Green light for UWA bright sparks

By Sally-Ann Jones

UWA students have taken out first and second places in the WA Young Innovator of the Year Awards presented at Scitech.

Final-year Engineering student Gregoriy (Greg) Tsaplin, from the Optical + Biomedical Engineering Laboratory (OBEL), won the individual 17 to 21 year-old category and $1500 for his high-tech invention, the Fast Pulsed Diode Driver for Fluorescence Lifetime Measurement.

And second-year Computer Science student Tris Le scored second prize in the same age category and $1000 cash for his environmentally friendly website, Swapthingy.

In a collaborative project with the School of Chemistry, Greg invented his device to help OBEL research staff measure the lifetime of fluorescent upconverting nanoparticles.

Greg’s supervisor, Assistant Professor Dirk Lorenser, is part of the ‘microscope-in-a needle’ group led by Winthrop Professor David Sampson in the School of Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering. Professor Sampson is pioneering the use of light in non-invasive medical diagnostic and treatment techniques.

Greg and his team worked with ARC Australian Research Fellow Dr Swaminatha Iyer and Dr Iyer’s student, Michael Challenor. Dr Iyer, from the School of Chemistry and Biochemistry, is Deputy Director of the Centre for Strategic Nano-fabrication. He researches nano-particle fabrication and synthesis for biomedical applications.

Michael synthesised nanoparticles which ‘glow in the dark’ and have the potential to act as tiny ‘lamps’ to enable medical researchers to ‘see’ inside cells and potentially detect cancer.

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unwanted belongings to reduce the amount of landfill.

“Swapthingy could become part of the social networking industry where global Internet users have gradually been more open to sharing things,” he said.

Tris, from Vietnam, is studying Web Technologies and Entrepreneurship and Innovation as majors and wants to hear from talented engineers and designers at UWA to join him in developing the project. He can be contacted at: 20851625@student.uwa.edu.au

UWA shares Indigenous knowledge

By Aleta Johnston

Gone are the days when a UWA student could go through their whole learning experience without acknowledging they had spent their time on Noongar land and without a basic understanding of the local Indigenous protocols and how Indigenous peoples think and do things.

This year the School of Indigenous Studies (SIS) introduced the first mandatory online unit of its kind in Australia for undergraduate students called Indigenous Studies Essentials (ISE).

ISE was developed by the School to help students meet the requirement of cultural literacy, one of the core principles of the University.

Indigenous Knowledge is also one of our six strategic research areas. SIS Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning, Jeromy Harvey, said the main focus of research is around the development of community-based oral histories and Indigenous stories as well as making a significant contribution to historical research.

“The School strives to give voice to Indigenous peoples’ knowledge, experience and understandings of the world,” he said.

“With ISE we can make sure that all students on campus get at least some exposure to Indigenous protocols. It can also help them in their studies when they read certain Indigenous-related literature, for example, by giving them the background to be able to critically evaluate it based on who is writing it and what authority they have as well as how to go about accessing information that can help.

“ISE starts with a focus on the traditional owners of the Perth area, the Whadjuk Noongar, and then traces broader identities, from the regional to the global. Students are required to reflect on the need to recognise local Indigenous protocols, and to consider that these can vary significantly from place to place.

“Students are directly guided and taught at important points by Whadjuk Noongar Elders and cultural authorities, who provide a Welcome to Country and a language lesson,” Assistant Professor Harvey said.

ISE has already been successfully delivered to more than 5,000 students and has received positive feedback. The latest figures show more than 87 per cent agree that ISE explains the basic principles and protocols of working with Indigenous peoples and communities, and more than 90 per cent agree that ISE provides a helpful introduction to Noongar peoples.

One student wrote: “Really good that this has been made compulsory to new students. I think it’s a really important side of living, studying and working in Australia that is neglected”. 

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And Greg invented a simple, cheap and effective device to measure the fluorescence of the nanoparticles as quality control in the nano-fabrication process.

“The experience of being part of the Young Innovator of the Year program has increased my appreciation of the powerful contributions each individual can make to better the world we live in,” Greg said.

Tris’ project, Swapthingy, is a social network website for online swapping. The site enables users to swap their
Artlines, iPads and chalkdust

Hundreds of brilliantly coloured drawings and postcards are swamping the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery and Berndt Museum.

Most are from child artists having fun with the Jimmy Pike Drawing Book and Postcard Art Book developed specially for the Jimmy Pike Artlines exhibition by the Gallery’s marketing manager Eve-Anne O'Regan, collection assistant Clare McFarlane and student Ashley Docherty.

Eve-Anne, who recently completed a PhD in Fine Art at the Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Visual Design, said the books encouraged children – and adults – to imagine themselves in the creative world of Jimmy Pike and draw like an artist after seeing the uplifting exhibition.

For example, one activity in the drawing book shows a photo of a storm cloud over a desert, Pike’s painting of a cloudy sky and a big facing blank page with a Pike aeroplane in the middle and the suggestion to draw a colourful sky for the plane.

Both books have tear-outs for budding artists to fill in and send back to UWA to be displayed in the Gallery foyer soon.

Children from Mount Claremont’s Moerlina Primary School visited Artlines recently to be inspired by Jimmy Pike’s work and life in the Great Sandy Desert. With them were Master of Teaching (Early Childhood and Primary) students from the Graduate School of Education (GSE).

Associate Professor Val Faulkner coordinated the visit as part of the GSE’s commitment to building bridges between the University and the wider community.

The pre-service teachers even used Faculty-issued iPads to explain bird’s eye perspective using Google Maps. After an exploration of the exhibition, each group found a cosy spot in the foyer or outside in the sunshine to enjoy filling their drawing and postcard books.

Pre-service teachers Lisette Rooney, Sharon McCleary and Michael Webb found the event rewarding and educational. Lisette was struck by how comprehensive a learning experience the children were able to have: “It has made me think how important it is to plan and consider excursions carefully to ensure children are given as many opportunities from every learning perspective as possible and to personally apply the experience.”

Sharon was thrilled that the activities confirmed for the children “their ability to see the extraordinary in the ordinary, and use art as a means of communication and self-expression.”

Michael spoke of the pre-service teachers’ motivations to become teachers. “The opportunity was a terrific and timely reminder of why each of us had chosen to take the teaching journey,” he said.

Sally Cloake, one of the Moerlina teachers, praised the morning as “a rich learning experience”, noting that “the children loved Jimmy Pike’s style, as well as the rapport they enjoyed with the student teachers”.

Future teachers

“Teachers … ultimately determine our collective ability to innovate, to invent, to find solutions for tomorrow. Nothing will ever replace a good teacher. Nothing is more important than supporting them.” (Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director General).

World Teachers’ Day was created by UNESCO and will be recognised in WA on Friday October 26. The Faculty of Education at UWA is committed to ensuring the provision of quality teaching for young people and offers programs and funding opportunities for the teachers of the future.

Call for Applications: Graduate Diploma in Education and Master of Teaching programs.

Applications for UWA’s Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary) close on 7 November 2012. Applications for the Master of Teaching (Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary) will remain open until 12 December 2012. For more information see http://www.education.uwa.edu.au/courses

Call for Applications: Alan Robson Rural Teaching Practicum Award.

The Faculty of Education at UWA invites applications for the 2013 Alan Robson Rural Teaching Practicum Award. The Award celebrates the strong commitment to teaching and learning of the University’s former Vice Chancellor, Alan Robson. The Award also recognises Professor Robson’s own rural school experiences and the rural teaching career of his father.

The Award provides one student participating in a rural teaching practicum with $1000 to assist in covering the expenses of the practicum. Students eligible for the award in 2013 will be enrolled in Primary or Early Childhood Education at UWA and not be in receipt of another rural teaching award.

Applications close on 19 October 2012. For further information email gse@uwa.edu.au, call 6488 2397 or visit http://www.education.uwa.edu.au/students/awards/alan-robson-award
A State of Excitement

Excitement is building on campus as our University prepares to celebrate our Centenary.

And the sense of jubilation is heightened by the fact that on the eve of the celebrations – and in a single year – we vaulted 14 places in the Academic Ranking of World Universities to be ranked 96th internationally.

To be counted as one the world’s top 100 universities just a few months before the start of 2013 adds palpably to the festive atmosphere.

The first event to mark our centenary is, fittingly, a celebration for staff on Friday 14 December to recognise 100 years of input from our UWA community.

This occasion will acknowledge the important role you, our staff, have played in helping our University meet both the milestone of our 100th year and that of being recognised globally as an institution of great merit.

In February 2013, we hope our staff will register to attend another major event: The Alumni Weekend. As staff – even if you are not UWA graduates – you are part of our valued alumni community and you are warmly invited to be part of this three-day event to celebrate our centenary, reflect on the past and discover the excellence in research and learning that drives us into the future.

The start of the weekend on Friday 8 February will be a Centenary Welcome Cocktail party on Whitfield Court, soon after the 2013 Perth International Arts Festival’s Welcome to Country on the Matilda Bay foreshore. The party will culminate with the first viewing of the spectacular filmic projection onto Winthrop Hall: LUMINOUS night.

Throughout the weekend there will be exhibitions, lectures, a writers’ corner showcasing UWA authors, tours, walks, a cricket match between the Guild XI and the Vice-Chancellor’s XI and panel discussions.

Several projects will culminate over the weekend. Some of these have come about through years of planning and effort by staff and alumni. They include the unveiling of the Shaun Tan Sundial, the first public appearance of the Centenary plant and the launches of the Centenary history, Seek Wisdom, and the UWA Musical Treasures CD.

Another very important part of the celebrations throughout 2013 will be the UWA Gives Back project in which many staff and alumni will be involved. They will host a series of activities which engage school students, industry and communities in remote and rural WA. Many of these activities will involve our School of Indigenous Studies and the Aspire UWA program.

Through UWA Gives Back, we hope to promote educational opportunities for people in the regions, raise awareness about the regions here on campus, and position our University even more strongly as a place that continues to do our best for the State.

Our University was founded with that purpose in mind. A century later, we are still ‘there’ for all Western Australians.

David’s choice

Recently elected a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, Winthrop Professor David Pannell must occasionally wonder what his life might have been like if he’d chosen another path.

In 1979, when he was deciding what to study at UWA, Professor Pannell – who is also an ARC Federation Fellow in the Faculties of Science and Director of the Centre for Environmental Economics and Policy – was torn between music and agricultural science.

He’d always loved science and fancied the idea of becoming a plant breeder, but he also loved music and was playing guitar, bass and singing in Perth hotels several times a week. Eventually, science won out but after a couple of years of study, an inspiring lecturer, the late Dr Henry Schapper, opened Professor Pannell’s eyes to the possibilities of economics as a vehicle for helping science have an impact in the real world.

So he switched career paths.

The Academy to which he has been elected aims to promote excellence in social sciences in Australia, and as part of that it selects a group of new Fellows each year. Professor Pannell’s election is in recognition of his research on the economics of various environmental and natural resource issues.

“I’m an economist, but I started in science, and now most of my work is in collaboration with scientists from various disciplines,” Professor Pannell said. “I’m especially pleased that interdisciplinary research was seen as worthy of recognition by the Academy.”

Professor Pannell’s research includes the economics of environmental conservation; environmental policy; farmer adoption of land conservation practices; risk management; and economics of farming systems. His research has been published in five books and 150 journal articles and book chapters, and has been recognised with awards from the USA, Australia, Canada and the UK, including the 2009 ARC Eureka Prize for Interdisciplinary Research.

To listen to his music: members.iinet.net.au/~dpannell/music/dpmusic.htm

David Pannell lets loose during a reunion of his 1980s band, The Bargains
Round and round and round and round the world

About 400 UWA stompers trekked around the world eight times from May to September – and lost a total of 198kg in the process.

Actually, most of them probably just walked around campus and their neighbourhood. But because they were in the Global Corporate Challenge (GCC), checking into the website every day to register their steps, they undertook a virtual tour of some of the world’s most exciting destinations.

GCC organiser and UWA Health and Wellbeing Officer Sarina Radici said UWA participants, who walked in teams of seven, had achieved a 12,753 daily step average and walked a total of 330,605km.

“UWA ranked as the fourth most active university in Australia out of 25 participating in this year’s GCC,” Sarina said.

“Evaluation of the Challenge showed participants not only increased their physical activity and lost weight, they also reported reduced stress levels and a greater sense of connection to colleagues and to the University.”

“Congratulations to Pedago2go who took out the title of Most Active UWA Team with a daily step average of 19,587 steps and were rewarded with a $100 voucher for the University Club café.

Congratulations also to Marius Porojan who took out the UWA Most Improved Individual prize, winning a $50 café voucher.

“Thank you to the University for subsidising entry fees as an incentive, to the University Club who have supported the Challenge for many years, and to UWA Sports for putting on a range of events.”

For anyone thinking about taking part in next year’s GCC, here’s some good advice from Jean Michel le Floch of the Big Bang Movers:

“What we did in our team was to encourage all team-mates to walk an extra 200m a day every week. We went from a 12,800 to 17,800 step average. We organised early morning walks in Kings Park and along the river, played table tennis and fencing and met over the weekends as well. It has helped a lot to change our lifestyles. Four out of our seven team members have now joined the UWA Sports gym to motivate us to keep moving.”

Flick takes gold

Human Movement graduate Felicity Sheedy-Ryan has been crowned only the third Australian woman to win the ITU Duathlon World Championship in Nancy, France recently.

The 27-year-old elite triathlete – coached by Assistant Professor Grant Landers from the School of Sport Science, Exercise and Health – dominated the scenic 10km run, 40km bike and 5km run course centered around the city’s UNESCO heritage site Place Stanislas.

And the 2010 bronze medallist had to lower the colours of Great Britain’s defending champion, Katie Hewison and four-time world championship medallist, Frenchwoman Sandra Levenez to claim the gold.

Although Felicity has been absent from the duathlon scene since earning bronze at the 2010 World Championships, she made a seamless return to the two-discipline sport.

“I knew there were some very strong girls,” she said after the race. “I’ve been doing a lot of hard biking and running recently for my triathlon training, and I was confident I could put in a good race. You never know, it’s never easy, but I was hoping for a really good result.”

The result was indeed good for the Australian, as she dominated the course from start to finish.

The top three leading women rode together throughout the eight-lap course, working to put an insurmountable distance between themselves and their competition.

Halfway through the final run, the tenacious trio separated in the hunt for gold.

The Australian surged to the top spot on the first of three run laps, securing a 20-second lead.

Felicity, a member of the UWA Triathlon Club, represents Australia at the Triathlon World Championships in Auckland soon.
Butterfly wings a clue to cancer detection

A combination of butterfly wings, vibrating mechanical beams and lasers to help detect lung cancer?

It might sound like science fiction but Gino Putrino’s research project proved so compelling to an international television program – PhD TV – that it was one of 11 chosen from a global field of 200 to be converted into an animated video with animation by Jorge Cham, creator of PhD comics and the 2011 film Piled Higher and Deeper: the Movie.

UWA graduate engineer and now PhD student Gino, from the School of Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering, said it wasn’t until the last minute that he entered the competition where PhD students attempted to explain their thesis in an audio recording of under two minutes.

“I was preparing for a conference and had been up until midnight packing and printing out material. I didn’t have to leave for the airport until 4am and I didn’t want to go to sleep just for a few hours so I decided I’d fill in time by entering,” he said.

Gino’s project, “Building an Artificial Nose”, is part of his PhD thesis.

“The air we breathe is packed full of invisible chemicals that carry a huge amount of useful information,” he said.

“A sensitive enough artificial nose could decipher this information, making it possible to tell if someone has lung cancer simply by sniffing their breath. An artificial nose could also detect explosives in an airport, tell if vegetables in a supermarket are fresh and when wine is fermented to the perfect level.

“Micro-electro-mechanical sensors (MEMS) are a new class of device which are sensitive enough to do all these things.

“The way they work is this: you make a suspended mechanical beam, clamped at one end. You then coat it with a substance which sticks to the specific chemical you want to sense. If you hit this beam, it will start vibrating at a speed that is its natural frequency.

“If the chemicals you are trying to sense then stick to the beam, the speed will change and, if you are able to detect the change, you have an incredibly sensitive artificial nose.”

The thickness of the beams Gino uses is one-hundredth the width of a human hair and vibrates at more than 20,000 times a second.

And the butterfly? “The colours on the Green Hairstreak butterfly's shimmering wings aren’t created by pigments but nano-structured shapes which bend light, creating an effect called diffraction,” he said.

“Different colours of light are bent in different directions. If nature can do it, then we can: by fabricating a nano-structure underneath our beam and aiming a laser at it. The amount of light that reaches the other side will depend on the height of the beam. The light helps us measure the vibrations, which are too small and fast to be otherwise visible, even under a microscope.”

Gino’s work on this project, which has three patents pending so far, is in collaboration with Winthrop Professor John Dell, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics; Winthrop Professor Lorenzo Faraone, Director of the Centre for Semiconductor Optoelectronics and Microsystems; Professor Adrian Keating in the School of Mechanical and Engineering; and Professor Mariusz Martyniuk in the School of Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering.
Explosive love story marks diamond anniversary

GRADS (Graduate Dramatic Society) is rehearsing one of the most difficult and controversial plays of its 60-year history: *M.Butterfly*.

It is based on the real-life story of a French diplomat who falls in love with a Chinese opera diva. However, the diva is not a woman, as the Frenchman believes for 20 years, but a man. Written by David Hwang, *M.Butterfly* has enjoyed popular runs on Broadway and in London, was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize for drama and has won numerous awards including the Tony Award for Best Play of the Year.

*M.Butterfly* is directed by Barry Park and will be performed at the Dolphin Theatre on evenings between 2 - 17 November. UWA graduate Charles McComb plays the diva, Song Liling, and Eliot McCann the diplomat Rene Gallimard.

Charles has been involved in Perth theatre for nine years, professionally and in amateur productions. He won Limelight’s award for best male lead when he played Judas Iscariot in the musical, *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

“Song is such a complex and challenging character from an acting standpoint,” he said. “The most obvious: she’s a man pretending to be woman. However, this pales in comparison to the numerous layers that are required to build her character. She can be naïve, cruel, calculating and submissive in a matter of moments.”

Eliot, who has been acting for more than 20 years, said one of the big tests of the play would be to make the audience ‘buy’ Gallimard’s story as it is so extraordinary it defies belief.

“Another challenge is playing Gallimard, who we see as a 12 year-old boy, as a student in his 20s, and then as a man in his 40s, 50s and mid-60s,” he said.

“Getting these ages ‘right’ and making them distinct for the audience will be demanding.

“Gallimard is a complex character. Initially he is shy and awkward around women, but as the play progresses he becomes over-confident. This ultimately is his downfall and what remains is the broken shell of a once brash personality.”

GRADS, a not-for-profit community theatre group, enables regular theatre-goers and students to see the best plays performed live at affordable prices in a professional theatre. The group welcomes new members.

For bookings to see *M.Butterfly*, which contains adult themes and sexual references: bookings@grads.org.au

Get growing for men’s health

Movember is coming and is a great time for men (and women!) to get involved with supporting a good cause and having some fun at the same time. For those who may not be aware, during November each year, Movember is responsible for the sprouting of moustaches on thousands of men’s faces in Australia and around the world.

The aim of this is to raise vital funds and awareness for men’s health, specifically prostate cancer and male mental health.

If you’re thinking of participating this year, why not join our ‘UWA Mowers’ team (open to staff, affiliates and students) and support others on campus also getting behind men’s health.

Women can also get involved. Find out more or register at the Movember website: au.movember.com. If you join the UWA team this year, you could be eligible for the best-or-worst-mo of the month prizes!

To kick off Movember, a men’s health workshop will be held on campus, so block out your diary and register your interest now. Women are also welcome. Find out more about the workshop (or Movember in general) at the UWA wellbeing website or by emailing wellbeing@uwa.edu.au
Serious monkey business

A Swiss primatologist who arrived at UWA in April to work in the School of Anatomy, Physiology and Human Biology probably won’t mind too much if his students start ‘monkeying around’ occasionally in class.

Assistant Professor Cyril Grueter is used to it. After all, he spent almost two years in Yunnan – a remote mountainous region of China – studying a group of 400 black and white snub-nosed monkeys.

The monkeys – never seen outside China – live in similar social groups to humans and Assistant Professor Grueter observed them in their wild state to investigate the evolutionary pathways that lead to our multilevel societies. His study is published in the *International Journal of Primatology* this month.

Assistant Professor Grueter said while chimpanzees were normally studied because they are genetically closest to humans, he chose snub-nosed monkeys because their social groups are more similar to ours.

His work involves two species of snub-nosed monkeys. One study investigates the black and white on the edge of the Himalayas where they live in forests of conifer and broad-leaved deciduous trees similar to those in Switzerland. This work, in the Baima Snow Mountain Nature Reserve in Yunnan, was near a village of the ethnic minority Lisu people.

He was there with a Masters student from the Chinese Academy of Sciences and several locals who helped the scientists locate the monkeys. Assistant Professor Grueter said he learned to speak Mandarin, but not the Lisu language.
His ongoing research involves the golden
in central China where they live in the
Shennongjia Nature Reserve and are fed
three times a day. They tolerate close
human contact.

The monkeys are listed as either critically
endangered or endangered and the
Chinese government is working to
protect them as part of the nation's
natural heritage.

“The black and white snub-nosed
moneys aren’t used to humans so we
watched them from a distance through
binoculars,” Assistant Professor Grueter
said. “By taking scan samples and
measuring the distances between
individuals, we found they show levels of
tolerance to monkeys not in their kinship
groups.

“When the young males turn three, they
leave the natal group and form bachelor
groups. Particularly in the mating season
– autumn – there’s a lot of aggression
between the bachelor males and the
resident males.

“This study is the most detailed of this
species’ social group because it lasted
for almost two years. In current research
we’re looking at the golden snub-nosed
monkeys to get data about individual life
histories and behavioural strategies.

“Already in this research we’ve found
that males of different groups cooperate
with each other against the bachelors,
forming joint patrols.”

Assistant Professor Grueter received his
PhD in biological anthropology from the
University of Zurich. Since then he
worked as a postdoctoral fellow at the
Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary
Anthropology in Leipzig and carried out a
field study on the feeding ecology and
competition in mountain gorillas in
Rwanda’s Virunga volcanoes region. This
work was in collaboration with the Dian
Fossey Gorilla Fund International.

Assistant Professor Grueter said he first
became interested in primates as a
teenager after reading Fossey’s Gorillas
in the Mist and seeing the film. He said
human society had evolved to a higher
level that monkey societies because we
form nuclear family units but also tolerate
and interact with other family units,
creating more integration and multi-
group networks.

“What makes us distinct from other
primates living in multi-level societies is
that we not only tolerate other social
units, but actively seek cooperation
partners in our neighbourhood. This
large-scale cooperation, coupled with
cultural transmission, enabled us to
conquer the globe,” he said.

“It’s interesting to learn about our own
social evolution by studying species
such as the snub-nosed monkeys, and
provides even more reasons for
preserving these fascinating primates
which have become highly endangered
in the wild as a result of destruction of
their natural habitat.”
UWA Extension is always looking for new ways to connect the University with communities and recently extended that reach to China.

Twenty agricultural students from South China Agriculture University visited and studied for four weeks in July and August. They were keen to improve their English and wanted to experience Australia’s culture, environment and our challenging farming practices. They got more than they asked for.

They started with five days of English, learning about Australian culture and touring the campus with the UWA Centre for English Language Teaching (CELT). They then got the opportunity to have an Aboriginal experience hosted by a Noongar elder artist, taste bush tucker and learn to play the didgeridoo in the Swan Valley.

In their second week, they were off via Serpentine and Jarrahdale to study the flood plain, coastal soils and a bird sanctuary. Then hardly being allowed to pause for breath, they were whisked to Brookton to discover the Future Farm in Ridgefield.

Many UWA students aren’t aware that this cutting-edge research facility exists and the visiting students realised we face many of the same farming challenges they do in China. They saw experimental grass that thrives on saltwater, an introduced breed of sheep that produces less methane gas, and much more.

Further south again, Albany revealed the unique south coast natural resources, they went to the Whaling Station, enjoyed lectures from the Department of Agriculture and Food WA and attended the Great Southern Science Conference. Before travelling back to Perth, they visited Middleton beach, a winery and a sandalwood factory.

Their studies at UWA included plant pathogens, herbicide resistance, agricultural and resource economics, as well as a visit to the UWA School of Animal Biology and CSIRO livestock industries.

Their visit was interspersed with free days to relax, shop or just explore on their own, so they had plenty of energy to learn about legume crops at our Centre for Legumes in Mediterranean Agriculture.

UWA Extension Program Manager, Kylie Weston, said the students were delightful and discovered more agricultural synergies between their host and home countries than they had anticipated.

This was the second group from China to go through the program. UWA Extension also recently ran a condensed program for Ngee Ann Polytechnic from Singapore, which saw the students head to Rottnest for a weekend with the Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions and the Oceans Institute.
Achieving international excellence

The diversity of doctoral research in the Graduate School of Education (GSE) was reinforced in the work of the five international doctoral students who graduated recently.

Wahiza Wahi – an award-winner for her publications and conference presentations – investigated the influence of English language academic literacy on employability of Malaysian undergraduate students. Rozita Dass developed a theory of how teachers and students in Singapore secondary schools deal with literature in English studies.


Gurdish and Shanmugam participated in the successful transnational Doctor of Education program offered by the GSE in Hong Kong (2001) and Singapore (2003). Eighty five transnational students have graduated successfully, 39 students are writing their theses and 24 new students have enrolled in Singapore.

The international students have returned to positions of influence in their own countries. Shanmugam is Head of Tamil Program at Singapore Institute of Management University and is also involved in teacher training at the National Institute of Education in Singapore.

Wahiza is teaching at the National University of Malaysia and continuing her research in academic literacy, English language literacy, TESL and higher education. Rozita is an education consultant with Avastar Education and Director of Learning at Dian Kindergarten in Selangor, Malaysia. Gurdish is an acquisitions editor with Pearson Australia Group.

When three colleagues were asked by Oxford University Press (OUP) to write a series of text books for adults learning English, they agreed to do it, knowing that they would be able to draw on each other’s complementary experiences.

Jenny Robinson, Kathy Shiels and Melissa Garnsworthy, who together have more than 85 years’ teaching experience, work at the UWA Centre for English Language Teaching (CELT).

The first of their reading and writing course books, the recently published Read It, Write It: Australasian Intermediate, have won the Australian Publishers’ Award in the TAFE and Vocational Education category. The set is made up of a student book and a teacher resource book.

Kathy said the trio and other colleagues at CELT had already identified the need for more relevant text books with local content. However, it became more urgent when, from 2007, there was an influx of Arabic-speaking students into CELT.

"While Arabic-speaking students have highly developed speaking and listening skills, they had particular needs in developing their academic language so specific courses with original reading texts and writing models were developed," Kathy said.

"In 2009 I was invited to present a seminar on the new material and an OUP representative attended. I was later contacted and asked if we would be interested in submitting a proposal for a writing contract.

"We couldn’t have done it without the support and encouragement of CELT Director Bianca Panizza and CELT’s teachers and students who enabled us to trial all the lessons so that we could redraft them before publication.

"The personal feedback and input from students, including graduates, was very useful. We also contacted them on Facebook where they could read sections to tell us whether they were relevant and interesting."

The texts refer to all the cultures of the CELT students as well as Australia and New Zealand. They and include topics such as comfort food, population changes and the beach.

Each unit builds carefully on the last so the language is scaffolded in order for students to access the next level of reading and writing skills.

The authors are very happy with the result and now they – and other teachers and their students – have the benefit of Australasia-specific resources.

The series is published by OUP in Melbourne and distributed throughout their offices internationally. OUP in Canada has ordered extra copies and may write an adaptation.
In good Stead

The great Australian novelist Christina Stead, best known for The Man Who Loved Children is the subject of a public lecture and a research symposium at UWA soon.

Stead (1902 – 1983), a lifelong Marxist, grew up in Sydney but spent much of her life overseas. Her 14 novels gave her a reputation for penetrating psychological characterisations and wit.

Through the Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS), Stead and her work will be the subject of a lecture by Louise Adler, CEO and Publisher-in-Chief at Melbourne University Publishing (MUP).

In 2010, MUP acquired the rights to a collection of Stead’s titles and Louise Adler will discuss the decision to re-issue Stead’s remarkable literary oeuvre for a new generation of readers.

Louise Adler is one of the most significant figures in contemporary Australian publishing. She has been editor of the Australian Book Review, arts and entertainment editor for The Melbourne Age and presenter of ABC Radio National’s Arts Today.

Her lecture, “Re-Reading Christina Stead” is at 6pm on Thursday 22 November in the Webb Lecture Theatre.

The following day, the symposium, “Christina Stead and Literary Ownership” will be held from 9.30am at the University Club, Seminar Room 1.

Convened by Chair of Australian Literature, Winthrop Professor Philip Mead, and associate director of the IAS, Susan Takao, the symposium will analyse the status of Australian writers such as Stead in relation to the greater world of literature.

It will also explore the ‘unofficial’ aspects of literary proprietorship including ownership of and rights in archives, biography and letters.

Speakers come from around Australia as well as from New York, where Stead taught in the 1940s and worked as a Hollywood screenwriter.

Register online before 16 November: www.ias.uwa.edu.au/conf/stead

Reading, ‘riting, ‘rithmetic and “R” programming language

From plant molecular biology to human health, more and more data is being generated through large-scale genomic studies.

A recent workshop at UWA familiarised researchers with the latest methods available for analysing big volumes of data.

Dr Cedric Gondro, a statistical geneticist from the University of New England, ran a three-day training course which introduced participants to the statistical programming language and environment “R” for genomic analysis.

Honours, PhD students and academic staff from UWA – as well as staff from iVEC and researchers from Murdoch University, the CSIRO and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research – attended lectures and practicals on the basics of programming in “R”, analysis of genome-wide association and microarray data, and how to explore and make use of biological information from public databases.

The course was organised by Assistant Professor Kate Howell from the ARC Centre of Excellence in Plant Energy Biology and the School of Anatomy, Physiology and Human Biology’s Associate Professor Silvana Gaudieri and Professor Miranda Grounds.

Professor Grounds is collaborating with Dr Gondro on microarray data analysis.

Dr Gondro will return to WA for a second workshop related to next generation sequencing early next year. For more information, please contact Kate.howell@uwa.edu.au or silvana.gaudieri@uwa.edu.au

Night of objects, day of ideas

The significance of cultural materials – from ancient rock art to artefacts from Africa and objects in Melbourne’s Jewish Holocaust Museum and Research Museum – is the topic of an evening lecture and a day’s discussion soon.

The linked events are organised by UWA’s Institute of Advanced Studies, the Western Australian Museum and Manning Clark house.

Head of Research at the British Museum, Dr Jeremy Hill, will give a public lecture on “Remembering and Reinventing the British Museum” at the WA Museum at 6pm on Thursday, 8 November. Dr Hill worked with BBC Radio 4’s internationally successful History of the World in 100 Objects. His research includes Iron Age and early Roman Britain.

The next day a symposium at the University Club from 9.30am includes speakers such as Winthrop Professor Susan Broomhall, Chief Investigator, ARC Centre for Excellence in the History of Emotions; Alec Coles, CEO, WA Museum; and Paul Lane, Director of Historical Ecologies of East African Landscapes at York University in the UK.

To register, visit www.ias.uwa.edu.au/conf
Just one paw short

The first working Guide Dog in Australia was very familiar with UWA so it is fitting that the University community will be involved in raising funds to sponsor another.

Dreena, who was brought to Perth from England in 1950 by Dr Arnold Cook, was a familiar figure on campus. Dr Cook had become blind when he was 18 with the eye condition retinitis Pigmentosa. He learned Braille then studied at UWA, where he gained a degree in Arts, majoring in Economics. He later completed a PhD at Harvard.

Almost 60 years later, UWA's Claire Webb and her husband Mike Webb are volunteer Guide Dog puppy raisers. Frankie is now a working Guide Dog and Bill is now in formal training. Both dogs have been regular campus visitors, accompanying Claire to work in Organisational and Staff Development Services in Love House.

Claire's mother, Suzanne Shield, took a keen interest in puppy raising and wanted to help sponsor a puppy herself, but died before her wish could come true. Suzanne left a bequest to the Guide Dog program and her family thought it would be wonderful if they could raise funds to sponsor a puppy in her memory.

With the help of Suzanne's bequest, Claire and Mike have so far raised $28,000.

“We’re just $2,000, or one paw short, of a Guide Dog,” Staff Development Officer Claire said.

To get the ‘fourth paw’, Claire has organised an information afternoon at Love House at 12.30pm on Thursday 1 November. There will be a free lecture from Claire and a Guide Dog and mobility instructor from the Association for the Blind WA and the opportunity to meet Guide Dog puppies.

Tax-deductible donations can be made online at www.everydayhero.com.au/claire_webb and there will be a collection tin on the day for cash donations.

RSVP by Friday 26 October to Claire.webb@uwa.edu.au

Pawnote: Claire believes Suzanne and Dr Cook may have met at the London School of Economics where both studied in the late 1940s.
Moerlina is an independent primary school providing a nurturing educational environment for pre-kindergarten (three year olds) to Year 7. Centrally located in Mount Claremont, Moerlina is close to public transport and nearby to a shuttle bus servicing the QEII/UWA precinct.

A partner school to UWA's Faculty of Education, Moerlina provides an academic program of excellence. Moerlina's point of difference is providing a child-centred, inquiry style of teaching and learning. Our programs foster curiosity, exploration and critical thinking skills to enable our students to emerge resourceful and independent thinkers. Our goal is to support the development of creative and higher order thinking skills – skills for success.

"Moerlina is an ideal learning environment and an excellent partnership school for our pre-service teachers" (Professor Val Faulkner, UWA Faculty of Education).

Thinking about schools for your child? Discover how Moerlina brings education alive:
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www.moerlina.wa.edu.au

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> Statistical Analysis and Reporting

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Dr Shane Langford or Jeanette McQueen
Suite 14, 37 Brown St, EAST PERTH, WA 6004
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MELANOMA FORUM
The Scott Kirkbolde Melanoma Research Centre invites you to an informative and interactive community forum breakfast supported by MelanomaWA.

At the Esplanade Hotel, Fremantle, from 6.30am on Wednesday 24 October, the forum has attracted leading international and national melanoma experts.

To register: www.melanomaconference2012.org.au/breakfast.html or phone 9224 0333 before 18 October.

When life is not plain sailing ...

The Employee Assistance Program offers free confidential counselling to UWA staff and immediate family, for personal or work problems.

To arrange an appointment contact one of the following service providers

PPC Worldwide
Level 16, 251 Adelaide Tce, Perth
Tel: 1300 361 008 (24hrs)
Web: au.ppcworldwide.com

UWA Counselling and Psychological Service
1st Floor, Social Sciences Building, South Wing
Tel: 1300 361 008 (24hrs)
Web: counselling.uwa.edu.au

For further information on the UWA Employee Assistance Program see safety.uwa.edu.au/policies/eap

IN A CAMPUS EMERGENCY
DIAL 2222

Security staff will call the emergency services, direct them to you and come to help you while waiting for their arrival.

NEXT WEEK...

15 October 2012

CLASSIFIEDS
FOR SALE:
BRIDGETOWN: Best town block, 16 Ewing Place, Bridgetown. Residential land. $169,000. Excellent town location, quiet cul-de-sac. Huge 2.871 sqm block – nearly 3/4 of an acre. Amazing 180 degree panoramic views over town and to rolling hills. Two street frontages, with each frontage having a width of over 35 metres. Located in an area of quality homes, the block is fully serviced and ready, when you are, to build on. Just a stroll to shops and services.

TO LET:
LONDON: Newly converted fully equipped London accommodation (can sleep four) with panoramic views and excellent transport to Central London available in nice area of Peckham from one week to three months at very reasonable price from $400. Cleaning fee of $100 and 10% deposit required at time of booking with $500 damage deposit and remainder of rental due before arrival. Contact: melhon@optusnet.com.au

LONDON:
TO LET:
Estate, Bridgetown.
FOR SALE:
Residential land. $169,000.

MERCK, SHARP AND DOHME AUSTRALIA
Associate Professor Peter Richmond, Mr William Pomer, Dr Deborah Lehmann, Child Health Research (UWA Centre for), Paediatrics and Child Health (School of); “Study of the Safety and or Efficacy of Pneumovax” – $101,862.

GOTERTRA ENVIRONMENT
Dr Joseph Dorch, Dr Ingrid Ward, Social Sciences (School of); “Geotechnical and Mooring Design Solutions for the Offshore Renewable Wave Energy Industry (GeoWAVE)” – $459,908 (2012-14).

GRAINS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Mr William MacLeod, Professor Martin Barbett, Plant Biology (School of); “Managing Soil Borne Diseases with a Focus” – $160,001 (2012-13).

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

GRAINS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Mr William MacLeod, Professor Martin Barbett, Plant Biology (School of); “Managing Soil Borne Diseases with a Focus” – $160,001 (2012-13).

LOTTERYWEST
Associate Professor Eileen Webb, Associate Professor Aviva Freilich, Law School; “Study of the Impact of Legislation on Housing Security for Seniors in Western Australia” – $173,000 (2012-13).

GREAT WESTERN AUSTRALIA
Australian Soils Amended with the Greenhouse Gas Potential of Environment (School of); “Mitigating Climate Change: Three Dimensional Analysis” – $99,500 (2012-13).

WATER CORPORATION WA
Mr William MacLeod, Professor Martin Barbett, Plant Biology (School of); “Managing Soil Borne Diseases with a Focus” – $160,001 (2012-13).

BRIDGETOWN:
FOR SALE:
Residential land. $169,000.

LONDON:
TO LET:
Estate, Bridgetown.
FOR SALE:
Residential land. $169,000.

RESEARCH GRANTS
Grants Awarded Between 17/09/2012 and 29/09/2012
AUSTRALIAN PORK LIMITED APL EX DAFF CARBON FARMING FUTURES FILLING THE RESEARCH GAP PROGRAM
Dr Sasha Jenkins, Earth and Environment (School of); “Mitigating the Greenhouse Gas Potential of Australian Soils Amended with Livestock Manure” – $655,563 (2011-14).

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF ORTHODONTISTS FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION
Associate Professor Mithran Goonewardene, Mr Syed Islam, Dentistry (School of) / Oral Health Centre; “Three Dimensional Analysis of the Impact of Skeletal Jaw Base Relationship on Airway Size and Volume” – $29,517 (2012).

COTERRA ENVIRONMENT
Dr Joseph Dorch, Dr Ingrid Ward, Social Sciences (School of); “Geotechnical and Mooring Design Solutions for the Offshore Renewable Wave Energy Industry (GeoWAVE)” – $459,908 (2012-14).

GRAINS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Mr William MacLeod, Professor Martin Barbett, Plant Biology (School of); “Managing Soil Borne Diseases with a Focus” – $160,001 (2012-13).

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

GRAINS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Mr William MacLeod, Professor Martin Barbett, Plant Biology (School of); “Managing Soil Borne Diseases with a Focus” – $160,001 (2012-13).

LOTTERYWEST
Associate Professor Eileen Webb, Associate Professor Aviva Freilich, Law School; “Study of the Impact of Legislation on Housing Security for Seniors in Western Australia” – $173,000 (2012-13).

MERCK, SHARP AND DOHME AUSTRALIA
Associate Professor Peter Richmond, Mr William Pomer, Dr Deborah Lehmann, Child Health Research (UWA Centre for), Paediatrics and Child Health (School of); “Study of the Safety and or Efficacy of Pneumovax” – $101,862 (2012).

WA ENERGY RESEARCH ALLIANCE WAERA EX CHEVRON
Winthrop Professor Eric May, Assistant Professor Brendan Graham, Dr Thomas Hughes, Mechanical and Chemical Engineering (School of); “PVT Modeling for LNG - Benchmarking Improved LNG Simulation Property Packages against Operational Plant Data” – $99,500 (2012-13).

WATER CORPORATION WA
Associate Professor Anas Ghadouani, Environmental Systems Engineering (School of); “Cyanobacterial Risk Assessment and Monitoring Program” – $139,200 (2012).
Like it or leave it

By Dr John Henderson
Discipline Chair
Linguistics

Hey, are you, like, a teacher?
A lost new student is nervously asking for directions on the stairs here in the M.C. Escher Building. Or maybe I need some more commas to capture it: ‘Hey, are you, like, a teacher?’ No, that looks like way too many commas for how she said it. It’s always, like, fun to, like, imitate the language of, like, kids – especially if you don’t actually do it right and it drives your teenage children insane and makes young academics feel, like, they’re even more hip and cool with, like, youths. You sound like a totally lame wannabe to anyone under about 85 or something. And nobody says that anymore anyway. In fact, just talking about it is lame.

I sometimes get emails from students, even ones I don’t know, that start with ‘Hey’ and end with ‘Seeya’. A colleague of mine wonders whether students should be picked up on things like this so that they learn to communicate in more formal situations in order to do well for themselves in life. I generally let this kind of informality pass, but it does make me think about the kinds of communication skills that students need and how they acquire them.

When a new communication skills unit was being planned, some of the first comments I heard in my faculty were things like: ‘Good. Some of the students we get in these days wouldn’t know where to place a comma if their lives depended on it.’ (Picture Angelina Jolie’s nervous hands defusing a terrorist nuclear weapon.) In addition to the attractions of clarity for the reader, at least some of the demand for comma therapy and the like comes from a small black spot in most people’s hearts that believes in absolutes of correctness in language (and punctuation), as if they’re immutable laws of the universe rather than social conventions appropriate to different contexts and changing over time.

Colleagues in the Business School tell me that money is a good motivator – so maybe we should teach students about the Million Dollar Comma case, or have them read a letter-to-the-editor young-people-today what-are-they-teaching-them complaint by some employer about modern university graduates, so that they can learn the market value of communication skills. Not to mention the potential taxation implications of singular they.

There’s more than a bit of truth to the idea that you go to university so that you’ll sound like somebody who went to university (and put commas where they do). A large proportion of students want to communicate effectively and understand that there are social conventions for communication in different contexts, and are therefore motivated to work on their communication skills (and not just commas). But there are quite a few other students who need to be convinced.

A small-scale fictive study was conducted in a university tutorial class (n=25). Participants were asked to respond to a questionnaire consisting of five items. Perceived career value of academic skills was investigated using a five-point discrete visual analog scale indexed from 1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree. The median score was 3 for the item Academic writing develops skills that are valuable in non-academic careers. This result is interpreted as indicating that it looks a bit like they were probably pretty evenly divided on the point.

Even with specialist communication skills units, we are all still tasked with selling the value proposition that effective language skills are mission-critical learnings for a successful career in global arenas. If this is to gain traction with the client group, we need to talk to this issue and give space to new thinking about the ecosystem of our unit frameworks. Sure, it’s a challenge that needs to be managed and there’s the risk of some pushback, but with the right drivers in place we can circuit-break that. It’ll be so awesome. Who better than a university to teach people to communicate well, and appropriately.