Equity and overcoming disadvantage
Murdoch ethos shines through
Alumni – what’s in a name?

As you may know the traditional names for graduates can be quite confusing:

Alumna – one female graduate
Alumnus – one male graduate
Alumni – a group of graduates, male or male/female
Alumnae – a group of female graduates.

We believe that these terms no longer meet the needs of a modern institution and society and it is time to simplify the way we refer to our graduates.

As such we have decided to adopt the Macquarie Dictionary approved Australian terms in all our publications and communications:

Alumnus – one graduate
Alumni – a group of graduates

We hope you will approve of this change and quickly become used to these non-gendered and simplified terms. As always, we welcome your feedback at alumni@murdoch.edu.au

Connecting
The latest news from alumni around the world.

New facilities for Muslim students
Fundraising starts for a Muslim Cultural Centre.

Meet our new Deputy Vice Chancellors
Two internationally renowned scholars join Murdoch.

Equity, Access and Diversity
A look at the office that provides support and assistance to help students through their university journey.

Investiture of the Vice Chancellor
Professor Richard Higgott is formally sworn in as the University’s eighth Vice Chancellor.

PX2
An innovative program is helping high school students in Rockingham and Kwinana to get to university.

Inprint
We preview some of the books produced by our talented alumni and staff.

Mysterious platypus
A Murdoch researcher is conducting a major study into the threats to wild platypus populations in Tasmania.

Alumni tell their stories
A snapshot of what your fellow alumni are doing now.

Alumni contacts
Here you’ll find the closest alumni chapter to your home.

Keep Intouch!
Help us keep in touch with you by making sure your details are up to date. If you have changed your name, employer or contact details let us know by visiting www.murdoch.edu.au/Alumni/.
Perhaps you’re still in touch with friends from your Murdoch days who’ve lost touch with us? If so you can visit the same address, scroll down and enter your friends’ details too.
From the Vice Chancellor

Since Murdoch’s beginning the values of liberalism, scepticism, social responsibility and a commitment to the enhancement of equity and social justice have been at the core of its values. These are values that our namesake Sir Walter Murdoch symbolised through his teaching and writing. He provided a role model for this university which at its inception no less than The West Australian in editorial (11/7/70) decreed that there should be “no humbug, or pretence and no ready acceptance of convention”.

Murdoch has a long history of programs and initiatives to assist all students with educational disadvantage to achieve their learning goals. The University now boasts a 17 per cent participation rate for students from a low socio-economic status background (against a state figure of 11.5 per cent). Courses which ‘enable’ non traditional students continue to grow as a result of Murdoch offering its key program, OnTrack, at all three Western Australian campuses each semester. Murdoch provides flexible access to a range of degrees and is also undertaking a significant expansion of units and courses offered through Open Universities Australia – which prides itself on overcoming traditional barriers to university.

On a more personal note let me explain these values were of no little consideration in bringing me back to Murdoch after 27 years. I am a kid from a post World War 2, British inner-city council estate. The education system did not intend people like me to go to university, let alone become a Professor and then a Vice Chancellor. I was a member of that very same low SES grouping that Murdoch does so much to help secure a higher education. Like many of our students, I know what a game changer a chance to go to university can be. It is an unequivocal public good. The individual students benefit, as do the community and society at large.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Intouch – there are many stories here which are good examples of equity at work and Murdoch at its best.

Best wishes for 2012.

Professor Richard Higgott
Vice Chancellor

From the Manager – Alumni Relations

Welcome to the first edition of Intouch for 2012. This edition highlights the achievements, courage and generosity of some outstanding alumni. So many of our graduates overcome incredible odds to obtain their degrees and we are proud to bring some of these inspiring stories to you as well as acknowledging the amazing generosity and contribution of alumni who give back to the University and the wider community in so many ways.

We’ll be running our Annual Appeal again this year, in June, and we hope you will support it. Last year’s Appeal inspired two of our graduates to generously donate an ongoing scholarship for Murdoch students in financial difficulty. You can read Daryl and Stefanie’s story on page 14.

I’d like to extend warm congratulations to all our new alumni graduating this year. Welcome to Murdoch’s alumni family. I hope that you will play an active role in your alumni association and I look forward to corresponding with you and hopefully meeting you at our future events.

And speaking of events, look out for many more alumni functions this year, as we launch an exciting calendar of Perth, interstate and international gatherings including literary evenings, reunions and public lectures. Remember to give us your most current email address as all invitations are sent electronically: http://ace.murdoch.edu.au/forms/changeofdetails.html

Nominations for the 2012 Distinguished Alumni Awards are now open and I would encourage you to consider nominating a deserving graduate for these prestigious awards. You’ll find more information on page 14.

Are you part of a large Murdoch ‘family’? Many of our graduates have relatives and colleagues, spouses and children, all of whom are Murdoch alumni. We are holding a competition to find the alumni with the largest number of Murdoch connections and the best stories will be featured in our next edition of Intouch. Find out more on page 6.

Finally, if you haven’t visited the Murdoch news website recently I would urge you all to do so. We are very proud of the important research being conducted by Murdoch academics, postgraduate students and research centres and we think you’ll be amazed and inspired by the stories that go online everyday: http://media.murdoch.edu.au/

Vanessa Fernandez-Kennedy
Manager – Alumni Relations
**Documentary Captures Attempts to Overcome Adversity**

Teacher and filmmaker Chad Peacock's career has taken him all the way to Zambia, where he documented a group of Australian students' attempts to improve life for a poverty-stricken community.

Chad graduated from Murdoch in 2000 with a degree in Marketing and Media.

“I gravitated towards the filmmaking units and really appreciated the knowledge of the staff at Murdoch who had an excellent array of industry experience,” he said.

“My experiences at Murdoch fed into a variety of opportunities that have literally taken me all over the world.

“Ultimately it has led to me teaching Media Studies back here in Perth.”

Chad’s role at Swan Christian College saw him following a group of his students to Zambia, where the group was involved in a school building and feeding project. While there, he was able to document the pitfalls and triumphs of the group, resulting in the recently released documentary Light up ahead.

“I really felt it was an inspirational story that the wider community needed to hear,” Chad said.

“Technically the lack of crew was one of the biggest challenges in making the film.

“This restraint did however have a positive side as I was able to capture many key moments in a very natural way, which otherwise would have been very difficult to do.

“Personally the hardest thing about the shoot was seeing children the same age as my own kids living in really difficult circumstances.”

**Support Group Helps Young Diabetes Sufferers**

Recent Murdoch alumnus Mitchell Coles has been awarded the Pride of Australia Medal in the Youth Leader Category by the Sunday Times for his work establishing the Young Western Australian Insulin Takers Group (YWAIT).

Mitchell formed the group three years ago with fellow Type 1 Diabetes sufferer Rachel Lamb.

“Rachel and I decided that there must be other young people out there who would benefit from this sort of peer support and together we formed YWAIT,” Mitchell said.

“The main aim of YWAIT is to connect young people who have Type 1 Diabetes with others, to share experiences, talk about themselves and the difficulties they face and to be part of a group where they are not the ‘odd one out’.

“YWAIT also aims to raise awareness of Type 1 Diabetes in the community and be involved in alleviating some of the misconceptions that exist about diabetes, particularly confusion between Type 1 and 2 Diabetes.”

In forming YWAIT, Mitchell has not only helped others, he has also found dealing with his own diabetes much easier.

“I know I was very reluctant to talk about my diabetes until Rachel and I formed YWAIT, and I believe that talking about diabetes has helped me tremendously,” Mitchell said.

“It has helped me ‘come out of my shell’ and let me engage with the community in ways I would not have expected five years ago.”

Mitchell has just completed a Bachelor of Science degree with a double major in Criminology and Forensic Biology and Toxicology. He begins his Juris Doctor this year.
Beautiful soul passes

THE CHIROPRACTIC AND MURDOCH ALUMNI COMMUNITY LOST A PROMISING YOUNG MEMBER WHEN 27-YEAR-OLD MURDOCH GRADUATE ALECIA SOFOULIS PASSED AWAY ON DECEMBER 27.

Alecia graduated as a chiropractor in 2009, leaving a strong impression on staff at the School of Chiropractic and Sports Science.

“She was always smiling, always happy,” said Dr Deb Nook, Senior Lecturer in Anatomy.

“She was conscientious, engaged and she wanted to learn.”

Alecia accompanied Deb, Dr Brian Nook and 17 other students to Durban in South Africa in both 2006 and 2008, when groups from the School worked at the Mr Price Pro Ballito surfing competition.

While there, Alecia also travelled with the group to a small township, where she helped treat underprivileged children.

According to Deb, the School and the chiropractic community have been rocked by the loss.

“We’re sad. We’ve just lost a beautiful person, with a beautiful soul,” she said.

Alecia’s employer David Lourie, co-workers and patients are all very upset.

“She’s left a huge hole at the Kelmscott Chiropractic Clinic where she was working in Kelmscott.”

On the day she passed away, Alecia was due to supervise students at the Tom Hoad International Water Polo Championships.

“Because she was involved in a variety of international events there are people from around the world sending their condolences,” Deb said.

Murdoch University Alumni Association

As one of more than 47,000 Murdoch graduates around the world, you are entitled to many professional and personal rewards:

• Career and employment support
• Invitations to events and functions
• Free University library use
• Executive Education Centre Open Programs discounts
• Bookshop discounts
• Free parking privileges on campus
• Discounted room hire on campus
• Sport & Recreation Centre membership discounts
• Hire of Student Village visitors’ flats

For more information visit http://ace.murdoch.edu.au or by telephone +61 8 9360 6668.
Gay marriage campaign goes viral

DIRECTOR STEPHEN MCCALLUM’S WORK HAS MADE IT ONTO MILLIONS OF COMPUTER SCREENS THANKS TO HIS MARRIAGE EQUALITY ADVERT, IT’S TIME, GOING VIRAL.

The ad, produced for advocacy organisation GetUp, became an international sensation, quickly clocking up several million views on YouTube.

“The reaction was really overwhelming,” Stephen said.

“It was so rewarding to have people really connect to the story we were telling.

“A lot of the comments left on YouTube were very humbling with some viewers admitting that they were against same sex marriage initially but the clip had changed their mind.

“It’s very rewarding to help effect change for a cause that I feel is very important.”

Stephen graduated from Murdoch in 2001 with a BA in Media Studies. At the time, becoming a director was still far from his mind.

“As a director now, I’m a firm believer that you need to have a solid grounding in all aspects of production in order for you to communicate what you want practically for a crew and ultimately engage an audience.

“Murdoch gave me a great foundation in this.”

Reaching out and giving back

FOR BILL HAYWARD, THE CHANGE FROM COAL MINER TO CHIROPRACTOR ALLOWED HIM TO GIVE SOMETHING BACK TO HIS PEOPLE.

Bill, a Nyungar man from the South West of Western Australia, graduated from Murdoch University with a Bachelor of Chiropractic in 2009.

“When I was younger I was a sports person, I played a lot of football and I used to get massages a lot,” Bill said.

“I wanted to know more about the body so I started massaging, did a lot of courses in it and ended up massaging at the Sydney Olympics.”

Bill’s massage work spurred him to look into chiropractic as a potential career change.

“I thought ‘well this is an opportunity to change my life’,” he said.

“I hadn’t been to school or done any prior learning, so I had to do a bridging course in chemistry and ended up being accepted.”

Working as a chiropractor has allowed Bill to help the Aboriginal community, who rarely access chiropractic services.

“I wanted to do chiropractic work to help reduce the systemic diseases that Aboriginal people are prone to due to lower socio-circumstances.”

Bill works at Derbal Yerrigan, a community health organisation that delivers health services to Aboriginal people. He also lobbies politically to get chiropractic treatment included as preventative services for Aboriginal health.

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Kharen found herself disillusioned by a thing seen as a bit revolutionary back then.”

“I loved the fact that the campus was life,” she said.

“In the mid 80s Murdoch had such a rich Communications and Cultural Studies. I decided to pursue another degree and chose Murdoch University as it offered Marketing with a mix of Hospitality and Tourism,” Jon said.

“Back then, I knew that upon graduating, the first integrated resorts would then be open and it would present a great opportunity.”

The decision paid off. On graduating, Jon landed a job as Communications Officer at Marina Bay Sands – one of Asia’s leading resort destinations for business, leisure and entertainment.

The role sees Jon in charge of the in-house weekly newsletter, The Journal to Magnificence; the resort’s daily news, Journey News; social networking and other online communications.

“My degree has taken me to a place where I have always wanted to be,” Jon said.

“I am very much pleased, honoured and grateful with where I am today and I can truly say there has never ever been a dull moment.

“My career with Marina Bay Sands offers inimitable experiences which I cherish and enjoy every single day.”

Taking matters into her own hands, she joined with five other Murdoch alumni in creating their own theatre company to stage two plays in Fremantle.

After the company parted ways, Kharen moved to Melbourne, where she now works as a writer, director and performer with Somebody’s Daughter Theatre (SDT), a community theatre company that works with women in, or recently released from prison and disadvantaged young people in regional and rural areas.

With SDT, Kharen works with young people who have been outside of traditional education systems, most for many years, largely because of histories of abuse and trauma.

SDT also works regularly in collaboration with education, health and welfare agencies to establish partnerships using the arts as a driver to break cycles of abuse, addiction and disengagement.

“It took me a few years to understand what being a community artist entailed; the responsibility of that role,” Kharen said.

“Now I wear the title community artist as a badge of honour.”

“Third culture kid realises his career goals

Bringing down walls of difference through art

THE AUSTRALIA COUNCIL RECENTLY RECOGNISED KHAREN HARPER’S DEDICATION TO COMMUNITY THEATRE, AWARDING HER THE $50,000 ROS BOWER AWARD FOR AN OUTSTANDING, LIFELONG CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY ARTS AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.

Kharen graduated from Murdoch University in 1986 with a Bachelor of Communications and Cultural Studies.

“In the mid 80s Murdoch had such a rich cross section of people from all walks of life,” she said.

“I loved the fact that the campus was seen as a bit revolutionary back then.”

However, six months after graduating, Kharen found herself disillusioned by a lack of job prospects.
Alumni members stay fit for less.

Did you know that Alumni Members of Murdoch University can join the The Zone Fitness Centre for $10.50 a week?

**Ezypay Monthly Membership $42.00**

And benefits include:
- Ongoing fitness appraisals.
- Structured programs tailored to your needs.
- Access to all fitness classes.
- Continuous training & nutritional evaluations.

**FREE** drink bottle with every Ezypay Monthly Membership.

The Zone Fitness Centre is located in the Sports Centre, near Carpark 4. Telephone: +61 8 9360 2318.
**Muslim Cultural Centre Planned**

FUNDRAISING HAS STARTED TO BUILD A MUSLIM CULTURAL CENTRE, ON THE SOUTH STREET CAMPUS.

The Centre will provide the University’s growing population of Muslim students and staff with worship facilities as well as space for social gatherings and cultural exchange.

The entire cost of the project – estimated at $6 million – will be covered by donations.

Project leader, Professor David Macey, said the idea for the Centre came from the Murdoch University Muslim Students’ Association (MUMSA), which works to promote better understanding of Islam as a way of life.

“The University opened a multi-faith Worship Centre in 1996 which has served the needs of all faith groups well,” said Professor Macey.

“However, the number of Muslim students has increased significantly. It’s estimated we have around 400 Muslim students and staff members currently and that number is expected to continue to rise in the future.

“MUMSA has been in discussion with the University for some time about how we can cater for that growing population and we are delighted that this project has now been launched.”

Honoured by the President of Kenya

Professor Samuel Makinda, Professor of Politics and International Studies and the Chair of Security, Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Studies at Murdoch, has been awarded the Medal of Elder of the Order of the Burning Spear (EBS) by Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki.

The honour is one of the highest civilian service awards granted by the President during Jamhuri (independence) Day celebrations each year in recognition of individuals’ outstanding contribution and distinguished services to the country.

Professor Makinda received the award for his exemplary contribution to the country’s education, international relations and communication.

A former editor of the Daily Nation, Professor Makinda writes a weekly column in the Nairobi-based Business Daily. He participated in the establishment of the Kenyan National Defence College in the mid-1990s and in the creation of Kenya’s Foreign Service Institute in 2007. In 2001, he was appointed the Distinguished Lecturer for the United Nations (UN) University’s Institute for Natural Resources in Africa and the UN Environment Programme.

He said: “I am delighted that President Mwai Kibaki has recognised my work as an academic, a public policy analyst and a community worker.

“While I am unable to identify any particular project or activity that might have fascinated President Kibaki, I believe he took into account my role as a public intellectual.

“For this reason, I share this award with my students and colleagues at Murdoch and elsewhere; some Australian and Kenyan government agencies that have often sought my perspectives on a range of issues; members of the Kenyan community in Western Australia for whom I am the patron; as well as the Australian and Kenyan media that have always given me opportunities to express my views.”

Professor Makinda is a member of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific and served on the Australian Foreign Minister’s National Consultative Committee for International Security Issues between 2001 and 2008. He has research experience in the areas of democracy and global governance, the UN and peacekeeping, transnational terrorism, and security in Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

Associate Professor Andrew Webster, Dean of the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, said: “Professor Makinda’s award by the Kenyan President is an acknowledgement of the great impact of his work on Kenyan society and its policies.”

For more information or to donate to the appeal contact Diana Duff on +61 8 9360 6716 or Peter Elliott on +61 8 9360 6749.
Supporting our Indigenous students

DEBORAH GRAHAM HAS ACHIEVED FAR MORE THAN SHE EVER THOUGHT WAS POSSIBLE.

The Indigenous mother-of-three has just graduated from Murdoch with a Bachelor of Nursing and has embarked on a postgraduate placement with Silver Chain Nursing.

Deborah, who graduated from high school in 1985, completed the Koort Mooditj: Pre-Nursing for Indigenous Students program and gained immediate entrance into a Bachelor of Nursing course. She also achieved high distinctions in the Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre’s Tertiary Entrance Course.

“The decision to study at university changed my outlook and was a huge turning point in my life,” Deborah said.

“While it’s been great, the biggest challenge I faced was balancing a family with my studies.

“I have three teenage children who have given me support and encouragement. But ultimately, time management has been the key to my success.”

When lectures clashed with family commitments, Deborah relied on Murdoch’s online lecture system, Lectopia. She also benefited from a host of equipment and other resources for use by students at the Peel Campus, and was the recipient of two scholarships provided to mature-age, Indigenous students. The scholarships helped her buy vital equipment for her nursing degree.

At Silver Chain Nursing Deborah is completing the company’s postgraduate qualification, which is a 12-month employment program for graduates.

“I’ve been able to select which areas of Silver Chain I want to work in,” Deborah said.

“So far I’ve worked in the clinical department where I make up to 15 home visits a day and provide wound care and other nursing assistance. I’ve also worked in palliative care, a program aimed at making clients more independent and worked with the liaison nurse at Fremantle Hospital who acts as a link between the client and the nurse.”

Deborah encourages other Indigenous people to not think twice about studying at university.

“Don’t hold back. A university degree gives you good grounding for your future employment and if you go into nursing you’ll never be unemployed because there are plenty of jobs.”

The Koort Mooditj: Pre-Nursing for Indigenous Students program is no longer offered by the University but there are now alternative entry pathways through the K-Track and OnTrack courses run by the Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre. The Centre plays a vital role in assisting the University to meet its commitment to the education of Indigenous people.

$1 million plus donation for infectious diseases

MURDOCH UNIVERSITY HAS CELEBRATED ITS LARGEST-EVER SINGLE PERSONAL DONATION – MORE THAN $1.3 MILLION WORTH OF SHARES. THIS WAS THE SECOND DONATION THAT FORTESCUE METALS GROUP CHAIRMAN ANDREW FORREST AND HIS WIFE, AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN’S TRUST DIRECTOR NICOLA FORREST, HAVE MADE TO THE UNIVERSITY.

The Forrests’ generosity recognises the outstanding work of Professor Simon Mallal and the specialist team at the University’s Institute for Immunology and Infectious Diseases (IIID) and contributes towards the goal of bringing clinical and research efforts together.

Infectious diseases kill over 17 million people each year (50,000 men, women and children each day) and represent one of the greatest threats to humanity. Through the assistance of 35 global partnerships, IIID’s team of 40 specialists is working to develop a personalised medicine approach to tackle existing and future infectious diseases. The team’s work has been widely recognised, notably with multi-million dollar support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Murdoch Vice Chancellor Professor Richard Higgott said: “The Forrests’ donation is an excellent example of the increasingly necessary partnership between research and philanthropy and I would like to thank Andrew and Nicola Forrest for their generosity and support of this far-reaching initiative.”

For more information about the work of the Institute, go to www.iiid.murdoch.edu.au.
Respected scholars join Murdoch

TWO INTERNATIONALLY-RENOVED SCHOLARS HAVE JOINED MURDOCH IN SENIOR ROLES.

Professor David Morrison has been appointed Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research), while Professor Ann Capling is the University’s new Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education).

Professor Morrison was formerly Winthrop Professor and Head of the School of Psychology at the University of Western Australia. He previously had appointments at the University of Queensland and the University of Wales, and lectured at Murdoch in his early career.

He said: “There are many research strengths at Murdoch but, like all universities, there are areas that could and should do better. I am looking forward to making the most of Murdoch’s natural advantages as well as developing organisational structures to further encourage and support research to take productivity and quality to new levels.”

Professor Capling joined Murdoch from the University of Melbourne where she was Professor of Political Science. She previously worked at Australian National University, Monash University and the University of Calgary.

She said she was impressed by the quality of Murdoch’s teaching, its innovative approach to curriculum and delivery and its emphasis on student-centred learning. “Particularly impressive is Murdoch’s genuine commitment to equity and social justice, as evident in its broad range of programs to encourage and support students from under-represented groups to aspire to a university education,” she said.

Vice Chancellor Professor Richard Higgott said: “Professors Capling and Morrison are not only very well and appropriately experienced for the portfolios they will occupy; they are both also significant scholars with outstanding international reputations.

“Theyir decision to join Murdoch is testament to the vibrancy of the institution.”

Voice for equity retires

GERRI BOX IS A WELL-KNOWN AND MUCH-LOVED FACE AT MURDOCH UNIVERSITY.

Now, after 16 years with the University, the Manager of Equity, Access and Diversity has recently retired.

Gerri joined Murdoch in 1995 as an Equity Projects Officer. Four years prior to that she was a mature-age student, granted entry on the basis of her professional background as a Registered Nurse.

After 23 years in nursing, Gerri had decided it was time for a change in direction, but her work with the needy would still shape her future career.

“Just prior to commencing as a student I was a Community Nurse with the WA Health Department, working in Priority Schools with recently arrived refugee children,” Gerri said.

“It was really rewarding work which provided me with a privileged view of the lives and settlement issues for these children and their parents.

“That was something which possibly influenced my study choices when I did come to Murdoch and enrolled in Southeast Asian Studies and Women’s Studies.”

Looking back over her time at Murdoch, Gerri is proud of her involvement with UniQuest and then the establishment and development of the UniAccess Program, both of which assisted people into undergraduate study when other pathways were closed to them.

“These two programs had high numbers of ‘mature-age’ students; people who had found their schooling unfathomable or excluding but who, when they were a little older, could see that a university education was something they desired,” Gerri said.

She went on to establish the Ally Program, ensuring that there are trained staff and students who can provide support to students or staff who are lesbian, gay, trans or bi.

Another key achievement has been her involvement with the network of First Year Advisors at Murdoch, helping them work and support one another as a team.

- Feature, pages 12–13
Lending a helping hand

UNIVERSITY LIFE CAN BE TAXING AT THE BEST OF TIMES, AND STUDENTS WITH COMPLEX PERSONAL BACKGROUNDS, DISABILITIES OR OTHER CHALLENGING PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES CAN BE OVERWHELMED BY THE DEMANDS OF THEIR STUDIES.

Others may encounter bullying, harassment or discrimination based on their race, age, gender, sexuality, religious or political convictions, mental health, appearance or background.

But the Equity, Access and Diversity office is always there to help. It provides much needed support for students from every conceivable background, upholding their rights to equal treatment and helping them get the most out of their university experience.

According to recently retired Manager Equity, Access and Diversity Gerri Box, the job can be challenging, but ultimately it is rewarding.

“Universities are complex organisms, set up for educating large groups of people and also providing intense research environments for a smaller few,” Gerri said.

“However, within the matrix can develop a challenging environment, one which inspires individuals to change direction, or take another path previously unknown to them.”
“For me, these are the moments most precious; to see a student make that connection or change based on thought, consideration, research and conversation irrespective or sometimes despite their lived experience – marvellous!”

For Gerri, one of the most rewarding elements of the job is seeing a student at graduation and knowing some of the obstacles they have encountered along the way. “Seeing students complete their university journey, watching them meet their demons, challenge them and then move on past them, is fantastic.”

Nursing student Sarah has encountered her own obstacles since starting university in 2010. Sarah lives with a mental illness that can mean stressful situations can be difficult to handle.

“I did not suffer from exam stress, rather the crowd noise before exams was hard to take,” she said.

“Right from the first meeting with Equity they showed kindness, understanding and a willingness to help with every aspect of study.

“They even suggested things that I had not thought of that would make my study time at uni so much easier.”

These suggestions included organising lecture notes early, forming a study group with friends who could support her and transferring to part time study to ease the pressure.

“I initially did not know about the Equity team – I found out through my first year advisor that they existed,” Sarah said.

“Now I have recommended a couple of students to them who are in similar situations as me.”

Another person who has found support in Murdoch’s Equity services is mature student Nancy.

As a student with a family, returning to university to study Legal Studies was a dream come true, and a major step towards fulfilling a lifelong goal.

That excitement was overshadowed by a violent marriage that threatened to derail Nancy’s studies and her family’s wellbeing.

“My health suffered, and I struggled in my first year at university,” Nancy said.

“I was too ashamed to seek the help that was available at university for fear I would be pitied or, worse still, kicked out, and my grades suffered as a result.”

One day, Nancy decided to take back control of her life, and seek help.

“It wasn’t easy, as I didn’t know who I could trust or who I could talk to,” she said.

“All through this experience I thought ‘what the hell – I am an intelligent person, with many accomplishments and a brain that still works between my ears; the only person stopping me achieving my goal is me.’

“I was encouraged by the understanding and genuine help shown and extended to me by Equity, the counselling team and Study Skills Plus, who I can honestly say helped me overcome one of the toughest challenges of my life.

“My confidence and self esteem have been restored and I am now back on track and continuing on my journey.”

Recent Law and Psychology graduate Phillip attributes much of his success to the assistance and understanding of the Equity team.

Living with a serious depressive illness, schooling was difficult for Phillip, and attending university seemed impossible.

“During high school, staff routinely told me that I was not smart enough to go to university, and to set more ‘realistic’ goals,” he said.

Despite his depression, Phillip repeated year 12 at Canning College, sat his TEE exams as a private candidate and applied for the Tertiary Options Project at Murdoch, which saw him accepted into Legal Studies.

Transferring from Legal Studies to Law and Psychology was difficult for Phillip, but with the assistance of the Equity office, he persevered.

“For me, these are the moments most precious; to see a student make that connection or change based on thought, consideration, research and conversation irrespective or sometimes despite their lived experience – marvellous!”

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As a student with a family, returning to university to study Legal Studies was a dream come true, and a major step towards fulfilling a lifelong goal.

That excitement was overshadowed by a violent marriage that threatened to derail Nancy’s studies and her family’s wellbeing.

“My health suffered, and I struggled in my first year at university,” Nancy said.

“I was too ashamed to seek the help that was available at university for fear I would be pitied or, worse still, kicked out, and my grades suffered as a result.”

One day, Nancy decided to take back control of her life, and seek help.

“It wasn’t easy, as I didn’t know who I could trust or who I could talk to,” she said.

“All through this experience I thought ‘what the hell – I am an intelligent person, with many accomplishments and a brain that still works between my ears; the only person stopping me achieving my goal is me.’

“I was encouraged by the understanding and genuine help shown and extended to me by Equity, the counselling team and Study Skills Plus, who I can honestly say helped me overcome one of the toughest challenges of my life.

“My confidence and self esteem have been restored and I am now back on track and continuing on my journey.”

Recent Law and Psychology graduate Phillip attributes much of his success to the assistance and understanding of the Equity team.

Living with a serious depressive illness, schooling was difficult for Phillip, and attending university seemed impossible.

“During high school, staff routinely told me that I was not smart enough to go to university, and to set more ‘realistic’ goals,” he said.

Despite his depression, Phillip repeated year 12 at Canning College, sat his TEE exams as a private candidate and applied for the Tertiary Options Project at Murdoch, which saw him accepted into Legal Studies.

Transferring from Legal Studies to Law and Psychology was difficult for Phillip, but with the assistance of the Equity office, he persevered.

“Now, only a few years later I’ve graduated with an LLB, BAPsych, have a job at a law firm where I’m managing 114 files, and am at the College of Law studying a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice so I can be admitted as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Western Australia,” he said.

“Murdoch’s Equity, Access and Diversity office has helped me in countless ways.

“Without them, I would never have been able to complete these degrees. Just the support – that goes a hell of a long way to making it possible to achieve your dreams.

“They believed in me when nobody else did. They believed that I was smart enough to learn law and psychology and they believed that I ought to be given a chance to show what I can do.”

While Equity, Access and Diversity is a crucial facet of many universities, for Gerri the key difference at Murdoch is its “community conscience”.

“The critical mass of ideals, genuine caring, and critique of injustice, established from its beginning, remains a strong element in Murdoch’s essence as an equitable place of learning,” she said.

However, according to Gerri, one of the key challenges the office faces is “getting the balance right”.

“The challenge is ensuring access and building capacity within students irrespective of their backgrounds to ensure they can participate fully in all aspects of university life,” she said.
Giving back to Murdoch

IN MID-2011, DARYL CHAN AND STEFANIE LEONG RECEIVED OUR ALUMNI ANNUAL APPEAL REQUEST. THEY ARE BOTH GRADUATES OF THE UNIVERSITY AND WERE CONVINCED THAT THEY COULD OFFER SOME FORM OF LASTING ASSISTANCE TO CURRENT STUDENTS. NOT LONG AFTER, THE DARYL-STEFANIE SCHOLARSHIP WAS ESTABLISHED. THE SCHOLARSHIP IS VALUED AT $2,500 AND IS AVAILABLE TO HIGH ACHIEVING STUDENTS IN THEIR THIRD, FOURTH OR FIFTH YEARS OF STUDY WHO HAVE SUFFERED RECENT FINANCIAL HARDSHIP.

DARYL AND STEFANIE TOLD INTOUCH WHY THEY DECIDED TO SET UP THE SCHOLARSHIP.

To learn more about the Daryl-Stefanie Scholarship visit http://jour.murdoch.edu.au/Student-life/Finances/Undergrad-scholarships/Daryl-Stefanie-Scholarship/.


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**Daryt:** “I did my Bachelors and Masters Degrees at Murdoch University between 1998 and 2001. Immediately after, I returned to Singapore to complete my National Service. I have fond memories of my life at University a decade ago. The time spent there was one of the more important and memorable phases in my life. You are learning in a fun and friendly environment – an environment where you can make mistakes and learn from them…when you are in the real world, it is not as forgiving. Even then, real world problems have a way of emerging and affecting us at any time in our lives.

“I encountered my fair share of difficulties while studying and often had to find innovative ways to extend my living allowance including buying and fixing old cars to supplement my income! Today, as a business owner, I know that there are ups and downs in life and events that are totally beyond our control.”

**Stefanie:** “I moved to Perth in 2000 after having spent over a decade in the UK where I completed my secondary education in Kent and undergraduate studies at the University of Oxford. I embarked on my second Masters Degree at Murdoch and upon completion of the course, stayed on to teach postgraduate students for a few trimesters. This brief stint in teaching convinced me that my true calling was in education. Ten years on, I have chosen to remain in the education industry and am delighted that I can still contribute in this area.

“We are both advocates of life-long learning and believe it is tragic for any student to be forced to give up their studies mid-way. As former students of Murdoch University, we have had first-hand experience with the journey that every Murdoch student goes through. Everyone has a different story and some will encounter misfortune and find themselves in a position where they feel they have to give up that journey. We have witnessed classmates drop out of university because of financial difficulties. What saddens us is when people give up without a fight. There is a solution to every problem; we just have to try a little harder.

The Daryl-Stefanie Scholarship was established by us as a token of hope for those who find themselves in difficult financial circumstances but have chosen not to give up.”

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**2012 Distinguished Alumni Awards**

AFTER 38 YEARS AS A LEADING EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION MURDOCH UNIVERSITY HAS A WEALTH OF INCREDIBLE GRADUATES. FROM LEADERS IN POLITICS, BUSINESS AND RESEARCH TO ALUMNI WORKING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT OR AT THE COALFACE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, OUR GRADUATES ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

The Murdoch University Distinguished Alumni Awards have been established to recognise outstanding professional and community service and achievements by Murdoch University alumni. These four prestigious awards acknowledge the diversity and quality of the contributions our alumni make to the enrichment of our society.

**NOMINATIONS**

Nominations are now open and may be made by any member of the wider community who feel that a Murdoch graduate is deserving of this award in accordance with the selection criteria. Self-nominations are encouraged.

**AWARD CATEGORIES**

- Distinguished Alumni – Arts, Education and Humanities
- Distinguished Alumni – Health Sciences
- Distinguished Alumni – Law, Business and Information Technology
- Distinguished Alumni – Science and Engineering

**ELIGIBILITY**

All graduates of Murdoch University are eligible for nomination.

**SELECTION CRITERIA**

Nominees must have made an outstanding contribution in one or more of the following areas:

(i) the community  
(ii) Murdoch University  
(iii) their chosen field

All nominations will be assessed against the core values of Murdoch University:

- Equity and Social Justice  
- Sustainability  
- Global Responsibility  
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship

**NOMINATIONS FOR ALL AWARDS**

Nominations must be made on the official nomination form, with appropriate supporting materials attached. The nomination form is available online at http://www.murdoch.edu.au/Distinguished-Alumni-Awards

Nominations can be made online, faxed to +61 8 9310 2676 or posted to:

Distinguished Alumni Award Nominations  
Alumni Relations Office  
Murdoch University  
South Street  
Murdoch Western Australia 6150

**CLOSING DATE FOR RECEIPT OF NOMINATIONS: 5PM (AEST)**

Friday March 30, 2012.

For further information telephone +61 8 9360 6144 or email Ian Exeter: i.exeter@murdoch.edu.au.
The ceremony was officiated by His Excellency Mr Malcolm McCusker AO QC, Governor of Western Australia.

Mr McCusker said: “The selection and appointment of a new Vice Chancellor is a highly significant step for any university. The VC carries a very heavy responsibility: to show leadership, to guide, to inspire, to listen to the staff and students and to seek and obtain funding.

“To find such a paragon is not easy but we believe we have found it in Richard Higgott. He has had an extraordinary and dazzling career and has a pre-eminent record of scholarship and research.”

Immediately prior to joining Murdoch Professor Higgott was Pro Vice Chancellor for Research at the University of Warwick in the UK, and a Winthrop Professor at the University of Western Australia.

In his investiture address, Professor Higgott spoke of the need for universities to practise shared governance.

“In the best universities everyone works ultimately to support the core educational mission of the institution – teaching and research,” he said.
A STORY TO TELL

IN HER SERIES OF ARTWORKS TITLED A STORY TO TELL, LAUREL NANNUP CONVEYS HER CHILDHOOD STORIES THROUGH WOODCUT, ETCHING AND PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINT MEDIUMS.

Laurel is an Indigenous Nyungar woman, born in 1943 in Carrolup, Western Australia. At the age of eight, the Native Welfare Department forcibly removed Laurel, her sister and her cousin from their families in the Pinjarra region to live and work at the Wandering Mission until they were old enough to work on farms in the area.

Laurel’s artwork is a reflection of her life, both with her family and her years spent at the mission. These stories are told with honesty and affectionate humour and build up a unique picture of the reality of life for many Indigenous people of her generation. Laurel is pictured here in front of one of her works, Lolly Tree, (woodcut with collage 2001) which depicts the following story, in Laurel’s own words:

Our Uncle, Lionel Hart, one day took his nieces and nephews out bush, for a ride in the cart. When they got to a certain tree, it was loaded with all these lollies with pretty wrappings on them. They thought it was just wonderful that their Uncle should find this lolly tree, and they did not know that he had gone out to the bush earlier to tie the lollies on the tree.

Earlier this year Murdoch University was fortunate enough to acquire seven of Laurel’s prints for its Indigenous art collection through a generous purchase by patron and former Art Board member Jenny Mills.

Mark Stewart
Murdoch University Art Curator

Innovative program the first step to success

MURDOCH UNIVERSITY IS INVESTING $5 MILLION TO HELP STUDENTS WHO HAVEN’T TRADITIONALLY CONSIDERED TERTIARY EDUCATION TO GET INTO UNIVERSITY AND SUCCEED ONCE THEY ARE THERE.

The innovative Px2 program is the first step on the path to university success for 4500 high school students from the Rockingham and Kwinana regions in Western Australia.

Marian Kemp, Murdoch’s Director of Student Life and Learning, said: “Murdoch has a holistic, student-centred approach to teaching and learning that encourages students from diverse backgrounds and provides opportunities for a broad range of students to enter university, not just high achieving school leavers.”

“The once at Murdoch, students have access to strong support networks and outstanding academic staff who are able to help students achieve their goal of a university degree.”

The Px2 program will provide the students with practical, down-to-earth tools to increase their self-confidence and help them achieve their full potential.

The program offers students the chance to spend some time on Murdoch’s campuses, as well as activities in their own classrooms. Sessions will be led by Murdoch and high school staff.

It aims to raise the aspirations of students and give them the self-confidence to achieve their full potential. This is done through the use of tools relating to factors such as goal-setting, accountability, communications, self-esteem and motivation.

“Part of the program is about how we tend to listen to the one negative thing said about us, rather than the nine positive things said. Turning this around, students can clear some of the imaginary roadblocks they may have placed in front of achieving the success they deserve,” Dr Kemp said.

The Px2 program is backed by the City of Rockingham, Town of Kwinana and the not-for-profit organisation Bridging The Gap. It is part of a long-term strategy supported by the Australian Federal Government to increase the proportion of students going to university from under-represented regions.
New vet surgery opened by local MP

The Commonwealth Government contributed about $3 million to the cost of the building with the remainder coming from the University with support from the Murdoch University Veterinary Trust.

Professor David Hampson, Dean of the School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences, said the building was a vital addition to the Murdoch campus, replacing a facility which was no longer adequate for the demands of teaching veterinary science.

“The enrolment of veterinary students is continuing to grow in order to meet the demand for qualified veterinarians, and professional standards are constantly improving,” said Prof Hampson.

“Already the new building has made a huge improvement to the medical and surgical training of veterinary students.

“It means we can teach a larger number of students in a positive teaching environment with adequate space and the latest equipment.”

The Veterinary School at Murdoch University is regarded as being a leader in veterinary education and research in Australia, with its graduates also being accredited to practice in North America and Europe.

Ms Parke represented the Minister for Tertiary Education, Senator Chris Evans, at the official opening of the facility and was impressed by the building’s sustainable design.

“It uses recycled and recyclable materials like steel, copper and aluminium,” Ms Parke said.

“The building fabric has high levels of thermal insulation, while the heating ventilation and air conditioning system can be shut off in rooms not in use.

“This is a great example of sustainable architecture which will serve the University well for many years.”

The facility was designed by architectural practice Hames Sharley and built by Pyramid Constructions WA.
A SEARCH FOR TRUE AUSTRALIA

MURDOCH ARTS GRADUATE CAMPBELL JEFFERYS (BA HISTORY 1998) THINKS OF HIMSELF MORE AS A STORYTELLER THAN A WRITER.

His desire to tell a story about the true history of Australia, and to change Australian stereotypes for the better, has resulted in the release of his third novel. Published by Ripples Books in October 2011, True Blue Tucker follows the path of two Australian men in their early twenties who are searching for answers to the question of what it means to be Australian.

Their journey takes them to Australia’s north-west, Canada’s ski hills, London’s damp streets and bars in Munich. Along the way they learn about themselves, their country, and what people from around the globe think of Australians.

“The story is about friendship and identity, and about stepping outside something to look at it differently,” Mr Jefferys said.

True Blue Tucker took Mr Jefferys five years to write. He wrote most of the book in Hamburg, where he has lived for eight years, but he also worked on it while he was the writer in residence at the Peter Cowan Writers’ Centre in Joondalup in December 2008.

He is now working on two book projects – a corporate spy thriller and a novel detailing the impact of technology on people’s lives.

PENNELED TO EVOKE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS

A BOOK WRITTEN BY A MURDOCH ARTS AND SCIENCE GRADUATE IS BEING CONSIDERED FOR USE AS A RESOURCE BOOK FOR UNIVERSITY AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ACROSS AUSTRALIA.

Sustainable Development and Environmental Issues (examined through selected essays, questions and answers) was written by Jack Singh, a consultant in environmental law, planning and development, sustainable development and environmental economics for the past 30 years.

The book took Mr Singh (BA History 2003, BSc Sustainable Development 2004) a year to compile and was published by Prestige Books in November 2011.

Mr Singh, who lives in Sydney and has a Master of Environmental Law from Sydney University, said his inspiration for writing the book was to diffuse to others his many years of working knowledge.

He said he avoided using technical and complex scientific and legal terms in the book so it would appeal to a spectrum of readers, including students, environmentalists, business and science-based communities, and legal and ecotourism organisations.

“By reading my book, which is well referenced, I hope readers will pursue their interests in sustainable development and other environmental issues, and develop a conscious environmental culture of their own,” he said.
A STORY OF FORTUNE, FAITH, LOVE AND BETRAYAL

AN INTRIGUING TALE BASED ON HER FAMILY’S RICH HISTORY IN MELBOURNE AT THE TIME OF THE VICTORIAN GOLD RUSH IS RECEIVING A MORE HEART-WARMING RESPONSE THAN AUTHOR TANGEA TANSEY THOUGHT POSSIBLE.

A Break in the Chain – The Early Kozminskys is the first novel by Dr Tansley, who has a PhD in comparative literature (2005) from Murdoch.

Dr Tansley said the book had evolved over a period of about 10 years in three different houses.

“The writing process went through a succession of phases – initial shock at the revelation of a family secret, astonishment, curiosity, and the realisation that not only did I have a new set of ancestors, but that I also had a good story,” she said.


“His eldest son forsook the making of money for science, astrology and esoteric beliefs, and to the family’s added consternation fell in love with an Irish woman and married out of the Jewish faith,” Dr Tansley said. “It is a story of misunderstanding and a lack of real forgiveness.”

Dr Tansley lives in Salter Point and is working on her next novel.

EXHAUSTING SCHEDULE PRODUCES SUPER-FAST BOOK

PULLING TOGETHER A BOOK IN A LITTLE OVER FOUR WEEKS WAS THE HERCULEAN TASK UNDERTAKEN BY ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR TERENCE LEE (BA COMMUNICATION AND CULTURAL STUDIES (HONS) 1997) FROM THE SCHOOL OF MEDIA COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE AFTER THE SINGAPOREAN ELECTION IN MAY 2011.

He estimates to have lost one full week’s worth of sleep over a three week period while writing and co-editing Voting In Change: Politics of Singapore’s 2011 General Election which was launched in Singapore on June 11.

Professor Lee and his co-editor Kevin YL Tan from the National University of Singapore began working on the book as the campaign for the May 7 election was hotting up, pulling together contributions from political observers and analysts in Singapore so that the book could be published as soon after the election as possible.

“The thrill of covering such a watershed event kept me going over the countless nights,” said Professor Lee.

“But I wouldn’t recommend doing this again as it has a bearing on one’s sanity and health!”

The election was particularly significant because it was the first ever to evidence a significant appetite for change among Singaporean voters, explained Professor Lee.

Although the result was an overwhelming victory for the ruling PAP party, one of the opposition parties won six seats, an unprecedented amount.

RESEARCH REPOSITORY PROVES A VALUABLE TOOL

THERE ARE MORE THAN 6000 ITEMS OF RESEARCH FROM VARIOUS FIELDS OF STUDY IN THE MURDOCH RESEARCH REPOSITORY, WITH 2500 AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD.

The Repository is an open access, digital collection of research written by University staff and students.

Publications in the Repository include journal articles, conference papers, book chapters and theses. Some of the research dates back to the late 1970s.

“The Repository is part of the open access movement which aims to collect, preserve and make available as much research online as possible,” Coordinator Joanne Richards said.

“It offers easy access to research that can sometimes be difficult to find, such as conference papers, student theses and popular reports by research centres affiliated with the University.”

Herself a Murdoch graduate, Joanne (BSc (Hons)1999) said the Repository was a valuable tool for former Murdoch students as it could help boost their professional and research profiles.

She said graduates and researchers applying for grants who had items in the Repository could include a link to it in their CVs.

More than 700 items a day are currently being downloaded by researchers and students from around the world.

For more information on the Research Repository email Joanne at repository@murdoch.edu.au or call +61 8 9360 1456. The Repository can be accessed at http://researchrepository.murdoch.edu.au/.
ICONIC WA TREES THREATENED BY DISEASE AND DROUGHT

MURDOCH UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS ARE WARNING THAT THE BEAUTIFUL AND ICONIC TREES OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA’S SOUTH WEST – A BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOT – ARE BEING THREATENED BY DISEASE AND DROUGHT.

Professor Giles Hardy, director of the Centre of Excellence for Climate Change, Woodland and Forest Health, says thousands of beautiful Marri trees in the wineries region around Margaret River are dying or already dead from a devastating form of tree cancer, known as Marri canker.

Professor Hardy and Dr George Matusick, also from the Centre, have identified that large areas of the Northern Jarrah Forest from the Perth Hills to Collie have suddenly collapsed and died from drought.

Wandoo, Tuart, WA Peppermint and the Red Gum have also shown severe recent declines, with some of the dead trees estimated to be at least 150 to 200 years old.

The recent devastating bush fires in the South West have also taken a toll on the trees and the species which depend on the habitat.

The Marri canker epidemic is severely impacting more than 80 per cent of all Marri trees along Caves Road, the Bussell Highway and the adjoining roads in an area heavily reliant on tourism.

“Marri is an iconic tree species in Western Australia but this cancer is destroying them and therefore the character and beauty of our famous Margaret River wine region is suffering,” said Professor Hardy.

“Currently the Marri canker is not completely understood and there are no known solutions. We are running out of time to find them.

“The deaths are impacting on flora and fauna biodiversity in the region. For example, the Carnaby’s Black Cockatoo relies on the Marri’s large fruit, known as honky nuts, for food.

“Collapsing trees with falling branches also pose a significant hazard for pedestrians and drivers.”

Professor Hardy and Dr Matusick hope to obtain funds from the Australian Research Council to research the cancer and other threatened trees.
Unravelling the mysteries of the platypus

It may be an Australian icon and feature on the 20 cent piece but there is a lot about the platypus which still remains a mystery.

Murdoch University alumnus James Macgregor (Masters of Veterinary Science in Conservation Medicine 2009) is hoping to rectify this with a major study into the threats to wild platypus populations in Tasmania, Australia.

James’ aim is to develop a comprehensive framework for researchers to use to properly assess the health of platypus populations all over Australia.

Working as part of Murdoch’s School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences’ Conservation Medicine Program, he will be hoping to address several key gaps of knowledge about the health of platypuses including the causes of mortality, locations of breeding sites and the relationship between environmental factors and health.

Mr Macgregor and a team of volunteers, including his wife Megan, are currently carrying out fieldwork in the Inglis River catchment in north-west Tasmania where they plan to capture and microchip around 100 of the semi-aquatic mammals.

“We are aiming to provide new information on normal platypus health as well as the factors which lead to sickness and death in the creatures,” said James, who is based in Tasmania.

“We’ll be monitoring the movements of the platypuses we’ve microchipped via antennae we’ll be planting in their habitat. And ultrasound examinations of platypuses should give us insights into which locations are preferred by platypuses for breeding.

“Hopefully the framework we develop will become a vital tool for monitoring platypus populations so that we can ensure the future of this extraordinary animal in its natural habitat.”

As part of the proposed framework, James will be developing new ultrasound techniques to assess the reproductive health of the animals. He’ll also be using remote microchip readers to detect platypuses microchipped in previous studies to help with investigations into their longevity.

In 2013, the general public will be enlisted to help with the study. James will carry out a survey of their sightings over the course of six months to help measure population density.

His project is being conducted in collaboration with the University of Tasmania, Charles Sturt University, the University of Sydney, the Tasmanian Forest Practices Authority and Diagnostic Veterinary Imaging in Bentley, Western Australia.

It is being funded by Caring For Our Country Community Action Grant, Central North Field Naturalists, Holsworth Wildlife Research Endowment, Cradle Coast Natural Resource Management, Tasmanian Alkaloids, The Forestry Practices Authority, Edward Alexander Weston and Iris Evelyn Fernie Research Fund (or Weston Fernie Research Fund).
Karen Thompson  
(BA Commerce, 2005)  
I’m back at Murdoch! I studied as a mature age student. Prior to going to university I’d worked in HR, recruitment, sales and administration. I combined my previously gained skills with what I learnt in my degree and worked for four years for an international recruitment firm, specialising in marketing and creative industries. I joined Murdoch University in April 2010 when the Executive Education Centre was established. I’m Manager – Open Programs, Workshops and Events which means I work closely with the Program Manager and Operations Manager organising management and leadership programs for private, government and not-for-profit organisations and I utilise my marketing skills in building the client base, communicating with clients and getting participants to register for programs.

Eduard Bitao  
(MSc Information Technology, 1997)  
I graduated from Murdoch while working with BHP Billiton as an Information Management Analyst. The wind changed for me and I bought a franchise repairing car scratches (What Scratch?) covering the Victoria Park area, which had nothing to do with my educational background, suffice to say. I then knocked my head against a brick wall for a while before returning to IT with Karara Mining as a Knowledge Management Coordinator. I have employed someone to do the What Scratch repair franchise whilst still managing it in a day-to-day capacity.

Melané White  
(BA Sociology, 2003)  
I am now back at Murdoch studying my Masters in Community Development. I am currently employed as a Community Diversity Officer at WA Police and prior to that worked at the Equal Opportunity Commission after doing a few years in the ‘bush’ developing engagement strategies with at risk young people.

Sarah Glenister  
(BPsych, 1987)  
After graduating from Murdoch I completed a Grad Dip Education in Guidance & Counselling at UWA. I worked in the Adult Education sector at various TAFE sites as a psychologist and also at Adult Migrant Education Services counselling newly arrived migrants and refugees. In 2000 I moved to the Health Sector and worked as a project officer and then in various planning roles. I am now the Manager of Workforce Planning for the South Metro Area Health Service and have returned to Murdoch part time to do further study in Organisational Psychology. I got married while at Murdoch and recently celebrated my 25th wedding anniversary and have four children aged 16-22.

James Eade  
(BA Communication & Cultural Studies, 1986)  
I am currently based in Melbourne working for global legal publishing company CCH, training professionals in online research and consulting on developing online training strategies and resources. Since leaving Murdoch I worked in politics with the WA Department of Premier and Cabinet, in media as a radio producer/presenter with Perth based RTR FM and Sydney station 2SER FM, for community organisations including the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, and have enjoyed roles in the corporate sector with account management roles with Telstra subsidiary Sensis, project management at the ANZ Bank, and earned my training qualifications while working in the in-house RTO of corporate communications giant Salmat.

Malcolm Wood  
(BA English and Comparative Literature, 1991)  
I graduated as a mature age student in 1991. I had taken quite some time in gaining the degree but thoroughly enjoyed every moment of my time at Murdoch University. Throughout the 1980s and early 90s Murdoch was a powerhouse of innovative thought in the areas of Communication and Literary Studies. It really was a very exciting place to be studying. After leaving Murdoch I went on to gain a Graduate Diploma in Information and Library Studies at Curtin University. I worked intermittently as a librarian throughout the 1990s. Around 2003 I decided it was time for a change of career and studied for a Graduate Diploma in Education (Primary) and have been working as a teacher ever since. I currently hold a position in Meekatharra where I am about to take on the task of teaching children about animal and plant care.

Lev Lafayette  
(Politics, Philosophy and Sociology, 1993)  
I graduated from Murdoch University from the School of Social Inquiry. Not content to stop studying, I found myself in Melbourne initially taking up a Masters in Social Theory and then converting to a doctoral candidacy. But the the lure of actually having a break from all this proved too much, so I spent a couple of years travelling around Australia, albeit primarily in the south-east. Eventually settling down again I found myself getting increasingly involved with the Australian Labor Party and ended up working for the Victorian parliament for several years initially as an electoral officer and policy boffin, but increasingly in IT training and database administration.

Apparently determined to throw away a potential political career I ended up working as a volunteer in East Timor as the IT advisor for their Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the last days of the UNTAET period and their first year of independence. It also provided the
opportunity to do a fair bit of travelling throughout the Malay Archipelago to experience riots and exotic diseases. On returning to Australia I ended up working in the field of scientific and supercomputing as a systems administrator for several years before the calling of study caught me again – this time completing a Masters in Business Administration and taking up new roles in IT quality and project management.

There are more than a few things still on this agenda. The increasingly dusty doctoral thesis is getting yet another brush up. I’ve been enrolled at the New York New Seminary for Interfaith Studies for the past six months. There is still more than a modicum of involvement in political activity, and, as a long-standing hobby, an interest in tabletop simulation games and speculative fiction – it pleases me immensely to hear that MARS is still operating even all these years. I still keep in contact with many old friends from the Murdoch days – and I still keep in mind that most important and unique vision from South Street: the Murdoch ethos.

**Kim Flintoff**

(BA Theatre and Drama, 1988)

I’m currently working at Curtin University in the Centre for eLearning. After graduating from Murdoch I continued working in theatre for quite a few years – went back to ECU to do a Grad Dip Ed and was a drama teacher for several years more. I also went on to get my MEd and started teaching at ECU in Drama Education. I eventually left Perth to start a PhD at QUT in Brisbane. While there I also taught in the Performance Studies program and caught up with some of my old Murdoch teachers, including the now Distinguished Professor John Hartley. That study, “Developing Digital Games-based Process Drama as Performance” remains incomplete as I needed to move back to Perth for family reasons.

In 2006, I found work in sessional teaching at ECU in Drama Education, Primary Education and Performance Studies: I started as Front of House manager at Perth Concert Hall and did what academic work I could find at Murdoch and Curtin. Ever since I started my Grad Dip Ed in 1995 I had taken an interest in the role of technology in arts education and have garnered some recognition over the years. I convened a Special Interest Group in Drama and New Media for the IDEA World Congresses in Bergen (2001), Ottawa (2004) and Hong Kong (2007) – and have presented at conferences nationally and internationally on similar topics. In 2008 I was approached by Curtin University (School of Regional Remote and eLearning) to apply for an academic position as an eLearning Advisor. I accepted an offer of employment and have been in that role since. The School of RRE has since become the Centre for eLearning. I continue to keep my hand in with my own teaching in Drama Education and this year did some tutoring in the School of Design and Art. I will be running a workshop at the Teaching and Learning Forum at Murdoch University in February and have been invited as a “major speaker” at the ACEC 2012 conference later in the year.

My most satisfying achievements have been my marriage to Frances and being dad to my two daughters, Palmer and Ari.

**Taruja Nicholls**


As a member of the Guild Secretariat and the University Senate in 1996 it was probably no surprise that after graduating with my BA in 1996, I worked for several Members of State and Commonwealth Parliaments in research and policy roles. During this time I continued studying for my BEc and BCom part-time. In 2003 I started with the RAC as a Policy Manager in the External and Government Relations section, but studying was never far away and in 2008, I graduated with a Master of Criminal Justice (with Distinction), from the University of Western Australia. My Masters precipitated my shift into academic life when, in 2009, I became a Research Associate at the Crime Research Centre, School of Law, UWA.

Currently ensconced as a criminologist, my current research interests include female offending, prostitution, offender careers, crime prevention, state crime and domestic violence. I am a White Ribbon ambassador for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and until recently was on the Board of the Armadale Domestic Violence Intervention Project.

In 2011 I was appointed to the Editorial Board of the International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice. In conjunction with tutoring first year Criminology students, I am currently completing my PhD in the politicisation and accountability of private military companies.

**Alisha Ryans-Taylor**

(BSc Conservation Biology & BA (Hons) Sustainable Development, 2004)

I am currently in the final year of my PhD at Murdoch, and as of last year run my own consultancy (Hermeneutica) in community resilience and capacity development work. I currently hold contracts with Challenger Institute, Engineers Without Borders and Australian Red Cross and work on projects in community disaster recovery, addressing homelessness, competency-based training in sustainability and volunteer management. I am getting to live my passion and put my energy and expertise where my values are.

**Von Ling**

(BCom 2010)

I graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce in Finance & Marketing Management. I was previously working with Standard Chartered Bank as a Corporate Actions Analyst, and am currently working with BlackRock (Singapore) as a Fund Performance Analyst. Since the Murdoch University alumni in Singapore became more actively managed, I have been attending the events organised. It truly is a blessing to have graduated with Murdoch and have the chance to meet up with ex-schoolmates.

We’d love to know what you’ve been doing since graduation. Send us your story: alumni@murdoch.edu.au
**Alumni Contacts**

If you’re a graduate of Murdoch University in any degree, diploma or certificate then you are one of our wonderful alumni! Chances are that wherever life has taken you you’ll find fellow Murdochians somewhere nearby. Our groups and chapters would love to hear from you. If none of the groups below is close or suits your interests you might like to consider starting one yourself – and we are here to help! Alumni Relations can assist with contacting alumni in your area or from an old sporting group or even from the School or degree you studied in.

For more information see our website at [http://ace.murdoch.edu.au/chapterswindow.html](http://ace.murdoch.edu.au/chapterswindow.html)

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