

Community



University of the
Sunshine Coast
Queensland, Australia

Edition 3—2008

Graduate guides ecological project

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Vice-Chancellor's comment

THE New Year started with a new Federal Government, the announcement of more than 100 reviews—including higher education, innovation and research—and optimism about increased funding because every Labor politician was conceding that universities had been taken to the brink.

World-class aspirations would be jeopardised unless there were major new injections of money.

Nearing year end, as the review outcomes come nearer exposure, we are also in the midst of a period when economic gloom and doom has dominated media coverage. Already there are signals that reinvestment in universities is going to be a protracted, long-term process ... if it occurs at all.

If indeed the "Education Revolution" does not eventuate it will be a national tragedy, because so many expectations have been created. However, even if the gloomier scenario is realised, it will not negatively impact on USC.

We have already traversed successfully the most difficult circumstances ever encountered by a new greenfield university in the country. We have gone through the worst of times, and not just survived, but thrived. If we encounter the best of times, then that will be a bonus.



Some of our most recent successes are evidenced in this issue of Community, with the outstanding ratings given to us in the Good Universities Guide as probably the most impressive. In areas where we have been least well funded like research, we have also made dramatic progress in 2008.

Whatever the outcomes of the government reviews and however the economic situation plays out, USC will go from strength to strength, and the flow-on effects, which are already impressive, will continue to become more evident.

Our regional commitment is unwavering and the more we are able to work collaboratively with key regional partners, through 2009 and beyond, the greater the impact will be.

Professor Paul Thomas AM
Vice-Chancellor

Cover

Arborcare Queensland ecologist Kate Hoad at work on the USC campus. Photo by Megan Slade.

Community

Community is a free publication published by the Office of Marketing and Communications at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia.

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Top marks for quality of education

THE quality of education provided by the University of the Sunshine Coast has received high accolades, with the 2009 Good Universities Guide describing the University as a five-star performer.

The annual Guide has awarded top marks (five stars) for USC's staff qualifications, teaching quality, graduates' satisfaction with their overall university experience, and their satisfaction with the generic skills they gained while at university.

USC also scored well (four stars) for access by equity groups and for Indigenous enrolments.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Thomas AM said he was delighted with the ratings.

"Our focus has always been on providing quality education because we believe it is essential for this region as it continues to grow," he said.



USC Coaching Science academic Angela Calder chats with Open Day visitor Beau McEwen.



Dr Joanne Scott with her book Showtime.

Showtime for historian

UNIVERSITY of the Sunshine Coast Associate Professor of History Joanne Scott has co-authored an historical account of the Brisbane Exhibition. The 250-page publication—"Showtime: A History of the Brisbane Exhibition"—was officially launched at the Queensland Museum in late July as part of a major social history exhibition about the Ekka. Dr Scott and Dr Ross Laurie of the University of Queensland spent four years researching the show's 132-year history to produce a record that details everything from food and fashion to agricultural displays and entertainment at the Ekka. Dr Scott said the book included plenty of interesting and amusing tales about Exhibition organisers and volunteers, catering crises, and the changing array of trade displays and competition categories.



Dr Michael Nagel with his new publication.

Tackling cyber bullying

PRACTICAL advice for parents and teachers in combating cyber bullying among girls is featured in a new book by USC education expert Dr Michael Nagel. The book, "It's a girl thing", looks beyond the "sugar and spice" to consider the nitty-gritty of girls' emotions, relationships and schooling. It contains specific advice on how to help girls deal with the increased prevalence of bullying carried out through email and mobile phone texting. Dr Nagel, who has worked as an educator and researcher into behaviour management for the past three decades, said schools needed to help girls learn to understand emotions and how to deal with stressful situations like bullying. "It's a girl thing" follows Dr Nagel's earlier book, "Boys Stir Us", which offers strategies to engage positively with boys.

— Kerry Brown

Treasurer opens USC's Health and Sport Centre

FEDERAL Treasurer Wayne Swan praised the University of the Sunshine Coast's commitment to the region when he officially opened its \$13.8 million Health and Sport Centre in late July.

About 150 people attended the opening ceremony of the five-storey centre that will be used to train many of the Sunshine Coast's future health professionals and boost community health.

Mr Swan said the Federal Government was impressed by USC's strong commitment to community engagement and its dedication to finding new ways to benefit the region.

"We're delighted to be partners in the provision of funding for this building and with your objectives of setting the University up for health and sport," he said.

"I've been very impressed with what I've seen so far at the University of the Sunshine Coast."

Mr Swan, whose career has included 12 years as a university lecturer in Brisbane, said education was a matter that was close to his heart.

"Education is the engine room of opportunity and fairness," he said. "It enables us to share opportunities fairly around Australia."



Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan tries out the gym equipment in USC's new five-storey Health and Sport Centre alongside USC staff members Melissa Waterson and Natasha King. Photo by Sunshine Coast Daily.

USC's Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Thomas AM and Head of School of Health and Sport Sciences Professor John Lowe also spoke at the opening ceremony about the University's key role in providing future healthcare experts for the region.

The Health and Sport Centre—built over nine months by the Evans Harch Group—was funded by government and private contributions, including donations to USC's ongoing Building Excellence Campaign (see page 10).

It has state-of-the-art testing and research laboratories, a gymnasium, and purpose-built teaching spaces for a range of degrees including biomedical science, paramedic science, occupational therapy, nursing science, sport science, nutrition and dietetics, psychology and public health.

A key feature of the Health and Sport Centre is a public psychology clinic that is offering treatment and assessment for a wide range of mental health problems and disorders.

Business Accelerator impresses Minister

QUEENSLAND'S Tourism, Regional Development and Industry Minister Desley Boyle officially opened the Business Accelerator at the University of the Sunshine Coast's Innovation Centre in August.

The Minister praised the University for its efforts in engaging with the local business community when she opened the facility before a crowd of 200 business and community leaders and USC staff.

The State Government provided \$3.6 million to help the University establish the facility which has been designed to stimulate significant private sector investment in the region over the next decade.

The Accelerator will house up to 20 established technology and knowledge-based businesses and professional service firms at a time.

It will become a significant part of the Business and Technology Precinct that is being developed around USC at Sippy Downs.

Innovation Centre CEO Colin Graham said the Accelerator offered an integrated package of serviced office space, fast speed fibre access, meeting rooms and business development services.



Tourism, Regional Development and Industry Minister Desley Boyle speaks at the official opening of the Business Accelerator.

Monthly markets grow in popularity



Darren Madigan and Luke Goodwin check out some water bottle holders at a recent market day.

MARKET days are now held at the University of the Sunshine Coast on the first Monday of each month.

The popular events have been organised by Faculty of Business Project and Event Management students to help create a more vibrant atmosphere on campus.

A growing number of stalls are now offering items ranging from jewellery and crafts to bags, handmade soap and organic fruit and vegetables.

Meanwhile, a team of enthusiastic USC students have helped Eumundi Markets in its bid to become the most ecologically-friendly market in Australia.

The students—who recently won \$1,500 in a national Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) competition for their involvement in a variety of community projects—suggested ways for the markets to become cleaner and greener.

Eumundi Markets general manager Peter Homan said he was impressed by the students' involvement as consultants for the markets, particularly by their suggestions for compostable packaging.

"They conducted research with food stall holders and gave a report that initiated significant changes for waste disposal to be implemented at the markets," he said.

Mr Homan said some of the SIFE team's suggestions would be introduced immediately.

SIFE team president Phoebe Brown said projects like that at the Eumundi Markets had helped the team members develop leadership, teamwork and communication skills.

"SIFE projects involve students in opportunities to make a difference to local communities while connecting them to future employers," she said.

— Kerry Brown



Universities urged to become 'eco-versities'

A NEW vision of how universities can lead the drive towards sustainability—by becoming "eco-versities"—was presented at a national conference of university delegates on the Sunshine Coast recently.

The University of the Sunshine Coast outlined how tertiary institutions could do more than simply teach about sustainability, when it hosted the annual Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA) conference.

Under the banner of "Engaging for a Sustainable Future", this annual conference promoted partnerships between universities, private enterprise, government and communities.

About 150 delegates from most Australian and several overseas universities

attended, along with government and business representatives.

AUCEA vice-president and USC Professor of Regional Engagement Steve Garlick presented a paper about "eco-versities".

Professor Garlick said this approach to sustainability should include all facets of universities, from curriculum, pedagogy, infrastructure, buildings, the treatment of the environment and wildlife, and engagement with the community.

His paper outlined USC's moves towards becoming an "eco-versity" through its engagement with the local community and wildlife.

He said the concept also could include the University applying to become a wildlife sanctuary.

Record crowd attends USC Open Day

A RECORD crowd of about 3,500 people attended the University of the Sunshine Coast's annual Open Day on Sunday 17 August.

Prospective students and their families took part in campus tours, attended lectures about various degree programs and chatted with USC staff and students.

The University's Open Day also featured seminars on career prospects in various fields and presentations about applying to study, seeking financial support, and USC's student support services.

Open Day organiser Kylie Russell said she was delighted with the turn-out, with people travelling from as far as Mackay, Roma and Port Macquarie to attend.

"People said they especially enjoyed the one-on-one contact with academics,"



Administrative assistant Julie Hobbins chats with Charlene Lynn and KC Meineke at the USC Open Day.

she said. "The seminars were well attended and the hands-on science activities were interactive and fun.

"A lot of people said they now felt comfortable about starting university after having had a look around the campus and speaking to our academics."

Graduate wins silver in Beijing

WINNING a silver medal at the recent Paralympic Games in Beijing brought both joy and relief to University of the Sunshine Coast graduate Marayke Jonkers.

Marayke, 27, clinched the medal in her only event at the Games—the 150m individual medley—adding to the two bronze medals she won in Athens in 2004.

She said her success vindicated her decision to persevere with training for the Games after learning earlier this year that two of her three events, the 150m butterfly and the 50m breaststroke,

had been removed from the Paralympics schedule.

"It was a wonderful feeling to have something to show for all that hard work I put into training for these Games over the past four years," she said. "To win a medal that was better than those I won in Athens was more than I could ever have hoped for."

Marayke said training for Beijing also had been at the expense of pursuing a career after graduating from USC with a Bachelor of Social Science (Community Work) in 2004 and a Bachelor of Arts (Communication) in 2006.

However, she said her studies of both journalism and public relations as part of her Communication degree had paid dividends.

"As an athlete, I am constantly dealing with the media," she said. "Having studied



Marayke Jonkers celebrates winning silver at the Beijing Paralympics. Photo by Marion Jonkers Photography.

both PR and journalism as part of my degree, I understand what the media wants and it doesn't stress me at all. Basically, I've been my own media manager."

Marayke said her training for the Games was boosted by USC's Centre for Healthy Activities, Sport and Exercise (CHASE), which developed special weight scales that she could access while remaining in her wheelchair. These scales enabled her to accurately assess her important power-to-weight ratio in the lead-up to Beijing.

Marayke also praised the work of CHASE director Associate Professor Brendan Burkett who was the Sports Science Coordinator for the Paralympic swim team.

Marayke recently established the Sporting Dreams foundation which will soon distribute its first round of grants to local athletes with disabilities.



USC lecturer Gayle Mayes at the Beijing Olympics.

Olympic effort by business academic

IF teaching students about marketing was an Olympic sport, University of the Sunshine Coast business academic Gayle Mayes would be well in the race to win a gold medal.

Ms Mayes, who spent two weeks in Beijing for the Olympic Games in August, organised several live video links with her Sport and Event Marketing classes during their scheduled lecture times.

She used the University's interactive computer technology to bring the Beijing Olympics into the classroom, both at USC and at a local primary school on the Sunshine Coast.

Ms Mayes integrated her live link sessions with the weekly sports marketing topics that were being discussed by her University classes.

"Students were encouraged to discuss and ask questions about issues like ticket prices, politics and sport, drugs in sport, security, the cultural, economic, political and environmental impacts of mega events, and the challenges of marketing and managing an international event in China," she said.

The former Olympic kayaker said she used experiential education as her main teaching strategy.

— Kerry Brown

USC joins search for future Olympians

TALENTED young athletes who believe they might have what it takes to represent Australia at the 2012 Olympics are being put through their paces at the University of the Sunshine Coast.

USC has become a Talent Assessment Centre for the Australian Sports Commission's National Talent Identification and Development (NTID) program which has the task of finding and developing new athletes for Olympic and World Championship sports.

The NTID centre at USC is one of more than 20 established across Australia to conduct testing and help fast-track talented athletes. These centres will assist in validating athletes' physical performance results generated from a web-based self-identification tool called eTID which is on the internet at ausport.gov.au/etid.

USC's laboratory coordinator for Sport and Exercise Science Meegan Walker said the next testing session would be held on 15 November.



USC laboratory coordinator Meegan Walker tests the strength of colleague Stephen Bishop.



Professor Abigail Elizur, right, works with Honours student Rebecca Morgan and PhD student Kelli Anderson on the Atlantic salmon project.

Scientists to ‘climate-proof’ salmon

UNIVERSITY of the Sunshine Coast researchers are taking part in an exciting scientific project to help “climate-proof” Tasmania’s \$270 million salmon aquaculture industry.

The collaborative project, involving USC, Griffith University and Salmon Enterprises of Tasmania, recently gained \$100,000 in funding from the Federal Government.

Researchers will examine the impact of temperature variations on Atlantic salmon breeding stock of different ages in a bid to improve the survival rate of eggs.

USC’s Professor of Aquaculture Biotechnology Abigail Elizur is working with PhD student Kelli Anderson and Honours student Rebecca Morgan in researching the molecular physiology of the fish.

Professor Elizur said Atlantic salmon in Tasmania were grown and produced in water temperatures that were starting to approach the upper tolerance limits of the fish.

She said warmer temperatures are believed to affect the reproduction of salmon by reducing the structural integrity

of the egg envelope, leading to what is termed “soft shells”.

“In our research, we are isolating the genes for the building blocks of the eggs and for the hormones which are associated with triggering the synthesis of these proteins,” Professor Elizur said.

“We are looking at the expression of the genes to see when the genes are triggered in the reproductive process and which ones are temperature-affected.”

Professor Elizur said the salmon research project would have world-wide benefits.

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Research to help triathletes

USC PhD student Katie Sutter aims to help put triathletes on the fast track to success after recently gaining a three-year scholarship with the Centre of Excellence for Applied Sport Science Research (CoE) at the Queensland Academy of Sport (QAS).

Katie, 25, will research the effects of fatigue on the physiological and biomechanical parameters of those who compete in Olympic distance triathlons.

Katie said she hopes her research will provide coaches and athletes with a better understanding of the complex relationships between intensity and technique in triathlon, as well as in the individual sports of swimming, cycling and running.

After completing a degree in Sports and Exercise Science at USC, Katie went on to receive first-class honours in 2007 before gaining this scholarship as part of her PhD studies.

— Kerry Brown



PhD student and triathlete Katie Sutter.

USC co-hosts child protection conference

THE University of the Sunshine Coast recently co-hosted a conference aimed at improving services for vulnerable children and families in the region.

The Child Protective Practices Conference—the first of its kind on the Sunshine Coast—was held in September by the University and the Department of Child Safety.

The 150 conference delegates who attended included staff from government agencies like the Department of Child Safety, Disability Services, Queensland Health and Education Queensland, and from Lifeline, Relationships Australia, TAFE colleges and University students and staff.

USC Social Work academic Jo Roff said the conference would help boost child protection practice, knowledge and skills in the region.

Ecologist oversees huge habitat project

UNIVERSITY of the Sunshine Coast environmental science graduate Kate Hoad is working on what could be the largest ecological project of its kind in the world.

Kate, 32, is a restoration ecologist with Arborcare Queensland and is overseeing the re-establishment of 15ha of native habitat that has been transported in four-square-metre turfs from a new residential development at Bundilla to the USC campus.

The last squares of habitat are expected to arrive in December, by which time the developer Stockland will have spent millions of dollars translocating the rare and threatened vegetation from its Brightwater estate.

Stockland hired Hall Contracting which used special excavators to lift plants, roots and soil in intact squares from the estate and load them on trucks bound for USC.

Kate was sub-contracted to ensure the 30,000-odd squares were correctly pieced together to give the plants the best chance of survival on a 15ha site at USC.

Kate, who finished her degree in 2003, said she was relishing the project which involved arranging plants according to their specific hydrological and topographical requirements.

She said rare species of boronia rivularis and acacia attenuata were among the plants that will provide habitat for a range of animals, including threatened species of ground parrot, acid frogs and the Lewin's Rail.

"It's very exciting," she said. "I've worked on a lot of projects in bush regeneration but



USC science graduate Kate Hoad checks a rare boronia plant.

never anything like this, slowly filling an ex-canefield with native heath.

"I am fortunate to be able to monitor the establishment of plants and create native habitat for the wildlife around the area."

Kate will continue working at the USC site for the next three years alongside University researchers who are keen to monitor the habitat's health and record changes in the biodiversity of its flora and fauna.

USC Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Greg Hill said the project had established a "living laboratory" on campus for extensive environmental research.



Dr Helen Wallace with Jeremy Brawnner of the CSIRO and Dr David Lee of the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries.

USC is leading forestry climate change initiative

A COLLABORATIVE forestry project, led by the University of the Sunshine Coast, is tackling the effects of climate change head on after receiving almost \$1.9 million from the State Government.

State Tourism, Regional Development and Industry Minister Desley Boyle announced the funding in August for the Smart Forests Alliance Queensland (SFAQ) project which will use world-leading biotechnology to speed up production of trees that are best able to absorb carbon from the air.

Alliance partners are the University of the Sunshine Coast, CSIRO, the Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, the Northern Territory Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines, Integrated Tree Cropping Ltd and Forest Enterprises Australia Ltd.

USC Associate Professor Helen Wallace said the alliance brought together all the players in forestry in northern Australia to scientifically speed up the production of fast-growing Queensland tropical and subtropical plantation trees.

Dr Wallace said the \$5.5 million project would have numerous benefits, including climate change mitigation through sequestration of carbon, increasing forestry investment in Queensland, and building rural and regional industries.

"The alliance will leapfrog Queensland to the forefront of tropical and subtropical forest biotechnology and attract the booming plantation investment sector to Queensland," she said.

"This ramps up research that we have been doing with our partners for a long time. We're really building on our expertise in forestry and climate change."



Workmen unload squares of habitat transported from Bundilla to the USC campus.



USC journalism student Megan Mackander.

Megan works for news crew at US presidential debate

BEING in the right place at the right time earned University of the Sunshine Coast journalism student Megan Mackander an exciting media experience that will certainly stand out on her resume.

Megan, 20, worked as an intern with cable television news channel MSNBC during the first presidential debate between John McCain and Barack Obama at the University of Mississippi (UM) on 26 September.

The second-year student from Hervey Bay is currently studying at UM thanks to USC's Global Opportunities program which enables students to spend a semester or two of their degree studying overseas.

Megan said it was exciting to mix with the 3,000 journalists who converged on the University of Mississippi for the debate.

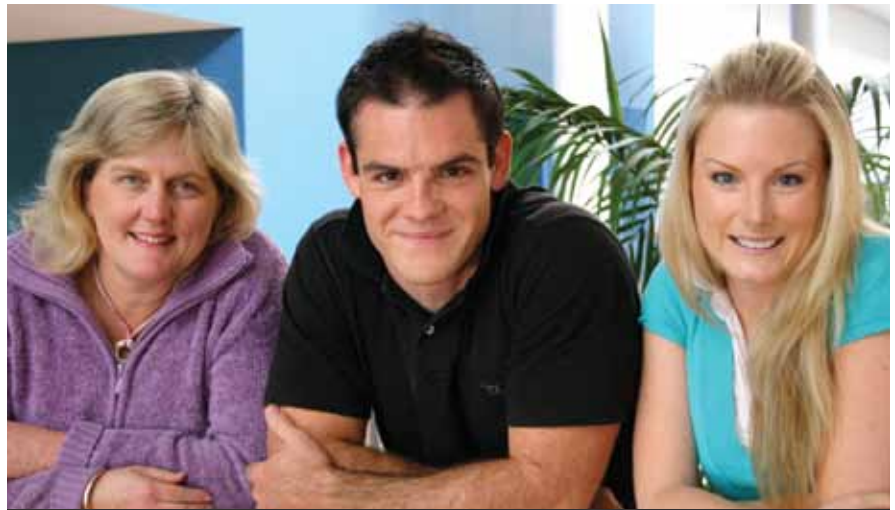
Her chance to work with MSNBC arose after she enrolled in a class that incorporated a week-long internship with the university's media relations team as it geared up for the presidential debate.

"During my first few days with the media relations team, I handed out press packs, answered questions, directed crews to where they needed to be and ensured everything was prepared for the arrival of the 3,000 journalists later that week," she said.

"On the day of the debate, I worked with MSNBC as an intern. I got coffees, made phone calls for staff, arranged meals, ran errands around campus, answered questions, got the live audience together by promoting the shows, and just observed.

"I can now put on my resume that I've done an internship with MSNBC in America ... practical experience that most Sunshine Coast students cannot say they have."

Tenacious student scoops media prize



Queensland Media Award winner Tom Haynes, centre, with finalists Kerry Brown and Kylie Stephenson.

UNIVERSITY of the Sunshine Coast journalism student Tom Haynes won the 2008 Queensland Media Award for the Most Outstanding Journalism Student from a Regional University.

Tom, 27, received \$6,000 in prize money for his competition entry of four stories he worked on while on internships with Seven Local News and the Sunshine Coast Daily as part of his Bachelor of Communication degree.

Tom said he was surprised to have won the award ahead of the two other talented finalists—Kerry Brown and Kylie Stephenson, both of USC—and now aimed to set his career goals higher.

"This is huge for my career ... for opening doors to job opportunities," he said. "It's certainly ignited a passionate flame to do hard news. I was planning

to work for a surfing magazine, but now I'd really like to work as a foreign correspondent for the ABC."

Tom's award entry included a story about a harrowing traffic accident on the Bruce Highway, and a report about the shortage of hospital beds in the region.

Tom said he believed the guidance and support of USC's journalism academics and his background in sales were key factors in winning the award.

"Sales is about tenacity and about not taking 'no' for an answer, and doing that in a way that is diplomatic," he said. "I think it was my tenacity in dealing with the Health Minister's office that impressed the judges."

USC's Head of School of Communication Associate Professor Stephen Lamble congratulated Tom on his win, and Kerry and Kylie on being Media Awards finalists.

Journalism academics earn \$10,000 award

TWO innovative University of the Sunshine Coast academics have gained a prestigious national award for their outstanding work in journalism education.

USC's Head of School of Communication Associate Professor Stephen Lamble and Associate Lecturer Gill Cowden jointly received a \$10,000 Australian Learning and Teaching Council award in Brisbane in August.

The award is for creating innovative curricula and developing research-informed teaching resources to enhance graduate employment opportunities in journalism.

Dr Lamble said the USC journalism program helped students develop skills in print, broadcast and web media, and offered them valuable work-integrated learning experiences with media organisations.

— Kerry Brown



Associate Lecturer Gill Cowden and Associate Professor Stephen Lamble.

Community festival hits right chord

PUBLIC Health student Sharna Taylor certainly knows how to draw a crowd ... and it has nothing to do with how well she can play the guitar.

Sharna, 26, organised the region's Fusion Festival, which was held on 5 October, while on a work placement with Community Focus Association Inc.

Her mission was to boost community well-being and promote Mental Health Week.

An estimated 2,500 people attended the free event at Cotton Tree Park, Maroochydore, which featured seven hours of live music and entertainment, workshops, sporting demonstrations, markets and food stalls, and information about the mental health services on the Coast.

Sharna said participation in community activities was an important aspect of community wellbeing, so the festival was focused on encouraging people to try out new sports and other social activities.

These included belly dancing, circus school, Latin and Indigenous dancing, yoga,



USC student and Fusion Festival organiser Sharna Taylor, with volunteer Jennifer Weir, says participating in music and sporting activities are key aspects to community mental health.

tai chi, meditation, painting and sports like AFL, rugby union, cricket and sailing.

"Sport and music and other activities are great ways to create a positive atmosphere where people can interact and feel part of the community," she said.

Sharna began planning the festival during a five-month work placement that ended in June but she continued working voluntarily to ensure the festival was bigger

and better than the previous year.

This effort was even more remarkable, given that Sharna gave birth to her first child in July.

Sharna said she was pleased by the financial support she received from the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and many other donors in organising the festival, and with the assistance she gained from fellow students and USC staff.

Internship leads to Muster work

VOLUNTARY work as part of a university assignment last year helped USC student Jarryd Townson gain employment as the marketing coordinator of the recent Toyota National Country Music Muster.

Jarryd, 29, of Buderim, was employed in February to nationally promote the iconic six-day event in late August that attracted 30,000 people to Amamoor Creek State Forest Park near Gympie.

The business student said his main tasks had included promoting the Muster interstate and highlighting its diverse range of performers, from Jimmy Barnes and Pete Murray to Kasey Chambers and Adam Brand.

Muster coordinator Brian Sansom said Jarryd had learnt all the latest marketing strategies and technological skills at USC and was applying them well in his role as marketing coordinator.

"He originally worked on a short-term basis, got very involved and took on more and more responsibility," he said. "We are very impressed with his enthusiasm and work ethic."



USC business student Jarryd Townson.

Jarryd is studying a double degree in Marketing and Design at the University of the Sunshine Coast and has enjoyed the work experiences on offer to him through USC.

"Interactive learning offers endless opportunities to students because they can show potential employers how well they can apply what they have learnt at university," he said.

"Throughout my degree, lecturers have encouraged me to volunteer. And that resulted in gaining this role as marketing coordinator of the Muster." — Kerry Brown

University study takes Kylie to Fiji

UNIVERSITY of the Sunshine Coast student Kylie Beard was thrilled to have travelled to Fiji this year to teach in a remote highland village as part of her study in a combined education and science degree.

Kylie, 20, was one of 19 students and three lecturers from USC who spent nine days in July working in rural Fiji on a project that the University started last year.

The students helped install a water filter at a remote "village resort" that was established for tourists to experience the highlands. This filter was funded by USC's Students in Free Enterprise team, Ballarat University and businesses Sky Juice Ltd and Fiji Dreaming.

Kylie said USC formed a partnership with Fiji Dreaming in 2006 to help develop sustainable economic and social concepts for the Fijian village which has about 500 residents.

Future trips to Fiji are planned for late November. — Kerry Brown



USC Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Thomas AM, second from left, thanks Peter, Brian and Cameron Hall of Hall Contracting Pty Ltd for their kind donation.

Hall family establishes engineering scholarship

THE University of the Sunshine Coast has established its first engineering scholarship thanks to a generous donation from local family-owned civil engineering firm Hall Contracting Pty Ltd.

In a significant gift to the University's Building Excellence campaign, the long-time Coast family has provided \$100,000 to endow the Les and Mary Hall Family Scholarship.

The gift will enable the University to each year present a \$5,000 scholarship to a first-year construction engineering student, distributed over the student's time at USC.

Hall Contracting owners, brothers Brian and Peter Hall, made the gift to USC to honour their parents, Les and Mary Hall, who founded Hall Contracting Pty Ltd after moving to the region in 1946.

This company—which today is run by Brian and Peter Hall and Brian's son Cameron—now employs more than 90 staff and carries out civil and dredging contracts all over Australia, South East Asia and the Pacific.

USC introduced two Bachelor of Engineering degrees this year, in Construction Management and in Water and Sustainable Resource Management.

AFUWQ rewards outstanding women

SIX University of the Sunshine Coast students recently received \$1,000 bursaries from the Sunshine Coast branch of the Australian Federation of University Women Queensland (AFUWQ).

The bursaries went to Michele Gilchrist (Bachelor of Arts), Lydia Fairhall (Bachelor of Social Science), Lea-Anne Keen (Bachelor of Science), Terri Waller (combined Arts and Education degree), Gina Leach (combined Arts and Science degree) and Macaela French (combined Arts and Business degree).

AFUWQ is part of an international organisation committed to the promotion of educational opportunities for women.

AFUWQ president Bev Hinz said the Sunshine Coast branch of the organisation had established a close association with the University of the Sunshine Coast.



Five of the six AFUWQ bursary recipients Gina Leach, Lydia Fairhall, Lea-Anne Keen, Terri Waller and Michele Gilchrist.

"Our members gown the USC graduands annually and the funds raised provide up to five bursaries each year, currently valued at \$1,000 each, which are awarded to outstanding women students," she said.

"Bursaries to the total value of \$42,000 have been awarded to date."

Final call for Building Excellence campaign

THE USC Building Excellence campaign looks set to reach an impressive target that was set in 2006.

It has so far raised \$4.42 million towards its goal of \$5 million to support three key initiatives: USC's new Health and Sport Centre, student scholarships and bursaries, and campus enhancement.

University Foundation Executive Officer Andrew Pentland said the campaign, which was launched in 2006, would wrap up on 31 December. "Community members are strongly encouraged to see the campaign 'over the finish line' through philanthropic support in the final months," he said.

For details on making donations to USC, contact Andrew Pentland at the University Foundation on <+61 7 5459 4418>.

Rotary funds Indigenous Health Scholarships



Scholarship recipient Nicole Willmett.

A LITTLE inspiration can go a long way. Just ask Nicole Willmett, one of the three USC student recipients of the Indigenous Health Scholarship for Indigenous students who are studying health sciences.

These scholarships are supported by the

Australian Rotary Health Research Fund, Rotary clubs, particularly Nambour and Mooloolaba, and the government.

Nicole is studying psychology and exercise science at USC and plans to work in Indigenous communities in mental health, specifically to get students back into school by building their confidence.

Nicole was inspired by family members to help the community from which she came. Nicole's father is a football coach who has long observed that Indigenous children's grades improve as their confidence on the field does.

Her great uncle, a school teacher to Indigenous students, was one of Queensland's first Aborigines to graduate from university and Nicole's grandmother worked in addressing Indigenous housing issues.

"I'd like to be a role model for younger Aboriginal kids too," she said.

The two other students to receive the scholarships were Judith Whitfield and Nicole Ellis. All three students will receive \$5,000 each year for the next two years.



Medical researcher Dr Elke Hacker is USC's Outstanding Alumni Award winner for 2008.

Cancer researcher wins Outstanding Alumni Award

A USC Science graduate researching the genetics of melanoma cancer at the Queensland Institute of Medical Research (QIMR) has won the University's Outstanding Alumni Award for 2008.

This award recognises a graduate who has attained significant achievement in their field of endeavour.

Dr Elke Hacker grew up on the Sunshine Coast and completed her Bachelor of Science in 2002, followed by a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in 2003, at USC.

Elke's research into schistosomiasis, a parasitic disease affecting people in developing countries, earned her first-class honours from USC and a Queensland Cancer Fund and QIMR PhD scholarship.

After three years of research into the role of UV in melanoma development and the publication of three papers, Elke received her PhD from the University of

Queensland—all before the age of 25.

Elke's research career has taken her to prestigious institutions around the world, including Yale and Harvard universities in the United States and the Marie Curie Research Institute in London.

"The history of these institutions is remarkable," says Elke. "It is exciting to collaborate with colleagues overseas regarding research techniques."

Elke plans to continue working on preventative strategies to reduce skin cancer and help people better manage their time spent in the Queensland sun.

Elke will receive her award at the 2008 Outstanding Alumni Award ceremony on 19 November in the USC Art Gallery. All graduates are encouraged to attend the celebration.

For more information please contact USC Alumni Relations Officer Anita Edmonds on <+61 7 5459 4564> or email <aedmonds@usc.edu.au>.

USC graduates meet in London

THE University of the Sunshine Coast's first alumni event in London was held in October at Covent Garden.

Graduates from all faculties enjoyed meeting with Associate Professors of Marketing, Debra and Michael Harker to reminisce about USC, catch up on University news and network with other graduates.

The Alumni Relations office has thanked all those who attended, particularly Sebastian Dietze who selected the venue, encouraged graduates to

attend, and assisted on the night.

"The feedback from everyone was really positive," Sebastian said.

"We had lively chats about our time in Australia, discovered once again that the world is small with friends in common and some even had classes together.

"We exchanged contact details and want to meet more often."

If you are interested in attending future alumni events in London, contact USC Alumni Relations Officer Anita Edmonds via email <alumni@usc.edu.au>.



Fabrizio Rossetti, Sebastian Dietze, Tyrone Zafir and Mikael Fager enjoy the first USC alumni event in London.

Upcoming events for graduates

THE USC Alumni Relations office has organised several events in November that graduates are invited and encouraged to attend.

2008 Outstanding Alumni Award ceremony—19 November 2008

An end-of-year alumni celebration and presentation of the 2008 Outstanding Alumni Award to Dr Elke Hacker will be held at the USC Art Gallery. Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Thomas AM also will give an update on the University's development.

Brisbane alumni reception—25 November 2008

An alumni reception will be held for Brisbane graduates at South Bank. The event will be hosted by Scott Forsdike, a USC founding student and University Council member, who will share his story and career progression.

Fiji alumni reception—14 November 2008

An alumni reception for graduates in Fiji will be hosted by USC Chancellor John Dobson OAM, and Professor of Property and Development Mike Hefferan who will visit Fiji to officiate at the 2008 Graduation ceremony.

10 year alumni reunion—2009

In 2009, the University will celebrate its first 10 year alumni reunion. Alumni who graduated in 1999, or who were founding students, and would like to participate can contact the Alumni Relations office.

For more information on any of these events, visit the Alumni Events section of the USC website <www.usc.edu.au/alumni> or contact the Alumni Relations office on <+61 7 5459 4564> or email <alumni@usc.edu.au>.



Thread creates tapestry of ideas

USC Computer-Based Design students Kate Jolly, Chenoa Pettrup, Keith Sweeney and Bianca Field prepare for this year's portfolio exhibition at the USC Gallery.

THE University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery's final exhibition for 2008, "Thread", will feature the portfolios of 38 advanced-level Computer-Based Design students.

The exhibition, from 13–22 November, will feature artwork created by each of the students over the past three years.

Computer-Based Design lecturer Toni Coles said the exhibition was symbolic of the students' abilities to take a brief and develop it into a series of creative ideas.

"Our students have put considerable thought into the ideas behind each project

in their portfolios," Ms Coles said.

"The exhibition will provide the future leaders of design with the opportunity to weave their way into the broader design network and creative industries.

"Thread celebrates the students' transition to industry professionals. This exhibition provides an opportunity for visitors to see examples of the creative work that forms the basis of the students' industry portfolios.

"The exhibition incorporates digital print, graphic design for print and publication, web design, illustration, animation,

product branding and more," she said.

Ms Coles said Computer-Based Design graduates gained work in web and print design, information graphics, multimedia and interpretive design, packaging, publishing and advertising. This exhibition is sponsored by Coastline Mini Garage.



The University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery 2008 Exhibition Program is proudly supported by major sponsor Coastline BMW.

Guided tours of Indigenous art collection

VOLUNTEERS from the University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery have been trained to provide guided tours of the University's extensive Indigenous art collection.

Gallery Curator Dawn Oelrich said the artworks were housed in several buildings on campus and comprised the largest public collection of its kind on the Sunshine Coast.

"The Central and Western Desert Art Collection at USC is a rich collection of paintings by a diverse range of Indigenous artists from the desert regions of the Northern Territory and Western Australia," she said.

"Our volunteer guides have been trained to encourage an appreciation of the art for visitors to the University campus.

"They will offer an insightful learning experience, enabling students of all levels to broadly examine the many issues reflected in the artwork."

Guided tours must be booked in advance. For more information contact Dawn Oelrich on <+61 7 5459 4633>.



Emu Dreaming at Angara Well, Utopia
by Harper Morris Tjungurrayi.
©Licensed by Aboriginal Artists Agency 2007.

Course offers top online marketing advice

THE Innovation Centre will run a course on Monday 27 November for business people who want to boost their online marketing.

The one-day "Digital Futures—Building your online business" course will feature presentations by 10 dynamic speakers about online marketing, website development and growing businesses.

Innovation Centre CEO Colin Graham said the course would help business people learn how to identify online opportunities, design online business models and generate traffic to their websites. It also will focus on website structure and design, converting traffic into sales and communicating with customers.

"It will be a great course for those starting businesses, or for people who work in areas like digital media, marketing, public relations, web development and graphic design," he said.

Registrations for the course can be made online at <www.innovation-centre.com.au> or telephone <+61 7 5450 2609>.