

news

December 2016

> from the University of South Australia



BUSINESS

Sowing the seeds to start-up success on ICC's first birthday

A trio of student start-ups, showcasing UniSA entrepreneurial talent, have been named the latest Venture Catalyst winners as UniSA's Innovation and Collaboration Centre (ICC) celebrated its first anniversary this month. [more](#)



COMMUNITY

SA's first University-based midwifery service now open

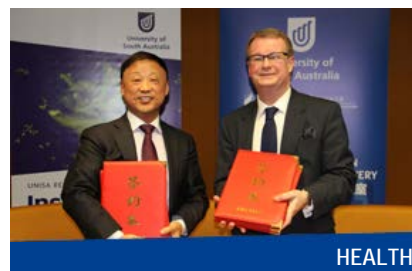
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Great expectations: UniSA launches SA's first University-based midwifery service

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by Sophia Moshakis and Mary-Jane McArdle



COMMUNITY

Midwife Angela Brown with an expectant mother Brooke Brown.

UniSA has launched a South Australian first with a new [midwifery clinic](#) open to the public to provide local families with the latest in evidence-based care and offer students significant practical learning opportunities.

Expectant mums are due to benefit from the ground-breaking clinic at UniSA's City East campus, which is the State's first University-based midwifery service.

Doors opened on November 29 with an open day where visitors could talk to the midwives, meet midwifery students and discover more about the range of services on offer to support women through their pregnancy and post-childbirth.

Expectant mothers and families dropped in and were excited to get involved in the information session. There were educational videos on display, as well as hands-on activities to coach mothers on how to care for their babies.

UniSA's Head of School for Nursing and Midwifery, Professor Carol Grech says the clinic will allow women to conveniently access antenatal and postnatal maternity care in the Adelaide CBD.

"The appeal for this type of clinic is growing as a result of the increased demand for midwifery-led models of care. We can now offer women and their families an important service in the CBD that they may otherwise not be able to access conveniently," Prof Grech says.



"The clinic also benefits UniSA's academic and clinical midwives by providing a practice environment they can contribute to in positive ways including opportunities for faculty practice and research.

Program Director of UniSA's Bachelor of Midwifery Dr Lois McKellar (far left) and Head of School for Nursing and Midwifery Professor Carol Grech (far right) are pictured with midwifery students Anna Powell and Kayla Kemp at the clinic launch.

"Our midwifery students are also able to work closely under the guidance of experienced midwives in a community setting, giving them a valuable hands-on learning experience."

The clinic's development has been guided and directed by Dr Lois McKellar, Program Director of UniSA's Bachelor of Midwifery who says the clinic can respond to local community needs by increasing access and choice in maternity care.

"The Midwifery Clinic will provide families with access to midwives during pregnancy and also during the six weeks after birth, revolutionising how Australian families start their parenting journey and contributing to healthy and resilient communities in Australia."

Dr McKellar says the midwives working in the clinic have extensive experience across all aspects of pregnancy and parenting care, with certified Lactation Consultants who provide breastfeeding support as well as midwives who can offer hypnobirthing education in preparation for labour and birth.

This clinic will add another dimension to UniSA's midwifery education, which is already highly centred around opportunities for students to learn firsthand about women's experiences during pregnancy, birth and the first few weeks after birth, through placements and UniSA's Continuity of Care Experience (COCE).

Second year midwifery student Jessica Begley says the experience of meeting expectant mothers through the COCE program has been her favourite part of the degree to date.

"So far I've 'caught' – as midwives like to say, 'postmen deliver things, you don't 'deliver' babies' or 'we don't take credit for what the women have done' – 15 beautiful babies and been present for another 10 instrumental deliveries or C-sections," Jessica says.

"I really enjoy following the pregnancy and learning the different care models for different hospitals, doctors and conditions, and getting to know women and their families.

"I think it's the most effective way of helping us understand real women-centred care and it's also just fun."

Clinic midwife Kate Bergamsco says students will benefit from performing health checks and meeting potential mums who could be continuity of care clients.

Bergamsco says the service also enables women who are giving birth at a public hospital the opportunity to receive continuity of care throughout pregnancy and after birth.

"In most other public models of care women often see different health care providers at each visit, but here at the clinic they can see the same midwife," she says.

Labor State Member for Elder Annabel Digance, who has worked closely with UniSA regarding the clinic's development, described it as a 'ground-breaking initiative'.

"The UniSA clinic could target expectant mothers who might otherwise not have access to midwifery-led models of care," Digance says.

"These care models show better well-being outcomes for mothers and babies."

The clinic is open on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 12.30pm – 5.00pm at UniSA's City East campus, Bonython Jubilee Building off Frome Road. Appointments can be made by phoning 08 8302 2097.

Parking is available directly outside the clinic entrance and patients will receive a parking permit on arrival at the clinic reception.

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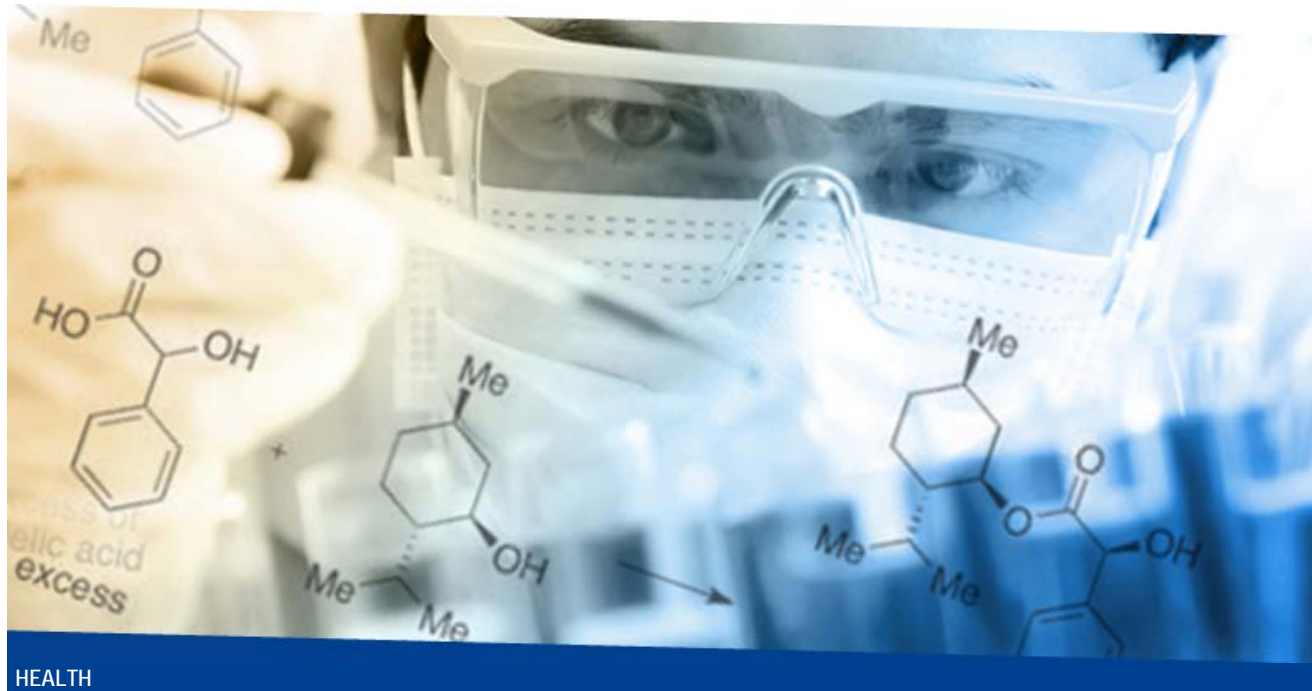


University of
South Australia

UniSA secures over \$13 million for health and medical research

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by Michèle Nardelli



HEALTH

UniSA researchers have been awarded over \$13 million to fund a range of projects looking at everything from genetics and personalised medicine, to cancer treatments, wound and bone healing, and the role of social technologies in healthy behaviour.

In an increasingly competitive arena, UniSA has received 14 Project Grants and two Career Development projects in the latest round of funding announced this month by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). This is in addition to four successful Early Career Fellowships and two Research Fellowships announced just last month.

UniSA Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research, Professor Tanya Monro says the grants represent the steady increase in world class medical and health research being undertaken at UniSA, driven by an array of brilliant and highly dedicated researchers.

“All of these projects are clearly focused on finding new techniques, therapies, treatments and causes for some of the key health challenges we face – cancer, diabetes, asthma, arthritis, obesity, and the fundamental genetic research that will help pinpoint causes and cures for a whole host of diseases,” Prof Monro says.

“Each year researchers have to prove the worth of their projects and earn support for them in what is an increasingly competitive arena. We are delighted that so many of our submissions have been successful because it means they can continue to lead their important health research here in South Australia.”

A full range of projects undertaken at UniSA and SA Pathology’s Centre for Cancer Biology have been successful – including research into chemo resistance in lung cancer treatment, an exploration of the role of mast cells in anaphylaxis and asthma and research into inhibiting metastasis in childhood neuroblastoma.

Other project grants include new research using CRISP-R/TALEN gene editing technology to give insights into the biology of newly identified epilepsy genes so that diagnostics and novel drug treatments can be improved and developed.

Career Development Grants were also received for a range of projects from how online interventions including social media may promote behavioural change to encourage physical activity and healthy lifestyles, to the development and delivery of a new generation of biomedical devices that can control infections, inflammation and foreign body response.

Early Career Fellowship grants will support research to develop a computational method for characterising cancer sub-types and work that unpacks who and when and how to treat prostate cancer to ensure the best outcomes.

Further details of projects that successfully achieved funding through the NHMRC can be found [here](#).



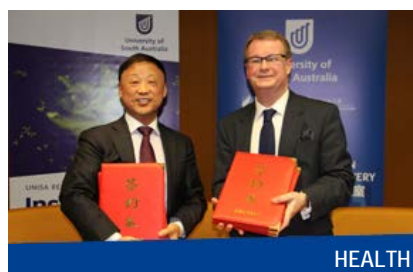
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Joint laboratory to fast track new cancer drugs

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by Michèle Nardelli



HEALTH

UniSA has joined forces with China's Qianhong-LeSun Pharma group to establish a multi-million dollar Sino-Australian Joint Laboratory in Innovative Drug Discovery to fast track the development of new treatments for cancer.

Under the agreement signed in Adelaide this month, Changzhou Qianhong Biopharma Co Ltd and its subsidiary, LeSun Pharmaceutical Ltd, will provide funding and additional in-kind support towards drug discovery programs.

Led by UniSA's Shudong Wang, an internationally renowned Professor of Medicinal Chemistry and a pioneer in kinase targeted drug discovery, the UniSA team will identify pre-clinical drug candidates.

The partnership will spearhead the commercialisation of drug candidates for global markets.

President of Qianhong-LeSun Pharma Group, Yaofang Wang says he is delighted with the agreement for this important collaboration.

"Our partnership with world-class institutes that have innovative drug discovery programs is a long-term win-win, which will enhance our international vision and our development and commercial capabilities," Wang says.

"We are thrilled with the opportunity to work with the University of South Australia's highly regarded scientists to develop important new therapies for cancer patients."

UniSA Vice Chancellor Professor David Lloyd says this is another example of the University's strong focus on enterprising partnerships that have high potential to deliver real benefits to society.

"We are really energised by the commitment we have received from our Chinese partners at Qianhong-LeSun Pharma Group because it reflects the excellence of the work we are doing," Prof Lloyd says.

“This is the very best of partnerships because of our shared goal to accelerate innovative drug research that will have a significant impact on how we fight the disease and improve the outcomes of millions of sufferers.

“I am delighted with this important new R&D investment and partnership.

“Under the excellent leadership of Prof Wang we also hope to encourage more talented researchers to join the laboratory and bring their skills to the challenge of developing more effective treatments for cancer.”

About Changzhou Qianhong Biopharma Co. Ltd.

Changzhou Qianhong Biopharma Co. Ltd (QIANHONG) is one of China's leading biochemical pharmaceutical enterprises in polysaccharide and protein-based drugs, and has multiple products with GMP certification from USA, EU, Australia and other countries. The company is listed in Shenzhen Stock Exchange, and has a net profit of RMB 267 million in 2015. In addition to its strong manufacture and drug distribution capabilities, QIANHONG has two subsidiary companies for innovative drug research and development - while Jiangsu ZonHon Biopharma Institute Inc. focuses on bio-pharmaceutical drugs LeSun Biopharmaceuticals Co. Ltd.(LeSun) develops small molecule targeted therapeutics.

About Changzhou Le Sun Pharmaceuticals Co., Ltd.

Changzhou Le Sun Pharmaceuticals Co., Ltd. (LESUN) is a biopharmaceutical company developing oral therapies for the treatment of cancer and other serious diseases. LESUN is advancing a pipeline of small molecule drugs designed to block the production or action of proteins or genes that are critical for cancer cell proliferation and survival. In addition to the strategic development of innovative pharmaceuticals, LESUN has strong capabilities in formulation, bioanalysis and API production.

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From the Chancellery

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INSIDE UNISA

What an extraordinary year this has been. We've talked a lot about 25th birthdays and cakes and candles and while all of those things were being dutifully celebrated and eaten and blown out, an enormous amount of real work was going on.

Not for nothing are we considered one of the best young universities in the world. QS rated us one place better than from early in the year; *Times Higher Education* moved us two bands up and that was in a much larger pool of universities. Thompson Reuters rates us as one of Asia's most innovative universities and we were the youngest Australian university to make the Nature Index 2016 Rising Stars listing for the Asia Pacific region.

All of those gains are due to the excellent teaching and research that is carried out at this university. In 2016 as we graduated our 150,000th student, we were still considered the best place to study in the State if getting a full-time job is your aim. *The Good Universities Guide 2017* says so. Our research has attracted many millions in grants from various agencies keen to support enterprise and energy in finding solutions to the world's problems, and multiple new business partners who are keen to go on the journey with us. One of the most exciting is Calvary Hospital with whom we are creating a new UniSA Clinical School to further expand health education and research opportunities.

We also created closer ties with Asia, signing several drug development agreements and launched a hub for Korean culture, business and language education, the King Sejong Institute, the only one to be awarded in Australia in 2016 and only one of nine to be awarded worldwide.

None of this would have been possible without the people we've educated and those we've employed.

Amongst the people that we have educated, one stands head and shoulders above everyone else. Alumnus Andrew Pridham gifted us with a cheque for \$5 million to go towards construction of our new Great (now Pridham) Hall. It was the largest single philanthropic gift we have ever been given. Andrew is now the inaugural member of the UniSA College of Benefactors and we honoured him, along with four other alumni, at our 2016 Alumni Awards night. Dean Brown, Penny Wong, Janine Mohamad and Angelica Cheung each, in their own

ways, have made enormous contributions to the community and we are very proud to have helped develop them as the talented and inspiring people they are.

As for the people whom we have employed, each and every one of you has helped make this University the innovator that it has become. We sought your advice again in our second Unijam, and again you shared your vision for the future of your University. The three topics that most engaged you were engaging with students and communities, developing a culture of excellence and commitment, and educating exceptional graduates.

You should be very proud of yourselves. I am. And I wish you every good wish for enjoying yourselves over the holiday period. Stay safe and I will see you in the new year.

Professor David Lloyd
Vice Chancellor and President
Chair of the Australian Technology Network of Universities

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AWARDS

UniSA graduate named as SA's Australian of the Year for 2016

Global dementia advocate and UniSA graduate Kate Swaffer has been named as South Australia's Australian of the Year for 2016.

Diagnosed with early onset dementia at age 49 in 2008, Kate has worked tirelessly to challenge the discrimination and stigma faced by people with dementia and to promote adequate facilities for younger people with the disease.

Kate holds a Bachelor of Arts (Writing and Creative Communication), and Bachelor of Psychology – both from UniSA.

As Chair and co-founder of Dementia Alliance International, Kate is a voice for people with the disease both in Australia and around the world.

In 2016, she published the book *What the hell happened to my Brain – Living Beyond Dementia*, which gives readers an insight into her experiences and calls for change to improve the lives of people with dementia.

The national awards will be announced on January 25, 2017 in Canberra.

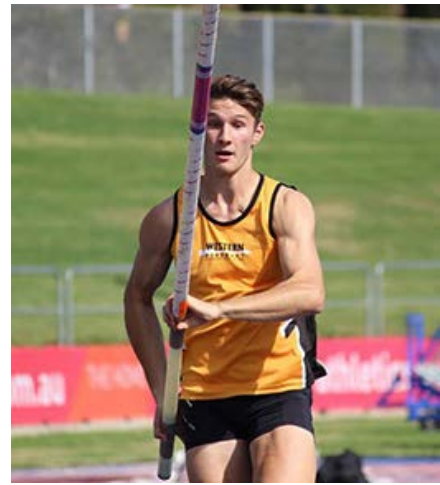
SASI award tops off dream year for UniSA student

UniSA student and Olympic pole vaulter Kurtis Marschall has taken out the South Australian Sports Institute (SASI) Young Male Athlete of the Year award for 2016.

Kurtis, a second year Human Movement student, wore the green and gold at this year's Rio Olympics, clearing 5.6 metres and narrowly missing the men's pole vault final on a countback.

The 19 year-old set a new Australian Under-20 record of 5.7m at a meet in Mannheim, Germany in June to book his place at the games. This Olympic qualifying vault was 15cm higher than his personal best.

Winning the SASI award topped off a very successful year in sport for



Kurtis Marschall. Photo courtesy of Athletics South Australia.

Kurtis.

“To win an award like this is such a great honour. It makes me feel so great that my hard work and dedication to my sport is paying off,” Kurtis says.

“It feels really good to be respected by all of my idols in the SASI community and I couldn't be happier with what I have achieved this year.

“My next goal for my pole vaulting career is to qualify for the 2017 IAAF World Championships in London, which will be a good stepping stone on the way to the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast in 2018, followed by hopefully another Olympic berth in Tokyo in 2020.”

UniSA's 'New Colombians' work and study in the Asia-Pacific

Three UniSA students will have invaluable work and study opportunities in the Asia Pacific region after gaining support from the Federal Government's New Colombo Plan (NCP) Scholarship program for 2017.

Tristan Winters, Hannah Kemp and Kogo Fujiki were all successful in gaining scholarships for the 2017 program. Tristan will study and work in construction management in Malaysia while Hannah and Kogo have opportunities in the Korean tourism and event management sector, and in Pacific Islands development respectively. Tristan was also awarded the special honour of 2017 New Colombo Plan Fellow for Malaysia.



Federal Minister for Education and Training Simon Birmingham with UniSA student Tristan Winters, Minister for Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop, UniSA students Hannah Kemp and Kogo Fujiki, and UniSA Deputy Vice Chancellor: External Relations & Strategic Projects, Nigel Relph.

A Bachelor of Construction Management and Economics (Honours) student, Tristan was the highest ranked of all NCP Scholars heading to Malaysia in 2017 and will now undertake two semesters of study at the University of Malaya, before an internship with a prominent construction firm in Kuala Lumpur.

Entering construction management after a career as a lawyer, Tristan says he is passionate about making the most of the many opportunities the NCP Scholarship in Malaysia will provide.

“I'm so grateful to be supported, to be able to have this experience, and will use it to further enhance the important multi-lateral social, political and economic relationships between Australia, Malaysia and the Asia-Pacific region,” he says.

Meanwhile, Hannah will be heading to Korea in mid-2017 to undertake studies and an internship relating to her business double degree in Marketing, and Tourism and Event Management.

She will be studying at Sookmyung Women's University, strengthening institutional links with UniSA by supporting research activities and facilitating a study tour for local students to travel to South Australia.

Fellow scholarship recipient Kogo is studying a Bachelor of Journalism and Bachelor of International Studies and will undertake his study and internship in Fiji.

Kogo has a long history of engagement with Fiji and is looking forward to gaining a deeper appreciation of Fijian culture and language.

Due to a keen interest in Pacific Islands regionalism and promoting development in the Pacific, he is anticipating that his internship at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat will kick-start his career in the region.

UniSA Deputy Vice Chancellor: External Relations & Strategic Projects, Nigel Relph, congratulated the NCP scholars, and highlighted the benefits of these international internships.

“The unique opportunities created through the New Colombo Plan enable our student scholars to gain valuable experiences of living, working and learning in the Asia-Pacific, strengthening their knowledge and skills and their engagement with business and industry at an international level,” Mr Relph says.

The NCP Scholarship is the Australian Government’s flagship scholarship program to give high-achieving young Australian undergraduates the opportunity for an immersive experience in the Asia-Pacific region.

APPOINTMENTS

Autonomous Systems Professor to lead UniSA’s School of Engineering

Former Director of the Australian Research Centre for Aerospace Automation (ARCAA), Professor Duncan Campbell (pictured right) is the new Head of UniSA’s School of Engineering.

Prof Campbell joins UniSA from Queensland University of Technology (QUT) where he was Professor in Robotics and Autonomous Systems, and also served as Director of QUT’s ARCAA for five years.

As an expert adviser on policy, legislation and developmental roadmaps related to unmanned aircraft systems and drone technology, Prof Campbell was also the leader for the recently completed Project ResQu, a two-year, \$7 million collaborative research partnership between QUT, CSIRO, Boeing Research & Technology Australia, Insitu Pacific Ltd and the Queensland State Government.

Project ResQu fast-tracked research focusing on the enabling technologies and the regulatory environment toward the routine operation of unmanned aircraft.

With grant funding of more than \$11 million over the past decade, Prof Campbell’s research focus has largely centred on unmanned aerial systems across areas including airspace integration, enabling technologies and biosecurity.

Professor Simon Beecham, Pro Vice Chancellor: Information Technology, Engineering and the Environment (ITEE) at UniSA says Prof Campbell would bring a wealth of expertise and leadership to the role.

“Professor Campbell’s extensive experience and knowledge within the field of engineering are matched by his skills in driving educational practice and research that connects strongly with industry and delivers real world outcomes,” Prof Beecham says.

Prof Campbell says he is “thrilled” to be taking up the new role with UniSA.

“I recognise the greater potential of the School of Engineering and the many opportunities that lay before it. With the commitment of UniSA to engineering and aviation, I look forward to very exciting times ahead,” Prof Campbell says.

Mars funds Australia-based Chair in Marketing Science

Mars Incorporated, manufacturer of some of the world’s favourite brands (M&Ms, Snickers etc.) and one of the world’s largest advertisers, has announced it will fund a new Chair at UniSA’s [Ehrenberg-Bass Institute](#).

Professor Magda Nenycz-Thiel has this month taken up the role of Mars Professor of Marketing, bringing an impressive research record to the role and a deep understanding of the marketing philosophy at Mars.

Chief Marketing and Customer Officer for Mars Andrew Clarke said he was enthusiastic about continuing the long-standing partnership with the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute.

“Together we are able to bring meaningful knowledge, research and evidence-based marketing to support our brand growth agenda,” Clarke



Professor Magda Nenycz-Thiel and Andrew

says.

Clarke.

Prof Nenycz-Thiel will provide thought leadership to Mars, academic peer review to assure research quality, and will support the development of superior marketing capability among Mars' Associates.

"Mars has a long record of global brand building, in no small part due to its innovative approach to marketing," Prof Nenycz-Thiel says.

"The relationship offers UniSA students and researchers a bird's eye view of the dynamic impact of marketing science on some of the best loved brands in the world today."

UniSA Vice Chancellor Professor David Lloyd says the news reaffirms the University's values of innovation and global engagement.

"Engaging with industry in this way is the greatest validation of UniSA's role as a university of enterprise," Prof Lloyd says.

"To have a household name such as Mars recognise and augment the world-leading research of our staff at the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute through the creation of this new chair is a wonderful outcome."

New Regional Manager for Mount Gambier

Nationally awarded education leader Mr Ian McKay has been appointed as UniSA's new Regional Manager: Mount Gambier.

Most recently the Principal and CEO of King's College in Warrnambool, McKay's impressive career includes more than 30 years serving regional and rural communities across three states. He has worked in both the Government and non-Government sectors in roles spanning early childhood to adult education.

McKay has also been involved in international research activity including a joint Harvard University/Independent Schools Victoria project focused on innovative education leadership in Europe and the United States.

Pro Vice Chancellor Student Engagement and Equity Dr Laura-Anne Bull says McKay has made extensive contributions and built valuable partnerships throughout the communities where he has lived and worked.

"Ian's experience will see a refocus of regional campus leadership where he will work with key partners to reinvigorate and diversify the role of our campus across the Limestone Coast in teaching, research and community engagement," Dr Bull says.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Farewell to HR director Ruth Blenkiron

Ruth Blenkiron has been farewelled as the Executive Director of Human Resources at UniSA after more than eight years in the role.

During her time at the University, Ruth was responsible for all Human Resource functions including organisational development, payroll and superannuation – managing all aspects of HR for about 6,700 academic and professional staff.

UniSA Vice Chancellor Professor David Lloyd says that for over eight and a half years Ruth has been central to the success of this University.

"Recruit hard and manage easy is one of Ruth's oft quoted mantras and her job has made our jobs so much easier. Her presence, her wit and her poise have enriched us immeasurably," Prof Lloyd says.

Indeed Ruth says one of her more recent achievements – establishing a centralised recruitment service in HR – has led to UniSA being in a better position to monitor who wants to work here and why.

"One of the main attributes stressed at recruitment is trusted, authentic and self-aware – that awareness goes to the heart of job fit and understanding what UniSA stands for, and what we expect from our staff," Ruth says.

"Both parties are investing in their future so we are not just filling a vacancy; we are recruiting for job and organisational fit and a professional relationship where people are aligned to who and what we are."

Ruth admits that getting that right is tough indeed, but feedback from recent recruits indicates that "new staff



UniSA Vice Chancellor Professor David Lloyd, Provost and Chief Academic Officer Professor Allan Evans and outgoing Executive Director of Human Resources Ruth Blenkiron, with Chief Marketing and Communications Officer Alan Brideson who was MC at Ruth's farewell event this month.

understand what we stood for well before they came and we understood more clearly what we were getting at the point of signing the contract”.

“This is the holy grail of recruitment and as Human Resources increases our sophistication in this space, we will see greater alignment between expectation and reality; on both sides of the employment proposition,” she says.

Provost and Chief Academic Officer Professor Allan Evans also spoke at Ruth’s farewell and says she embodies the UniSA attributes – she is someone who provides solutions, has initiative and delivers results, communicates with impact, leads and works well with others, and is trusted, authentic and self-aware.

“Ruth is all these things and more,” Prof Evans says. “I’ve been fortunate enough to work alongside Ruth for all of her years at UniSA and have witnessed first-hand the massive impact she’s had on the culture of our workplace and the care and support she has provided to so many.

“She is a wonderful spirit who has certainly put far more into us than she has put into herself.”

Reflecting upon her time at the University, Ruth says eight years is enough time for any one leader to exert influence over the people-side of the business.

“Fresh eyes are fresh ideas, greater creativity and no amount of wisdom or experience in an institution this young, can take that place,” she says.

“We have come a long way fast – to quote (former Vice Chancellor) Peter Høj – *sleep faster* – the poor man, he never did live that down – the remarkable escalation to being ‘the best’ has been built on the extraordinary talent, allegiance and hard work of our people – the willingness and determination to be the best we can be.

“So the next phase will be built on the collective strength of those who have come before and those whom remain.

“I can’t resist a last piece of advice.... Be fierce in your protection of this cooperative strength, preserve the egalitarianism that allows the *fleet of foot* attitude and guard against the erosion of our people’s generosity of spirit, by those who have no place here with their own individual hubris.”

As [announced in UniSA News last month](#), following Ruth’s retirement, Jane Booth has been appointed to the new position of Executive Director: People, Talent and Culture.

Natural and Built Environments Research Centre launch

UniSA has launched the Natural and Built Environments Research Centre (NBERC) to drive interdisciplinary research into key environmental and sustainability issues.

UniSA Vice Chancellor Professor David Lloyd says the Centre – based at Mawson Lakes campus – represents an even sharper focus on the environment and the relationships between both built and natural landscapes, and the social and economic factors at play, as we plan for a climate-changed future.

Pro Vice Chancellor of UniSA’s Division of Information Technology, Engineering and the Environment, Professor Simon Beecham, says the NBERC will provide research training, specialist interdisciplinary research and consulting outcomes across the four research strands of Natural and Built Environments Education, Environmental Stewardship, Smart and Healthy Communities and Water and Natural Resources.

“More than 50 full-time academic staff and 100 PhD students will be engaging in internationally recognised leading edge research into sustaining and enhancing our natural environments and the development of progressive built environments that support the well-being of communities all over the world,” Prof Beecham says.

The Natural and Built Environments Research Centre collaborates with the UniSA Future Industries Institute (FII), the Barbara Hardy Institute, the UniSA School of Engineering and School of Information Technology and Mathematical Sciences, where technologies, skills and expertise are complementary.

The NBERC also has two significant testing facilities that support the needs of industry, government agencies and the wider community.

“With the assistance of \$1.63 million of funding provided by the Federal Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, UniSA has created a world class facility for flow measurement and research - the Australian Flow



Pro Vice Chancellor of UniSA’s Division of Information Technology, Engineering and the Environment Professor Simon Beecham.

Management Group (AFMG, formerly known as the Australian Irrigation and Hydraulics Testing Facility),” Prof Beecham says.

“The Structural Materials Assemblies Group also delivers independent specialist testing and research on structures, concrete technology, construction materials and geotechnical services.”

New technology centre opened at Mawson Lakes

A new Manufacturing Technologies Centre has been opened at UniSA’s Mawson Lakes campus, providing businesses with access to the state’s best researchers, financial institutions and global supply chains to help them grow.

The \$1.2 million [Manufacturing Technologies Centre](#) (MTC) is part of the Northern Economic Plan, a blueprint for a prosperous northern Adelaide, focussed on creating jobs and empowering local communities.

It will assist businesses, at no cost, to identify methods by which they can adopt priority technology areas including additive manufacturing, advanced materials, phototonics, robotics and automation and big data.

Working closely with South Australia’s three main universities, as well as others interstate and overseas, the MTC will be a centrepiece where industry can develop collaborative alliances and overcome barriers to adopting new technology.

UniSA Vice Chancellor Professor David Lloyd says the University’s Mawson Lakes campus is the perfect location for this new centre.

“We have longstanding links with industry and manufacturing going back to the very roots of the University, particularly in Adelaide’s North,” Prof Lloyd says.

“The new centre is set to become a showcase of collaborative practice at its best, with research, industry, education and government working together to create outcomes that will have an ongoing benefit to South Australia and its industries.”

Upon opening the centre, Minister for Manufacturing and Innovation Kyam Maher says South Australia’s economy is moving towards a high-value, high-tech future that will pose many challenges as the manufacturing industry evolves.

“With change comes opportunity and we need to take bold actions, adopt new ways of doing things and use advanced technologies to build globally competitive, high-value firms and access new global markets,” Minister Maher says.

“The Manufacturing Technologies Centre is part of our Northern Economic Plan to unite government, industry, education and the community to work towards a prosperous northern Adelaide.”

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Sowing the seeds to start-up success on ICC's first birthday

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by Will Venn



BUSINESS

Venture Catalyst winners Migel Tissera, Daniel Padilla and Jhordany Rodriguez from Analytix, Lindon Lark, from Snake Oil Tonics and John Kellet from MAATSUYKER.

A trio of student start-ups, showcasing UniSA entrepreneurial talent, have been named the latest Venture Catalyst winners as UniSA's Innovation and Collaboration Centre (ICC) celebrated its first anniversary this month.

The ICC hosted the Venture Catalyst Awards Ceremony on December 8 and reflected upon its first year successes as a Centre, creating new jobs and supporting 14 start-up companies.

The latest three start-ups to secure seed funding through the SA Government and UniSA partnered Venture Catalyst initiative were MAATSUYKER (\$50,000), Analytix Software (\$50,000) and Snake Oil Tonics (\$33,000).

The latest award winners announced this month were:

MAATSUYKER is a luxury wool men's apparel brand which is expected to launch in April next year. Maatsuyker has innovations in product and service delivery, having developed key supply chain partners in Australia and overseas.

Pictured right: John Kellet and Natalie Skubel from MAATSUYKER.



Analytix Software is a cloud based machine learning company providing technology solutions to meet industry needs, supporting companies to make use of existing data for more effective decision making.

Pictured right: Jhordany Rodriguez, Migel Tissera and Daniel Padilla from Analytix.



Snake Oil Tonics produces a bespoke tonic syrup, using Cinchona based cordial, which will enable consumers to tailor drinks to their own taste. The product is especially designed to complement and enhance the world's premium gins.



Pictured right: Lindon Lark, from Snake Oil Tonics.

UniSA Vice Chancellor, Professor David Lloyd congratulated this year's Venture Catalyst winners and spoke of the value of the ICC as a Centre dedicated to help start-ups prosper.

"The products and services being created by these start-up companies are wide ranging and demonstrative of the resourceful, innovative, and entrepreneurial skills of our students as they shape the start-up landscape," Prof Lloyd says.

"Their early stage success has been recognised with the award of seed funding and with opportunities to develop their ideas in an environment designed to accelerate creative thinking into commercial reality.

"That environment is the Innovation and Collaboration Centre, whose first year success has seen it become the go-to place to incubate innovative ideas and facilitate new business growth."

Jasmine Vreugdenburg, the ICC Manager, described the Centre's first year as an exciting and opportune time to spearhead innovation, entrepreneurship and business growth.

"Over the last year the ICC has facilitated, supported and driven a number of entrepreneurial and external engagement activities," Ms Vreugdenburg says.

"As a result the ICC is already gaining a reputation as a place to engage and collaborate, to explore new ideas for business, supporting SME innovation and providing a pipeline to commercialisation opportunities."

The ICC was launched in November 2015 as a strategic partnership between UniSA, the South Australian Government and Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) to support technology-based incubation and business growth.

Venture Catalyst is a collaboration between UniSA and the South Australian Government, supporting student led start-ups by providing up to \$50,000 to the new enterprise as a grant. The scheme targets current and recent graduates who have a high tolerance for risk and an idea for a new business venture that is both novel and scalable. Each of the Venture Catalyst funded companies is now eligible to receive mentoring and support through the ICC to help develop their products and services from early stage creation through to marketable fruition.

A few highlights from the ICC's first year are listed below and its annual report is available [here](#).

- 70 Workshops, seminars and briefings held in the ICC.
- 2005 Individuals attended events in the ICC.
- 92 per cent satisfaction rate from ICC event attendees.
- 150 Business and company board meetings held at the ICC.
- 14 start-up companies supported through the ICC, resulting in the creation of more than 46 new jobs.



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**University of
South Australia**

Australia receives a D- for kids' physical activity

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by Michèle Nardelli



HEALTH

The latest report shows less than 1 in 5 Australian kids aged between 5 and 17 years meet the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity each day.

Australian kids are now some of the least active in the world, and have again been graded a D minus for physical activity according to the latest national report from the Active Healthy Kids Australia (AHKA) research group.

Lead author of the Australian report card from UniSA, Dr Natasha Schranz says the age-old notion of Australia being a nation of active healthy kids who naturally gravitate to outdoor play and sports, has gone out the window. Aussie kids are failing to meet the basic physical activity guidelines that lead to lifelong health and well-being.

"What this means is less than 1 in 5 Australian children aged between 5 and 17 years meet the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity each day, despite a range of recommendations, initiatives and campaigns put in place in an attempt to improve the grade," Dr Schranz said.

"It seems many Australian children and parents just don't know how or why they need to include physical activity in their daily lives."

Heart Foundation spokesperson on physical activity Adjunct Professor Trevor Shilton says these results are a real wake-up call and we, as a nation need to act decisively.

"We must turn around these results or face the consequences and costs of an increasingly unhealthy population," Adj Prof Shilton said.

The 2016 *Physical Activity Report Card* is part of a global network, which includes 38 countries all reporting on the physical activity levels of their nation's children.

The global results, presented in Bangkok last month, highlight that overall physical activity levels for Australian

children remained static at a D minus, but we are lagging behind countries such as New Zealand, Slovenia, Mexico and Brazil.

“The report card indicates that as our society has changed and there are fewer opportunities for free or unstructured play and active travel, our children have fewer opportunities to acquire the necessary skills, confidence and motivation to be physically active,” Dr Schranz said.

“To imagine there is a quick fix for this would be a mistake – children need to be supported to develop their ‘physical literacy’ and establish the capabilities and habits that will set them up to be active for life.”

The full 2016 Report Card, including a breakdown of the 12 physical activity indicators and methodology is available online [here](#).

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UniSA gene research to spotlight Muscular Dystrophy

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by Michèle Nardelli



COMMUNITY

Representatives from Muscular Dystrophy South Australia present a cheque for \$75,000 to UniSA researchers who hope their work will lead to better treatments for the incurable muscular dystrophy disease.

One of Australia's most successful genetics research groups based at UniSA has received a funding boost and set its sights on unlocking more knowledge about muscular dystrophy, in a bid to open up better treatments for the incurable and multifaceted disease.

Muscular Dystrophy South Australia is contributing \$75,000 to support the work to track down more knowledge about the genetic causes and new treatments for MD.

The research will be led by Associate Professor Leanne Dibbens, a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Senior Research Fellow, who heads up the University's highly successful Epilepsy Genetics Research Group that has been responsible for some of the most significant new research into the genetic causes of epilepsy and related neurological disorders.

Assoc Prof Dibbens says she is excited to take on the new project and help to discover more about MD, a group of diseases that are genetic in origin but quite varied in their presentation.

"The great benefit of genetic research is that increasingly we can identify just where the 'fault lines' are in the genes and we are finding that while there may be one common set of symptoms, the genetic causes of those symptoms may be quite varied," Assoc Prof Dibbens says.

"In our research into epilepsy we have discovered more than 35 different genes associated with the condition.

"Next Generation Sequencing allows us to make genetic discoveries on a whole new scale and find the causes of disease in patients that we were previously unable to solve.

“We are learning all the time that congenital and inherited disorders are more individual than we ever suspected – that makes the hunt for the problem more complex, but also raises hope for more personalised treatments and interventions.”

CEO of Muscular Dystrophy SA, Phil Martin says he looks forward to some important outcomes from the research.

“We have been actively looking to invest in a research project that will explore and hopefully uncover new ways to prevent, treat and possibly one day, cure neuromuscular disorders,” Martin says.

“We are delighted to support the UniSA research team and look forward to working with them in the global race to find a cure by 2050.”

UniSA Vice Chancellor Professor David Lloyd welcomes the new partnership and says the University prides itself on being the kind that is approachable and easy to work with.

“And that is reflected in the more than 2500 partnerships we have with industry, NGOs and businesses,” Prof Lloyd says.

“It is especially gratifying to have the kind of researchers here at UniSA who are among the best in the world and are dedicated to unravelling some of the most difficult problems in genetic science, where discoveries can have a very direct link to new treatments, new cures and improved health outcomes.”

Muscular dystrophy (MD) is a group of muscle diseases that results in increasing weakening and breakdown of skeletal muscles over time.

The disorders differ in which muscles are primarily affected, the degree of weakness, how fast they worsen, and when symptoms begin.

Nine main categories of muscular dystrophy contain more than thirty specific types.

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Calling all food gardeners – share your experiences

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by Will Venn



COMMUNITY

Food gardeners from across South Australia are being invited to participate in a project aimed at developing a greater understanding about urban food gardens, including both their social value and their productive capabilities.

The *Edible Gardens Project*, a South Australian Citizen Science initiative by UniSA researchers, is seeking participants to complete an edible gardens online survey, which asks about gardening experience, what growing methods are currently used, and what growing food means to participants.

A final question asks if participants would like to take part in collecting data from their own food garden, and, if selected, they are provided with the tools (a water meter and a set of scales) to help gather that information, including weighing the food that is harvested.

So far there have been 293 survey responses from across South Australia, with 72 percent of respondents volunteering to collect data on their own gardens, and 53 percent volunteering to take part in a focus group conversation on the social value of growing food.

The project, which is open to home, community and school gardens across SA has seen 44 active gardens displayed on the Discovery Circle list of participating gardens who have had Data Collection Toolkits posted to them, with a further 60 gardens in the process of registration.

Dr James Ward, of UniSA's School of Natural and Built Environments, says the project is developing a greater understanding about urban food gardens (also known as urban agriculture), which are continuing to grow in popularity.

"Although urban food gardens are common, there is currently a serious lack of information on what it takes to grow food in urban environments," Dr Ward says.

"Water in particular is a completely overlooked input, and yet is a scarce and expensive resource in South Australia. The data collected for this project will form the basis for a more realistic understanding of urban agriculture".

PhD researcher Georgia Pollard, who is running the project, says participation will help people assess how productive their gardens actually are.

"Many people want to know exactly how much food they're actually growing," Georgia says.

"There are so many different ways you can grow food, but which method fits the value that you're after from your garden? Do you want to try to save money? Or to use less water? This project will help people figure that out, and learn all about their gardens while they do so.

"One primary school, Banksia Park School R-7 is actively taking part with measuring their school garden, and several others have expressed interest in participating in the New Year.

"For schools with existing food gardens (particularly those involved in the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Initiative), this project is a great way to measure the ongoing productive benefits and success of the school garden.

"Students have fun learning how to measure and record what is going into and coming out of their school garden, and apply their STEM skills."

For one participant, Kelly Johnston, taking part in the project has turned her interest in growing fruit, vegetables and herbs from something sporadic to much more fully engaged.

She is now keeping regular track of the time she spends in the garden at Northgate and the produce that is beginning to flourish.

From leeks, capsicums, kale and silver beet to a range of herbs, a grapevine and a variety of fruit trees bearing lemons, limes, apricots and pomegranates, Kelly's garden - listed as *kelly's herbs and veggies on the verge* is one of the many featured participating gardens on the [Discovery Circle website](#).

"It's a fantastic project I found out about through Facebook and whereas before I would describe growing fruit and veggies in the garden as a bit hit and miss, now it has become better planned," Kelly says.

"Recording data of what is grown also makes you feel more responsible and accountable to do your best."

Dr Philip Roetman, of UniSA's Discovery Circle, says it is the commitment of participants that makes initiatives such as the *Edible Gardens Project*, a success.

"Without the enthusiasm and engagement of citizen scientists, projects like this one could never succeed," Dr Roetman says.

"Scientists can't visit every urban food garden to regularly measure what is going in and what is being harvested. But dedicated urban gardeners can contribute large amounts of valuable data.

"The more gardeners that complete the survey, the better quality our analysis will be. This survey is giving us a vital overview of what kind of urban food production is happening around South Australia and what it means to people to grow some of their own food.

"We have a limited number of Data Collection Toolkits to share (so get in soon if you're thinking of participating). We are also preparing a Do-It-Yourself kit, so that keen participants can purchase their own materials and still use our online tools to store and visualise the inputs and outputs of their gardens, and compare garden areas in their own and others' gardens."

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**University of
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New course opens up digital world to College students

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by Lisa Toole



INSIDE UNISA

UniSA College Students Lachlan Pridham, Alexandra Sudlow-Haylett and James Gleeson-McCoy shared their digital learning with delegates at the recent ASCILITE conference.

The digital mastery of UniSA College students was on display at a recent Australasian Conference in Adelaide.

The students were among the first intakes of the innovative course 'Digital Literacy: Screen, Web and New Media', which aims to develop digital literacy skills for the workplaces of the future.

Their work from the course – which included podcasts, apps, games and infographics – was showcased at the Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education (ASCILITE) conference last month, with support from the Teaching Innovation Unit.

Course Coordinator Jenny Stokes says the digital literacy course helps students develop skills to thrive in an increasingly digital world.

Stokes says her course has encouraged students to critically analyse and understand the digital space and become a participant through creating a new product.

"It's about being part of this space rather than just being an observer," she says.

The specific challenge given to the students was to devise a new and original product, pitch that project and then create the product while adhering to real world provisions such as copyright.

Students could choose projects that were meaningful for them, which increased their engagement with the task.

Stokes says results were a range of interesting and diverse projects including apps, games and infographics.

Students at the conference praised the course saying it helped them to uncover their own strengths, develop analytical and problem solving skills, and even open up potential new career pathways.

Alexandra Sudlow-Haylett created a podcast which put a new twist on an interview with a vampire. It tells the story of two women – a journalist and a vampire who is posing as a drug addict in a rehab centre. The podcast explores the themes of female friendship and sacrifice.

Alexandra says the digital literacy course allowed her to play to her strengths in creativity and also learn critical skills such as problem solving.

She hopes to move onto a double degree in creative writing and professional writing, and work towards script writing and editing. The course certainly helped shape these goals.

“Getting to write a script for the first time was great and having to pitch my project was daunting, but being able to do that gave me a lot of confidence. This is definitely what I want to do,” Alexandra says.

“It’s a really special course to be involved in.”

Fellow student James Gleeson-McCoy dissected the film *Zootopia* and reviewed the techniques and tricks used by animators to tell the story.

James says he “pulled it apart at the seams” and analysed the very detailed environments to pinpoint visual cues and methods of demonstrating the passage of time, journeys and how characters had changed. These techniques include the use of lighting, movement of characters, changing backgrounds and colours.

He enjoyed the digital literacy course as it helped him to develop skills in critical analysis of the digital space and the freedom to choose his own response to a project.

“I’m hoping to go onto a digital media degree and possibly onto cinema, maybe animation or even teaching at some point,” James says.

Another student Lachlan Pridham chose a project close to his own heart.

Lachlan is a member of local rap group Ill Division and his project was to design a website for the group – featuring the band’s music videos, pictures and a large music playlist.

The project allowed Lachlan to perfect a variety of web design techniques, which he will now use to continually update the site.

“I feel that the site can only get better and better,” he says.

“Through this project I found that I could incorporate my own passion and get my friends involved as well.”

The course has ignited a spark in Lachlan for digital learning. While planning to undertake a health-related degree, he is also now excited about the potential to extend his production skills in media and digital environments.

“It opened my eyes to this – it’s what I love doing,” Lachlan says.

For fellow student James Gleeson-McCoy, being invited to exhibit at the conference was a great opportunity.

“It means a lot to me – this is something I’m passionate about and I get to share it with people,” he says.

UniSA College programs provide alternative pathways for students who do not initially have the qualifications to gain entry into a bachelor degree. College students develop academic literacies and prerequisite knowledge for undergraduate study through Foundation Studies and Diploma programs.

Stokes says the bonuses of her course are two-fold – students not only gain skills in digital literacy, but they also have a ‘positive experience of learning’, which will inspire them to move confidently into future university studies.

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**University of
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Tours deliver international edge for students

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by Sophia Moshakis



HEALTH

Human movement students enjoying a recent study tour to the United States.

From helping children at a special needs school in rural India to gaining access to cutting-edge sports facilities in Oregon, two recent overseas trips may have provided contrasting experiences but they have delivered the same results for UniSA students.

Physiotherapy and Human Movement students have returned from these two unique tours with a new mindset and approach to their studies, along with the opportunity to stand out from the crowd in the job market.

Dr Adam Hewitt who facilitated UniSA's first Human Movement Study Tour to the US, says the valuable experience was something that cannot simply be taught in a classroom.

"This type of experience allows graduates to stand out amongst the crowd and gives them the unique opportunity to form great industry connections overseas. Students have the added bonus of returning from the trip with great friendships," Dr Hewitt says.

With a passion for high performance sport, 16 third-year [Bachelor of Human Movement](#) students spent 2.5 weeks visiting various sporting organisations in the US.

"We wanted students to have a unique and exciting experience, being able to go behind the scenes and speak to people who worked at places including Nike International Headquarters in Oregon and Red Bull North American Headquarters in California," Dr Hewitt says.

Students gained special entry to the University of Oregon's latest \$25 million cutting-edge Marcus Mariota Sports Performance Centre, which usually only permits access to those in the Oregon Ducks Football program.

Human Movement student, Alexandra Sicari, attended the study tour and encourages students to consider a placement or study tour overseas in the future.

“Definitely do it. The experiences you have, friendships you develop and the memories you make are unforgettable,” she says.

“This trip helped me confirm that I want to become a qualified physiotherapist by undertaking a [Master of Physiotherapy \(Graduate Entry\)](#) once I finish my undergraduate degree. It doesn’t matter whether you know what you want to do in your future career or not, having exposure to your industry overseas is a unique opportunity.”

Also this year, final year [Bachelor of Physiotherapy](#) students had the opportunity to visit rural India, where they provided services to local communities in need.

The five-week clinical placement was led by UniSA Lecturer in Physiotherapy and Clinical Educator, Dr Julie Walters, who collaborated with [Volunteering India](#) to identify patients unable to access or afford physiotherapy treatment.

Based in Palampur, a small town in Northern India, students worked alongside local physiotherapists and visited private practices, health services, schools and homes.

They provided free musculoskeletal physiotherapy services, focusing on children with developmental delays who often had some form of cognitive and physical disability, including Down Syndrome and Cerebral Palsy.

“We worked on developing their skills so that once they finish school, they can contribute to their family by making an income,” Dr Walters says.

Neurological conditions such as stroke and Parkinson’s Disease, and patients experiencing spinal cord injuries, were also treated.

“It’s as much a cultural experience as it is a learning experience, since practising physiotherapy in India is very different to Australia. Students need to work within the confines of what their patients have and must often find different ways of being effective within the environment,” Dr Walters says.

“Students were challenged by patients being home-bound, as most houses are multi-level with stairs. Patients are not able to use equipment like forward walkers, as there are no footpaths.

“Overseas experience is seen as favourable from the profession and employers, it is a unique learning curve that allows students to demonstrate a different mindset which can set them apart from others.”

Physiotherapy student, Alexandra Thomas, described the tour as an amazing experience.

“I saw far more than I could have ever imagined and I helped children and adults who otherwise wouldn’t receive treatment,” Alexandra says.

“Helping children at a special needs school was a rewarding experience, especially seeing the smile on their faces when they caught a ball for the first time or were able to kick a soccer ball, which meant they could join in with other children in the playground.

“The first day we attended the school I was introduced to a young boy with Cerebral Palsy who sat in the corner and didn’t contribute. The final session I had with him, he was playing soccer with friends and had enough skill to participate.”

Free time on weekends was also a bonus for students, who paraglided in the Himalayas, hiked, camped below snow level, and visited landmarks such as the Taj Mahal and Golden Temple.

Alexandra thoroughly enjoyed the paediatric aspect of her placement and hopes to work with children in her physiotherapy career. She also believes this overseas experience has given her an edge to stand out when seeking employment.

Due to the great success and feedback of both the Human Movement and Physiotherapy tours, Dr Hewitt and Dr Walters are planning to facilitate the trips again in 2017.



Physiotherapy students gain experience while on tour in India.



Physiotherapy students took time out from their learning in India to see the tourist sites.

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**University of
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Reversing our resources: Planet Talks return to WOMADelaide

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by Lisa Toole



COMMUNITY

We may be running out of resources but the answer is to look at the situation in reverse says UniSA academic Dr Nick Chileshe.

Dr Chileshe, Senior Lecturer in the School of Natural and Built Environments and reverse logistics specialist, will join a panel of experts to discuss using waste as a resource, along with actions to minimise waste as part of the UniSA-sponsored 2017 [WOMADelaide Planet Talks program](#).

In a talk titled *Redefining our resources and the right to repair* on Sunday 12 March, Dr Chileshe will join iFixit founder Kyle Wiens and UNSW's Scientia Professor of Materials Science, Veena Sahajwalla. They will explore such topics as whether a circular economy can compete with the desire to have the latest iPhone, the impact of tech companies on our right to extend the life of products and if a waste-free global economy is profitable or even possible.

Dr Chileshe says the talk will highlight the value of the reverse logistics concept, which tracks the movement of products or materials from the point of consumption back to the point of origin and looks at ways that waste could be minimised and resources reclaimed along the way.

"We will highlight the potential that reverse logistics has to bring these resources and embodied energy back into the life-cycle thus promoting the circular economy," he says.

"Through effective management, the reverse flow of the resources could easily be subjected to reuse, repair or recycling to regain the product value, thus redefining our resources through minimisation of waste to landfill.

"It's also about encouraging changes in attitude to eradicate the stigma attached to the use of salvaged materials or repaired products among clients and designers."

Also on the Planet Talks line up is UniSA's Professor Mohammad Abdall who will join an inter-faith panel hosted by Father Bob Maguire on Monday 13 March for the presentation titled '*What's God got to do with it*'. This talk will explore the Green Faith movement as a central pillar of all religions.

Meanwhile, UniSA Adjunct Research Fellow Lewis O'Brien will feature on the panel for another session on 13 March – '*Valuing Indigenous Culture and Language*'. This talk will discuss the critical importance of preserving and sustaining indigenous cultures, heritage and languages for the future of Australian environmental conservation.

The Planet Talks program will engage festival goers in the spirit of friendly environmental debate when WOMADelaide returns from 10-13 March, 2017. With six thought-provoking panel discussions over three days, the Planet Talks program will explore new ideas and discover how we can live more sustainably and harmoniously on our planet.

UniSA is proud to be the sole education partner for the WOMADelaide Planet Talks program for the fourth year running. In-line with this partnership, UniSA is able to offer students, staff and alumni up to 20 per cent off 2017 festival tickets (adult price).

The exclusive discount tickets are now available, visit [UniSA's WOMAD web page](#) for more information.

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UniSA study: Can diet reduce the risk of perinatal depression and anxiety?

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by Michèle Nardelli



RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

Researchers at UniSA have launched a new study to examine the impact of diet on the mental health of pregnant women and new mothers.

Launched during National Perinatal Depression and Anxiety Week (November 13 -19), the study hopes to inform better approaches to managing mental health at what is a vulnerable time for many women.

UniSA lead researcher in population health and psychologist, Angie Willcocks says about 15-20 per cent of women will experience clinically significant levels of depression and/or anxiety from when they are about five months pregnant through to the first month after their child is born.

“This is the most vulnerable period because they are more likely to have mental health problems at this time than in any other period of their lives and the consequences can be pretty devastating,” Willcocks says.

“Mental health problems during the perinatal period can have an impact on obstetric and birth outcomes, on mothers’ relationships with their partners, how well they forge a relationship with their child and on the child’s social, emotional and cognitive development.

“There is a lot at stake on the personal level but beyond that, the costs associated with perinatal depression and anxiety, are quite significant – in 2012 the estimate was about \$78.66 million.”

Willcocks says over the years very little has changed in treatment options for women facing these problems.

Treatment is focused on medications or psychological counselling, despite an increasing body of evidence showing the importance of lifestyle factors such as diet and exercise for mental health and well-being.

“Diet is especially significant for pregnant women because of the increased nutritional demands of pregnancy,

but without the research to examine how diet may affect mothers' mental health, dietary advice for pregnant women is usually directed only at the growing baby's health," she says.

"I'm launching an online study to look at diet quality and mental health for women during the perinatal period.

"This will be one of the first studies of its kind and I hope to discover more about the potential links between diet and depression during pregnancy to be able to offer women new evidence-based information to help them to manage their mental health.

"I have tried to make this a really easy task for women by making the survey completely online.

"The participants will need to fill in questionnaires at four points – twice during pregnancy and twice after the baby is born.

"What I hope to establish in the first instance is a much clearer understanding of what women are eating during the perinatal period and also how they are feeling in terms of mental health.

"In the first instance I'll be looking for any patterns between diet and mental health problems and anxiety and then I hope to take the research further."

Willcocks is hoping to attract more than 500 participants for the survey.

"Participants will be contributing to new knowledge in an area that is not well understood and hopefully, to better outcomes for many new mothers in the future," she says.

Women can register to take part in the study [here](#).



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Highlights from the Media Centre

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The past month has seen the release of new research, partnerships and innovations; as well as a number of achievements for UniSA. Here are some of the top news stories from our [Media Centre](#):

[It happens to 7% of us at night and only while we are asleep...](#)

New research from UniSA has identified just how prevalent sleep walking is, with 6.9 percent of people expected to sleepwalk at some point in their lives.

Children also outnumber adult sleepwalkers, with 5 percent of children likely to have sleepwalked within the last 12 months, compared to just 1.5 percent of adults.

UniSA's Centre for Sleep Research has published its latest findings: "Prevalence of Sleepwalking: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis" based on 51 studies which assessed the prevalence rates of sleepwalking across 100,490 people.

UniSA's Dr Helen Stallman, expert on the science of somnambulism, says this research is adding knowledge about a condition which is often misunderstood and often unrecorded - not least because of the unconscious state people find themselves in when the act of sleepwalking occurs.



[Calling for a revolution in spinal pain management](#)

GPs, physiotherapists, and other health professionals, governments, the insurance industry, pain sufferers and their carers must act together to take research into practice if we are to revolutionise treatment for the hundreds of thousands of people suffering chronic spinal pain worldwide.

Speaking at UniSA's latest Enterprising Partnerships lecture last month, internationally renowned neuroscientist and Chair in Physiotherapy at UniSA, Professor Lorimer Moseley said, while experts understood much more about spinal pain and the causes of pain, the path from research into practice had been too slow.

"We need a revolution in how we treat acute and chronic pain and that revolution should be founded on what we have learned in the past 20 years about different management approaches and the neurological and biological mechanisms that underpin pain," Prof Moseley says.



[OPINION: Trauma, depression, hopelessness – will going to the US heal refugee pain?](#)

The one-off deal brokered by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and his Minister for Immigration and Border Protection Peter Dutton, for the resettlement of refugees on Manus Island and Nauru to the United States has the potential to go a long way to finally giving these people a new start.

In this opinion piece, authors Professor Nicholas Procteris – Chair in Mental Health Nursing at UniSA and Associate Professor Mary Anne Kenny from Murdoch University discuss the agreement that has been welcomed by the Nauru Government, the Labor Opposition and refugee advocates.



[Selling the farm to China - What's really driving Australian reticence?](#)

The pros and cons of selling property and especially agricultural and farmland to Chinese buyers has been headline news around the country in the past few years, with the federal government stepping in to block some high profile deals such as the sale of SC Kidman on the grounds of 'national security'.

Breaking down what really troubles people about such sales is the focus of a UniSA research project and early results are suggesting that food and other security issues may not be at the core of the general concern.

Property Professor at UniSA Business School, David Parker, says the research hopes to drill down and find out exactly what concerns most people about property sales to Chinese enterprises.



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New Books

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Adelaide's Jubilee International Exhibition 1887-1888 – The Event, the Building, the Legacy

The first book documenting Adelaide's Jubilee International Exhibition, which celebrated 50 years of the colony of South Australia and the reign of Queen Victoria, was launched by the Lord Mayor of Adelaide, Martin Haese, in November.

Adelaide's Jubilee International Exhibition was edited by two UniSA academics – Architecture Museum Director, Associate Professor Christine Garnaut and Collections Manager Dr Julie Collins, along with Dr Bridget Jolly, who is a member of the Professional Historians Association (SA).

The new book compiles the words of 37 authors, all historians from various disciplines, to tell a story that has not been told in detail before. It presents the Jubilee Exhibition from the perspectives of the event itself, the building and grounds where it was housed, and its legacy.

"The Jubilee International Exhibition was a significant event in the life of the colony of South Australia and for the city of Adelaide," Assoc Prof Garnaut says.

The exhibition, which was open from June 1887 to January 1888, attracted 750,000 visitors from overseas, interstate and country SA at a time when the State's population was approximately 309,000.

It was held in the purpose-built Jubilee Exhibition Building on 18½ acres of land that lay adjacent to the University of Adelaide on North Terrace and stretched northwards to the River Torrens and eastwards to Frome Road.

"The Jubilee Exhibition took place at a time when South Australia was experiencing the effects of the economic depression that would take hold internationally from about 1890," Assoc Prof Garnaut says.

As explained in the book's Introduction:

"The Exhibition was 'a brave attempt [on the promoters' part] to pull the colony out of a depression by harnessing the power of positive thinking.'

"Undaunted by the economic circumstances, they regarded the Jubilee Exhibition as a novel chance to advertise and promote South Australia's industries and businesses, to attract investors and emigrants, and to aid international trade.

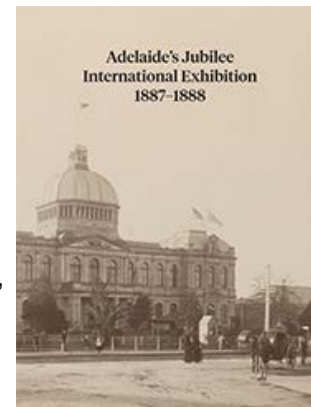
"The Jubilee Exhibition was, like previous international exhibitions held in Australia in Sydney (1879) and in Melbourne (1880), an opportunity 'to demonstrate to the world that the [Australian] colonies were prosperous, civilized and British'".

Over the years after the Exhibition closed, the Exhibition Building was used for various events and activities and from 1891-1963 was home to the School of Design, later the South Australian School of Art, which is now part of the School of Art, Architecture and Design at UniSA.

With a RRP of \$49.95, the book is available through [Crossing Press](#) and enquiries are welcome via email to architecturemuseum@unisa.edu.au.

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Vice Chancellor's lunch for Emeritus Professors

A Vice Chancellor's Lunch for Emeritus Professors was held recently to celebrate UniSA's 25th birthday. Guests enjoyed the opportunity to catch up with colleagues and reflect on the anniversary year.



(L) Deputy Vice Chancellor: External Relations and Strategic Projects Mr Nigel Relph, Emeritus Professor Kay Lawrence AM, Vice Chancellor Professor David Lloyd and Emeritus Professor Kym Adey AM. (R) Emeritus Professor Robin King, Emeritus Professor Ruth Grant AM and Emeritus Professor Marjory Ebbeck.



(L) Emeritus Professor Michael Taylor, Emeritus Professor Stephen Hammett and Emeritus Professor Kevin O'Brien. (R) Professor Gerry Griffin, with Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Innovation Professor Tanya Monro and Emeritus Professor Andrew Gilbert AM.



(L) Emeritus Professor Phil Howlett, Emeritus Professor Robin King and Emeritus Professor Mike Miller AO. (R) Emeritus Professor Barbara Pocock AM, Emeritus Professor Mervyn Lewis, Dr Laura-Anne Bull and Emeritus Professor Marjory Ebbeck.



(L) Emeritus Professor Ian Davey with Corporate Events Officer Cindy McKee.

Showcasing regional success

UniSA is a proud program partner of the 2016 South Australian Regional Awards – celebrating and showcasing the achievements of individuals, groups and businesses that have made significant contributions to regional South Australia.

Celebration evenings were held around the regions and here we showcase a number of the finalists pictured with UniSA representatives.



Finalist for the Central region Amanda Keller is pictured with UniSA's Professor Denise Meredith. Amanda runs [Wild Woodland Toys](#), a venture that she began five years ago on her Robertstown farm which is now a successful online store and showroom selling wooden toys.



UniSA Regional Manager of Whyalla Paul Havelberg with Outback region finalist Trent Headland of Roxby Downs who was recognised for his achievements in sidecar racing which includes finishing second in this year's national championship.



Associate Professor Judy Nagy, Associate Dean: Teaching and Learning with Limestone Coast region finalist Jamie McDonald from [The Cide Project](#) a business that started in 2014 producing cider made from 100% apples, locally grown in Kalangadoo.



Pro Vice Chancellor of Student Engagement & Equity at UniSA, Dr Laura-Anne Bull, with Murraylands and Riverland region finalists Mark Yates and Patrick Broughton. Mark Yates is owner of successful Paringa-based renewable energy company [Yates Electrical Services](#) and has launched Redmud Green Energy, an innovative solar scheme designed to help landowners tap into the growing national energy market.



Professor Simon Beecham, Pro Vice Chancellor: Information Technology, Engineering and the Environment with Adelaide Hills Council Mayor Bill Spragg accepting the finalist award for [Thorngrove Manor Hotel](#) in Craferns – the only five star property in the Adelaide Hills. Kenneth Lehmann is the owner, builder and architect of the large and highly complex castle which has been listed on the World's Most Luxurious Hotels list for the past 21 years.

Hong Kong alumni celebrate UniSA's 25th birthday

Guests enjoyed a special 25th anniversary dinner at the Grand Hyatt Hong Kong last month with UniSA Vice Chancellor Professor David Lloyd joining alumni who gathered to celebrate the occasion.





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