contribution to Psychology in Australia on September 26, as part of the National APS Conference.

The award was presented by APS President Amanda Gordon at the Brisbane Convention Centre and recognises Professor Sanders’ development of Triple P over the past 30 years.

SOLOMONS SUPPORTED

UQ has signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Solomon Islands Government.

Sam Alasia, special envoy of the Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands, the Honorable Manasseh Sogavare, met with UQ Vice-Chancellor Professor John Hay for the signing in September.

Associate Professor Clive Moore of UQ’s School of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics said the new five-year MOU replaced a 2003 agreement.

“This MOU focuses on aiding the restoration and maintenance of peace, harmony and well-being through development and resource sustainability and community resilience,” he said.
Read Gunyah, Goondie + Wurley, the first book to detail Australian Aboriginal architecture, and you’re bound to learn a thing or two.

Put together by Associate Professor Paul Memmott and published by UQP, the book turns on its head the belief that Indigenous people were devoid of houses or towns when Europeans first reached Australian shores.

Now the Director of UQ’s Aboriginal Environments Research Centre (AERC), Dr Memmott’s interest in the area began while working with Indigenous communities in North-west Queensland during the 1970s.

“At that time most councils in the region were bulldozing fringe camps but we saw that they had something important to say in how people organised their residential activity and patterns of behaviour,” he said.

“I realised that these last self-constructed camps were like field stations in which to study Aboriginal kinship and housing design, to understand how much of their residents’ lifestyle was based on traditional customs versus westernised behaviour.”

After completing honours studies in architecture, Dr Memmott pursued a PhD in anthropology so he could study the link between Indigenous peoples’ cultural landscapes, their buildings and behaviour.

Gunyah, Goondie + Wurley is the result of his extensive research in the field since then, taking 35 years of “detective work” to assemble information from oral histories, old manuscripts, explorers’ diaries, paintings, photographic collections, and 100-year-old newspapers.

Including contributions from Aboriginal authors as well as fellow AERC staff and postgraduates, the book is written for both academic and general readers and includes hundreds of photographs, maps and illustrations – many of which haven’t been seen outside the archives before.

Dr Memmott said the myth that Indigenous Australians lived only in makeshift huts or lean-tos began because early explorers often made their observations in favourable weather, when people were mobile and needing only nocturnal fires and windbreaks.

“However, research shows a repertoire of different shelters were built in different styles in particular regions depending on the climate – a good example being the durable dome structures found throughout the country.

“In the rainforest area up around Cairns where there was heavy rain for much of the year, people built domes out of lawyer cane with palm leaf thatching,” Dr Memmott said.

“If we go to the west coast of Tasmania we get reports of domes there, with triple layers of cladding and insulation. And then in western Victoria there’s a classical case of circular stone walls of up to a metre or so high and then dome roofs over the top with sometimes earth/sod cladding.”

It is also known that missionaries drew on Aboriginal technology for buildings, evident in the use of bark for roofs and walls, and grass thatching for gables.

“This finding links with a new $770,000 Australian Research Council research project led by Dr Memmott to examine the ecological and physical makeup of spinifex grass and its potential use in buildings for Aboriginal people.

Dr Memmott said he hoped continuing research in the area would not only clear up the historical record, but help to inform architectural designers working on current housing problems.

“There’s lessons about Aboriginal housing to be learned, and there are more potential innovative ideas that could be generated from such understandings,” he said.

“There’s a large amount of Indigenous knowledge locked into the customary architecture which has yet to be examined and followed through in terms of its potential applications.”

Gunyah, Goondie + Wurley: the Aboriginal Architecture of Australia is available from the UQ Bookshop, St Lucia, and Avid Reader in West End.

“Original Architecture
UQ research has revealed early European settlers were not the first to design and build houses in Australia.

A grass-clad dome house in the north-east of South Australia.
Photo courtesy Aboriginal Environments Research Centre collection

“There’s a large amount of Indigenous knowledge locked into the customary architecture which has yet to be examined”