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

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.
Greetings Alumni

Universities operate nowadays in an intensely competitive and dynamic environment, and are continually faced with new challenges that are distinctive and unique to our time.

Universities must operate globally, and in this edition of Intouch, it is demonstrated that our graduates are indeed found in all corners of the world.

Our university must be internationally connected in all areas of our research and teaching, and our recognition as an international university has come this year with Murdoch’s appearance in the Times Higher Ed top 100 universities under 50 ranking.

Nowhere is our international connectivity demonstrated better than in our annual Distinguished Alumni Awards. Many of our high achieving alumni work and live around the world, and this year we were proud to select Mr Barathan (Bara) Pasupathi, the CEO of Jetstar Asia, as the recipient of a Distinguished Alumni Award.

The other worthy recipient of a Distinguished Alumni Award this year is Mr Josh Byrne.

Josh is well known to many here in Australia – especially as the WA presenter on Gardening Australia on ABC Television.

I congratulate both recipients who are making valuable contributions for the benefit of society – each in their individual pursuits. You can read more about each recipient in this edition.

You will also have seen that we are very excited to welcome a new Chancellor to Murdoch. Mr David Flanagan, non-executive Chairman of Atlas Iron, will be invested at a ceremony here on campus in August.

Mr Flanagan will bring much expertise to the role and we look forward to a long association with him.

We are saying farewell to our previous Chancellor, Mr Terry Budge, who is retiring from the role after nearly seven years in the job.

Until next time, I send greetings to our alumni, near and far.

Professor Richard Higgott
Vice Chancellor

From the Manager – Alumni Relations

Welcome to the 2013 Spring edition of Intouch. This edition features a range of fascinating stories from Murdoch alumni on the international stage. With articles ranging from an alumnus who established the world’s largest joke book publishing house in New York to an inspiring young woman representing Australia as a Youth Ambassador to Antarctica; from a Journalism graduate working tirelessly towards global press freedom in Paris to a business alumnus applying his management skills for a gastroenterology unit in Delhi; Murdoch alumni are making their mark around the globe.

The presentation of our Distinguished Alumni Awards is always an important event and this year’s ceremony took place at a formal dinner on the South Street campus. The 2013 finalists were from all parts of the world and we were so pleased that most of them could join us for the occasion. The full story of this year’s finalists and winners is on page 14.

Our Annual Alumni Appeal also took place in the middle of the year and we were once again thrilled at the generosity of our alumni. This year’s Appeal featured Natasha Prokop, a final year Journalism and Marine Biology student who kindly agreed to share her personal story of how receiving the inaugural Murdoch University Alumni Appeal scholarship helped her to expand her studies. You can read more of Natasha’s story on page 20.

We are often asked to help alumni find fellow graduates to contact when they are visiting a new country and I find the many events we host are becoming increasingly popular as opportunities for cultural exchange. With so much activity and new groups forming we’ve decided to move our Alumni contacts off the back page of Intouch and onto the web. This means you can always find up-to-date alumni contact information wherever in the world you are!

http://www.alumni-enews.murdoch.edu.au/2013/05/alumni-contacts/

Finally, I’d like to extend my warm congratulations to all our new alumni graduating this year. This year’s graduations will welcome a record number of new members into the Murdoch 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.

Vanessa Fernandez-Kennedy
Manager – Alumni Relations
Dealing with Indian “royalty” on a daily basis

THE DALAI LAMA, BOLLYWOOD AND HOLLYWOOD ACTOR IRRFAN KHAN, SENIOR POLITICIANS AND BUSINESS TYCOONS ARE AMONG THE PEOPLE DR SIDDHARTH SHANKAR HAS MET IN HIS DAILY DEALINGS WITH PATIENTS AND VISITORS AT ONE OF INDIA’S BIGGEST MULTI-SPECIALTY HOSPITALS.

Siddharth is the In-Patient Department Manager of the VIP and corporate business ward at Medanta, the Medicity Hospital in the city of Gurgaon, near Delhi.

“My job profile includes coordinating the various activities in the ward by being a central point of contact for the clinicians, nurses, food and beverages department, housekeeping, and engineering and maintenance departments,” Siddharth said.

“I come into contact with many eminent Indian personalities, who either come for check-ups or treatments, or as visitors for other patients, and my contact with them involves resolving any problems they face during their stay.”

Siddharth studied to be a dental surgeon in India but soon discovered he preferred managing patients to treating them.

This led him to Murdoch University where he undertook a Masters of Health Management, Quality and Leadership, graduating in 2012.

“Studying at Murdoch will remain one of the best experiences of my life,” he said.

“A few memories that top the charts are spending time at the library, the knowledgeable, friendly and kind teachers, playing squash at the recreation centre, and representing the Vice Chancellor’s XI in the annual Twenty20 cricket match.”

Siddharth was recently interviewed for a National Geographic documentary on hospital stays.

He is keen to one day bring his administrative and managerial skills to a role in the Australian healthcare industry.

Owen bound for the Bahamas

FOR SOME, IT’S A DREAM HOLIDAY DESTINATION. BUT FOR DR OWEN O’SHEA (PHD MARINE SCIENCE 2013), AN IDYLLIC ISLAND IN THE BAHAMAS IS HIS NEW OFFICE.

With its pink sandy beaches and lush, tropical landscape, it’s no surprise that the Caribbean island of Eleuthera is a tourism hotspot, attracting the likes of Hollywood actors and European royalty.

But according to the island’s newest resident, Dr Owen O’Shea, Eleuthera’s greatest treasure lies beneath its turquoise waters.

Owen recently accepted a position as a Shark Research Associate at the Cape Eleuthera Institute, having completed his PhD at Murdoch University. His research took him to Ningaloo Reef, a picturesque location home to five different species of stingray.

“As meso-predators, stingrays are an important link between the top and bottom of the food chain,” Owen said.

“They are ‘engineers of the sea’, changing and creating habitats as they feed. When looking for food, rays churn up the sediment on the ocean floor, which is very important, both physically and at a chemical level.”

At the Cape Eleuthera Institute, Owen will work with a team of marine experts to study local shark populations and support conservation efforts.
Trip to Antarctica unlocks a deeper environmental drive

MORGAN PETTERSSON IS PART OF A NEW GENERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ADVOCATES FOLLOWING AN EXPEDITION TO ANTARCTICA EARLIER THIS YEAR.

She was among 30 young people chosen from around the globe to take part in the 2041 Antarctic Youth Ambassador Program.

The program aims to create an international youth alliance that champions renewable energy as its path to saving the continent from the effects of climate change.

“I have always cared about the environment and was involved in climate change campaigning as a member of the Australian Youth Climate Coalition during university,” Morgan said.

“The ambassador program gave me the opportunity to learn more in one of the most extreme environments on the earth and has equipped me with the skills to promote environmental protection and sustainability in my own community.”

Morgan, who graduated from Murdoch University in 2012 with a Bachelor of Communications (Journalism and Public Relations) and a Bachelor of Arts (History), said one of the highlights of the trip was meeting polar explorer and environmental activist Robert Swan OBE (pictured with Morgan).

“Robert’s E-Base (educational base) is run off 100 per cent renewable energy and if this can work in Antarctica it can work anywhere in the world,” she said.

Other highlights for the Warnbro environmentalist were spending a night on the ice in a sleeping bag under the Antarctic sky and jumping into freezing water as part of a polar plunge.

Morgan’s latest adventure has involved working in South America with animals in captivity.

Tina markets her noodle passion

MURDOCH UNIVERSITY GRADUATE TINA TAN WENT FROM A CAREER AS AN INVESTMENT BANKER TO RUNNING HER FAMILY BUSINESS.

Tina, who completed a Bachelor of Marketing and Media in 1999, now puts in 12 to 18 hour days in her family’s 100-year-old business, Hock Lam Beef in Singapore.

Working in the family business was an easy decision for Tina who remembers helping in her father’s hawker stall when she was 12. Her father Anthony Tan has stepped back from the business after 35 years of working 16 hour days after being advised by doctors that his knees could give way.

Tina said the secret recipe has been handed down from her great grandfather in 1911 verbally. For that reason, she does much of the preparation work, as had her father.

But it is not just the secret recipe that makes Hock Lam noodles, which turns over $1 million annually, a favourite with its customers.

“Every dish, down to the soup, gravy or chilli, is made from scratch using only the freshest ingredients,” she said.

“Our much-celebrated soup is prepared fresh daily through a 24 hour process to extract the natural goodness from the ingredients.”

The business has gone from a humble hawker stall with clientele who grew and aged with the business, to having two stores with plans to continue to expand the business, including overseas.

“We hope that someday we will be able to bring this great tasting food that speaks to the heart around the world and be recognised as a truly Singaporean heritage dish,” she said.

Her degree may help her in that quest.
Environmental activism goes underground

LIKE THE RIVER SYSTEMS THAT HAVE INSPIRED HER ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM, STACEY CHILCOTT (BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONS) (ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE) 2012) THINKS BOTH DEEPLY AND BROADLY WHEN WORKING ON PROJECTS.

Her initial studies in environmental science led her to Mexico’s Riviera Maya, part of the Yucatan Peninsula, the largest subterranean river system in the world.

The system is characterised by cenotes, stunningly beautiful sinkholes of clear water running for kilometres underground.

The threats to the river system from rampant development inspired Stacey to produce her own documentary. She then contacted the ABC’s Foreign Correspondent, which, after a long consultation and development period, produced its own report on the subject and credited Stacey as the initial researcher.

Originally from Victoria, Stacey subsequently travelled to Perth to investigate the caves in Margaret River to learn more about how the ecosystems function.

This led to an Honours project at Murdoch University, which her supervisors deemed could also be used by the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF).

She is now pursuing further studies at Murdoch in Sustainable Development, returning to Mexico for an internship unit with two strands.

“The first project involves working with a sustainability group and a Mayan community to work on projects such as sustainable wastewater treatment systems and sustainable food production,” Stacey said.

“My experiences as the secretary of the Murdoch Community Gardens really help here.”

The second project involves creating a feature film about the Riviera Maya.

“This investigation into the cenotes has definitely been life-changing,” Stacey said.

“It has given me a pathway to pursue the protection of groundwater ecosystems, especially those most vulnerable to damage and destruction. I am grateful for the opportunities I have had, and am inspired to continue taking action to protect these vital ecosystems.”

Megan makes teaching a global profession

LIVING AND WORKING IN DUBAI PROVED NO BARRIER TO MEGAN BRAZIL WHEN SHE COMPLETED A MASTER OF EDUCATION THROUGH MURDOCH.

The Elementary School Principal at GEMS World Academy completed her degree both online and at Murdoch’s Dubai campus.

She graduated in 2012, and was awarded the Elizabeth Mary Dodd Prize in Education for the highest academic achievement of a graduating Master of Education student in 2013.

Megan began her teaching career in Queensland, where she grew up, before heading overseas to work and travel.

She and her husband Scott have taught in Colombia, where their first child was born, and India before both becoming foundation staff of GEMS World Academy in Dubai in 2008.

“Our love for working in international schools was developed in Colombia,” Megan said.

As Elementary Principal, Megan leads a division of 850 students, 80 teachers and 50 teaching assistants.

She said one of her highlights in her time with GEMS World Academy had been building a program from the beginning and leading the school through authorisation with the International Baccalaureate Association and becoming accredited with the Council of International Schools.

“Those accreditations come with years of team work, collaboration and vision,” she said.

Megan said she loved her time at Murdoch.

“It had been over 15 years since I’d last studied, and I was incredibly nervous about undertaking a Masters degree while working fulltime, and being mum to two beautiful girls (aged six and two when I started studying),” she said.

“It was tiring – all my study took place at night after the kids were in bed. “However, it was extremely stimulating, and the content was great and I felt like I was truly doing something for myself.”
Saving a Species

WHEN THE TREES WERE TO FALL IN AN INDONESIAN RAINFOREST, STEPHEN VAN MIL (BSc Vet Biology 1983/Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine & Surgery 1984) WENT INTO ACTION.

The filmmaker and environmentalist had already been inspired by Dr Biruté Mary Galdikas, with his documentary The Last Trimate showing her life work with orangutans.

Dr Galdikas had the chance to buy 2500 hectares of rainforest known locally as the Rawa Kuno, home to 200 wild orangutans.

After she had raised more than half the $640,000 asking price through her organisation, Orangutan Foundation International (OFI), Stephen brought together a group aiming to raise $250,000 in a few weeks late last year, through an organisation to be known as OFI Australia (OFIA).

Needless to say, OFIA achieved the audacious aim, though there have been inevitable challenges, such as sovereign land in Indonesia only being available for purchase in two-hectare lots, requiring hundreds of individual titles.

But the effort was worth it.

“If you weigh up the cost of housing, feeding and maintaining enclosures, the cost fades into insignificance,” Stephen said.

The 2012 Murdoch Distinguished Alumni Award winner is now working with WA company Carbon IQ to create an income for the forest and its villagers through carbon credits.

“We aim to save the lungs of the Earth and all the wildlife within that, and keep the carbon locked there,” Stephen said.

Enduring commitment to human rights and press freedom

ALISON BUNTING MESTON’S COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS BEGAN IN THE MID-1990S WHEN SHE WAS THROWN INTO STUDENT ACTIVISM AS THE EDUCATION VICE PRESIDENT OF MURDOCH UNIVERSITY’S STUDENT GUILD.

Almost two decades on, Alison has built a career as a rigorous campaigner for the rights of everyday people and world-wide press freedom.

She had a lengthy involvement with the trade union movement in Perth and Glasgow before taking up a position with the British Red Cross as the inaugural public affairs officer for Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man.

The Murdoch alumnus (Bachelor of Arts in Australian Studies, 1997, Graduate Diploma in Education Primary, 1997, Graduate Diploma in Journalism, 2006) and “accidental expat” now works in Paris as the Director of Press Freedom for the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA).

“My role is to ensure that newspapers and news organisations around the world can report the news freely and without fear,” she said.

“There is an inexorable link between a free press and the reduction of poverty and corruption, and this is what drives what I do.”

Alison lists having Archbishop Desmond Tutu sign the Declaration of Table Mountain – an ongoing media industry campaign to repeal criminal defamation laws in Africa and place a free press higher on the political agenda – in 2010 as a career highlight.

Other memorable moments include her involvement in a mentoring program in Zambia, Namibia and Botswana to encourage more female media executives and coordinating the Arab Free Press Forum, where she witnessed 100 media professionals discuss challenges facing the independent Arab press after uprisings.
Julius lands big names for his first feature film

Julius lands big names for his first feature film

Writer and Director Julius Avery recently finished shooting his debut feature film Son of a Gun, which will be released next year.

Shot in Perth, Kalgoorlie and Melbourne, the crime thriller tells of a young man sent to jail, where he becomes the apprentice to an experienced criminal.

Julius said he felt privileged to have attracted a cast that combined high-calibre local actors with award-winning international talent, including Ewan McGregor in the lead role of conman Brendan Lynch.

“Ewan is one of the most talented and generous actors going; I loved working with him,” Julius said.

The film also stars Australian actors Brenton Thwaites and Jacek Koman, and Swedish actress Alicia Vikander.

Described by film industry insiders as one of the most exciting new directors in the country, Julius’ short film Yardbird won Best Film at Flickerfest earlier this year and Best Australian Short Film at the 2012 Sydney Film Festival.

He wrote and directed Jerrycan, which won Best Short Film at the 2009 Berlin International Film Festival, the Australian Film Institute award for Best Short Fiction Film in 2008, and it was the Jury Prize winner at the 2008 Cannes Film Festival.

Julius said he had many fond memories and life-long friends from his time studying at Murdoch University (Bachelor of Arts in Media Studies, 2001).

“Martin Mhando (Associate Professor in Media Studies) gave me the freedom to explore my experimental side, and my good buddy and fellow filmmaker Jeff Asselin is still doing great things at Murdoch,” he said.

Mobile app takes James to Silicon Valley

When the Perth-based technology company he co-founded attracted interest from the global business community, entrepreneur James McDonough set up an office in Silicon Valley to work alongside and learn from world leaders in high-tech innovation.

The chief executive of SEE Forge (Safe Efficient Effective) Mobile Solutions and his business partner, Chris Bjorklund, have designed an application that can eliminate paper reporting and increase safety and efficiency in workplaces using mobile technology.

Their SEE Forge application was recently awarded second place in the oZAPP Awards, a competition that identifies the best new mobile application concepts in Australia.

James said the idea for the application came from his 10 years’ experience working in and consulting to heavy industry operations around the world.

“I’ve seen firsthand how inefficient and ineffective capturing critical safety and operations information on paper can be,” he said.

“Our SEE Forge app allows field workers to report issues back to the office immediately using any mobile device.

“It also enables companies to customise their previous paper-based forms and analyse data for decision making.”

SEE Forge currently has offices in Perth, Melbourne and San Francisco.

James graduated from Murdoch University in 2009 with a Master of Business Administration in International Business and spent five weeks in China as part of the course.

“The China program was an amazing experience that I would recommend to anyone interested in exploring business in a completely different culture,” he said.

“Working and learning in Shanghai was a great way to complete the program.”
Since graduating with a Bachelor of Communications and Cultural Studies in 1986, he has written and published more than 700 joke books.

But if you ask him what he does for a living, don’t expect a serious response.

“I tell everybody that I’m a life guard studying to be a senior life guard, or that I kill rats for the New York City Transit Authority,” he said.

“If I become friends with them, and they find out what I really do, I apologise, tell them that I have no memory of that because I suffer from CRS (Can’t Remember Sh*t).”

Mark enjoyed a varied career before finding his true calling. He worked as a journalist for a technology magazine and even taught public relations, publishing and web design before heading to the States in 1993.

What started as a working holiday soon became more permanent when Mark met his wife, who later gave birth to his son.

Shortly after, telling jokes became his full-time job. Mark established Dolyttle & Seamore in 2004, a company he describes as the world’s largest joke book publisher.

“I steal ideas from everybody, rewrite everything, change the concept and turn it into my own,” Mark said.

Ask him for his favourite joke, and Mark is quick to turn to the self-deprecating humour Australians are known for.

“It changes all the time. I like ‘Why do Australians wear slip on shoes? You need an IQ of at least five to tie a shoe lace,’” he said.
escaped through a gap in the rock. It shed and scattered its scales in the process, which over time became the glittering Argyle Diamonds commonly associated with the Kimberley region.

Opened in 2006, the Musée du quai Branly is one of two world class European museums dedicated to ethnic arts and already houses more than 1,400 Australian Indigenous artworks.

Museum president Stéphane Martin said, “The scale and prominence of this unique project reflects the growing international fascination and market for contemporary Australian Indigenous art. This powerful new work by Nyadbi is an historic opportunity to highlight and promote Indigenous Australian art and cultures to a global audience in Paris”.

In contrast to her increasingly global reputation, Nyadbi lives a very subdued life at the Warmun Arts Centre at Turkey Creek community, which is situated in Western Australia’s remote East Kimberley desert.

Warmun Art Centre senior manager Jonathan Kimberley said, “The installation is extraordinary but should not be misinterpreted. Dayiwul Lirlmim is certainly an audacious re-visioning of global intercultural trajectories yet, for Nyadbi, the work is simply a true Ngarranggarni (Dreaming) story for all time.”

Murdoch University’s Art Collection proudly represents Lena Nyadbi by a limited edition etching print and small ochre painting, acquired in 2006 and 2007 respectively.

With the generous support of our friends and donors, the University’s Art Board plans to acquire a significant painting by the artist in early 2014.

If you would like to inquire about supporting the Art Board with this initiative please contact the University Art Curator, Mark Stewart on +618 9360 6602 or mark.stewart@murdoch.edu.au

Local artist takes global stage

THE MUCH-ANTICIPATED INSTALLATION OF A HUGE GRAPHIC REPRODUCTION OF A LENA NYADBI PAINTING ON THE ROOFTOP OF THE MUSÉE DU QUAI BRANLY WAS UNVEILED EARLIER THIS YEAR ON 6 JUNE IN THE HEART OF PARIS, FRANCE.

Clearly visible from the Eiffel Tower’s observation platform, this 700 square metre striking installation will be viewed by the seven million people who visit the Eiffel Tower annually and thanks to satellite mapping technology, the artwork is accessible to many more people via Google Earth.

The roof top installation, which is exceptionally contemporary and equally ancient, was interpreted from a bold charcoal and ochre painting by Lena Nyadbi titled Dayiwul Lirlmim (Barramundi Scales).

This painting is inspired by her mother’s homeland in Dayiwul Country situated within Western Australia’s East Kimberley.

According to Indigenous legend, three women were fishing for barramundi when one fish eluded the net and

Mark Stewart
Murdoch University
Art Curator

Adrian Fisher
Manager
Sport and Recreation

Murdoch athletes on world stage

THE 2013 SUMMER UNIVERSIADE WAS RECENTLY HELD IN KAZAN RUSSIA, THE MOST NORTHERLY CITY EVER TO HOST A WORLD UNIVERSITY GAMES.

Universiades are the second-largest sporting events in the world by participation, after Olympiads.

This year’s Universiade was the biggest event of its kind in history, with participation from more than 10,400 university athletes hailing from 162 countries.

Two Murdoch University students were selected to represent Australia - Shan McCann for Hurdles and Sutherland Scudds for Fencing.

Sutherland, who was 2012 Murdoch University Sportsperson of the Year, said the Universiade was a really amazing experience.

“From the moment I stepped off the plane I knew this was no ordinary competition,” Sutherland said.

Sutherland said that although he competed really well he was disappointed not to progress through to the second round.

“I beat the best athlete in the pool from Korea and had three close matches with USA, Japan and Malaysia losing by one touch in all three matches.

Shan McCann competed well all week and after a great semi-final performance made the final of the women’s hurdles.

“That was my biggest goal, but then I didn’t even come last,” Shan laughed.

“I came sixth and ran a personal best time.”

Over the last five years Murdoch University’s participation and performance at state, national and international athletic events has improved significantly.

The University consistently ranks well in Western Australia and it has improved its national university sporting ranking to eighth.
Great leaps forward in science

Murdoch researchers are tackling the toughest challenges to ever face the planet. Whether combating disease, protecting threatened wildlife or finding ways to feed the world, our scientists are at the forefront of securing our future.

Developing hope for rare diseases

Molecular Biologist Professor Sue Fletcher has spent the past 23 years developing therapies for Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD).

The fatal disease is a genetic disorder caused by mutations in the dystrophin gene that prevent the production of dystrophin protein, a key element in muscle function and strength. It affects about one in 3500 boys.

The condition eventually leads to muscle degeneration, weakness and eventually death, usually before the age of 30.

Professor Fletcher teamed up with colleague Professor Steve Wilton 19 years ago, and they received the 2012 Mitsubishi Corporation WA Innovator of the Year Award for their work using ‘exon skipping’ as a therapy for boys with DMD.

Exon skipping, a concept developed by Professor Wilton, allows the muscle cells to bypass the cause of the disease, which can reduce the symptoms of DMD. The treatment is being developed in partnership with US biotechnology (RNA therapeutics) company Sarepta Therapeutics.

Professor Fletcher said clinical trials had kept 10 boys walking for more than 85 weeks.

“We believe that this type of treatment will reduce the severity of DMD, keep the boys walking for longer and give those families added years together. However, it is a treatment, not a cure, and it is likely that they will need to take the treatment for life,” she said.

Professor Fletcher and Professor Wilton joined Murdoch University’s Centre for Comparative Genomics (CCG) in April this year. Professor Fletcher is also an Adjunct Research Professor at UWA.

“Most people living with a rare disease have limited or no treatment options, high needs and multiple health issues,” Professor Fletcher said.

“We are delighted to be a part of the rare diseases initiative at Murdoch, and believe that the added expertise now available to us through our collaborators at the University will bring new dimensions to our work.”

The desire to understand and solve problems is a driving force for Professor Fletcher, but so is the desire to change lives for the better.

“It is very rewarding to be at the point of delivering a treatment that could benefit those families who have believed in us, and encouraged us for so many years,” she said.

“DMD is one of many rare diseases, and we are now exploring opportunities to apply the technology to other conditions.”

http://ccg.murdoch.edu.au
Protecting wildlife from disease

WHEN PROFESSOR ANDREW THOMPSON PLAYS HOST, THERE'S A FAIR CHANCE THE TOPIC WILL TURN TO PARASITES. AFTER ALL, HE'S THE HEAD OF MURDOCH'S INTERNATIONALLY RENEWED PARASITOLOGY SECTION IN THE SCHOOL OF VETERINARY AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES.

The conversation could also turn to native animals like bandicoots and possums, which are coming into closer contact with humans because of greater urbanisation and clearing of land.

“We're applying molecular tools to better understand the ecology of a variety of parasites, particularly those affecting wildlife,” Professor Thompson said.

“For example, we're seeing strains of the parasite toxoplasma in bandicoots in urban areas and cases of neurological disease that could well be caused by human contact. But how are they getting it?”

“It could be through people giving them meat scraps, or perhaps through our septic systems.”

Another animal studied, in conjunction with WA's Department of Environment and Conservation, is the endangered waylie, or brush-tailed bettong, focusing on where the blood-borne parasite it is hosting might derive from and how it is affecting the decline of the species.

“In urban areas, the best way to address these matters is through education,” Professor Thompson said.

“We work with community groups to find ways to avoid the possibility of transferring disease to wildlife.”


Future proofing farming

INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED EXPERT IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, PROFESSOR JOHN HOWIESON SPECIALISES IN THE NITROGEN FIXATION OF LEGUME CROPS.

Professor Howieson is particularly interested in domestication of new legume pasture species adapted for a drying climate, rhizobium science and application of legumes and rhizobium in agriculture in developing countries.

“Legume science and nitrogen fixation are the basis of sustainable agriculture,” Professor Howieson said.

“So I enjoy trying to lessen the carbon footprint of agriculture on the planet by enhancing the uptake of legumes in as many farming contexts as possible.”

He said the legumes and rhizobium he and research colleagues had commercialised were responsible for about $1 billion worth of nitrogen production (free from the air) every year in southern Australia.

“We are launching the new vision statement for the Centre for Rhizobium Studies later this year – around free nitrogen farming,” he said.

Professor Howieson was the Foundation Director of the Centre for Rhizobium Studies at Murdoch and is currently on the steering committee for $20 million project N2Africa: Putting nitrogen fixation to work for smallholder farmers in Africa. The project is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

His main current projects, aside from N2Africa, involve working with small holder farmers in South Africa, as well as improving the feedbase for meat and wool producers in WA and NSW by increasing the uptake of pasture legumes through a new method called “summer sowing”.

“I am also domesticating perennial forage legumes that will make our Wheatbelt more productive under the variable climatic conditions we are experiencing,” he said.

http://profiles.murdoch.edu.au/myprofile/john-howieson

Sorting data to protect health

LIFE SCIENCE DOMAINS ARE GENERATING HUGE AMOUNTS OF DATA THAT REQUIRE SOPHISTICATED ANALYSIS TO MAKE SCIENTIFIC BREAKTHROUGHS, ACCORDING TO PROFESSOR MATTHEW BELLGARD, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE FOR COMPARATIVE GENOMICS (CCG) AND FOUNDATION CHAIR IN BIOINFORMATICS.

But for Professor Bellgard, it’s all about collaborating and integrating information in a scalable fashion.

The Centre draws together biomedical and agricultural research and development, molecular therapies, bioinformatics activities, expertise in comparative genomics, professional software development and high-performance computing to promote understanding within and across fields of study.

“The Centre develops sophisticated data analysis and supercomputing solutions to a diverse range of life science domains including human health, food security and animal health,” Professor Bellgard said.

“We work closely with end users, be they clinicians, plant pathologists, growers or policy makers to ensure leading-edge research we conduct is translated to practical solutions.”

Professor Bellgard is in the process of mapping out a Rare Disease Roadmap, to enable collaborative multidisciplinary research teams to study the 6000+ rare diseases.

“Identifying key components of rare disease research will enable us to better understand what information needs to be captured, tracked and analysed over time to aid in reducing the time taken to develop viable treatments to rare conditions that effect fewer than 1 in 2000 people worldwide,” Professor Bellgard said.

One of the core systems the CCG has designed has been open sourced, and currently deployed for a number of national and international rare disease registries for neuromuscular diseases, such as Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

“We have designed a system that is scalable, secure and can be adapted to any disease,” Professor Bellgard said.

http://ccg.murdoch.edu.au
Feeding the world

**PROFESSOR SHASHI SHARMA, CHAIR IN BIOSECURITY AND FOOD SECURITY, WANTS NOTHING LESS THAN TO MAKE FOOD SECURITY A NON ISSUE FOR EVERY PERSON ON THE PLANET.**

Professor Sharma is working to establish a Centre for Biosecurity and Food Security to see his goal realised.

*“There are seven billion people in the world and one billion go to bed hungry every night,”* he said.

*“Another billion have food, but not nutritious food, and their growth and development is impaired.”*

“Yet we lose or waste food that could feed over 2 billion people.”

In the next 40 years the population will rise to 9 billion, requiring more than the total food produced in the last 10,000 years.

“The challenge is how to produce food sustainably and not lose food we grow and produce,” Professor Sharma said.

“We also need to distribute food in a manner that does not expose importing countries and regions to biosecurity and safety risks.”

“Hunger kills more people than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined,” Professor Sharma said.

“We need to give every child the opportunity to live up to their dreams, capabilities and make a difference; to live up to their potential.”


Creative research has lasting benefits

**FOR PROFESSOR RUDI APPELS, RESEARCH IS HIGHLY CREATIVE AND WRITING A RESEARCH MANUSCRIPT IS JUST LIKE WORKING ON A PAINTING.**

Professor Appels has been a researcher for 42 years, and it remains an all consuming love and passion for him.

“It is just my life. I live and breathe it. It satisfies everything that I need in that creative area,” Professor Appels said.

His research areas have been varied over his four decade career including looking at chromosome structure and function in bird red blood cells and Drosophila (fruit flies).

In 1977 he developed an interest in wheat and it has remained his core research focus - in particular wheat quality at the molecular level.

Professor Appels, who is based at Murdoch’s Centre for Comparative Genomics, has looked into developing drought resistant wheat varieties, and he hopes to achieve an outcome in a few years.

Last year, the Australia-China Centre for Wheat Improvement, of which he is Director, received Australian Federal Government funding of more than $800,000.

Murdoch University provided additional funding based on this new resource. The Centre was one of six research centres Australia-wide to receive funding. It was the only centre focused on agricultural research.

“In another year we should have some really good outputs for some new genes and some new ways of measuring wheat quality and understanding the wheat quality markets in China which are still a bit of a mystery,” he said.

Professor Appels serves as a co-chair of the International Wheat Genome Sequencing Consortium (IWGSC), an international research effort focused on identifying wheat genes that contribute to the survival of wheat across a broad range of global environments.

[http://ccg.murdoch.edu.au](http://ccg.murdoch.edu.au)

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2013 Distinguished Alumni Awards

MURDOCH UNIVERSITY ALUMNI RELATIONS WELCOMED MORE THAN 80 DISTINGUISHED GUESTS TO A FORMAL DINNER AT THE SOUTH STREET CAMPUS IN JULY TO CELEBRATE THE WINNERS OF THE 2013 MURDOCH UNIVERSITY DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS.

The event was hosted by the Alumni Relations Office and Vice Chancellor Professor Richard Higgott. Special guests included Professor Chung Min Lee, South Korea’s Ambassador for National Security Affairs, Chief Justice The Hon. Wayne Martin AC, City of Rockingham Mayor, Barry Sammels and Professor Kevin Hewison, Director of the Asia Research Centre at Murdoch University.

The 2013 Murdoch University Distinguished Alumni Award category winners were:

Science
Josh Byrne
BSc(Hons) Environmental Science (2002)
Josh Byrne is an environmental scientist who is recognised nationally for his leadership in sustainable gardening and landscaping, urban water management, appropriate technology and innovative design.

He is best known for his work as WA presenter on Gardening Australia with ABC television over the past 10 years. Since 2005, Josh has also directed the Fremantle-based landscape design, environmental consultancy and communications company, Josh Byrne & Associates, which has received many awards for its engagement in projects across community, corporate, education and government sectors.

Arts and Social Science
Barathan Pasupathi
BComm (1993)
Barathan Pasupathi, CEO of Jetstar Asia, has over 16 years of expertise and leadership in the areas of oil market risk management, aircraft financing and leasing and supply chain management and is an active participant and supporter of community and environmental work.

Finalists were:
Jessica Evans
Robyn Sermon
Darren Hamley
Philip Livingston

(L-R) Under Treasurer Timothy Marney, Josh Byrne, Dr Stephen Van Mil, Anna George, Barathan Pasupathi.
Each of the winners of the 2013 Murdoch University Distinguished Alumni Awards received a framed photograph and personally autographed book by internationally renowned, Perth based photographer, Brad Rimmer.

Murdoch University Vice Chancellor Professor Richard Higgott said the finalists and recipients were a shining example to current students and to the community in Australia and abroad.

“This year’s recipients truly deserve to be recognised. Their contributions, both as professionals and community members, to ensure the betterment of society, exemplify the core values that underpin Murdoch University,” he said.

“Their impact can be seen locally, nationally and internationally. We’re proud to call them our alumni.”

The evening was compered by another outstanding Murdoch graduate, Tim Marney, Under-Treasurer of Western Australia and winner of the 2012 Law, Business and Information Technology Distinguished Alumni Award. Anna George and Dr Stephen Van Mil, past Distinguished Alumni Award winners, were also present at the awards ceremony.

Alumni Relations was also delighted to announce the inaugural recipient of the Murdoch University Alumni Annual Appeal Scholarship; final year Marine Science and Journalism student Natasha Prokop. Natasha spoke of the difference the scholarship had made to her studies by allowing her to undertake a practical field unit in Tropical Marine Biology at Ningaloo Reef.

Manager of Alumni Relations, Vanessa Fernandez-Kennedy, said the finalists were chosen from a field of very impressive candidates.

“Both winners are leaders in their chosen field and have provided outstanding service to the community,” Ms Fernandez-Kennedy said.

“The evening was a wonderful celebration of our distinguished alumni and we were delighted to have the opportunity to share their success with families, friends and colleagues.”

Full biographies of the 2013 Distinguished Alumni Award winners and finalists can be found at www.murdoch.edu.au/Distinguished-Alumni-Awards.

For further information regarding the Awards please contact alumni@murdoch.edu.au

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE AWARDS PLEASE CONTACT ALUMNI@MURDOCH.EDU.AU
New Chancellor for Murdoch University

MURDOCH UNIVERSITY’S SENATE IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE APPOINTMENT OF NON EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF ATLAS IRON, DAVID FLANAGAN AS THE NEW CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY.

Mr Flanagan took the reins from Mr Terry Budge, who retired from the role after nearly seven years.

A geologist by trade, Mr Flanagan has more than 20 years’ experience in mining and mineral exploration in Australia, Indonesia and West Africa.

Mr Flanagan is a highly respected businessman, philanthropist and entrepreneur.

He founded Atlas Iron in 2004 and since this time it has grown from a $9 million exploration company with one employee to a business that generates more than $1 billion a year and employs more than 700 people.

Ms Eva Skira, Deputy Chancellor and Chair of the Senate Search Committee, said that Murdoch was very pleased to have secured Mr Flanagan as the new Chancellor after an exhaustive selection process.

Vice Chancellor Professor Richard Higgott agreed, saying that the University was very excited to have Mr Flanagan as Chancellor.

“Mr Flanagan is a dynamic, enthusiastic, energetic, and very community minded leader which makes him a great fit for Murdoch at this point in its history as the University approaches its 40th anniversary,” Professor Higgott added.

Mr Flanagan said he was looking forward to his new role and he paid tribute to the leadership of outgoing Chancellor Terry Budge.

“I will be following in the footsteps of many distinguished Chancellors of Murdoch including Senator Fred Chaney, Sir Ronald Wilson and current Chancellor Terry Budge, who has led the Murdoch Senate during a time of significant change in the higher education sector.

“I am delighted to join a university with such strong credentials at an exciting time in its life and I am committed to helping achieve the strategic vision of Murdoch to be internationally recognised for the quality of its research, teaching, student outcomes and community engagement.

“I am currently a member of the First Murdoch Commission - an independent internationally focussed inquiry into the growing economic interdependency of Western Australia, Australia and the Asian region. I have seen first-hand and been a part of the great work Murdoch University is undertaking.”

Mr Flanagan officially began his role as Murdoch University Chancellor in August.

Alumni can gain knowledge for less

Murdoch University Bookshop extends a special offer to all Murdoch graduates.

We are pleased to offer a 12 per cent discount on a range of items including textbooks, general books, stationery, multimedia, giftware and merchandise.

To take advantage of this offer, please present this advertisement to claim your discount.

Bookshop opening times
8.30am – 4.30pm
Monday to Friday

Please consult our website for further information:
http://our.murdoch.edu.au/bookshop
Graduate School well positioned for global challenges

RENOWNED POLITICAL SCIENTIST PROFESSOR BENJAMIN REILLY HAS MOVED TO PERTH TO HEAD UP MURDOCH’S NEW SIR WALTER MURDOCH SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.

Professor Reilly said the Sir Walter Murdoch School was uniquely positioned to connect with global challenges.

“The Sir Walter Murdoch School is the first dedicated graduate policy school to be established in Western Australia, which is the most connected Australian state to global challenges, given its geographic and economic profile.

“We are very deliberately focusing on the region where we are based, and taking advantage of the great depth of regional expertise that exists at Murdoch on the region, from south-east Asia across to India and Africa.”

Professor Reilly was previously the Professor of Political Science and Director of the Policy and Governance program in the Crawford School of Public Policy at the Australian National University (ANU).

He has written on democratisation, constitutional reform, party politics, electoral system design and conflict management, and has advised numerous governments and international organisations on these subjects.

“The big idea behind the Sir Walter Murdoch School is the interaction of national and international policy in the modern world,” Professor Reilly said.

“It is not like the old days when you either studied domestic policy or you studied international affairs: nearly all the big policy challenges these days contain elements of both. So we want to make that connection explicit in everything we do.

“Students who complete a degree from this School will gain expertise in three core areas: how to manage and lead organisations, how to think about policymaking and policy processes, and how to understand the global context of everything they do.

“This is a challenging combination, but it is also exactly the skill set that employers are looking for today.

“Many multinational companies are looking for this mix of practical skills and strategic thinking.

“Sir Walter Murdoch School graduates would find opportunities not just in government and the broader public sector, but also in NGOs, development, media and, increasingly, the private sector.”

http://www.murdoch.edu.au/Sirwalterschool/

Three to retire

THREE ACADEMICS FROM THE SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY HAVE ANNOUNCED PLANS TO RETIRE, AFTER SERVING 30 YEARS EACH AT MURDOCH.

Professors Laurence Hartley, David Leach and Jeffrey Coney all started at the University in the late 1970s and all remember Murdoch as small, with enthusiastic and friendly staff and students.

“The university was on a sand hill with the vet school and two to three other main buildings. I thought I’d arrived at a Legionnaires’ outpost,” Professor Leach said.

Professor Leach, who came to Murdoch from the UK, recounts the story of how he arrived at his office door to a sign saying a dugite was seen going under the door and not to enter. He had no idea what a dugite was.

Professor Hartley came to Murdoch in 1979, following 10 years as a UK Medical Research Council scientist and lecturer at Otago and Leicester University while Professor Coney started in 1977.

All agree the School and Murdoch have undergone significant changes in the past 30 years.

Professor Hartley said he would be working with former students on a research project for Main Roads WA and providing expert evidence for police.

Professor Coney, whose research has focused on higher level processes in language comprehension and reading processes, said he would turn his hand to writing a book or novel focusing on areas of psychology that pose fascinating questions to address.

“I think the enormous advantage of retirement is that it will allow me, for the first time in my life, to think about what I might like to do, without any necessity to earn a living from it,” Professor Coney said.

Professor Leach, who has expertise in developmental disabilities, autism, ADHD and anxiety, plans to start a private practice and complete three half-finished books and four research papers, as well as travel to China, North and South America and Northern Europe.
Two worlds brought to life in new novel

ANTONIO CASELLA’S NEW NOVEL AN OLIVE BRANCH FOR SANTE WAS AN ACHIEVEMENT ORIGINATING AT MURDOCH UNIVERSITY AS IT WAS WRITTEN AS PART OF HIS PH.D IN ENGLISH AND COMPARATIVE LITERATURE (2007).

Self published in January 2013, An Olive Branch for Sante is set in Australia and Sicily and follows the story of young Australian journalist Sara-Jane who goes to Sicily on assignment and discovers that she has a brother, Sante, living there. The novel explores cultural and sexual identity, buried memories, nostalgia, love and redemption.

Antonio was born in Italy and migrated to Australia as a 15 year-old. He has been writing since childhood and published his first novel in 1980.

Of his latest work he said: “At one level the novel can be seen as an attempt to cast a bridge between two countries in which I have lived and loved. A major theme of the novel is the formative power of past experience and of the environment in which we operate”.

A fresh look at Australian history


History of Australia - Revisited (Prestige Books 2013) is written using various primary and secondary sources and uses history to see the past in a new way. It aims, in simple language, to provide a sensitive, critical and readable history to appeal and challenge all sections of Australian society.

“My reason for writing the History of Australia—Revisited is to diffuse critical historical knowledge to others in a more innovative and different way than other Historians, including the present traces of the past,” says Jack.

“By reading this book, it is hoped that a variety of readers will pursue their interests in Australian History and thereby develop a conscious historical culture of their own.”


More information about Jack’s work can be found at http://www.members.optusnet.com.au/singh.jack/
HELP WITH COACHING KIDS

MURDOCH GRADUATE KELLY SUMICH’S NEW PUBLICATION, COACHING CHILDREN - SPORTS SCIENCE ESSENTIALS, IS THE FIRST IN AUSTRALIA SPECIFICALLY AIMED AT HELPING COMMUNITY COACHES AND FITNESS PROFESSIONALS DESIGN SAFE AND EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN.

Kelly hopes her book will “help parents, coaches and fitness professionals feel confident about their decisions related to children and exercise.

“A one-stop-shop with application to both individual and team activities, the book provides straightforward research-based advice on nutrition, and explains in clear terms, how to tailor exercise to address children’s social, physical and psychological needs,” she said.

Coaching Children - Sports Science Essentials was published by ACER press in May 2013; a timely resource considering the rise of obesity rates and the decline of physical activity in today’s society.

Kelly is the Director, Sports Science Education Institute in Perth and has a special interest in paediatric exercise.


A ‘ROLLERCOASTER RIDE’ OF A NOVEL

NICK VASEY, WHO GRADUATED WITH A BACHELOR OF COMMERCE IN 1989, PUBLISHED HIS FIRST NOVEL, ROPPONGI, IN JANUARY 2012. THE BOOK IS NAMED AFTER THE NIGHTLIFE DOMINATED TOKYO SUBURB, WHERE THE NOVEL IS PRIMARY BASED.

Nick spent time living in Roppongi and recalls; “I realised that although this ‘24/7 world’ of dealers, gangsters, models, dancers, hostesses, hustlers and partying was now like a second skin to me... by any conventional standard this type of lifestyle with these kinds of people, was extreme, to say the least!”

The novel has been extremely well-received since its publication with many 5-star reviews on Amazon.

“The novel is essentially me taking my best shot at trying to plunge the reader into the gritty reality of that alluring but dangerous world,” he said.

“Based on feedback and sales to date, I succeeded in doing that, not only with the ‘ex-Roppongi-folk’ who were actually there back in the day, but also with readers who had never even heard of Roppongi until they picked up my novel. Capturing the respect of both those groups, is the thing I am perhaps proudest of.”

More information about the novel can be found at www.roppongithenovel.com

A MERGING OF CULTURES THROUGH LITERATURE

POET, AUTHOR AND TRANSLATOR SUNIL GOVINNAGE MOVED TO PERTH FROM SRI LANKA IN THE 1980s AND, ACCORDING TO THE AUTHOR HIMSELF, HIS WORK REFLECTS MEMORIES AND NOSTALGIA FOR HIS HOMELAND AS WELL AS HIS DESIRE TO BE PART OF HIS NEW HOMELAND OF AUSTRALIA.

In the last two years Sunil Govinnage has published two new works; firstly Perth: My Village Down Under: A Collection of Australian Poetry in 2011, followed by The Black Australian: a novel in 2012 (both Nugegoda: Sarasavi Publishers).

“The notions of cultural otherness and difference, which are vitally connected to cultural identity, run like an underground stream throughout these stories,” said the Hawaii based academic Professor Wimal Dissanayake of Mr Govinnage’s work.

The Murdoch alumnus (Master of Arts in Science and Technology Policy in 1995) has a vast bibliography, having been writing in Sinhala since 1965 and English since 1989.

“One has only to glance at the contemporary Australian political landscape to realise the salience of otherness and difference,” reflects Professor Dissanayake.

“In his stories, Govinnage has sought to point out the importance of recognising differences among black Australians as a way of acquiring a more complex and nuanced understanding of black Australians.”
Marine Scientist wins scholarship

ALUMNI RELATIONS IS DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE THE INAUGURAL RECIPIENT OF THE MURDOCH UNIVERSITY ALUMNI ANNUAL APPEAL SCHOLARSHIP, FINAL YEAR MARINE SCIENCE AND JOURNALISM STUDENT NATASHA PROKOP.

The establishment of the Alumni Annual Appeal Scholarship has been made possible from the generous donations received from new and repeat alumni donors to the Alumni Annual Appeal over the last three years.

The scholarship, valued at $2,000, was awarded to Natasha at the Distinguished Alumni Awards annual dinner in July.

Natasha spoke of her gratitude at receiving the scholarship.

“I am so grateful to have received the inaugural 2013 Murdoch University Alumni Annual Appeal Scholarship. It allowed me to undertake a practical field unit in Tropical Marine Biology at Western Australia’s Ningaloo Reef. For this I thank all the generous alumni donors.”

Natasha was also keen to share some of her experiences in the colourful underwater world of Ningaloo in her blog:

“One thing they don’t mention when you are heading up to a ‘tropical reef’ (Coral Bay JUST squeezes in above the Tropic of Capricorn) is how cold the water is! Apparently it’s about 22°C up here but 29 marine science students were all wearing full length wetsuits when they first hopped in the water.”

Natasha’s Ningaloo Adventure blog can be found at:


Alumni Relations would also like to thank the generous alumni donors who made the Scholarship possible, and look forward to helping more students in need in the years to come.

Find out more about the Scholarship on the website:

http://our.murdoch.edu.au/Student-life/Finances/Undergrad-scholarships/Alumni/

Informal Chapter Snapshots

Murdoch University Singapore Alumni Chapter

The Murdoch University Alumni Singapore Chapter was re-established after a brief hiatus in August 2011 by several very enthusiastic Murdoch Alumni in Singapore. The objects of the Alumni Committee are to:

- Promote opportunities for networking and fostering social, professional and business relations among alumni.
- Provide opportunities for social gatherings.
- Provide a channel for communication between alumni and Murdoch University.
- Assist Murdoch University in the achievement of its objectives.

The Chapter members remember and relish the wonderful times they had with friends and teachers during their student days at Murdoch University campuses. Long-lasting friendships were made back then. Today, they catch up with friends, not only to talk about the good old times, but to share new interests and pursuits in life. The Chapter welcomes new members from around the globe to their family and helps them adjust to life in Singapore.

Murdoch University Singapore Alumni Contacts

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Telephone: +65 8113 1313

https://www.facebook.com/murdochalumni

Murdoch University Malaysia Alumni Chapter

Established over a decade ago and still going strong, the Murdoch University Malaysia Alumni Chapter is the oldest international chapter of Murdoch alumni. The Chapter hosts a range of activities for Malaysian based alumni including an annual Welcome Home High Tea, Professional Development events for returning graduates and regular family film days.

The Chapter has a vibrant network of alumni who meet regularly and work closely with the Alumni Relations office to provide continued support and opportunities for any alumni based in Malaysia.

Murdoch University Malaysia Alumni Contact

Adrian Ong
President
Email: adrianongleo@unifi.my
http://www.facebook.com/groups/6454647660/

International Chapter Snapshots

Murdoch University Dubai Alumni

Established formally in April this year, the Murdoch University Dubai Alumni Chapter is the newest Chapter in a growing list of groups and contacts for alumni right around the globe. The Chapter hopes to host a range of events in the coming months and is particularly keen to encourage alumni to participate in community engagement events and professional development activities.

If you’re an alumnus of any Murdoch University campus and currently based in Dubai or the United Arab Emirates, the new Committee would love to hear from you!

Murdoch University Dubai Alumni Contact

Michael Barry
Email: Michael.Barry@murdochdubai.ac.ae

Alumni Contacts

If you’re a graduate of any Murdoch University campus 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.

http://www.alumni-enews.murdoch.edu.au/2013/05/alumni-contacts/
One of my clear recollections was that the entire exercise of the first weeks of the new School of Law had a “new car smell”. That first lecture was conducted in the brand new (and if truth be told, not quite finished) Economics Commerce and Law Building, which formed what was then the southern-most boundary of the campus, save for thevet buildings way over to the east. The Law Collection, a section of the library, was brand new - it had been created by the kind donations of benefactors, most of which were law firms, and each of those benefactors was acknowledged in shiny new gilt letters on a glass entrance.

Professor Simmonds’ energy for the task at hand was freshly minted, and positively contagious. He talked about his aspirations for us, and for the School of Law. That first day, and the enthusiasm which Professor Simmonds generated in that first encounter, part-lecture and part-policy speech, has not faded from my memory.

It is now 20 years since that first class left Murdoch University’s School of Law and ventured into the workforce.

In 1993, Australia was locked in a recession with 11 per cent unemployment, a grim economic position for new entrants to the legal market. Except for the academic leading lights, our graduating class was openly concerned that we would not get jobs. My naive understanding when I enrolled was that we would all get jobs within the law, and the inclination of law firms not to hire was a grim reality check.

Remarkably, with a great deal of effort and lobbying of firms by Professor Simmonds, working in conjunction with Geraldine Byrne of the Law Society of Western Australia (WA), the vast majority of us who wanted to work in the law eventually did so.

The proliferation of law schools in WA since that time, and the current reality that most law graduates nowadays do not work in the law, has caused me to realise in recent years how very fortunate we were to be able to fulfil these ambitions.

The first class was reasonably diverse in character and outlook, and they have gone on to achieve much and do many interesting things.

At the risk of offending those I do not mention, I should note the careers of at least some. Tanya Aplin is now a Professor of Law at Kings College London. Daniel Mah works for SES Americom in Washington DC. Adam Bandt is the Greens’ first Member of Federal House of Representatives. Grant Gernhoefer is the General Manager of BWP Management Limited. Simone Muller is a native title expert taking a year off to live in Houston, Texas. Stephanie Unwin is General Manager, Strategy and Business Development at Verve Energy. Sonia Walker is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Law. Ian Campbell-Fraser is the Manager of the Native Title Unit in the Department of Sustainability and Environment in Victoria.

Many of us are now partners/directors / senior associates in law firms, or have migrated into senior in-house legal positions.

I’m very pleased that I am still in touch with many of the graduates from that first year. I know that I am not unusual in that, and I wonder if being in that first year created a lasting bond, or whether it was a natural outcome for all graduates of the School of Law.

If that first group has achieved much, we were assisted by great lecturers and tutors. We stretched the patience and tried to absorb their expertise of the likes of Michael Pendleton, Linda Jurevic, Gary Meyers, Hannes Schoombee, John Mugambwa, Neil McLeod, Gary Dean, and others.

Most of all, we benefitted from the vision, skill, and care of Professor (now Justice) Simmonds. If counted as a nominal member of that first class, he has been amongst the most successful of us, with his appointment to the bench of the Supreme Court of Western Australia in February 2004.

I am told he is still a strong supporter of the School of Law he founded, and his portrait sits in a proper place of honour in the lobby of the annex which now harbours the School of Law.

It would be remiss of me not to mention Murdoch Student Law Society. Founded in 1990 at Professor Simmonds’ urging, MSLS has been a hub of law student academic and social activity from the very beginning.

Sometimes controversial and occasionally very contentious in its activities, MSLS was an important part of student life for many of us in those first years. I am just as proud to have been an MSLS president as I am to be a Murdoch School of Law graduate (some of my fellow-graduates assert the novelty and pride of being MSLS president should really have worn off by now, but quite honestly, it hasn’t and it won’t).

It brings a keen sense of satisfaction to know that MSLS remains relevant and important to the life of law students at Murdoch University.

David Stewart is a director of Wrays Lawyers. He holds a Bachelor of Laws and a Masters of Laws (Intellectual Property) from Murdoch University, has been an occasional lecturer at Murdoch University in 2000, 2007, and 2012, and sits on the new External Advisory Board of Murdoch University’s School of Law.
Alumni tell their stories

ROHIT GUPTA
(BMCM 2012)
I graduated in 2011 with a double degree in Public Relations and Journalism and attended my grad ceremony in 2012 in Singapore. I am currently part of a small team helping set up Waggener Edstrom in India. It has been fun and a great learning experience coming back to India after 13 years to find so much has changed. I am happy to announce work is looking good, clients are coming through and drinks are cheap! A lot of what I had learnt at Murdoch is coming in handy and I am getting into the groove of Public Relations and all it has to offer.

CAROL PINTO
(MBA 2010)
I completed my MBA from Murdoch University, in Dubai, in 2010, which catapulted my career into a direction I never dreamed of. Soon after graduating, I worked for JC Decaux, the worlds top Out of Home Advertising company, and then worked as the Advertising Sales Manager for Martha Stewart’s ME magazines across the Middle East and Africa. But nothing felt good enough, so I returned to Murdoch where I discovered my true passion. I now lecture at Murdoch University, Dubai in the undergraduate program and was recently invited to deliver a talk at TEDx, on the future of education. You can watch the video at http://youtu.be/SpijkOZ4qw I doubt I would be here today, had it not been for Murdoch!

ALEX MARINI
(PC CERT IN POLICY STUDIES 2006)
After my graduation from Murdoch University, I received an urban planning international Masters in Italy and South America. I wrote a thesis in Mexico, worked in New Zealand and now am back in Italy where I promote a popular initiative in order to introduce direct democracy mechanism in the Autonomous Province of Trento. The initiative can be viewed at www.piodemocraziaintrentino.org

TERRY HOGAN
(BA ECON 1981)
I was already one-third through my teacher training when I began in 1976, doing my degree all part-time and some external. There weren’t many people around in ‘76 and the scuba club had 8 or so members. Once when Murdoch came to Churchlands to play football, there were only 14 players. I was on the Churchlands side of things and Murdoch was about to forfeit as they needed 15 on the field to have it considered a match. I agreed to stand in for Murdoch as I was a student at both, provided that I could stand on the wing and not have to do anything (motorbike injury in 1974). Everyone agreed, so I just stood out there and watched the game unfold around me, puffing away on a cigar (I stopped in 1997).

When I graduated from Teachers’ College (Churchlands) in 1977, I decided against teaching and instead joined the R&I Bank and continued at Murdoch.

I worked for three banks in total in my career, adding other postgraduate courses along the way. I had stints in Head Office departments in the R&I, then Corporate Banking with both the R&I and Westpac before joining the NAB.

I was a Business Banker with the NAB then finally a Financial Adviser. I retired early (as planned) at 58 and bought a yacht in Annapolis, MD. We have sailed our yacht down the East Coast of the US, across to the Bahamas, on to Bermuda, over the Atlantic to Portugal and are half-way into the Med, wintering in Tunisia before heading further east this season to Malta, Greece and Turkey.

My Murdoch degree was excellent for my banking career but nothing prepares you for crossing the Atlantic in a 42’ yacht. You just have to do it.

JEREMY MALCOLM
(LLB (Hons) AND B COM, 1994; PhD (LAW) 2008)
I was part of the first intake of law students to Murdoch in 1990. Because of a longstanding interest in computers, I would have taken a double-degree in computer science, but for two reasons. First, the only double-degree offered at Murdoch was in commerce; and second, I was no good at maths! Nevertheless after graduation, alongside my first job as a lawyer I started up an IT consultancy, which soon turned into a business.

By 2000, I was managing my own specialised IT law firm and the IT consultancy from the same premises, with staff of each business working side by side. In both capacities and through volunteer work, I became a well-known figure in Australia’s Internet and open source software communities. I then went back to Murdoch in 2005 to write my PhD thesis on the topic of Internet governance, and met the woman who is now my wife while we were both studying there! Since married life demanded a change of pace, I retired from my businesses and took the New York bar exam in the expectation of finding a new job in the United States. Instead, I ended up in Malaysia working for the NGO Consumers International, with responsibility for coordinating its global campaign “Consumers in the Digital Age”. In this role I travel around the world advocating for fairer laws and policies governing intellectual property, digital products and Internet services.

DEE MAREVIC
(BACHELOR OF SCIENCE PSYCHOLOGY 2007; POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA PSYCHOLOGY 2009)
I initially chose to study psychology more for personal interest than thinking about it as a career option. At the time I was more interested in my major Human Biology. I’ve found that my love for the science and study of psychology has often incorporated the biological perspective and I have been interested in topics like neuropsychology and biological psychology. So it’s been a fascinating journey of learning and discovery.

It was extremely challenging completing a degree and working at the same time but eventually I found myself at the end of it! And then unbelievably I decided to follow up and complete the fourth year of psychology with a view to doing further study and also to keep up with the accreditation guidelines of the industry. I really enjoyed my fourth year as I was involved in a very interesting research thesis project.
After graduating in 2009 I came back to Murdoch as an employee, working as a HR Project Officer in the Office of Human Resources. Since then I have engaged in interesting and varied work, in federal government, not for profit organisations and in the resources sector mostly in HR.

I am now pursuing a career in Organisational Psychology and am returning back to Murdoch to study a Postgraduate Diploma in Organisational Consultancy Psychology. My goal is to contribute to the work that Org Psychs do in Australia, modifying and re-inventing our work systems. I have a really special affiliation with Murdoch and have found the university to offer a very supportive study experience.

**Benedict Coyne**
(Bachelor of Arts in History and Environmental Ethics 2003)

I graduated from a Bachelor of Arts in History and Environmental Ethics at Murdoch University in 2003. I was awarded the Vice Chancellor’s Commendation for Academic Excellence (2003) and the CALM Environmental Award (2003).

I subsequently completed a graduate law degree at Southern Cross University, graduating in 2010 with first class honours and I was awarded the University Medal, the New South Wales Bar Associations Prizes for Ethics and the Philosophy of Law and the S & P Lawyers Prize for the Graduating Student with the highest academic results (2000).

In 2009 I secured an internship with the legal team at the Australian Human Rights Commission through the Aurora programme which was fantastic! That same year I represented Australia in the American Bar Association’s Louis M Brown International Client Counselling Competition which was held in Bangalore, India.

In 2011 I completed an Associateship with Justice Bromberg on the Federal Court in Melbourne which was supremely exciting and a great learning curve. I am now working as a class actions lawyer at Maurice Blackburn in Brisbane and I am a State Convenor and National Committee Member of Australian Lawyers for Human Rights (ALHR) which keeps me remarkably busy. I have just been accepted to into an MSt in International Human Rights Law at Oxford University which begins in October 2013 and which I am thoroughly chuffed about!!

**Colin Longworth**
(PG Dip Counselling 2009)

Since graduating in 2009, I have continued to work in a variety of counselling related positions. This includes co-facilitating groups with perpetrators of domestic violence, as well as groups in the alcohol and other drugs fields, within a prison setting. In both settings I work with mandated clients. This is in addition to my current one-to-one counselling with clients. Although not a direct result of the Postgraduate Diploma of Counselling I am now a fully registered Psychologist (I started this registration process and got some of the required practical experience, while studying at Murdoch.) I am now working in my own private psychology practice, in three locations (One of them in a nearby country town.)

In terms of other skills related to the course at Murdoch, I was also in 2011, awarded Honorary Life Membership of Gay and Lesbian Community Services of WA, in recognition of my 30 years plus of volunteering on the organisation’s volunteer peer-based counselling and information phone line. My experience was a precursor to both my Psychology studies and the Postgraduate studies at Murdoch.

**Megan Cannon**
(BCom 2000)

After graduating I went on to do my CPA with a strong focus on taxation. I worked for smaller practises in Perth for about 6 years before joining RSM Bird Cameron in Geraldton. So after almost 10 years in tax I decided it was time for a change - time to move into management accounting. I worked for the Geraldton Fishermans co-op for a while and learnt a lot about the management accounting role and crayfish. From there I moved to my current role as an accountant for WBHO Civil, an earth moving company. My main focus is on the plant accounting and looking after all admin aspects of plant from the massive excavators to the small utes. Quite a demanding role but I still enjoy it. Although nothing was quite as good as the uni days.

**Alan de Souza**
(BCom 2013)

I began my journey with Murdoch in the second semester of 2008. As I worked full-time as a Senior Manager, I decided to sign up for just one unit – dipping my toe into the unchartered waters of higher-learning. This unit was “Structure Thought and Reality”. The coordinator delivered his lectures very passionately and despite having been away from study for almost 28 years (Yes – I was a very mature student), I soon found myself enjoying the Uni experience so much that I took another Unit and did so for the rest of my time at Murdoch.

This eventually led me to my very last unit in Semester 1 of 2013 – “Knowledge and Organisational Learning”, or sometimes just referred to as Knowledge Management by me in absent-mindedness. In reflection over these last 5 years I think it is bittersweet that I began with a unit that made me re-think how I thought about things such as “Truth” and ended up with how knowledge and learning can be ‘managed’ as a means for competitive advantage. Personally I am optimistic that this journey, which coincided with me recently parting ways with the organisation which shared some of these experiences with me, will also see me with a competitiveness that I did not possess before – when there was perhaps less structure and thought to my reality.

**Duncan Edmond**
(BAST 1994)

I graduated from Murdoch with a Bachelor of Asian Studies, majoring in Japanese. I left Murdoch, went directly to live in Japan for 2 and a half years, did various things (learnt Aikido, worked as a translator/proofer for Toppan Printing in Tokyo), then moved to Sydney in April 1996 to be an international flight attendant with Qantas Airways for 7 years.

In June 2002 I quit Qantas to live again in Japan where I have been ever since. During this time I have managed a language school, been the Japan manager/consultant for an online educational firm, taught cultural understanding at over 60 Kawasaki City Elementary Schools, and currently help manage a couple online businesses, while also teaching at a semi elite local high school.

For 10 years I have been very involved in local government (Kawasaki City) volunteer work, as a semi government official. Our group has helped change actual laws in Japan, and is respected by the Australian Embassy and other country delegations. The group is called, Kawasaki City Representative Assembly For Foreign Residents’. http://www.city.kawasaki.jp/en/page/0000037241.html
Dr Jeffrey Wilson’s research into the resource politics of Asian economies is world class. One of his areas of expertise is assisting the Australian government to develop its valuable resource relationship with Japan.

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