Drug driving: 
the road ahead for police

Story on page 5
Growing opportunities

Looking back on some of my past comments in this publication, a few definite themes have emerged.

One of those themes is my interest in growing educational opportunities for anyone who wants and deserves them. This is something I’ve always felt very strongly about: geographical isolation or social disadvantage should not prevent students from obtaining a higher education.

Since early in my time here, the University has pursued a strategy of growing educational opportunities in the state to great effect. In fact, over the past decade we have grown significantly in student numbers.

We plan to continue this growth and to whole-heartedly embrace the Federal Government’s current emphasis on access, and on aligning our academic programs with national and state priorities and the demands of industry.

I am firmly of the view that recruitment of greater numbers of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds should not be limited to the VET sector or less research-intensive institutions.

Of course, the University’s track record in trying to break through the barriers of social disadvantage or geographical isolation significantly pre-dates my term as Vice-Chancellor. For example, Adelaide’s Fairway Scheme was a pioneering low socio-economic status access scheme almost 20 years ago.

But now we want to create new pathways and opportunities for entry into the University of Adelaide for students who may have previously been denied them, while at the same time continuing to maintain the highest standards.

We’ve already started doing this: the Fairway Scheme has this year been extended to all Year 12 students eligible for a School Card or Youth Allowance; we are working with TAFE SA to expand our articulation, credit transfer and resource sharing agreements so that students can more easily continue their education to degree level; we’re making changes to admissions processes and credit transfer policies to maximise recognition of prior learning.

Our recent signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Kaplan Inc. is the start of an innovative partnership that will help us in our aims to become a much more student-centred university, with increasingly flexible options for the delivery of our programs and an increased focus on the student experience.

This agreement with Kaplan will allow us to create even further opportunities for education in this state and beyond, widening our access to students who might otherwise have missed out.

We expect that there will be new articulation pathways from Kaplan programs to entry into University of Adelaide courses, and Kaplan’s expertise in online learning technologies will help us develop our own online learning and resources, helping us to expand our offerings to rural and remote regions. This will also offer more flexibility in the delivery of our programs for the benefit of those already in the workforce.

The University of Adelaide, the state and the Australian community will benefit greatly from the entry of Kaplan into the Australian higher education sector. We have much to gain from Kaplan’s worldwide recruitment network, its exemplary record in student outcomes and its strong focus on student support services.

The University of Adelaide is proud to be able to contribute in this way to the aims of the State Government’s ‘University City’ strategy and to help meet both the State and Federal Government’s goals of increasing access to quality education.

And we’re pleased to be growing opportunities for education at a time when our nation needs it most.
New student hub builds campus life

The University of Adelaide is about to embark on a major new facility for students in the heart of its North Terrace Campus that will transform on-campus student life and learning.

The $34.5 million redevelopment of the central Hughes Plaza as a student learning hub, due for completion in March 2011, will reinvent students’ on-campus experience, increase learning and recreational space and provide a ‘front door’ to services at the University.

The learning hub will be a multi-level, all-weather space where students can meet and undertake group study in flexible lounge areas, use free computer and other audio-visual facilities, and access a broad range of student services, while enjoying a coffee and a range of other food and beverages.

“This will be the largest and most dynamic student learning hub in Australia and, we believe, the envy of other universities across Australia,” said the University’s Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor James McWha.

“Other satellite learning hubs are likely to follow on our North Terrace, Waite and Roseworthy campuses. We’ve already opened a student hub in the Faculty of the Professions on Pulteney Street and it’s proving highly successful.

“Hughes Plaza is the geographical heart of the campus, a logical intersection traversed by more than 50% of all campus pedestrians. The redevelopment will turn this rather barren area into a true hub which will provide more opportunity for social interaction on campus. It will integrate learning, social and recreational spaces with a ‘front door’ to student support services and library resources, food and beverage outlets and other services.”

The development will incorporate technologies such as online learning, learning management systems and wireless networks with informal and collaborative study and recreational spaces. It brings together the leading thinking on educational space planning from around the world.

“We will be arranging focus groups and undertaking surveys with students to ensure we provide exactly what students want in this new facility,” Professor McWha said.

“This is a significant development in the University’s building program, which is seeing more than $400 million being invested in state-of-the-art research and teaching facilities on the North Terrace, Waite and Roseworthy campuses.”

The development is part-funded by the Federal Government’s Better Universities Renewal Funding initiative.

Story by Olivia Jones and Robyn Mills
Above: A proposed concept of the Hughes Plaza learning hub. Image courtesy of Hassell
**Elder Hall has ASO touch**

The presence of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra (ASO) will be felt in Elder Hall this month in more ways than one.

The ASO returns to historic Elder Hall on Wednesday 25 November for the second of its Classic Hour concerts, *Haydn in Spring*.

Featuring works by Pärt, Respighi, Skalkottas and Haydn, the orchestra will perform at 1.00pm and again at 6.00pm under the direction of its Chief Conductor, Arvo Volmer. (See below for details about how you can win tickets.)

Just a few days later, Arvo Volmer will then return to the University of Adelaide to direct the Elder Conservatorium of Music’s full choral and orchestral forces, in the final concert of the 2009 Evenings at Elder Hall concert series at 6.30pm Saturday 28 November.

This concert will see the first performance of a new work for soprano, chorus and orchestra, *Requiem*, by Carl Crossin.

Known primarily as Conductor of the Adelaide Chamber Singers and the Elder Conservatorium Chorale, Crossin is well known and respected throughout Australia as a choral conductor, educator and, more recently, composer. He is also currently Acting Director of the Elder Conservatorium of Music.

Mr Crossin said *Requiem* sprang from the “melodic inspiration of Gregorian Chant and the desire to explore modes of expression other than purely unaccompanied voices”.

“I have worked with voices for my entire professional life and composing *Requiem* gave me the opportunity to combine my passion for choral sonority with the wonderful palette of orchestral colours,” he said.

“It is such a fantastic opportunity for our students to work with a conductor of such international standing. I’m sure many will be inspired by Arvo to become orchestral musicians,” Mr Crossin said.

Tchaikovsky’s 6th Symphony, *Pathétique*, is the other main work in the final concert’s program.

Tickets to the evening concert are $25 (adult); $20 (concession) and $15 (student). For bookings phone the Concert Office on +61 8 8303 5925.

For full program details visit: [www.elderhall.adelaide.edu.au](http://www.elderhall.adelaide.edu.au)

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**ASO GIVEAWAY**

To go in the running to win one of five double passes to the ASO’s 1.00pm Classic Hour performance in Elder Hall on Wednesday 25 November, simply send an email to aso@aso.com.au with “Adelaidean Classic Hour giveaway” in the subject heading.

Please provide your name, address and a contact phone number.

“Australia is doing more than any other country in terms of anti-drug driving laws and enforcement,” said Dr Jeremy Woolley, Senior Research Fellow with the University of Adelaide’s Centre for Automotive Safety Research (CASR).

“Victoria has become the model because it was the first jurisdiction anywhere in the world to introduce anti-drug driving legislation. There are legislative differences from state to state, but all of the states are now doing similar things – with some variations in the equipment they use and the approaches they take to enforcement.”

CASR Research Fellow Dr Matthew Baldock said alcohol was still the biggest problem in fatal accidents, “but the latest statistics show that more than one in five fatally injured drivers in Australia have illicit drugs in their system”.

“This is one of the reasons why the drug driving issue is such a problem and why it’s important to find a way to educate the public and legislate against it.”

While Dr Woolley and Dr Baldock are supportive of the push to combat drug driving, they have raised a number of concerns about drug testing equipment and procedures that have implications for the way such laws are enforced throughout Australia.

Earlier this year, Dr Woolley and Dr Baldock were commissioned by the Western Australian Government to conduct a comprehensive review of that state’s drug driving laws and enforcement practices.

As part of this, they looked at data collected by WA Police over more than 12 months of roadside drug testing. This involved 10,000 drug tests performed in 1000 hours of enforcement, about a third of which took place in rural areas. The drugs tested for were methamphetamine, MDMA or ecstasy, and cannabis. The most common confirmed drug cases involved methamphetamine alone (40% of positive cases) and methamphetamine combined with cannabis (23%).

Dr Woolley and Dr Baldock concluded that the initial period of the drug driving legislation in WA had been a success overall, but they made a number of recommendations to improve the new program of enforcement.

“Western Australia uses a three-tiered testing system. One of the most significant findings of our study was that the second screening test failed to detect the presence of drugs in 20% of samples, which were later confirmed to be drug positive in laboratory analyses. The second screening test was particularly ineffective for detection of cannabis,” Dr Baldock said.

Thanks to this finding, new testing kits are now being used in WA.

“We expect that this will resolve the problem, but ongoing monitoring is needed to confirm this,” Dr Baldock said.

Among a range of recommendations, the researchers argued against a general rollout of driver drug testing by WA Police, suggesting that such testing be restricted to ‘drug bus’ operations only.

Dr Woolley said this was because “there are legitimate concerns about the transportation and storage of evidentiary samples, especially given the range of environmental and climatic conditions throughout WA”.

With a general rollout, there could be an increase in the likelihood of operator error and inaccurate test results,” he said.

Dr Baldock likened these issues to the early days of random breath testing.

“This will evolve over time. At the moment the equipment is still in its infancy, there are some technical difficulties and a lot of operator expertise is required. Australia really is at the cutting edge here so we need to keep an eye on things until some of these issues are ironed out.

“The various states could benefit from sharing more information and experiences, especially in these early days,” he said.

Story by David Ellis

Photo courtesy of Victoria Police
Alison Care has been named the 2009 winner of the prestigious Young Investigator Award. Her research has examined the role of a type of immune cells known as macrophages (white blood cells) within the ovary, which are found in abundance around developing eggs and in hormone-producing structures within the ovary.

The study, conducted in mice, shows that when these white blood cells are depleted there is a significant reduction in the amount of progesterone the ovary produces. Progesterone is a hormone produced by the ovary that is essential for the maintenance of early pregnancy.

“We know that the ovary requires a vascular network in order to deliver the high levels of progesterone the body requires to maintain early pregnancy. The formation of this network occurs very quickly following ovulation, and macrophages may be involved in establishing that blood supply,” Ms Care said.

“It appears that the ovary has its own specialist pathway to achieve this, and that macrophages have an essential role in building the blood supply that we hadn’t previously appreciated. “This research identifies immune system cells as critical determinants of normal ovarian activity and the maintenance of early pregnancy. This might be a key to helping prevent early pregnancy loss, such as recurrent miscarriage.”

Ms Care said a number of factors – such as smoking, obesity, poor nutrition and stress – could all alter the way macrophages behave and may provide reasons for infertility or miscarriage in some women.

Alison Care is a PhD student in the University of Adelaide’s Discipline of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, in the Research Centre for Reproductive Health, Robinson Institute.

She won the Young Investigator Award after presenting her research to a general audience and a panel of media judges. As the winner, she received The Hon. Carolyn Pickles Award of $10,000. Prizes of $3000 each were awarded to the two runners up, Kathryn Gebhardt (also from the Discipline of Obstetrics & Gynaecology) and Roger Yazbek (Department of Gastroenterology, Children, Youth and Women’s Health Service).

Ms Care is supervised by Associate Professor Sarah Robertson, Dr Melinda Jasper and Dr Wendy Ingman.

The Young Investigator Award, now in its 10th year, is a highly successful event rewarding excellence in South Australia’s young researchers in both science and their ability to communicate and ‘sell’ that science. The award is an initiative of the Children, Youth and Women’s Health Service and the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Adelaide.

The University of South Australia and Flinders University are also partners in the award together with the Women’s and Children’s Health Research Institute, the Royal Institution of Australia, Medvet and the Women’s and Children’s Hospital Foundation.


Immune cell pregnancy link a winner

A University of Adelaide PhD student has won a $10,000 prize for shedding new light on why some women are infertile and why some pregnancies end in miscarriage.

Alison Care has been named the 2009 winner of the prestigious Young Investigator Award.

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Raise targets to prevent extinction

Conservation biologists are setting their minimum population size targets too low to prevent extinction, according to a new study led by University of Adelaide researchers.

The study, published online recently in the journal *Biological Conservation*, showed that populations of endangered species are unlikely to persist in the face of global climate change and habitat loss unless they number around 5000 mature individuals or more.

“Conservation biologists routinely underestimate or ignore the number of animals or plants required to prevent extinction,” said researcher Dr Lochran Traill, from the University of Adelaide’s Environment Institute. “Often, they aim to maintain tens or hundreds of individuals, when thousands are actually needed. Our review found that populations smaller than about 5000 had unacceptably high extinction rates. This suggests that many targets for conservation recovery are simply too small to do much good in the long run.”

A long-standing idea in species restoration programs is the so-called ‘50/500’ rule. This states that at least 50 adults are required to avoid the damaging effects of inbreeding, and 500 to avoid extinctions due to the inability to evolve to cope with environmental change.

“Our research suggests that the 50/500 rule is at least an order of magnitude too small to effectively stave off extinction,” said Dr Traill. “This does not necessarily imply that populations smaller than 5000 are doomed. But it does highlight the challenge that small populations face in adapting to a rapidly changing world.”

Conservation biologists worldwide are battling to prevent a mass extinction event in the face of a growing human population and its associated impact on the planet.

“The conservation management bar needs to be a lot higher,” says Dr Traill. “However, we shouldn’t necessarily give up on critically endangered species numbering a few hundred of individuals in the wild. Acceptance that more needs to be done if we are to stop ‘managing for extinction’ should force decision makers to be more explicit about what they are aiming for, and what they are willing to trade off, when allocating conservation funds.”

Other researchers in the study were Associate Professor Corey Bradshaw and Professor Barry Brook, both from the University of Adelaide’s Environment Institute, and Professor Richard Frankham, from Macquarie University’s Department of Biological Sciences.

Meanwhile, Associate Professor Bradshaw was awarded this year’s Royal Society of SA’s prestigious Andrewartha Medal for his outstanding research as an early career scientist.

Society president Dr John Jennings said conservation ecologist Corey Bradshaw already had an impressive and rapidly building record of publications, including many in prestigious journals such as *Nature*.

“Associate Professor Bradshaw is addressing the modern concern with sustainability and what happens when ecosystems begin to unravel due to the effects of human activity,” said Dr Jennings. “He is also a highly successful facilitator being actively involved in building collaborative links between researchers throughout Australia and overseas.”

Associate Professor Bradshaw is jointly appointed with SARDI’s Marine Innovation SA and has particular strengths in conservation ecology and extinction dynamics, population dynamics, sustainable harvest and invasive species management. More recently, he directed his focus on shark conservation and ecology.

Story by Robyn Mills

Right: Illegal harvest and habitat loss have reduced the population of Black Rhino (*Diceros bicornis*) to a worldwide total of less than 2500.

Photo courtesy of Simon Morgan

www.wildlifelact.com
Mental health benefits from alcohol: study

A new study led by University of Adelaide researchers shows that moderate alcohol consumption may help protect accident victims from posttraumatic psychological distress.

More than 1000 patients admitted to hospital following traumatic injury were assessed for patterns of alcohol consumption before the accident and in the three months following. This was compared with the level of anxiety, depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) one week after the accident and at three months.

The researchers found that moderate alcohol consumption before and following the accident predicted lower levels of psychological distress. Conversely, both abstinence from alcohol and high levels of drinking produced poorer mental health outcomes.

A small group of patients showed a link between more severe PTSD and the emergence of alcohol abuse, suggesting “self-medication”.

The findings have been published recently in the Journal of Affective Disorders.

Conversely, both abstinence from alcohol and high levels of drinking produced poorer mental health outcomes. More than 1000 patients admitted to hospital following traumatic injury were assessed for patterns of alcohol consumption before the accident and in the three months following. This was compared with the level of anxiety, depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) one week after the accident and at three months.

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A small group of patients showed a link between more severe PTSD and the emergence of alcohol abuse, suggesting “self-medication”.

The findings have been published recently in the Journal of Affective Disorders.

"Alcohol consumption is an embedded and accepted behaviour in our community. Rather than suggesting abstinence following exposure to traumatic events because of the perceived risk of addiction through alcohol abuse, the importance of moderate drinking should be emphasised as this behaviour may have some benefit in minimising distress," said lead author Professor Alexander McFarlane.

Professor McFarlane is Head of the Centre for Military and Veterans’ Health at the University of Adelaide and internationally renowned as an expert in the impact of disasters and posttraumatic stress disorder.

Individuals should, however, be warned of the importance of moderate drinking should be emphasised as this behaviour may have some benefit in minimising distress," said lead author Professor Alexander McFarlane.

Professor McFarlane is Head of the Centre for Military and Veterans’ Health at the University of Adelaide and internationally renowned as an expert in the impact of disasters and posttraumatic stress disorder.

Individuals should, however, be warned of the importance of moderate alcohol usage. The risks of excessive consumption, Professor McFarlane said. The researchers advocated active screening and early intervention strategies that focus on moderate alcohol usage.

The researchers were from the Centre for Military and Veterans’ Health at the University of Adelaide, the Schools of Psychology and Psychiatry at the University of New South Wales, and the Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health and Department of Psychiatry at the University of Melbourne.

Strong link between obesity and depression

Doctors should pay more attention to the link between common mental illness and obesity in patients because the two health problems are closely linked.

That’s according to researchers at the University of Adelaide, who have added support to claims of a two-way risk between obesity and common mental disorders.

In an editorial published recently in the British Medical Journal (BMJ), the Adelaide researchers make comments on a new research paper on this topic published in the same issue of the BMJ by Professor Mika Kivimäki from University College London.

“A better understanding of the mechanisms for the apparent bi-directional risk between obesity and common mental disorders is needed for effective treatment and prevention,” said the lead author of the editorial, Dr Evan Atlantis from the University of Adelaide’s School of Medicine.

Although the topic is largely unexplored, several psychosocial, lifestyle and physiological factors may be involved in the complex inter-relationship between obesity and mental illness,” he said.

Obese people – especially those who perceive themselves as being overweight – often experience weight-related stigma and discrimination, and consequently present with symptoms of low self esteem, low self worth, and guilt. Obesity is associated with socioeconomic disadvantage and low levels of physical activity, both of which are strong predictors of depression.

“Obesity may constitute a chronic stressful state, which in turn can cause significant physiological dysfunction. Such dysfunction would then predispose individuals to depressed mood and associated symptoms,” he said.

Dr Atlantis said reduced physical activity and overeating – “particularly comfort foods rich in fats and sugars to improve mood” – were common among depressed and anxious patients.

“Activation of the endocannabinoid system, which increases appetite and may simultaneously alleviate depression, is likely to reinforce this eating behaviour. Socioeconomic disadvantage may further exacerbate the over-consumption of comfort foods because of their low cost,” he said.

Dr Atlantis said patients presenting to their doctor with symptoms of common mental disorder should be assessed for obesity and related chronic diseases, and vice versa.

“A multidisciplinary approach that focuses on promoting a healthy lifestyle is important. Further research on how best to deliver lifestyle interventions is needed, along with government action on taxes, tariffs, and trade laws to encourage the supply and consumption of healthy food and physical activity choices,” he said.

Story by Robyn Mills

Photo by Sanja Gjenero
Adelaide’s new uni partnership

The University of Adelaide has joined forces with international private education provider Kaplan, Inc. to investigate the establishment of a Kaplan University campus in Adelaide.

Kaplan and the University of Adelaide have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The partnership will see both universities working together to expand access to high-quality career-oriented educational programs.

Subject to government approval and approval of the Higher Learning Commission in the United States (Kaplan University’s accreditor), Kaplan will introduce innovative e-learning technologies to deliver degree programs across Australia, with students able to study at Kaplan’s Adelaide-based campus or anywhere in Australia online.

The Premier of South Australia, the Hon. Mike Rann, described the agreement between Kaplan and the University of Adelaide as a “perfect fit” with the State Government’s ‘University City’ project.

“We want Adelaide to be known as an international centre for university education,” he said.

“Bringing together a world-class Australian university in the University of Adelaide with one of the world’s biggest, most innovative education providers, Kaplan, will provide local and international students with a wider range of study options to fit their different needs.”

The first intake of students is expected to commence in 2011. Initially, financial services and business programs will be offered, ranging from Bachelors to Masters degree level, with future expansion into other fields such as allied health.

Once Kaplan University becomes fully operational, the aim is to admit 5000 domestic and international students on campus in Adelaide with many more enrolled online.

Professor James McWha said: “The primary mission of our partnership with Kaplan will be to expand access to higher education in Australia. Under-represented groups, including working adults, students from low socio-economic backgrounds and students in regional and remote areas, will be the big winners from this agreement. With a focus on students from non-traditional pathways, we’ll be helping to meet both State and Federal Governments’ goals of increasing access to a quality education.”

Mr Andy Rosen, Chairman and CEO of Kaplan, added: “This partnership with the University of Adelaide is another step in serving students across the globe with educational programs that can help them improve their lives. With our mission to build individual futures, we’re committed to delivering world-class education to generate positive student outcomes.”

Mr Mark Coggins, CEO of Kaplan Asia Pacific said: “This partnership representing Kaplan University’s first international campus offers a range of exciting opportunities for both Kaplan and the University of Adelaide. Kaplan’s strength in virtual classroom technologies will enable us to educate students not only within the state but across Australia and the globe. The sharing of educational resources and expertise with the University of Adelaide will be of great benefit to students and staff from our respective universities.”

The MOU builds on a long-standing relationship between Kaplan and the University of Adelaide through Bradford College. Kaplan’s Bradford College offers pathway programs to international students with the majority of these students going on to study at the University of Adelaide. Kaplan has a variety of additional operations in Australia including: Kaplan Business School, Kaplan Professional, Kaplan Aspect and Murdoch Institute of Technology.

Kaplan is a subsidiary of The Washington Post Company.

Story by David Ellis and Gail Appleby

Below (from left): Mr Andy Rosen, Chairman and CEO of Kaplan, Inc., South Australian Premier Mike Rann and Professor James McWha, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Adelaide. Photo by Michael Haines
The University of Adelaide’s sportsmen and women have been making names for themselves around Australia.

In Canberra, the Adelaide University Boat Club had a historic win while competing in the Australian University Rowing Championships.

The men’s eights crew won the prestigious Oxford and Cambridge Cup for the first time since 1979, with victory over the University of Sydney on Canberra’s Lake Burley Griffin.

The cup is a solid silver trophy, which stands nearly a metre tall and is of immense value, having been donated by Australians who raced for Oxford and Cambridge universities,” said the President of the Adelaide University Sports Association, Mr Andres Munoz-Lamilla.

The crew, coached by Adelaide University Boat Club President Mike Jeffries – and consisting of Tom Sullivan, Pat Maddern, Jeff Duncan, Tom Shelton, Ned Kinnear, Owen Giradi, James McRae, Nick Andrew and Lucy Hyde – defeated Sydney University by one-and-a-half boat lengths at the annual Australian Universities Regatta.

"The win could not have been more timely, as we write a new chapter in the promotion of sporting excellence and improved recreational facilities at our University. All congratulations to the entire rowing crew for doing Adelaide proud. Long live the Blacks!"

Earlier, 150 University of Adelaide students made the journey to Queensland to compete in the 2009 Australian University Games, with Adelaide students represented in 14 sports.

"The team was inspirational both on and off the field," said Sports Development Officer Caitlin Stanley, who travelled with the team to the Gold Coast.

"Dressed in black and white, the team roared with excitement at the Opening Ceremony at Sea World, where team captains Melissa Perry and Bilal Farooqi marched for Adelaide University."

"Sydney Uni has won the trophy for the past several years, and with six international representatives in its boat, Sydney had again started favourites."

"As the week progressed, the competition became fiercer and saw some of the athletes with concussions, sprained ankles and stitches in the chin!" Ms Stanley said.

"This didn’t stop our teams from fighting hard come finals, where Adelaide claimed four medals, including gold to Alex Burgun in the Men’s Épée competition (Fencing), silver to the Ultimate Frisbee and Women’s Indoor Volleyball teams and bronze to the Mixed Netball team.

"Special mention must also go to our athletes who were nominated for green and gold, including: Alex Burgun (Fencing), Sam Hilditch, Ruben Wyld and Fiona Paton (Hockey), Megan Cain (Mixed Netball) and Hannah Berman and Amy Allen (Women’s Indoor Volleyball)."

Meanwhile, the Adelaide University Baseball Club’s A-grade side, the Varsity Blues, has continued its phenomenal success by again taking out the Division 1 trophy in the winter competition.
Varsity came from behind to win 13-10 in the grand final over the Golden Grove Inters.

This is the team’s sixth Division 1 winter premiership in a row, capping off a highly successful 2009 season.

“After dropping a game in round three, Varsity went on to win 15 straight over the rest of the season including the premiership decider,” said shortstop Chris McGowan.

“The Blues’ hitters amassed 26 home runs for the season in a sustained display of power hitting and young star Patrick Inglis set a new club record with 33 hits.”

In a team of award-winners and a season of highlights, the clear choice for the Most Valuable Player award was Mark Stephens, who smashed the club’s season record for home runs, made major contributions in the field and was the winning pitcher in the grand final.
Award to anti-smoking campaigner

An international award has been given to a University of Adelaide researcher who has spent the past 30 years campaigning against smoking and helping smokers to kick the habit.

Professor Konrad Jamrozik, who is the Head of the School of Population Health and Clinical Practice at the University of Adelaide, has received the Nigel Gray Award for Achievement in Tobacco Control.

Awarded as part of the recent Oceania Tobacco Control Conference, the Nigel Gray Award recognises ‘unsung heroes’ working in tobacco control throughout Oceania.

Professor Jamrozik’s first interests in tobacco control began as a young medical intern at the Royal Hobart Hospital during the late 1970s, where he became acutely aware of the dangerous consequences of smoking and the impact it was having on patients.

“It occurred to me that there was a great deal of absurdity in patients using their dying breaths to smoke one last cigarette, or admitting a patient to hospital for his second heart attack because no-one had convinced him to stop smoking the first time around,” Professor Jamrozik said.

His PhD project, undertaken while he was a postgraduate student at the University of Oxford, examined ways in which general practitioners could increase their effectiveness in helping patients who were smokers to give up smoking permanently.

Since the mid 1980s, Professor Jamrozik has combined his academic and clinical work with his passion for tobacco control as a “part-time activist but full-time advocate”.

As an academic expert he has generated significant new evidence on the impact of smoking on heart and blood vessel disease, particularly on stroke, and has completed three further large clinical trials looking for better ways to help smokers to quit.

“I have always aimed to keep the urgency of the problem in view,” he said.

His work on deaths attributable to passive smoking was cited at least nine times in the Westminster Parliamentary debate that led to the adoption of smoke-free legislation. A conservative estimate is that that legislation will prevent more than 100,000 premature deaths, principally through its effects in prompting active smokers to quit.

Professor Jamrozik’s work has helped to raise the awareness and visibility of tobacco health warnings, and he has been instrumental in promoting a third category of victims of smoking: “The children who are orphaned by their parents’ smoking add measurably to the problem of the avoidable death and disease to the parents themselves, and to the harm done by passive smoking.”

Professor Jamrozik’s contributions to tobacco control have included:

• Chair of the Australian Council of Smoking and Health;
• Chair of the National Heart Foundation’s Tobacco Control Committee;
• various contributions to the Tobacco Advisory Group of the Royal College of Physicians in London, the Health Education and Health Protection Authorities in the UK, and to the World Health Organization in Geneva;
• membership of the Second National Health and Medical Research (NHMRC) Inquiry into the impact of passive smoking on health; and
• presentations to the European Parliament regarding deaths attributable to passive smoking across all 25 member nations of the expanded European Community.

New Zealand anti-smoking campaigner Shane Bradbrook also received the Nigel Gray Award, which is named for one of the co-authors of the International Union Against Cancer’s “Guidelines for Smoking Control” and long-term Director of the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria.

Story by David Ellis
Above: Professor Konrad Jamrozik
Photo by Jennie Groom
A national team of 18 researchers has discovered 850 new species of invertebrates, which include various insects, small crustaceans, spiders, worms and many others.

The team – led by Professor Andy Austin (University of Adelaide), Dr Steve Cooper (SA Museum) and Dr Bill Humphreys (WA Museum) – has conducted a comprehensive four-year survey of underground water, caves and micro-caverns across arid and semi-arid Australia.

“What we’ve found is that you don’t have to go searching in the depths of the ocean to discover new species of invertebrate animals – you just have to look in your own ‘back yard’,” said Professor Austin, from the Australian Centre for Evolutionary Biology & Biodiversity at the University of Adelaide.

“Our research has revealed whole communities of invertebrate animals that were previously unknown just a few years ago. What we have discovered is a completely new component to Australia’s biodiversity. It is a huge discovery and it is only about one fifth of the number of new species we believe exist underground in the Australian outback.”

Only half of the species discovered have so far been named. Generically, the animals found in underground water are known as “stygofauna” and those from caves and micro-caverns are known as “troglofauna”.

Professor Austin said the team had a theory as to why so many new species have been hidden away underground and in caves.

“Essentially what we are seeing is the result of past climate change. Central and southern Australia was a much wetter place 15 million years ago when there was a flourishing diversity of invertebrate fauna living on the surface. But the continent became drier, a process that lasted until about 1-2 million years ago, resulting in our current arid environment. Species took refuge in isolated favourable habitats, such as in underground waters and micro-caverns, where they survived and evolved in isolation from each other.

“Discovery of this ‘new’ biodiversity, although exciting scientifically, also poses a number of challenges for conservation in that many of these species are found in areas that are potentially impacted by mining and pastoral activities,” he said.

The research team reported its findings at a recent conference on evolution and biodiversity in Darwin, which celebrated the 200th anniversary of Charles Darwin.

Their research has been funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) Environmental Futures Network.

Story by David Ellis

Above (clockwise, from left): A new woodlice species whose distribution is restricted to mound springs in South Australia; an unusual crustacean found in the Yilgarn region of Western Australia; a primitive crustacean, previously only known from the northern hemisphere, found at Cape Range, WA; another new crustacean species at the Yilgarn region, WA.
That was the question being tackled at the University of Adelaide recently.

This year, 79 Year 10 students across six schools have been participating in the University’s “myth-busters” program, which aims to dispel myths about university life and study. The program culminated in a First Generation Day at the University.

The initiative is part of the State Government’s First Generation Program being run in partnership with the state’s three major universities at 23 schools this year.

South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) Board Chief Executive Dr Paul Kilvert said the program linked with the intentions of the new compulsory SACE subject, the Personal Learning Plan, by encouraging students to research and assess further education, training and employment opportunities for the future.

“For some students, university may not seem a natural option,” he said.

“Students often have pre-conceived ideas about whether they have the potential to meet the university entry requirements, the number of contact hours spent on campus, the jobs that qualifications can lead to, the affordability of going to university or the amount of study time associated with different degrees.

“In essence the objective of this program is to separate the myths from the facts and help the students to explore opportunities matching their interests and skills,” Dr Kilvert said.

By attending program days and participating in activities that help them to identify university and career pathways, the students have been gaining a better understanding of what university life is like, from the lecture hall to the radio station.

The schools involved in the “myth-busters” program were Charles Campbell Secondary School, Temple Christian College, Seaford 6-12 School, Tatchilla Lutheran College, Thomas More College and William Light R-12 School.

With a choice of 200 degree programs on offer at the University of Adelaide, the students were surveyed at the start of the program to determine what would be beneficial and of interest to them.

First Generation program coordinator at the University Jen Hill said the students were particularly interested in engineering, health sciences, teaching, architecture and various fields of science.

“The students have been able to examine career options they might like to pursue and the university pathways that can take them there,” Ms Hill said.

“By taking part in the program’s activities, the students get a real impression of the skills needed to succeed at university, an understanding of the difference between high school education and university education, and encouragement to consider university as an achievable goal.

“Myth-busters is about giving first generation students the opportunity to experience what university is like and understand what it has to offer. It takes the ‘unknown’ out of university, which empowers students to want to participate.”

The final program day was centred on career development options, with the University’s Careers Manager, Susan Hervey, talking about the benefits of university education and the job opportunities available to graduates.

Below: Students from six different schools attended the First Generation Day at the University of Adelaide

Photo by David Ellis
Food sources under threat from climate, development

Climate change and urban expansion could threaten the sustainability of horticultural industries in the Adelaide Hills unless a long-term strategy is employed.

That’s according to Geographical and Environmental Studies lecturer Dr Douglas Bardsley, who has spent the past four years working in partnership with the SA Government and the Adelaide Mt Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board on long-term planning approaches to cope with climate change.

Together with the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation, and Primary Industries and Resources SA, the group has developed geographical models with the Apple and Pear Growers Association to predict how warmer temperatures and urban expansion would affect their growing conditions.

“Projected warmer temperatures and rural residential development pose serious risks for industries such as the apple and pear industry, worth $25 million a year to South Australia,” Dr Bardsley said. “The area available in the Hills to grow high-quality apples could shrink considerably.”

The apple and pear industry is one of seven case studies undertaken since 2005 to assess the impact of global warming on South Australia’s natural resources.

“These projects, which consider impacts on agricultural industries, water, soil, biodiversity and coastal management in the Adelaide region, highlight the need for land use policies which respond directly to the risk of climate change.”

Other key projects include looking at groundwater systems in the McLaren Vale area to ascertain how the Southern Vales would be affected long term by a drier climate and examining how changes in wind and rainfall patterns would alter soil management north of Adelaide.

Another study undertaken in conjunction with the CSIRO suggests that 14 plant species that are considered of high conservation value in SA would be particularly vulnerable to changes in temperature and rainfall.

“Years of drought in the Murray-Darling Basin have, in part, led to the collapse of important water management systems in South Australia. Projections suggest that these weather conditions are more like what we can expect in the future,” Dr Bardsley said.

“The potential impacts of climate change for South Australia are likely to be negative for many stakeholders in the rural sector. It will be insufficient for us to simply try and manage environmental crises as they emerge.

“We need to integrate science into our future planning approaches and also work closely with key stakeholders to ensure the decisions we make incorporate the risks of future climate change,” Dr Bardsley said.

He said that as a result of his and his colleagues’ research, the regional Board and local councils were investing significant amounts of time and money into climate change initiatives to make their regions less vulnerable.

“The challenge is to plan long term, beyond political cycles, to ensure we protect our natural resources.”

Story by Candy Gibson

Want to do research without studying honours?

The University of Adelaide has introduced a new, intensive research-based Masters degree starting in 2010 – and is offering $200,000 worth of scholarships to students in the first intake.

The new degree is the Master of Philosophy (MPhil), which can be undertaken across any of the University’s research disciplines.

“This new degree is an introductory research program which enables transition directly from Bachelor level to Masters level without the need for Honours,” said Professor Richard Russell, Pro-Vice Chancellor Research Operations and Dean of Graduate Studies.

“It’s an ideal alternative to Honours for those students who have outstanding undergraduate records, or who are interested in researching for a longer periods than Honours or coursework Masters degrees allow.”

Widely recognised in the UK and the European Union, the two-year MPhil program allows students to study a research topic of their choosing, similar to the way Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) candidates undertake their research.

Initially 10 scholarships each valued at $20,000 per annum will be available for students who enter the Master of Philosophy program directly from their undergraduate degree.

The University of Adelaide is the first university in the state, and one of the few universities in Australia, to offer such a degree program.

“This new Masters program is another opportunity for students to undertake research and provides further pathways into university study. Most importantly, it gives students added flexibility to choose the program that is best suited to them,” Professor Russell said.

“Students interested in doing a PhD might also find that the MPhil is a better way for them to test the waters – it could help them to make up their minds about whether or not to conduct longer-term research projects.”

The MPhil is currently open only to Australian and New Zealand citizens and permanent residents.

Applications for entry and for scholarships close on Friday 13 November.

For more information, visit: www.adelaide.edu.au/graduatecentre

Story by David Ellis
These annual awards are part of the new five-year umbrella project Excellence in Education, which brings together and gives new focus to a whole range of initiatives seeking to enhance learning and teaching.

Initiatives are underway in areas such as teaching quality, curriculum development, program structures, facilities, IT services and policy development.

“We want all our staff to know that learning and teaching has equal value with research, and that teaching and research should be integrated and mutually supportive activities,” said Vice-Chancellor and President Professor James McWha.

Five awards (one per Faculty) will be presented annually and recognise contributions by academic staff, including innovative teaching practice, curriculum development, professional development and new strategic initiatives related to learning and teaching.

The inaugural award winners are:

Dr Wen Soong, Dr Braden Phillips, Dr Matthew Sorell, Mr Peter Ramsey with Mr Darryl Bosch and Associate Professor Michael Liebelt (School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Computer and Mathematical Sciences) for introductory first-year courses for Electrical and Electronic Engineering students. The curriculum emphasises the real-world context, developing system-level projects and exposing students to the broader context of the engineering profession. The courses make extensive use of online teaching resources and online discussion boards with active lecturer participation.

Mrs Catherine Snelling and Ms Sophie Karanicolas (School of Dentistry, Faculty of Health Sciences) developed the use of online tools to create flexibility in the first and second year of the Bachelor of Oral Health program where students are rostered for clinical sessions and benefit from an “anywhere, anytime” approach. Students are encouraged to collaborate, and to actively influence their learning environment through ongoing feedback. Use is made of blogs, interactive online learning modules and wikis.

Dr Jennie Louise (School of Humanities, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences) restructured the curriculum for core components of philosophy to improve accessibility of the material and its integration across year levels. This restructure has included revisions to teaching methodology, new texts, and significant changes in content. Significant online resources have been developed to better support students and cater to various levels of ability.

Mr Josh McCarthy (School of Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Urban Design, Faculty of the Professions) won his award for the use of social media in the first-year design elective course ‘Imaging Our World’. The course blended virtual and physical learning environments using a virtual classroom hosted by Facebook and a physical classroom. The blended learning environment increased peer interaction and academic engagement.

Dr Gerald Laurence (School of Chemistry and Physics, Faculty of Sciences) won his award for the development of a chemistry bridging course for first-year students taking foundation chemistry or biology courses. The intensive course (one lecture and three hours of tutorials for 10 days) is largely taught in small tutorial groups, with a high level of interaction and group dialogue.

All winners received a certificate and a grant for $2000 to assist with their professional development. As examples of best practice, the winning projects will be published on the Excellence in Education website: www.adelaide.edu.au/pvclq/excellence

Story by Robyn Mills

Below (from left): Dr Wen Soong, Dr Matthew Sorell, Associate Professor Michael Liebelt, Josh McCarthy, Sophie Karanicolas, Catherine Snelling, Vice-Chancellor Professor James McWha, Dr Jennie Louise, Dr Gerald Laurence and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Quality) Professor Birgit Lohmann.

Photo by Robyn Mills
Jubilee graduates relive golden years

Shared memories and laughter were the order of the day as more than 100 University of Adelaide alumni returned to their alma mater last month to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their 1959 graduation.

Known as the Golden Jubilee reunion, the commemoration ceremony held in Bonython Hall attracted alumni from as far away as the US and Kenya, and from across Australia.

Professor Deane Terrell, who graduated with an Honours degree in Economics and was also the university’s Rhodes Scholar in 1959, gave the Golden Jubilee address. After graduating, Professor Terrell went on to have a distinguished academic career, including being Vice-Chancellor at the Australian National University in Canberra.

“Today is a wonderful opportunity… to meet with fellow graduates of 1959 and to recall the academic, social and sporting adventures and interactions that were such a rewarding part of those times,” Professor Terrell said in his address.

Vice-Chancellor Professor James McWha commended the Golden Jubilee graduates for the distinction and service they had brought to the University and the community over the last 50 years.

“This event also reaffirms that the reputations of universities are largely built on the quality of the graduates they produce – not only at the time of their graduation, but what they go on to achieve, and how they use their education to better the lives of others,” Professor McWha said.

The Golden Jubilee ceremony is held annually and gives University of Adelaide graduates the opportunity to reconnect with friends and places from their time at the University 50 years ago.

Story by Ben Osborne

Top: 1959 Golden Jubilee participants outside Bonython Hall, where they first graduated 50 years ago
Above: Golden Jubilee participant Professor John Mainstone and his great-nephew, 11-year-old Stephen Dowding of Adelaide. Professor Mainstone, who graduated from the University of Adelaide in 1959 with a PhD in Physics, has been custodian of the University of Queensland’s famous pitch drop experiment, the world’s longest running laboratory experiment, since 1961.
Photos by John Hemmings
Called Eco the lizard, the mascot was seen recently as part of the launch of the new Ecoversity sustainability project at the University.

Ecoversity, previously known as Sustainable Adelaide, is an ongoing initiative that aims to learn more about the University’s “resources footprint” and provide best-practice solutions for becoming more sustainable.

The mascot is based on a Pygmy Bluetongue Lizard (*Tiliqua adelaidensis*), which are uniquely local to Adelaide, particularly the mid-North region. Prior to re-discovery in 1992, they were regarded as one of the most seriously endangered of Australia’s reptile species, if not actually extinct.

Since re-discovery, a concerted conservation and recovery effort has seen numbers increase to more stable, albeit still critical, proportions.

“We chose Eco as our mascot because of pygmy bluetongues’ link to the state and because they are excellent bio-indicators.” said the University’s Director, Office of Services and Resources, Jonathan Pheasant.

The principle reason for the species’ rarity is believed to be ploughing of its native grassland habitat. Ploughing permanently alters the vegetation and ground cover and destroys existing spider burrows – the only refuge used by pygmy bluetongues.

Recovery plans have focused on the management of habitat remnants and community awareness and involvement.

“Pygmy bluetongues can sense danger from a long way off, which means Eco is here to help us,” Mr Pheasant said.

“Eco represents our commitment to a more sustainable University. Eco supports all activities aimed at reducing our environmental footprint and risk, and seeks to raise staff and student awareness through participation in and promotion of sustainable ideas.”

Ecoversity was launched last month during a breakfast at the North Terrace Campus as part of national Ride To Work Day.

Around 300 staff and students from the University of Adelaide took part in Ride To Work Day, with as many as 150 attending the breakfast hosted by the University.

“By taking part in national Ride To Work Day, the University is doing its part to raise the profile of the health and environmental benefits of riding bicycles,” said Mr Paul Duldig, Vice President (Services and Resources).

“For some people, this was the first time they had ridden to work. “It’s a great event. It brings people together and gives them an opportunity to understand the positive impact of cycling on individuals, the University and the community.”

Mr Duldig said riding to work was one way of helping the University to reduce its carbon footprint.

“We’re pleased to be supporting the aims of national Ride To Work Day, which align with the University’s own goals of encouraging alternative means of transport.”

To help staff and students prepare for the ride, the University worked with Bicycle SA to hold a series of bike maintenance workshops.

“While it’s important for us to encourage people to ride to the University, we also want to make sure that people understand how they can get their bicycles ‘ride ready’. These workshops have been particularly useful for first-time riders or people who have not ridden a bike for many years.”

Story by David Ellis

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‘Eco’ an indicator of environmental times

The University of Adelaide has a new mascot – for sustainability.

Photo by Brett Sheridan

www.bluerazoo.com
Volunteers needed for salt intake study

Participants are needed for a new study investigating the effects of lowering salt intake on blood vessel function.

PhD researcher Kacie Dickinson says the recommended salt intake for healthy Australians is 6 grams a day, or one teaspoon, but the reality is that most people consume between 8-12 grams a day, leaving them at greater risk of high blood pressure, strokes and heart attacks.

“Processed foods are often loaded with salt and most Australians tend to add salt to their meals on top of this,” said Ms Dickinson, from the University’s Discipline of Physiology and CSIRO Food and Nutritional Sciences.

Ms Dickinson is keen to recruit 60 overweight men and women, aged between 40 and 70 years, for a 12-week study to test the impacts of a low-sodium diet on blood vessels. They should not currently be taking any blood pressure medication.

Participants will follow a salt-reduced diet for six weeks and a normal salt diet for the remaining six weeks, under supervision from a dietician.

Earlier this year, Ms Dickinson and her colleagues from CSIRO and the University’s Centre of Clinical Research Excellence (CCRE) in Nutritional Physiology Interventions and Outcomes published their findings of a previous study, which demonstrated the multiple benefits of salt reduction. The study measured the impact of salt restriction on the endothelium, the thin layer of cells that line the interior of the blood vessels and help regulate blood flow.

“Results of this study published earlier this year show that there are benefits of salt reduction independently of blood pressure,” Ms Dickinson said. “We have known for a long time that lowering salt intake can improve blood pressure but this was the first time it was shown to have a direct effect on blood vessel function.”

In this study, 29 overweight and obese participants with normal blood pressure who restricted their daily salt intake to between 3.5 and 7.5 grams of salt per day showed a 40% improvement in blood flow. The study, published earlier this year in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, warranted further investigation to confirm the findings, she said.

People interested in taking part in this new study or seeking more information should contact Kacie Dickinson on +61 8 8303 8936 or email: kacie.dickinson@csiro.au

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Easier Pills to Swallow

Natural digestive system medicines are emerging with a previously elusive ingredient – evidence.

“Alternative Medicines” have never had a popularity problem. They’re currently used by almost half of all Australian households to treat a vast array of ailments.

But credibility has been in short supply, with robust scientific rationales and evidence of effectiveness typically conspicuous in their absence.

New research at the University of Adelaide, however, is going some way to changing that. A large number of naturally sourced agents known as “bioactives” have been shown to have the potential to improve or, in some cases, supersede conventional pharmaceutical drug therapies for diseases and disorders of the bowel.

In this fascinating presentation, research leader Associate Professor Gordon Howarth will explain how and explore the exciting implications.

**WANT TO KNOW MORE?**

For more information about Coming Events please visit our News and Events website: www.adelaide.edu.au/news