BRIGHT FUTURES

UQ engineering welcomes record number of women
Packed to capacity, Suncorp Stadium is Queensland’s fifth largest city. Orchestrating everything and everyone is the Operations Manager, Graeme.

A UQ Ipswich business graduate, Graeme handles the huge responsibility with a quiet confidence he attributes to how he studied his business degree.

**THE UNIVERSITY OF GRAEME**

Smaller class sizes at UQ Ipswich meant an intimate learning environment, which provided greater interaction with lecturers.

Graeme also gained hands-on experience running real events, which taught him how to work with people, thousands of people. Another reason why there’s more to uni at UQ.
UQ has long been conscious of its responsibilities towards students from diverse backgrounds. Initiatives such as UQ-Link (a special entry and support scheme for students with a low-income background), scholarships that take account of financial hardship, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit have placed the University within reach of many who might otherwise have found it unattainable.

If we are judged against other Australian universities – particularly other Group of Eight (Go8) institutions – our performance looks respectable. We are one of the top two Go8s for access by “low socio-economic status” (SES) students and sit mid-field among Australia’s 38 public universities for students from regional and remote areas.

However, the recent “Bradley Review” of Australian Higher Education reminds us that the national benchmark is inadequate. Although one in four Australians is officially low SES only about 16 percent of this group accesses higher education. Up to $2 million over four years is newly committed towards students from disadvantaged backgrounds, with 2009 school-leavers to be the first to benefit. UQ will:

• Triple the existing number of UQ-Link scholarships (worth $3000 per year for up to four years) by making 60 available to commencing students each year;
• Introduce a $500 bursary to help with the up-front costs of new UQ-Link scholars; and
• Earmark at least $100,000 from the annual Academic Scholarships scheme for students from equity groups.

The Australian Government has endorsed a Bradley Review recommendation that, by 2020, 20 percent of enrolled undergraduates ought to be of low SES. UQ wants to help the nation realise this ambition, but enrolment alone is not the answer. Students must be encouraged to complete and to succeed. The best advertisements for the equity project will be successful graduates whose greatest advantage was a high-quality university education.

One over-achiever whose early years at UQ were leavened by an undergraduate scholarship is our retiring Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor David Siddle. David’s success in attracting both people and funds will continue to flow to the end-users of our research for many years hence. I wish both David and his partner, UQ Graduate School Dean, Professor Christa Critchley (who is also retiring) the most satisfying of futures.

Professor Paul Greenfield AO

Short cuts

UQ Email for Life
University of Queensland students now own an individual email account “for life” thanks to a new alumni initiative.

The program follows a successful two-month pilot phase that saw 2500 students voluntarily switch over to the new Microsoft Live@edu Exchange Labs email service.

UQ IT Services Director Nick Tate said a survey of the pilot participants had yielded positive results.

“Students said that being able to remember their email address after leaving UQ was a big benefit,” Mr Tate said.

“They also responded well to the improved functionality and speed of the new system, and to the more user-friendly address format.”

Students starting at UQ in 2009 automatically have the new accounts, and continuing students can upgrade via my.UQ.

UQ chose the Microsoft-hosted solution for its students in September last year.

UQ’s alumni will also have the option to use the service.

More than 70,000 email accounts have been created on the system to date, with each able to hold 10GB of data.

INFO ➔ www.uqconnect.net

Employment Economics
UQ Business School Industry Fellow Chris Roberts argues that slashing staff to reduce costs might be exactly the wrong thing to do when times get tough.

“Though increasing customer focus rather than cutting costs may seem counter-intuitive, when you factor in the incremental loyalty, repurchase rates, and especially word-of-mouth, it makes perfect economic sense,” he said.

“Even if overall demand in a category decreases, organisations can still take a leadership role and ensure they position themselves strongly for the future.”

Mr Roberts said his recent analysis of five major Australian industry sectors used a proprietary management tool, the Net Promoter Score of customer loyalty, to assess performance.

“This score asks customers how likely they would be to recommend the company to others,” he said.

“By focusing on improving their customer experience, companies can significantly improve their score – which is associated with better growth outcomes.”

He said the score was used by many major organisations including GE, Microsoft, PayPal, Philips, Sony, American Express, and The Harvard Business Review.

Mr Roberts, CEO and founder of Engaged Marketing, said he had surveyed five industry sectors – property insurance, banking, mobile networks, online shopping and health insurance – and a total of 1501 customers.

“The reality is that in the current environment, customer service is an economic necessity,” he said.

Crayfish Lock Claws
A study conducted at UQ’s Moreton Bay Research Station has found when it comes to crayfish, size really does matter.

Dr Robbie Wilson and researchers from UQ’s Integrative Ecology Lab found crayfish with larger claws could trick opponents into believing they were stronger fighters.

“What we found was that many of the crayfish were winning fights through intimidation alone, and were actually weak-clawed individuals,” he said.

By testing the muscle force of the male crayfish, Dr Wilson and his colleagues found claw size was not an accurate indicator of claw strength.

Given that dishonesty is not commonly seen in animals, the results were particularly surprising.

“These signals are expected, by theory, to be an honest indicator of how strong that individual is,” Dr Wilson said.

UQ Switches Off
The University of Queensland joined many notable landmarks, businesses and residents across the city in turning off its lights for Earth Hour on March 28.

The carefully coordinated “lights out” operation took place between 8:30pm and 9:00pm, and targeted non-essential lighting and equipment at UQ’s St Lucia, Gatton, Ipswich and Herston campuses, Indooroopilly Mine and Moreton Bay Research Station on North Stradbroke Island.

During the event, UQ’s occupational health and safety guidelines were observed, and emergency lighting and University security systems operated normally.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Greenfield thanked staff and students for their participation in the global effort to help reduce carbon consumption.

“The University achieved a 6.5 percent energy reduction during Earth Hour, with an estimated total saving of 730 kilograms of carbon dioxide,” Professor Greenfield said.

“UQ’s support for Earth Hour is part of a wide-ranging commitment to contribute to energy conservation and greenhouse gas mitigation.

“The event is also an opportunity to remind staff and students of actions that they can take, or continue taking, to reduce their everyday carbon footprint.”

INFO ➔ Further details can be found at www.earthhour.org/
GANG LAW CAUTION

UQ’s Dr Andreas Schloenhardt has cautioned police and legislators not to adopt ill-conceived reactionary measures to recent gang-related violence despite the renewed calls for tougher action.

Dr Schloenhardt, a senior lecturer at UQ’s TC Beirne School of Law, said the call for the introduction of South Australia’s now infamous Serious and Organised Crime Act 2008 to other states is not the solution.

“By adopting the South Australian Act, there is little that can stop the Attorney-General from banning a local bowling club or the opposition party if he feels they pose a public safety risk,” he said.

“A better response would be one that aims at the key directors and financiers of criminal organisations and targets the wealth accumulated from drug trafficking, migrant smuggling, trafficking in persons, loan sharkering, and other types of organised crime.”

The Serious and Organised Crime Act 2008 introduced radical new measures to outlaw criminal organisations and prohibit any deliberate association with them and their members.

The legislation allows the Attorney-General to declare a criminal bikie gang an outlaw organisation on the basis of police intelligence and hold gang members who engage in acts of violence that threaten and intimidate the public liable for serious offences.

Proposals to introduce similar laws in Queensland in 2007 failed. Other states fear that the heavy handed approach in Adelaide may lead some criminal organisations to go further underground or relocate across the border, especially into Victoria, New South Wales and the Northern Territory.

The concern over the South Australian laws has led the Federal Government to conduct a parliamentary inquiry into anti-organised crime laws, with findings expected later this year.

Dr Schloenhardt is currently involved in a study of organised crime offences in Australia and the Asia Pacific region.

SUNFLOWERS ON SHOW

Green thumbs from schools around the state have converged on The University of Queensland’s Gatton campus for its annual Sunflower Competition.

Hosted by the School of Land, Crop and Food Sciences, the competition sees schools race to grow the heaviest sunflower.

Competition organiser Dr Doug George said participating schools were growing their sunflowers over the 11 weeks following the official planting day on March 6.

“We want to open their worlds to the excitement and diversity of horticulture,” Dr George said.

More than 40 schools and 1500 students have registered for the 2009 competition so far.

Sponsored by Pacific Seeds, Australian Sunflower Association and Grains Research Foundation, the entrants will have their best sunflowers judged on Weigh In Day on May 26.

“The industry is expanding into new and diverse areas,” Dr George said.

“Australia currently imports 60,000 tonnes of sunflower seed from which 25,000 tonnes of oil is produced.

“There are opportunities for local growers to produce this seed as well as replace some of the saturated oil market (150,000 tonnes of palm oil and 100,000 tonnes of tallow) with healthier unsaturated sunflower oil.”

INFO ➔ sunflower@uq.edu.au or www.uq.edu.au/nravs

FACTS + FIGURES

6000 – secondary school students involved in the annual Australian Brain Bee Challenge, a neuroscience competition coordinated by the Queensland Brain Institute

$2.5 million – cost of the Advanced Concepts Teaching Space (ACTS), which is located at UQ’s St Lucia campus and incorporates touch screens, iPod docks and interactive capabilities

1200 – number of participants in the recent Science and Engineering Challenge, hosted over five days at The University of Queensland

20 – number of years since the landmark Fitzgerald inquiry into police corruption, which was marked at a special forum by the School of Journalism and Communication last month

122 – different types of coral analysed in a recent climate change study on Heron Island by UQ reef expert Dr Selina Ward
UQ NEWS, APRIL 2009

➔

UQ students are stepping into the future with a new high-tech lecture theatre, equipped with individual touch screens, connections for iPods and wireless recognition for lecturers.

The Advanced Concept Teaching Space (UQ ACTS), within the $54 million General Purpose North 4 building, has opened for classes and combines research, interactive technology and innovative teaching under one roof.

Set across three levels, the space accommodates 100 students and maximises classroom communication through high-resolution touch screens for instant feedback, as well as links to students’ own portable devices such as iPods, mobile phones and laptops to allow students to share work and actively participate in lectures. Lecturers will no longer have to login to the room’s computer control systems and input their preferences, with wireless identification tags allowing the system to instantly recognise them as they step to the podium and automatically set up the room to reflect their needs.

Teachers can use projection screens, interactive whiteboards, tablets and front-of-stage preview monitors as well as innovative lighting systems to direct students’ attention.

From the podium, a single touch will be enough to launch an instant poll on students’ screens or to launch translation software that can render a PowerPoint file in six different languages.

UQ Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Deborah Terry congratulated staff involved in the planning and design of UQ ACTS, saying their ideas had positioned the University at the forefront of teaching and learning infrastructure. “The University of Queensland is always looking at new ways to open communication channels during teaching sessions and with UQ ACTS, the opportunities are endless,” Professor Terry said.

“UQ ACTS will allow state-of-the-art technology to be tested and therefore implemented into mainstream UQ teaching spaces at a faster pace.”

UQ Teaching Technology Support Manager Derek Powell said academics had identified a need for greater student participation and group discussion.

“The touch screens provide students with the opportunity to share and discuss material with their peers in small groups,” he said.

“A primary goal of the experimental systems in UQ ACTS is to allow students to use whatever technology they prefer in their learning – from iPods to PDAs, mobile phones to laptops – with an important part of the project to research and test a variety of ways in which students can use these portable devices to participate in class activities.”

UQ ACTS was funded by the Australian Commonwealth Government’s Learning and Teaching Performance Fund.

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Lecture theatre goes live

UQ IPSWICH LINKS WITH LOCAL SCHOOL

UQ has welcomed the Queensland Government’s announcement on the location of the new Bremer State High School, beside the University’s Ipswich Campus.

Pro-Vice Chancellor Professor Alan Rix said that this marked a major step in the education of students in Ipswich, and opened a new chapter for UQ Ipswich and for the students, families and staff of Bremer High.

“The University will be working closely with Bremer State High School and Education Queensland to build this education precinct and to ensure there are opportunities for students and teachers to work with the campus in terms of curriculum, leadership development, the creation of pathways for future education and training, and access to education and recreation infrastructure,” Professor Rix said.

“UQ fully supports the location choice and will offer assistance and collaboration to Bremer State High School including IT access, professional development, learning experiences and research.

“Bremer students will be able to widen their learning opportunities by being part of activities at UQ and this may give them a head-start at university.

“We look forward to developing this relationship further and developing close collaboration with both the staff and students.”

Professor Rix thanked the Minister, Mr Rod Welford, the Member for Ipswich, Rachel Nolan, and staff of Education Queensland for their strong commitment to this vision for the future.

“Celebrating our 10th anniversary later this year, UQ Ipswich is still a new campus and is entering an important new stage of planning for the future, with a particular focus on health sciences,” Professor Rix said.

“We will be integrating our relationship with Bremer State High School into these plans.”

The new school to replace Bremer State High School is part of Education Queensland’s $134 million State Schools of Tomorrow program for East Ipswich.

INFO → www.uq.edu.au/ipswich

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INFO → www.uq.edu.au/ipswich

➔

STEWART GOULD

CHRIS STACEY

➔

➔
UQ scientists will use a record research grant to give new hope to patients with two of Australia’s most fatal cancers.

The Australian Government has pledged $27.5 million from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to fund a UQ cancer genome sequencing program to study pancreatic and ovarian cancers.

The funding, announced by Health Minister Nicola Roxon, is the largest ever grant from the NHMRC. Former UQ Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor David Siddle said it gave the Australian people a crucial stake in the research program, based at UQ’s Institute for Molecular Bioscience (IMB).

“The new program will aim to revolutionise our understanding of pancreatic and ovarian cancers and provide new avenues for the treatment of these diseases,” Professor Siddle said.

“By developing detailed descriptions (known as sequences) of tumour genes, the researchers will provide information for other scientists who are seeking to tailor-make drugs that target specific tumours, instead of a range of cancers.

“The government funding is vital to complete a five-year package valued at more than $40 million. Essential contributions are also coming from Applied Biosystems, a division of Life Technologies Corporation that is providing best-in-class technologies, (SGI) Silicon Graphics, the Cancer Council NSW and UQ itself.”

The program will be directed by Associate Professor Sean Grimmond (pictured), who is heading Australia’s contribution to the International Cancer Genome Consortium. The group will involve teams from around the world sequencing 50 tumour types from 25,000 patients.

“It will be a massive and co-ordinated effort to gather and share information about the genetics of tumours, and will move us closer to being able to personalise a cancer patient’s treatment,” IMB director Professor Brandon Wainwright said.

“It has been known for some time that tumours form as a result of accumulated genetic damage. The program will identify the entire scope of this damage in 500 pancreatic and ovarian tumours, and compare them with normal tissue. “This will allow us to discover how these tumours originate and develop, giving us targets for treatment.

“Profiling tumours will also allow for more accurate prognoses, meaning doctors can devise the most effective strategies for patients.”

Key partners of the IMB research program are the Garvan Institute of Medical Research, the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute and the Australian Genome Research Facility. The centre will be run in collaboration with the Ontario Cancer Institute in Canada and the US Pancreatic Cancer Action Network.

– BRONWYN ADAMS

Professor David Siddle, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), and Professor Christa Critchley, Dean of the UQ Graduate School, both entered retirement on April 3 after many years of exceptional service to the University.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Greenfield paid tribute to both of them as having crucial roles in making UQ one of the leading Australian universities.

“Both David and Christa have been integral in shaping UQ as a modern and dynamic university and will be sorely missed,” Professor Greenfield said.

“In David’s time UQ’s research profile has flourished as annual Medical Research Council funds have more than doubled, and we have gained outstanding research buildings, equipment and people. “Christa has, among other things, successfully promoted UQ as a destination for high-quality research higher degree training, as demonstrated by the record number of RHD graduations in 2008.”

Professor Siddle completed his studies in psychology at UQ before beginning an international academic career in the early 1970s and returning to head UQ’s Department of Psychology in 1991.

He became the first Dean of Postgraduate Studies in 1993. After a period as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) at the University of Sydney he was appointed UQ Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) in 2001, shortly before Senate approved a title change to Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

Professor Critchley has spent 20 years at UQ most recently as Dean of the Graduate School. A respected plant scientist, she also held the post of Deputy Dean of the Graduate School from 2002 and was previously Head of the then Department of Botany.
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**ENGAGEMENT A PRINCIPAL AFFAIR**

Principals from across the state attended a forum at UQ last month with special guest Emeritus Professor Denise Bradley.

Lead author of the Review of Australian Higher Education, Professor Bradley offered advice on how universities and high schools could work together to achieve the best outcomes for students.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Deborah Terry said the event was an opportunity for UQ to foster closer links with high schools.

“Engaging with high schools is key to ensuring we are attuned to the needs of students who may be considering their tertiary options,” Professor Terry said.

“Knowing the issues facing high school students will assist with tailoring strategies to help increase participation rates, in line with the recommendations of the Bradley Review.”

Led by Emeritus Professor Bradley and published in December 2008, the Review of Australian Higher Education explores the future direction of the sector, its capacity to meet the needs of the Australian community and economy, and the options available for ongoing reform.

Approximately 60 principals, representing state and private schools across Brisbane, Ipswich and the Gold Coast, attended the event.

“We were thrilled that Professor Bradley agreed to share her views on how the education landscape is likely to evolve and the implications of this for high school and university collaboration,” Professor Terry said.

UQ will be meeting with schools in regional locations including Toowoomba, Cairns and the Sunshine Coast in coming months.

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**Brand new**

Bus commuters at the St Lucia campus would’ve noticed a new addition to their routine recently – a series of striking billboards featuring UQ staff, students and alumni.

The posters are part of a revitalised branding project designed to communicate the value of the UQ experience, and are based on findings from a market research project known as INSIGHT.

The campaign focuses on staff, students and graduates who discuss their work, study and play, and will be featured in coming months across print, broadcast and online media.

INSIGHT involved extensive consultation with current and future staff, students, alumni and industry representatives.

Pro-Vice-Chancellor (External Relations) Professor Ian Zimmer said feedback to the campaign had been overwhelmingly positive thus far.

“This internal and external assessment has helped us to focus and build on our strengths as we look to the future,” Professor Zimmer said.

A feature of the branding is a new “UQ” device, which has been designed to complement the long established University of Queensland logo, and will be used across a range of publications, advertisements and websites.

INFO ➔ www.youruq.com
Scientists keep watch

If a coral bleaching event hits Australia's Great Barrier Reef this year, marine biologists from UQ will be ready to document the action.

Dr Selina Ward, a researcher from UQ's Centre for Marine Studies, has for the past three years closely observed 122 corals located near the Heron Island Research Station.

"I think when things are changing as much as they are it's really important to monitor closely, and to work out what normally happens," Dr Ward said.

"Also, we lay down tape between known markers and take photos all the way along. From those high-resolution photos you get an enormous amount of information because you can zoom in, look at the species of every coral, look at how much they've grown over time, what's died, what algae's come in, what's bleached and what's recruited.

"The monitoring project is particularly important this year because we may get a bleaching event here so we want to see how that bleaching affects the survival of recruits."

When Dr Ward is not at Heron Island documenting the state of the reef, she can usually be found at the University's St Lucia campus investigating the impact of ocean acidification.

"Coral reefs are in trouble because they're affected by climate change in so many different ways, but it's the increase of carbon dioxide in the air which causes ocean acidification," she said.

"When the sea takes up vast quantities of carbon dioxide, the chemistry of the water changes, and that's already started to happen – the pH of the ocean has dropped about 0.1 of a pH unit."

By conducting manipulative experiments in the lab, Dr Ward hopes to assess how corals might cope with changes predicted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

While the experiment is still underway, early results suggest corals may have trouble adapting to a more acidic environment.

"As you change the pH, I've been finding quite big differences in the success of fertilisation, in the amount that will settle and in the way that first skeleton develops," she said.

CHAMELEON of the CORAL REEF

Scientists from UQ have revealed a coral reef fish has been successfully living incognito by using its colour-changing ability.

Lead author of the study Dr Karen Cheney, from UQ's School of Biological Sciences, said the blue-striped fangblenny used a number of different disguises to pass undetected on coral reefs.

"The fangblenny mimics juvenile cleaner fish, but instead of removing ectoparasites from reef fish, they attack passing reef fish to nip at scales and fins," Dr Cheney said.

"Fangblennies can also change their colour to hide in a number of different shoaling fish species."

"Many fish can alter their colouration, but the fangblenny is the first example of a vertebrate that can change their colour at will to mimic a variety of different species."

"The only other example of this occurs in the mimic octopus that can alter its colouration and shape to resemble lionfish, flatfish and sea snakes." Part of the fangblenny's success as a mimic was attributed to its consideration for the species it imitated.

"The fish that are being mimicked do not seem to react to the presence of fangblenny," Dr Cheney said.

"Mimics often 'hang around' cleaner fish, but although fish come to visit cleaners to have their parasites removed, fangblennies do not attack these fish but instead target passing reef fish."

Dr Cheney said it was possible fangblennies used colour vision to initiate their change in appearance, but further research was required to confirm this finding.

"The process of colour change has not been investigated in detail for the fangblenny," she said.

"We haven't yet tested behaviourally that fangblennies can use colour vision to initiate colour change, but plan to do so."

The research is published online in Proceedings of the Royal Society: B.
A stint at UQ’s Heron Island Research Station has prompted Brisbane-based Indigenous artist Judy Watson to explore the concept of renewal in her latest work.

As Heron Island’s artist-in-residence for 12 days in February, Ms Watson was able to visit the recently rebuilt Research Station, which was devastated by fire in March 2007.

“I’m interested in the whole idea of rejuvenation, especially with the fire that occurred here and then the station being rebuilt, and also what’s just happened in recent history with regard to the Victorian bushfires,” Ms Watson said.

“I’ll be informed by all the objects I look at and pick up and take notice of, by what people might say to me in passing conversation.

“I always say it’s like I carry a big net around, and there will be certain things that run through my net, and I take them to the surface to observe more closely.

“But the work will also be layered – layered with the idea of what I see here today and then what was here before.”

Awarded the 1995 Moët & Chandon Fellowship and selected as one of three Aboriginal women artists to represent Australia in the 1997 Venice Biennale, Ms Watson’s work has had considerable international success.

Ms Watson’s Aboriginal grandmother was born on Riversleigh Station in north-west Queensland.

While inspired by her heritage, she said her Aboriginality did not define her artwork.

“My family are both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, and that comes through in all of my work,” she said. “Indigenous art is art that’s made by Indigenous people, and I’ll just be working with whatever touches me as a person.

“I’m concerned with the environment, women’s issues, the fact that I’m a mother, that I’m from Queensland.

“All these things about who I am as a person – including being Indigenous – will inform the work that I make.

“I don’t think you’ll be able to look at it and say ‘that looks like an Indigenous work’.

“That’s what Indigenous artists are doing – they’re trying to push the boundary, so it’s always that idea of stepping outside the stereotype.”

Now back at her Brisbane studio, Ms Watson is developing artwork based on sketches and drawings completed during her time at Heron Island, which she will exhibit at the UQ Art Museum from October 9 to November 22.

Her next show, which begins on May 28 at Brisbane’s Milani Gallery, explores the oil spill in Moreton Bay.

– PENNY ROBINSON
Dung beetles dig up diversity clues

Dung beetles are renowned for their smelly habitats, yet these little creatures could hold the key to south-east Queensland’s changing biodiversity.

First-year UQ science students are using the beetles to help identify ways to protect the region’s unique biodiversity during future urban expansion.

As part of a greater Australian Research Council Project looking at the variety of birds, micro-bats, dung beetles and mammals from across 140 sites, the students will investigate dung beetle diversity.

UQ Senior Lecturer Dr Robbie Wilson, from the Integrative Ecology Lab, said the project allowed students to be involved in research that directly affected government policy in SEQ.

“Many (dung beetle) species provide important biological services by removing and recycling animal dung in bush and suburban backyards,” Dr Wilson said.

“Dung beetles are one of the important indicator species of an ecosystem’s health. The greater density and diversity of dung beetles, the faster poo is removed and recycled and the greater the density and diversity of mammals that occurs in the region.”

As part of their studies, the students will be provided with a collecting kit that includes a frozen ball of cow manure.

“The students will be trained to identify dung beetles using their own collected beetles. We will then provide the students with five unidentified beetles from our research and ask them to identify them,” Dr Wilson said.

“All data will be collated and the students will get to analyse the findings. These results will be directly fed back to our research partners.”

The ARC project is being conducted in collaboration with Brisbane City Council, Gold Coast City Council, Redland City Council, the Urban Development Institute of Australia and the Environmental Protection Agency.

LEGAL LIABILITY
Legal experts will consider possible constitutional reforms to increase the responsiveness and accountability of the executive government in Queensland at a conference to be held on May 29.

“Queensland Constitution at 150: Origins and Evolution”, is jointly hosted by the TC Beirne School of Law’s Centre for Public, International and Comparative Law and the Supreme Court of Queensland Library.
INFO ➔ www.law.uq.edu.au/ or tcblaw@law.uq.edu.au

LOOKING INTO LUNGS
People with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are invited to participate in a study investigating whether a self management approach is as effective as pulmonary rehabilitation.

You do not have to have a formal diagnosis to take part.

Participants are required to complete surveys at six, nine and twelve months, with programs available at locations across Brisbane. Alternatively, participants can assist research by choosing to take part in their usual care groups.

INFO ➔ (07) 3365 4587 or enquiries. shrs@uq.edu.au

MALARIA FIGHT
UQ PhD student Major Alyson Auliff will use a prestigious Fulbright Scholarship to help in the battle against malaria, a major cause of Australian military casualties.

Major Auliff, a student in UQ’s School of Population Health, will focus on developing a novel system to investigate the mechanism by which malaria parasites develop resistance to drugs and use this system to evaluate new drugs.

The scholarship will enable Major Auliff to conduct part of her research at the University of South Florida and the Walter Reed Armed Institute of Research.
WOMEN TO ENGINEER THE FUTURE

UQ Engineering has welcomed its largest cohort of female undergraduate students this semester.

Jasmine Roberts (pictured), a UQ Excellence Scholarship recipient, is part of the cohort and is looking forward to the rewarding opportunities on offer to future engineers.

The Queensland Minerals and Energy Academy, a joint venture between the Queensland Resources Council and the Queensland Government, worked with Ms Roberts to find a suitable scholarship and convert her passion for maths and science towards a successful career in engineering.

“It wasn’t until late year 10 that this foreign word ‘engineering’ started to open my eyes to the amazing opportunities I had to do something which I loved,” Ms Roberts said.

“UQ Engineering has welcomed its largest cohort of female undergraduate students this semester. - Jasmine Roberts (pictured), a UQ Excellence Scholarship recipient, is part of the cohort and is looking forward to the rewarding opportunities on offer to future engineers.

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“It wasn’t until late year 10 that this foreign word ‘engineering’ started to open my eyes to the amazing opportunities I had to do something which I loved,” Ms Roberts said.

The idea of becoming a successful female in a typically male-dominated field was definitely a catalyst in making my decision.

“I think this current increase is fantastic and hopefully it will encourage even more girls to consider studying engineering.”

Ms Roberts will join 200 female undergraduate students in the UQ Bachelor of Engineering’s foundation course this semester, making up more than one fifth of the class.

Faculty of Engineering, Architecture and Information Technology Associate Dean (Academic) Professor Caroline Crosthwaite said the increase in enrolments was inspiring for both the university and industry.

“Female engineers bring different perspectives to their work which is beneficial to all areas of the engineering profession, whether in the established civil and mechanical fields or emerging biomedical and environmental areas,” she said.

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Points were allocated for innovation and creativity with top-scoring schools Brisbane Girls’ Grammar, Brigidine College, Queensland Academy for Science, Mathematics & Technology, All Hallows’ School and Forest Lake College qualifying for the Queensland state final in August.

More than 1200 high school students from throughout Brisbane put their skills to the test in a unique competition which inspires young people to pursue science and engineering careers.

The University recently hosted the five-day Science and Engineering Challenge, which brought together year nine and ten students from across 40 schools to test their ingenuity on a range of competitive activities.

Working in teams, the students designed and built innovative models of eco-friendly homes and bridges, constructed catapults, airships and hovercrafts and effectively managed metropolitan power distribution networks.

Executive Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Architecture and Information Technology Professor Graham Schaffer said UQ was very pleased to host the competition, which was an important way to raise the profile of engineering and science with high school students.

“The activities require students to work together in teams to identify and develop novel solutions to problems with limited time and resources, which is how scientists and engineers are required to work in industry and in the laboratory,” Professor Schaffer said.

“The competing students are supervised by UQ engineering students and engineers from industry, who not only provide ‘technical’ advice, but can also provide a window into life at uni and what engineers do on a day-to-day basis.”

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UQ developmental psychologists have taken a step into our evolutionary past by studying gibbons.

Associate Professor Thomas Suddendorf and Dr Emma Collier-Baker, from UQ's School of Psychology, studied gibbons from several zoos in Australia as well as at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington to see if they were capable of recognising themselves in mirrors.

"We know that human children develop this ability before they turn two, and we know that great apes – chimpanzees, gorillas and orangutans – can do this as well," Dr Suddendorf said.

"Our research shows that lesser apes, such as gibbons and siamangs, do not have this ability."

Dr Suddendorf said the research added a crucial piece to an evolutionary puzzle.

"The fact that humans and our closest living relatives, the great apes, can pass the task suggests that this capacity was inherited from a common ancestor," he said.

"The last common ancestor of all great apes lived about 14 million years ago. Gibbons split from our evolutionary tree about 18 million years ago. The current results therefore suggest that the trait evolved between 14 and 18 million years ago."

He said the findings also informed the search for the neurological and genetic underpinnings of the capacity to self-recognise.

"We can now ask what self-recognising great apes and humans have in common that they do not share with non-self-recognising lesser apes," he said.

The research involved exposing gibbons to mirrors and then surreptitiously placing paint on their foreheads.

"None of the apes recognised that the mark they could see in the mirror was on their own head. Instead, most of them looked or reached behind the mirror as if looking for another gibbon," he said.

Various control conditions showed the apes were motivated to find marks. In one of these, the researchers used cake icing and found that the gibbons scraped icing from their legs and even from the mirror surface itself, but continued to ignore the icing on their own face that they could see in the mirror.

"It is difficult to establish the absence of a capacity, but the current results strongly suggest that the lesser apes just do not get it," he said.

"What's kind of cool about these results is that, together with the data from great apes, they create a comparative picture that allows us to reason about the minds of our extinct great ape ancestor, even without laying eyes on any fossils."

The research, funded by an ARC Discovery Grant and a Queensland-Smithsonian Fellowship, was recently published in the journal Proceedings of The Royal Society B.
UQ Master of Science student Maren Dammann is aiming to uncover what makes a koala’s wish list when it comes to choosing a place to live.

By studying the movement patterns of koalas from Coomera Waters, a new housing estate located 40km south of Brisbane, Ms Dammann (pictured) will learn how green developments can be made more appealing to the native marsupial.

“The Coomera Waters development project is a good example of a modern development that aspires to be green and considers environmental issues,” Ms Dammann said.

“The developers did not undertake broad scale clearing of the whole area but rather they retained, rehabilitated and linked several large areas of native vegetation that incorporate koala habitat and now have koalas present in high numbers.

“This study aims to learn about habitat use and get an indication of what a development design should look like in order to sustain koalas over a longer term.

“We want to find out in which patches koalas can be found and what characteristics these patches have. We are also interested in learning about the usage of corridors and street vegetation.”

The project is sponsored by Coomera Waters development company, AustCorp, which plans to incorporate the results into future green constructions.

Ms Dammann has chosen to involve the Coomera Waters community, an approach which will assist the researchers and help the locals learn about koala conservation.

“Residents of Coomera Waters have been invited to participate and report sightings of koalas to us,” she said.

“Every koala has different coloured ear tags which makes them easy to recognise for residents, and us.

“We hope that an active involvement of the residents draws attention to the topic and leads to a positive attitude and appreciation towards the species and the natural environment in general.

“That is very important for koala conservation because residents need to know how their actions can affect koalas, such as restraining their dogs and planting native vegetation.

“People in the estate are very friendly and communicative. For example, when we caught a koala from a backyard, the owners watched our work and wanted to learn about koalas.

“We named the koala Ashlee after their little daughter, and she shared the story with her class mates at show-and-tell the next day.”

Ms Dammann’s research forms part of a larger project assessing the effectiveness of green developments in South East Queensland.

“Many developers claim to be green but we don’t really know if their development designs and approaches are actually good at saving wildlife,” she said.

Several researchers from UQ are involved in the broader study, including Dr Sean FitzGibbon and Ben Barth, both from the Integrative Ecology Lab in UQ’s School of Biological Sciences.

They are examining approximately 30 new developments that vary from green to non-green, to compare the diversity and abundance of birds, dung beetles and microbats (insect-eating bats).

The Coomera Waters project, which runs until July, forms part of Ms Dammann’s Master of Science in Conservation Studies, supervised by Dr FitzGibbon and Dr Robbie Wilson.

– PENNY ROBINSON
UQ research has revealed the older a father is the more likely his children will have reduced cognitive abilities.

Professor John McGrath (pictured), from UQ’s Queensland Brain Institute, said the study could have implications for a society that is having children later in life.

He said while recent research had shown a link between the age of a father and an increased chance of schizophrenia and autism in his children, there has been less focus on the age of father and cognition.

“The results were quite startling as it was thought that the age of the father was less of a concern compared to the age of the mother,” Professor McGrath said.

“Now we are getting more evidence of the age of the father being just as important. The older a dad is, the worse his children tend to do in intelligence tests.”

The research, published in medical journal *PLoS Medicine* last month, re-analysed data from one of the largest studies of children in the United States – the Collaborative Perinatal Project.

More than 33,000 children were tested at eight months, four years and seven years on a variety of intelligence tests, and when Professor McGrath and his colleagues looked at the results against the age of the fathers a pattern soon became clear.

“Frankly, we were surprised to come up with such a clear-cut finding. We are concerned that older men accumulate more mutations in the developing sperm cells,” Professor McGrath said.

“These mistakes then pile up and increase the risks of problems in the children, and it is possible that these mistakes will carry on into the next generation.”

Professor McGrath said the difference in intelligence was the exact opposite for children of older women, which made the findings even more startling.

“Offspring of older women do better in similar tests, but this is usually put down to socio-economic status of women,” he said.

“But with the older dads, we wonder if the association is related to mutations in the developing sperm.”

Professor McGrath and colleagues at QBI and the Queensland Institute of Medical Research are currently using mouse models in order to find the underlying genetic factors that may explain the association between advance paternal age and child development.
RESEARCH SPEAKS

A UQ researcher has revealed a new treatment for a speech disorder that commonly affects those who have suffered a stroke or brain injury.

PhD graduate Dr Rachel Wenke (pictured) has shown in a recent study that the Lee Silverman Voice Treatment® may be an effective option for dysarthria patients suffering from stroke and traumatic brain injury (TBI).

Dysarthria is a speech disorder which negatively affects a person’s ability to communicate as they can be difficult to understand and may sound like they have slurred or unclear speech.

The disorder affects 75 percent of individuals with Parkinson’s disease, up to 30 percent of those who have experienced a stroke and about 60 percent of individuals with TBI.

The treatment was originally designed to assist Parkinson’s patients, and Dr Wenke is the first to trial the method’s effectiveness in a group study involving other neurological conditions.

“This research will also help to provide speech pathologists evidence for treatments for the disorder, which may also encourage further research in the area,” she said.

In the study, the effectiveness of the program was compared with traditional dysarthria therapy for 26 participants ranging from 18 to 88 years who had experienced stroke and TBI.

The findings revealed that participants who received the treatment demonstrated positive effects of a louder and clearer voice and slower rate of speech.

“My findings have also shown that people who lived with dysarthria for up to 21 years were able to make improvements following treatment, therefore the mindset of not treating patients who have not improved in one or two years should be challenged,” Dr Wenke said.

The LSVT® program is an intensive therapy administered one hour a day, four days a week for four weeks. The patients are trained to use loud speech in progressively more difficult speech tasks.

Dr Wenke’s research will be published in Brain Injury and the International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders.

POD PRIZE
Pharmacy student Joseph Vien is the winner of an 8GB iPod Nano, a market day prize from UQ’s Print on Demand service. Print on Demand (POD) offers a wide range of services to staff and students, including the compiling, cleanup, copyright management and printing of course materials.

POD supervisor Elizabeth Hall said the new podExpress, which provided fast and affordable self-service printing from portable media such as USB sticks, was proving increasingly popular among students.

ADAMS FOR DIVERSITY WEEK
Popular broadcaster Phillip Adams will return to UQ’s annual Diversity Week, held from May 25-29.

The host of ABC Radio National’s Late Night Live, Mr Adams will chair the panel discussion as part of the Vice-Chancellor’s Equity and Diversity Awards.

Australia’s first female State Premier Professor Carmen Lawrence and Professor Kevin Clements from The University of Otago will explore the question: “In Others’ Shoes: Possible or Pipedream?”

To register for the awards visit www.uq.edu.au/diversity-week/
NEW SCHOLARSHIPS FOR HIGH ACHIEVERS

A guaranteed scholarship of up to $60,000 will give Australia’s best young academic achievers a new incentive to study at UQ.

The UQ Vice-Chancellor’s Scholarships will be available to all Australian school-leavers who attain 99.95, the highest score possible on a national measure known as the Interstate Transfer Index.

Introduced for 2009 domestic high school graduates with applications opening in July, the scholarships will provide $12,000 per year for up to five years of undergraduate study.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Greenfield said it was an unprecedented program for UQ.

“These will be the most valuable scholarships for school leavers offered by UQ, and the first scholarships guaranteed by the University to a defined group of school leavers,” he said.

The new awards build on UQ Academic Scholarships, offered for the first time to 2008 school leavers. Three hundred and forty-three high school graduates won this type of scholarship.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Debbie Terry said the UQ Vice-Chancellor’s Scholarships emerged from feedback received during the UQ Academic Scholarships process.

UQ flagged the new scholarships at a forum for school principals at the St Lucia campus on March 31, and details will be provided at briefings at the Sunshine Coast on April 30, followed by Ipswich and Toowoomba on May 15.

INFO ➔ www.uq.edu.au/study/scholarships/

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Morrison Hall, Gatton (formerly Uni Credit Union)
or visit mecu.com.au

INFO ➔ www.mecu.com.au

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PhD student Rebecca Banks lost her locks but raised more than $3500 for the Leukaemia Foundation

PhD candidate Rebecca Banks was one of several representatives from UQ who went the "big chop" last month for cancer research.

The occupational therapy student sacrificed her locks at the 2009 Leukaemia Foundation’s World’s Greatest Shave event, at Indooroopilly Shopping Centre on March 14.

In recent times, Ms Banks’ life has been rocked by the news of close family and friends being diagnosed with cancer.

Her experience of watching her loved ones deal with the disease, her work as an occupational therapist and her strong belief in the value of the Leukaemia Foundation compelled her to put her locks to good use.

“Three years ago, when I saw those advertisements on TV saying that one in every three Australians’ lives are affected by cancer,

I remember thinking how lucky I was that no one I knew had cancer at that time,” Ms Banks said.

“In the past 12 months, I’ve had three relatives diagnosed with cancer, a very well-respected colleague from the occupational therapy division who has been diagnosed with cancer and has retired for health reasons, and a number of friends whose parents and family members have also been diagnosed with cancer.

“Sometimes people think ‘I’m just one person, what can I do?’ But these types of events make you realise that individuals with a common goal can collectively achieve great things.

“I think that the day of finding a cure for cancer is drawing very near, and the best way to ensure that it arrives is to support research into treatments and support the health professionals who develop and provide treatments.”

To date, Ms Banks has raised more than $3500 for the Leukaemia Foundation.

INFO ➔ www.worldsgreatestshave.com
UQ’s annual multi-faith Thanksgiving Service, to be held in Brisbane on May 6, recognises the generosity of anatomy donors who provide a unique gift to humanity after their deaths.

But for second-year UQ medical student Kate Hawkins, the service has also unexpectedly provided new beginnings.

Ms Hawkins was among the cohort of students encouraged to meet families of anatomy donors after last year’s event.

By chance, one group of family members organised an introduction to British paediatrician Dr Clare Sheahan, who is currently working in a regional hospital at Iringa, in the Tanzanian southern highlands.

“I emailed Dr Sheahan and asked if she knew anyone who would be prepared to be my supervisor for my first-year elective,” Ms Hawkins said.

“She emailed back that she would be happy to do it. At the end of the year I found myself travelling three days to reach Tanzania to undertake my four-week medical elective.

“Attending the ceremony was very important to me, but I could never have foreseen that it would completely change my life and provide such an amazing opportunity to learn first hand about health issues in another country.”

Ms Hawkins, whose family is from the Lismore region, said the Thanksgiving Service celebrated the selflessness of people who donated their bodies so that future generations could learn from them.

“It’s a remarkable thing that anatomy donors do for the community. They have such insight and generosity. It takes a very special person to do that,” she said.

“I was very impressed, and I’ll be there again this year and every year of my studies.”

This year’s event will honour 93 anatomy donors, the largest number of donors in the service’s history.

The May 6 service will be held at the UQ Centre, St Lucia at 5.30pm with Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Michael Keniger guest speaker.

Thanksgiving Service organising committee chair Leo Brown said the University welcomed relatives and friends of donors and interested members of the community to attend.

UQ has been holding the Thanksgiving Service since 1992, when it acknowledged all donors to the School of Biomedical Science’s Bequest Program since 1927. The event was the first of its kind in Australia and New Zealand. Appreciated by relatives and the community, it is now an important UQ tradition.

Representatives from the Christian, Muslim and Buddhist traditions will speak at this year’s service.

The So-La Voce Chamber Choir, led by Reka Csényik of UQ’s School of Music and accompanied by a string trio, will also perform.

INFO ➔ www.uq.edu.au/sbms/, g.pascoe@uq.edu.au or (07) 3365 1950

— JAN KING

“Donors Honoured”

TEAMWORK
A HEALTHY CHALLENGE

More than 1500 future health professionals got a unique and entertaining introduction to teamwork at UQ’s Teamwork in Action Day on March 19.

Students from a range of disciplines, from midwifery to speech pathology, worked together on challenging and fun team activities, including lifts and jumps as part of a stunting routine, and construction of an improvised stretcher for a “field emergency”.

Faculty of Health Sciences’ Deputy Executive Dean (Academic), Professor Helen Chenery, said the aim was to promote the importance of teamwork in healthcare delivery.

“Health professionals working as an effective team are the key to achieving the best outcomes for patients,” Professor Chenery said.

“Despite this, the need for teamwork is not a concept that is widely taught at universities.”

Professor Chenery said UQ was the only university in Australia to hold a Teamwork in Action Day for all new health students and was the only university with a faculty-wide interprofessional education curriculum.

“During each year of their degree, students will be required to complete modules reinforcing the importance of collaboration,” she said.

“As a result, UQ health graduates will understand that their profession is not an isolated silo of knowledge and skills, but that they have an important role to play as part of a health team.

“They will be better equipped for the demands they will face in delivering quality patient care.”

“Teamwork A Healthy Challenge”

UQ students Grant McGrath (Dental Science) and Tegan Draheim (Medicine) participate in last year’s Thanksgiving Service
A crowd of maroon-faced fans cheering on their favourite footballers or skimpy-clad bodies basking in the Queensland sun are just some of the iconic images captured in the newly-released UQP title Made in Queensland: A New History.

Made In Queensland coincides with the state’s Q150 celebrations and is the work of historians Professor Ross Fitzgerald, Lyndon Megarrity and David Symons.

The book details the state’s separation from New South Wales in 1859, its mining and tourism industries, changes in technology, education and the evolution of the arts and its shifting political landscape.

It canvasses the impact of the World Wars on the Queensland people, and the importance of the 1982 Commonwealth Games and Expo 88 in showcasing the state to the world.

Professor Fitzgerald said one of the many things that intrigued him about writing the history was how much Queensland had changed culturally, politically and socially since the Commonwealth Games, and especially since Tony Fitzgerald’s pathbreaking report into police and political corruption.

“When Queensland is no longer seen as the ‘hillbilly’ state and on the periphery of Australia. It is central to political and economical change,” he said.

The book includes more than 90 images from around Queensland.

“Images of Queensland life are still dominated by the dream of sun, surf and sand; many people from down south want to live in Queensland for its relaxed lifestyle and its natural wonders,” Dr Megarrity said.

“At the same time, like other Australians, Queenslanders are working hard to achieve great things in science, the arts, education, business and so many other endeavours.”

As historian David Symons believes, some of the state’s greatest achievements belong to Queenslanders themselves.

“Being able to settle in some inhospitable terrain, and succeed, is testament to the character of Queenslanders. Queensland’s primary industries have long been the flagship of the state’s economy amid devastating drought, floods and other natural disasters including cyclones,” he said.

The book was achieved through the support of UQ’s Fryer Library, John Oxley Library, Queensland State Archives and Queensland Art Gallery, as well as Library and Research Services staff at the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and picture archivists at The Courier-Mail.

Paul Memmott’s acclaimed book Gunyah, Goondie + Wurley has been recognised by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, recently taking out the prestigious Stanner Award.

The accolade applauds the most outstanding scholarly work in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies for the calendar year.

The book, published in 2007, is the first anthropological work to detail Australian Aboriginal architecture and turns on its head the belief that indigenous people were devoid of houses or towns when Europeans first reached Australian shores.

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 in the early 1970s as an undergraduate architecture student.

Gunyah, Goondie + Wurley includes contributions from Aboriginal authors as well as fellow AERC staff and postgraduates.

Dr Memmott (pictured right), thanked the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies for the award.

“I hope Gunyah, Goondie + Wurley might yet inspire its readers to engage in other constructive and ambitious applied-research projects based on a fundamental respect of ancient Aboriginal knowledge,” he said.

The book has sparked two research projects including a call for a cross-cultural theory of architecture of the Western World, and an Australian Research Council study into design prospects on spinifex grasses.
The Faculty of Arts and UniQuest Pty Limited, UQ’s main commercialisation company, has launched a new arts innovation enterprise.

Ortelia Interactive Spaces offers art galleries, museums and other cultural venues a unique 3D interactive marketing and visualisation tool for attracting audiences to view special exhibitions and collections in both real and online spaces.

Ortelia is also valuable for preservation projects, where access to historically sensitive sites and buildings can be recreated for educational and reference purposes.

Lead researcher Professor Joanne Tompkins, from UQ’s School of English, Media Studies and Art History, said students could view archived versions of original exhibitions and also curate their own artworks.

Ortelia Interactive Spaces can also produce detailed scale models of venues, develop 3D websites and convert exhibitions into DVDs.

Our Way, the internationally acclaimed UQ exhibition of art from Lockhart River in far north Queensland, is one of several exhibitions which have used the technology.

Professor Tompkins’ research assistant Neal Harvey suggested the name “Ortelia” after Abraham Ortelius, the 16th century Flemish geographer credited with compiling the first modern world atlas.

“UniQuest supported the commercial development of the Ortelia technology so that its applications can help to promote Australia’s heritage and cultural assets more widely, especially to global audiences,” UniQuest Managing Director David Henderson said.

UniQuest’s support for Ortelia’s commercial development was complemented by further UQ funding, an ARC Linkage partnership with La Boite Theatre, the Cairns Civic Centre and the Queensland Government.

The Ortelia Interactive Spaces team currently includes Professor Tompkins, Laz Kastanis, Sean Ivermee and Darren Pack.

Not many mothers can say they share university classes with their daughter, but UQ postgraduate Victoria Oyama is one of them.

Ms Oyama and her daughter Akane (pictured) have both recently commenced the Master of Arts Japanese Interpreting and Translation (MAJIT) program at St Lucia, and share a goal to sharpen their skills in both English and Japanese.

Victoria is Australian by birth but moved to Japan when she was 18, eventually teaching herself Japanese completely through immersion over three decades.

Upon her return to Australia in 2004, she decided to “put the cart before the horse” by enrolling in a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Japanese after attaining the highest level in a language proficiency exam.

She said the decision to tackle postgraduate study at UQ was because of the international reputation of the translation degree, which takes two years to complete full-time.

“I heard that MAJIT was one of the top programs in the world for acquiring the official NAATI (official translation) qualification,” she said.

The program is one of only two of its kind in the world, and the only one in the Southern Hemisphere ranked by the Swiss-based AIIC (International Association of Conference Interpreters).

Students become familiar with legal, business and even medical language, and in their final year participate in weekly live forums where they interpret for a guest speaker in real-time.

At the end of her studies, Victoria hopes to achieve a NAATI qualification, and plans to put her skills to good use in Australia or Japan.

For Victoria’s daughter Akane, the situation is reversed. Acquiring Japanese as her native language, she developed her English skills from her mother during childhood, further building on these through Japanese public schooling, undergraduate studies in Australia and work experience.

“MAJIT is such a well known translation and interpreting course around the world that at first, I thought that the level of study would be too high,” Akane said.

“However, while I worked as an in-house translator and interpreter at one of Japan’s car makers, I strongly felt the need to improve my translation and interpreting skills and to undertake a systematic and thorough training at an early stage.”
The UQ Boat Club had a lot to celebrate recently, having showcased one of its best ever performances when they took to the water at the Australian Rowing Championships in March.

The club continued their long-standing history of success, winning five gold, five silver and seven bronze medals at the national event that ran from March 3 to March 9 on Tasmania’s Lake Barrington.

After an intense six-day club regatta, the event culminated with an interstate competition which saw UQBC field their strongest ever representation in the Queensland team.

UQ’s Head Rowing Coach, Lincoln Handley, said gaining so many places on the state side was a true testament to the overwhelming talent in UQBC.

“With 27 athletes and three coaches on the Queensland team, we had a majority of the seats, which is a tremendous effort for any club,” Mr Handley said.

Oxfam Australia and UQ SPORT teamed up with national athletics champion Otis Gowa last month to do their bit for Indigenous health.

The Sporting Chance event invited people to donate sporting equipment to support the Sporting Chance Indigenous Sports Academies, which are struggling in the current financial climate.

In Brisbane to defend his 100m title at the National Athletics Championships, Mr Gowa was the event’s guest speaker, along with Director of UQ’s Centre for Indigenous Health, Professor Cindy Shannon.

UQ Oxfam spokesperson Alex Maskiell said the group wanted to do something positive and practical to help provide Indigenous Australians with the resources needed to improve their health and education.

“That’s what lead us to take on this project and then to combine forces with UQ SPORT so that we could magnify the scale of the equipment drive and fundraiser,” Mr Maskiell said.

Hundreds of events were held across the country to mark National Close the Gap Day on April 2, with tens of thousands of Australians urging the federal and state governments to increase their commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and well-being.

Another record was set at the event, with women achieving better overall results than their male counterparts for the first time in decades.

Alison Scobbie ensured her performances were remembered, winning gold in the U23 lightweight women’s single and combining with Catriona Rose to win gold in the U23 lightweight double scull.

Another highlight was the silver medal in the women’s U23 eight going to an all-UQBC crew featuring six UQ students including the Krippner sisters, Fran Patterson and Kirstin White. It was the first time UQBC had entered a straight women’s U23 eight.

The men also lived up to their reputation as traditional competition heavyweights, scoring their fair share of medals.

Co-organiser of the Sporting Chance event Emma Poulson said over the past year the Federal Government had taken some positive steps toward improving Indigenous health outcomes.

The Sporting Chance Program is an Australian Government initiative that provides financial support for organisations to deliver projects that use sport as a vehicle to increase the level of engagement of Indigenous children and young people in schooling, and improve their educational outcomes.

Mr Maskiell said while the Close the Gap campaign had already achieved some success, it must continue to hold the government to its commitments.

“But it’s not all about the government either – it’s also about individuals and groups doing what they can to support other Australians,” he said.

Angus Morton combined with Chris Bigg to give the UQBC combo an emphatic win in the open men’s lightweight double scull.

In another strong performance, Jared Bidwell won bronze representing Queensland in the President’s Cup. Mr Bidwell earned himself a personal best, coming in under seven minutes for the first time.

INFO ➔ www.uqsport.uq.edu.au

UQ Oxfam representative Emma Poulson with Australian athletics champion Otis Gowa at the Close the Gap event at St Lucia

Winning on water

UQ Boat Club representative Emma Poulson and Australian athletics champion Otis Gowa at the Close the Gap event at St Lucia.
**EVENTS**

**Wednesday April 22**
The Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies: "Appraisative learning from elicted unknowns of personal pasts". Dr Antonio Moran (noon, Don Carruthers Room, Level 5, Dorothy Hill PSE Library, Hawken Building). Information: s.loode@uq.edu.au

**Friday April 24**
Apple Pty Ltd Creative Academic Workshop will introduce you to the Mac via presentations, photo slideshows, movies and podcasts that bring all forms of media together. All staff and students welcome (noon-2pm, Hawken Building, room N210, St Lucia). Information: www.apple.com.au/education/discovery or education@apple.com

**Friday May 1**
Deadline for submitting an abstract for the First Australian Workshop on Afro-Asiatic Linguistics (AWAAL), to be held at UQ from September 11-13, 2009. Papers will analyze Semitic languages (eg Arabic, Amharic, Aramaic, Hebrew and Israelite) and other Afro-Asiatic languages (eg Berber, Somali, Oromo, Omotic). Information: Associate Professor Ghid'ad Zuckermann, www.zuckermann.org or ghz@uq.edu.au

**Wednesday May 20**
The Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies: "The Symbol of Asia and Oceania: Exploring lost civilizations and finding East Timor's Heritage". Dr Claire Rawlesley (noon, Don Carruthers Room, Level 5, Dorothy Hill PSE Library, Hawken Building). Information: s.loode@uq.edu.au

**Thursday May 21**
Probus Club of St Lucia East: "Rough Play: Brisbane's Larrikins in the Late Nineteenth Century". Dr Melissa Bellanta (2pm, BCC Indooroopilly Shoppingtown). All welcome. Information: pgunn@uq.edu.au

**Wednesday May 27**
The Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies seminar "Intercultural Dialogue: Rhetoric and Reality in Museums". Dr Amareswar Galla (noon, Don Carruthers Room, Level 5, Dorothy Hill PSE Library, Hawken Building). Information: s.loode@uq.edu.au

**Wednesday July 6**
ISSR Winter School Workshops. Two leading international scholars will present two postgraduate workshops on key research themes in the social sciences. Each visiting fellow will conduct one five-day workshop in the mid-semester break in July. Information: Visit www.uq.edu.au/issr

**GENERAL CLASSIFIEDS**

**TO RENT:** Two bedroom, plus small study air-conditioned house sitting in Yeronga. Two bathrooms single lock-up garage. Walk to train, shops and river. In close proximity to Green Bridge and UQ. Available May 1, 2009. $360. Contact: 0402 755 574. Inspections welcome.

**HOUSE SITTER:** UQ staff member available to house sit from April 30th. Previous sitting referees available. Contact: Greg (07) 3346 4390 or g.george@library.uq.edu.au

**HOUSE SITTER:** Available for medium to long-term house sitting. Responsible and caring professional woman. Excellent references. Contact: 0411 826 343 or (07) 3374 2042.

**UQ NEWS DEADLINES**

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Semester 1 ends June 26

**SCHOLARSHIPS**

**RD Arida Bursary 2009**
Open to students who have undertaken no previous study at tertiary level and whose home residence is in Charters Towers or one of the shires of Dalrymple, Flinders or Cloncurry. Awarded on the basis of financial need. Worth: $999 per annum for three years. Closing: May 1, 2009. Information: (07) 3365 1984 or ugscholarships@uq.edu.au.

**WH & HW Harris Bursary 2009**
Open to female students who are of lineal descendant to a person eligible to be accepted as a member of the War Widows Guild, Australia, Queensland Branch, and who attended a Queensland secondary school in 2007. Based on best academic results in 2008, over at least #14. Worth: Approximately $999 per annum for three years. Closing: May 1, 2009. Information: (07) 3365 1984 or ugscholarships@uq.edu.au.

**John Fox Memorial Bursary 2009**
Awarded to an orphan, or a fatherless Australian-born male, who is pursuing the Bachelor of Engineering (electrical). Preference will be given to applicants who are enrolled in the third semester. Based on proficiency during the program and other circumstances deemed relevant. Worth: Approximately $670. Closing: June 26, 2009. Information: (07) 3365 1984 or ugscholarships@uq.edu.au

Library hours are available at www.library.uq.edu.au

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**THIS WEEKEND LEARN SOMETHING YOU WON’T FIND IN A TEXT BOOK.**

Information Sessions held Every Tuesday from 7.00pm at Queensland University Regiment, 24 Wallcott St, St Lucia.

Right now, your local Army Reserve unit is recruiting soldiers and officers. If you’re a university student it’s the perfect way to get outdoors, meet new people and make the most of the little time you have away from the textbooks. You’ll also develop skills that will help in your future career and receive tax-free pay that won’t affect your Austudy. Call (07) 3721 4329 for details about our next information session. www.defencejobs.gov.au

**ARMY RESERVE: THE PART TIME OF YOUR LIFE.**
Music lovers were in for a treat last month when UQ music graduate and rising opera star Kathleen Parker presented a free program of Brahms, Tchaikovsky and Beethoven at Customs House.

The 26-year-old soprano graduated with honours from UQ in 2003 with a Bachelor of Music and has subsequently graduated from one of the best operatic training institutes in the country, the Australian Opera Studio.

After a two-year intensive course, likened by some to “opera boot camp”, Ms Parker was named Dux of her class in 2008.

Her time at the Opera Studio required a rigorous weekly schedule including German, Italian, Russian and French language study, singing, acting, dancing and even stage combat classes. Ms Parker was one of three recipients of a $250,000 scholarship which covered 100 percent of her training over the two years.

“It’s been a long journey to get to this point and yet still I am only beginning. Music is such a tough industry but performing is incredibly rewarding and I can’t think of a more thrilling career,” Ms Parker said.

For the first time since her graduation, Ms Parker returned to Customs House on March 29 to present a lieder recital with pianist John Woods – part of UQ’s free concert series.

She said she was honoured to be able to perform at Customs House and hoped to inspire current UQ music students.

“It’s a really great venue for recitals with a beautiful acoustic and a very classy view of the river,” she said.

“The concerts are always popular and very well received. I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to represent UQ and to perform at Customs House.”

In October last year Ms Parker returned to UQ to compete for the Ethel Osborn Prize and was thrilled to receive the $4600 scholarship, which she will use to travel to London for auditions and coaching later in the year.

INFO → www.music.uq.edu.au/

“Music is such a tough industry but performing is incredibly rewarding and I can’t think of a more thrilling career”