A crystal ball is the newest piece of equipment to find a home in the School of Physics but it doesn’t mean the researchers are giving up on more conventional techniques.

The crystal is the stunning trophy won by senior research fellow Eugene Ivanov for the international Cady Award.

Named after American physicist Walter G Cady who became famous in the piezoelectric field, the award recognises an outstanding contribution each year related to piezoelectric frequency control and sensor devices in areas including Dr Ivanov’s special area of microwave oscillators.

He was awarded the accolade at the International Frequency Control Symposium in New Orleans recently, for the development of ultra-low noise microwave oscillators and for his pioneering research in the field of microwave circuit interferometry.

Dr Ivanov says that, in layman’s terms, Walter Cady would be credited with inventing the quartz crystal that is found in wrist watches. He also used piezoelectricity and underwater sound to make devices that could locate enemy submarines – almost a century ago.

“I hope that one day my work will be used in civil aviation, to detect air turbulence,” Dr Ivanov said. “It should be possible.”

Already, Poseiden Scientific Instruments, a Perth company which commercialised Dr Ivanov’s novel technique in 1994, has developed different instruments using his low noise microwave oscillators. One is used mainly in a military application, to detect flying targets.

So the work of the first Australian scientist to win the Cady award for nearly 20 years has already been of benefit to Australian industry.

In his acceptance speech at the symposium in New Orleans, Dr Ivanov paid tribute to Professor David Blair, who invited him to come from Moscow 11 years ago, to join his group at UWA.

After the symposium, Dr Ivanov set off to visit friends and family in Russia but was not allowed to take his crystal ball on the plane from the US. “For security reasons, it had to be posted back to me at UWA,” he said.

The School of Physics has reached a milestone in its relationship with Poseiden Scientific Instruments … see story page 8.

by Lindy Brophy
There is a quiet revolution taking place on our Australian campuses which deserves greater recognition and support.

The cycle of innovation — connecting basic research (mainly in the natural and engineering sciences) to application, product development, commercialisation and economic success — has become a feature of our sector.

Just as the international programs have transformed Australian higher education, so the innovation development is in the early stages of bringing a major new feature to the role and impact of our universities. The spin-off company will soon be as familiar an outcome of the good universities’ role as the creation of CRCs to an earlier generation, or even the emergence of the specialised research centres to even earlier generations of scholars.

Of course, there is controversy in this latest process of university evolution. And many pointed questions are being raised — will such commercialisation undermine academic freedom, bias university missions, downgrade basic research, and prove to be money losers in the long-run?

Conducted badly, with poor accountabilities and poor business plans, the drive to commercialise basic research outcomes can have negative consequences. There is some quite considerable discussion in the media, research and policy environments about getting it right.

But when we do get it right the benefits to our society, economy and universities can be considerable.

Major studies in the US and here, by the ARC, have some critical nexus between basic research, innovation and the knowledge economies of the 21st century.

Australian universities do over 80 per cent of all Australian research, (and the Go8 contribute over 70 per cent of that outcome). The figure is much lower in the US and Europe, where industry and research institutions are also major players in research and innovation.

But for our nation the universities are absolutely critical for innovation, for R & D in not only the now famous SETS cluster but in the molecular sciences and areas of the human sciences which empower the graphic design revolution.

Indeed, the biggest challenge is not so much in developing new rules to control and contain Innovation — the genie is out of the bottle!— but rather in fostering the process which begins with basic research and then involves the high risk funding phases of seeding R & D. Indeed, especially the pre-seeding phase where investment is needed against projects which are still more concept and promise than product and market.

Earlier this year I was invited to work on a task-force set up by the Prime Minister’s Science, Engineering, Innovation and Technology Committee. Under the excellent chairing of Tim Besley, one of our best business leaders and who is also president of The Technological Academy of Sciences and a former university chancellor, a significant cabinet report was developed. The recommendations ranged from more Commonwealth support to industry action to university challenge, - all aimed at addressing the critical pre-seed. I am proud to say that at UWA we have taken up the challenge in a positive and practical way. Last week I was pleased to welcome the State Minister for Development, Clive Brown, to launch the UWA Pathfinder Fund.

This new initiative of our already successful Office of Industry and Innovation, led by Andy Sierakowski, will provide a competitive fund offering financial support of up to $40,000 specifically aimed at early stage projects developed within the University with commercial potential.

Pathfinder aims to bridge the gap for projects which have exhausted avenues of research funding but have not progressed far enough to be eligible for the Federal pre-seed fund, or other venture capital seeding.

Increasing both the number and success rate of UWA’s commercialisation projects is our target. The beneficiaries will include our State and society, but will also more immediately benefit many of our creative researching scholars and their teams.

Our commitment to basic research and its relation to teaching is a fundamental feature of the UWA tradition, mission and character. This is why the latest DEST data shows UWA reporting 54 areas of research capacity reflecting our quality research-teaching nexus.

But we also increasingly add to that a nexus with Innovation, R & D and commercial outcomes.

In that development we reflect the evolution of the best of modern research-led universities, nationally and overseas.

This week also saw the ARC-CSIRO-NHMRC launch of a major study comparing Australian performance in the global spin-off. We do remarkably well for a small research culture by international standards.

The Go8 has, in addition, produced its own statement on Innovation suggesting how crucial are our set of universities in this quiet revolution of knowledge development and application: “entrepreneurial universities building the intellectual, social, cultural and economic excellence of the nation”.

Within the appropriate framework of accountability and audit, policy and ethics, we are at UWA “Open for Business”.

Professor Deryck Schreuder
Vice-Chancellor and President
vc@acs.uwa.edu.au
The upsurge in anti-military sentiment in Indonesia, following the fall of the Soeharto regime, was good news for Asian Studies lecturer David Bourchier.

A specialist in Indonesian politics for more than 20 years, Dr Bourchier has been compiling and updating information on the Indonesian military since the 1980s.

He now has a grant to work with Arts Multimedia to put together a sophisticated biographical database and publish a ‘who’s who’ of the Indonesian military. His next step will be to make his mass of data accessible on the Internet.

The wave of anti-militarism and greater freedom of the press in Indonesia since 1998 has given Dr Bourchier access to many new sources of information. “While the military are still very sensitive about being the subjects of research, many Indonesians – including some dissident officers – are now more willing to talk about the internal workings of the powerful institution.”

He gave evidence to the Australian Senate inquiry into relations between Indonesia and Australia with regard to East Timor. His work has also been used in evidence in war crime trials following the violence and destruction committed by Indonesia’s military and pro-integration militias in the wake of the United Nations supervised ballot on self determination in East Timor held in August 1999.

He recently collaborated with another Australian, Professor Richard Tanter, who gave evidence against the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Indonesian Army, in a civil suit brought in the United States.

“Six East Timorese people won their case against Lieutenant-General Johnny Lumintang for ‘ordering and directing a campaign of violence and intimidation against the people of East Timor’ and they were award US$66 million,” Dr Bourchier said.

“Of course, they will never get that money but it is important that the perpetrators know the world is watching them.”

Dr Bourchier was recently approached by the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights to observe and report on the war crimes trials currently under way in Jakarta. But he and his wife have recently had their first child and decided to stay in Perth.

His recent UWA Small Grant took him to Cornell University in New York and Leiden University in Holland, both major centres of Indonesian studies. His work there will help him complete the database and bring fresh perspectives to his teaching on the politics of Southeast Asia.

He is pleased that his work is helping in trials of human rights abuses but feels that, since 11 September 2001, the US-led war on terror has reduced the will of the international community to prosecute crimes against humanity, especially in Muslim countries friendly to the US.
In the early 1990s there was huge, emotional resistance in the United States to the marketing of the genetically-engineered Flavr Savr tomato. It was the first genetically modified food to be approved for general sale in the US.

Now, ten years later, more than half the corn produced in the US is genetically modified and it is very highly accepted.

The difference, according to Professor David Gilchrist, is education. "Genetically modified plants and foods are here to stay, but most people understand very little about them. It is because, in part, the science that enables biotechnology is so new and most people have not learned about it at school," he said.

Professor Gilchrist, a plant scientist with a special interest in gene technology and an international reputation as an innovative scientist, is Director of the Education and Outreach program at the University of California Davis (UCD).

He and his team train teachers, develop software and lend laboratory kits to high schools to bring concepts and applications of biotechnology to the classroom.

"High school and tertiary students are growing up in a world where biotechnology seems remote and difficult to understand. We have set about bridging the gap to help younger and older people understand the science behind society," Professor Gilchrist said.

He visited UWA last month, hosted by Schools in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and the School of Biomedical and Chemical Sciences. Professor Gilchrist presented a lecture aimed at high school and tertiary teachers on biotechnology and genetically modified plants, to help them to bridge the gap too.

Back at UCD, he and his team have introduced molecular biology and biotechnology to high school students in computer game format. The program has been ongoing for about a decade and Professor Gilchrist says tens of thousands of high school students have been exposed to ideas and theories through the games, other software and laboratory kits, which cost about $US 25,000 each and are loaned out to schools with specifically trained teachers to administer them, for a week or so at a time.

The education scheme is funded by the National Science Foundation. "The program has been incredibly successful with not one instance where parents have had a negative comment," he said.

"I'm always fascinated by the way in which people approach things. Biotechnology being used to improve human health, through better diagnostics and development of drug therapies, is generally accepted. But as soon as you start talking about genetically modified organisms, you get plenty of reaction there! Our goal, regardless of what people believe about technology, is to enable the average citizen to make a reasonable judgment, through appropriate education.”

Professor Gilchrist said people in the US were as sceptical as people in Australia. “But people were against the microwave, the radio and other things they didn’t understand or trust, until they learned about them.

“I think the initial problems with genetic technology were naïveté on the part of the scientists and arrogance on the part of the commercialising companies, believing that it would be accepted, not seeing it as the emotional issue it became.”

As well as his public lecture on biotechnology for young and old, Professor Gilchrist presented a paper to a Plant Biology/Biochemistry seminar on the potential role of apoptosis (programmed cell death) in plant disease.

He is an acknowledged expert in the field of apoptosis, which has been widely accepted in animals but not yet in plants. He argues that programmed cell death (PCD) is the unifying template in the fight against disease, across both the plant and animal kingdoms.

His work in the area of plant disease has concluded that PCD is a basic feature of all living tissues, plant and animal, and that plant disease resistance and susceptibility is the result of outcomes of PCD when host and pathogen tissues come into contact.

His research group is developing applied outcomes from their work on PCD in the form of novel disease resistance genes and shared these outcomes with students and researchers at UWA over several days.
A case of need becomes a stable of speed

A local council stipulation and a research grant that ran out were the unlikely starting points for WA’s most successful swim school.

Last month, Head of the School of Human Movement and Exercise Science, Professor Brian Blanksby and his wife Jeanette were presented with a joint Chancellor’s Medal for their devotion to the teaching of swimming and the establishment and setting up of Uniswim.

In 1980, Jeanette Blanksby returned to Perth from Queensland where she had been teaching physical education with her degree from UWA. She and Brian Blanksby married about the time the swimming pool was built at Human Movement, the first pool funded by an Australian university as an aquatic laboratory.

“But we had some problems with the Subiaco Council,” Professor Blanksby said. “They told us we could only build a pool here if we opened it to the public. At the same time, a longitudinal growth study I was doing with John Bloomfield ran out of money.

“So we came up with the idea of running swimming lessons here, which would satisfy the council and make some money to pay a research assistant to continue our growth and development study,” he said.

Uniswim was run from the Blanksby’s home with all bookings taken on their private phone. Jeanette Blanksby taught swimming and, within a year, some of the children were looking pretty good.

“So we set up a junior squad in 1981. One of the first kids in that squad was Rachel Harris, who was only four but already a great swimmer,” she said. Rachel went on to become an Olympic swimmer and is currently enrolled at UWA, studying arts and commerce.

She is one of several swimmers taught and coached by the Blanksbys who have made it to the top. And along the way, there were thousands more.

“The school just grew and grew. We used second year physical education (later human movement) students as teachers. In 1990, we had a second pool built,” Mrs Blanksby said.

At their busiest, the pools employ 40 students teaching and coaching swimming. There are now five full-time staff employed to run the business and the pools. And they are proud that they have never, in more than 20 years, had to advertise. Uniswim has always had such a good reputation that there are always waiting lists. They are also pleased that they have kept the pools accessible for staff, keeping prices down to encourage everybody to take advantage of them.

Jeanette Blanksby is still Uniswim’s learn-to-swim consultant.

“Jeanette was — and still is — brilliant at knowing when to push a child and when not to. Her mentoring has been invaluable for so many of our students who are now working out in the state’s schools,” Professor Blanksby said.

“Uniswim still consumes our lives!” they laughed.

Fervent teacher on a mission

Anthropologist Professor Bob Tonkinson, who has spent 40 years documenting culture and change in locations as diverse as Australia’s Western Desert and Melanesia’s tropical islands, will present the Berndt Memorial Lecture later this month.

Professor Tonkinson, who will retire from the School of Anthropology in January 2003, was one of UWA’s first anthropology students. He enrolled in 1957, a year after the anthropology course was launched by Professor Ronald Berndt. After completing Honours, he did fieldwork in the Jigalong community, and produced a PhD on the importance of ritual. He later went to work on a University of Oregon research project, spending a year in the New Hebrides.

“Over the years I have watched the paternalism of Australian missions being dismantled and have seen the New Hebrides - where Christianity went hand-in-hand with colonialism - become Vanuatu,” he recalls. “It has been interesting for me to compare the impact of Christianity in these two places.” His Berndt lecture distils those years of research: Spiritual prescription, social reality: reflections on religious dynamism.

Professor Tonkinson is involved in a range of research, including a major ARC-funded project with fellow researchers Myrna Tonkinson and Victoria Burbank on the causal factors behind health problems and risk taking in Aboriginal communities. He is the author of The Jigalong Mob and The Mardu Aborigines.

Lecturing is Professor Tonkinson’s great love and in 1988 he became the first Professor at UWA to win an Excellence in Teaching Award.

The Berndt Memorial Lecture is a free public lecture at the Lawrence Wilson Gallery at 7.30pm on October 31.
China’s western desert meets the petroleum

The huge North West Shelf gas deal with China could seem unnecessary when you realise that an original part of the Shelf is now part of western China.

The Tarim Basin, part of China’s western desert region, was once connected to Australia, right next to the North West Shelf. The vast arid plateau is dotted with mining companies, drilling for precious oil and gas.

Working in the same area of Xinjiang Province is Professor John Dodson who, along with postgraduate students and international collaborators, is aiming to bring together the entire evolution of the environment of central Asia.

The people of Xinjiang Province look more Middle Eastern than Chinese

Silks are still a big trade

Yan Zhu and Jemina Toia at the dig
Professor Dodson, who specialises in environmental history in the School of Earth and Geographical Sciences, is pursuing research that he had planned to do with the late Professor Chris Powell, who would have covered the plate tectonics side of the work.

“In terms of plate tectonics, this area was actually a little plate by itself, attached to Australia, which broke off and drifted north,” Professor Dodson explained. “When India collided with Asia, the land was pushed up around the basin to form very high mountains which became snow-capped peaks. The Himalayas lie to the south of the Tarim Basin. “It is a pretty tough plate to resist that sort of force!”

About 40 million years ago, before that major movement of continents, the Tarim Basin was a sea surrounded by lush vegetation. Once the mountains were formed, no rain-bearing winds could penetrate and it became very dry, like most of central Asia. The basin is part of the same desert system as the vast Gobi Desert.

The mountains also isolate the people of the western desert region. Geographically close to Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Pakistan, the people look more middle eastern than oriental.

“They have their own culture, their own language and music,” Professor Dodson said. The old silk road from the middle east to China goes through the Xinjiang Province and beautiful silks are still one of their major commodities.

He and PhD student Jemina Toia visited the University’s research site, about 70 kilometres from the main city of Kashgar (population 250,000) in May and will return later this month.

They explained that, as the mountains around the Tarim Basin lifted, a lake was virtually tipped on its side, leaving behind a two kilometre high bank of sediment, invaluable for their research.

Jemina said they had been sampling rock to find fossilised pollen grains. “Pollen grains record what’s been going on in the environment and we are tracing the changes from an area that supported lush vegetation to one that has become part of the arid centre of the biggest continent in the world.”

(Pollen grains are remarkably resistant to degradation. The oldest known fossil of a flowering plant is a pollen grain from Russia — it is 127 million years old.)

“After we extract the pollen, we identify the plant from which it came and, using John’s knowledge, work out the kind of environment it would have been and look at how it has changed over time,” Jemina said.

Their two main collaborators on the project are Hongbo Zheng, a graduate of UWA, one of whose masters students from the Tongji University in Shanghai will join them in October, and Dr Yan Zhu, a geographer from Lanzhou University.

“Our work takes into account the assembly of the continent, the global climate system, how the topography altered the climate, and how the massive change in biogeography from tropical system to arid system actually took place,” Professor Dodson said.

It is likely to be several years before the environmental history of this former part of Australia is fully explored.
A forensic anthropologist’s work can be grisly.

But after dealing with bikie murders, airline crashes, exhuming mass graves and other potentially traumatic human experiences, Kathy Reichs says, with hardly a moment to reflect, that September 11 was her most painful and difficult assignment.

Kathy Reichs is a Professor of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and the Laboratoires de Sciences Judiciaires et de Medecine Legale in Quebec but is better known to millions of readers worldwide simply as Kathy Reichs, author of five best-selling thrillers featuring forensic anthropologist Temperance Brennan.

Somehow, in between lecturing to FBI agents, giving evidence in court, using her skills at accident scenes and in mortuaries, and writing her latest novel, Professor Reichs had time to be part of the mortuary team which swung into action just over a year ago, when the Trade Centre collapsed.

“It was by far the hardest thing, both physically and emotionally, that I have ever done,” she told a packed house at the Octagon Theatre on a recent visit to UWA.

“I spent part of the time at Ground Zero but most of it away from the scene, in a caravan, raking through bucket after bucket of debris, searching for and isolating personal effects and bones, bone fragments, anything that would help with the identification of the thousands of bodies at the scene,” she said.

Kathy Reichs was at UWA as a guest of the Centre for Forensic Science, delivering her public lecture the day after the 9/11 anniversary.

It was aimed both at the fans of her books and current and prospective forensic science students. She said that, as a forensic anthropologist, her work fell into three parts: recovery (of bodies or parts of bodies), identification, and analysis of trauma.

“While forensic entomologists like my friend Dr Ian Dadour and forensic odontologists (dental experts) have different roles to play in this work, for me it is the bones that answer the questions.”

She explained to the audience how differences in skull and pelvis shapes and bone structures can tell her about race, gender, age, health and cause of death.

She uses her experiences (mixing them up and changing the names and places) to create her hugely popular novels.

“I began my first book, Deja Dead, after I had just finished work on a serial killer case. My third book, Deadly Decisions, was inspired by a bikie who was brought into the mortuary with nine bullet holes in his chest. He was brought in as a suicide!”

Learning about blood spatter pattern analysis led her into her fourth book, Deadly Decisions.

Although her books have made her many millions of dollars, Professor Reichs still endures the far less glamorous side of her profession, including testifying for the United Nations in human rights trials in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia.

The super accurate sapphire clocks developed by UWA physicists have not been left gathering dust in the Physics basement.

Since their commercialisation in 1992, the clocks have made $5 million for Fremantle scientific instrument company, Poseidon. The precision instrument company recently presented a cheque for just over $55,000 to the University’s Office of Industry and Innovation – royalties for the School of Physics and a milestone payment for passing the $5 million mark.

Managing director of Poseidon, Jesse Searls, said that most of the clocks had been sold to the United States for defence purposes. Other applications include metrology, aviation and communications.

Physicists involved in the development of the technology, Associate Professor Michael Tobar and Dr Eugene Ivanov, were happy to share receipt of the cheque with Professor Michael Barber, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation).
In our affluent society, some students, living on very little money, would probably fit into a needy category.

But students at Currie Hall weren’t thinking of themselves when they put on their annual International Night recently, with a theme of helping people in need.

This year, in keeping with the theme, the students decided to put on more than just a night of entertainment. They worked hard getting sponsors and ran a huge raffle, with the first prize a trip to Bali, donated by Joy Tours. Other prizes included donations from most of the Guild Village businesses. Some of the students auctioned themselves as slaves for a day. And they raised $1,600 for world Vision’s Starving Children in Africa Appeal.
The University hosted a moving memorial ceremony recently to honour those people who had donated their bodies to scientific research.

The mortal remains of 60 people have been given to the University over the past three years and the families of these people attended the ceremony in Winthrop Hall which recognised their generous gift.

Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alan Robson, said it was an occasion filled with respect and gratitude.

“There can be few gestures greater than the selfless act of making provision to leave one’s mortal remains to medicine and science with the wish that, as a result, others may live more fulfilling lives,” he told the gathering of about 200 people.

“We also recognise relatives and friends, who either supported the decision of their loved ones, or who accepted their decision to make this ultimate bequest,” he said.

An Act of Recognition, read by the Chancellor, Dr Ken Michael, recognised that “there is something special about the material that we handle and study. Each of these gifts represents a person with a history of growth from childhood, of a rich and varied life story, of health and illness, of joy and sadness, of human relationships, of intellectual and spiritual achievement.”

Many students of anatomy took part in the ceremony, distributing flowers to the guests.

Associate Professor Paul McMenamin, from the School of Anatomy and Human Biology, said that when the students first came into contact with cadavers each year, they were read an act of recognition similar to the one read at the ceremony.

“We then have a minute’s silence, which helps the students to come to terms with the fact that this was once a living, breathing human being. They appreciate the opportunity to give their respects to these people,” he said. “Then they can get on with their work, without feeling macabre or dwelling on anything, but just knowing that they have given time to appreciate this person’s gift.”

He said shaving and embalming the bodies helped to make them anonymous and, in more than 20 years of teaching anatomy, no student had ever recognised a cadaver.

“The new medical curriculum means that there is very little dissection of a complete cadaver any more,” he said.

Professor McMenamin recalled an incident that reminded the students of their responsibilities towards the bodies on which they work.

“I came into the laboratory and saw a card on one of the cadavers. I was told that it was a mother’s day card from the son of a woman who had died in a nursing home and bequeathed her body to the University. Her son was living in the country, had not been in touch with his mother for a while and didn’t know she had died. When he found out, he sent her a mother’s day card, to the University.

“We left it on the body and the students found it when they came in. I asked them to be quiet and for one of them to read it out. You could have heard a pin drop. They were appreciative that I’d left the card there because they felt it was important for the relationship between the man and his mother to be recognised.”

The University usually accepts mortal remains only of elderly people who have died from natural causes. If you would like information about a bequest, please call Lesley Hicks in the School of Anatomy and Human Biology on extension 3288.
**Restoring the rivers’ run**

Cleaning up waterways and making them pretty is probably one of the worst things you can do for their health.

Urbanisation, with paving and cleared areas at the edge of water, increases speed of run-off and causes erosion. Removal of large woody debris to allow water to flow more swiftly destroys the habitats of the animals who keep the waterways in good condition.

It is these lessons that Animal Biology research officer Andrew Storey hopes to teach students and members of catchment and community groups in the School’s Restoration of Rivers Special Course in first semester next year. The University is running the course in collaboration with the Waters and Rivers Commission.

“River restoration is becoming an increasingly important component of catchment management,” Dr Storey said.

And more and more people are involved in some form of environmental protection, restoration and rehabilitation of streams and rivers.

“It is imperative that good science underpins the practical aspects of successful restoration. We want to train people involved in river management with the ultimate aim of improving habitats for the animals and organisms that live in healthy river systems, teaching the theory and applying that theory,” he said.

The five-day course was run in 2001 with about 20 people, a mix of undergraduate students, environmental consultants and members of catchment communities.

It is worth two points towards a degree for HECS enrolled students. For further information, call Dr Storey on extension 1482.

**Christine Bapty wants to take a look in your filing cabinet!**

Under new state legislation, all government agencies (which includes UWA) must produce a record-keeping plan, by March 2004.

It is Christine, the University’s project archivist’s responsibility to check out all the record-keeping procedures on campus, note how the systems are managed, who is responsible for records, how they are disposed of and how they are archived.

“It doesn’t mean any work for anybody else. I’ll just need 30 minutes with the administrative people in each faculty, school and centre, to ask them about their procedures and have a quick look at their systems,” she said.

“There is no right or wrong, nobody will be judged or labelled. I don’t want to be intrusive, just get in, get the work done and get out.”
Indemnity crisis for Medical School

By Professor Lou Landau
Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

Events in the insurance industry over the past twelve months have had a major effect on society with a particular impact on Medical Schools.

Following September 11 2001 the collapse of HIH and the withdrawal of a number of underwriters from the insurance industry, Australian universities have experienced difficulties in securing professional indemnity, especially those teaching the health care professions. The insurers provide limited medical malpractice cover in spite of the fact that there is no record of any claim of this type involving the medical school in Western Australia.

The impact of the collapse of the medical insurer UMP has resulted in concerns by private specialists, general practitioners and hospital doctors involved in teaching students. It has also raised issues of the viability of private practice by clinical academics. If not resolved, this would lead to the movement of clinical academics out of the university system and the failure to recruit appropriate clinical teachers.

Currently, the university has obtained some cover for clinical trials and regular student professional indemnity, but has a reduced level of coverage for those in the health care professions with a significant excess imposed in certain areas. The premiums are skyrocketing and this clearly has an impact on all areas within the university as funds are diverted to this insurance cover.

The University of Western Australia has made a commitment to provide cover that will allow continued practical teaching. But this is not sustainable in the long term and if the issues are not resolved there will be a major impact on clinical placements for teaching which will have an effect on the skills development for our graduates. It will also impact on the quality of care provided within health services in Western Australia, which will deteriorate in the absence of properly conducted clinical trials and research.

Some practitioners who teach within the Medical School are choosing to cease clinical practice early as a result of the indemnity issue. Our new curriculum is based on more teaching within the community, particularly in the new rural clinical school where students spend all of fifth year in a rural centre. Exposure from indemnity is more complex in this environment and more difficult to address. These exciting initiatives which are aimed to improve availability of health services in rural centres are being put at risk.

Issues relating to overseas students undertaking clinical study in Western Australia and Western Australian students undertaking electives overseas, especially North America, will also need to be addressed to maintain the benefits of these activities.

These issues involve all universities with health care professions. They can only be properly addressed collaboratively at all levels including Federal Government, State Government, private insurers and university insurers. There will need to be free and honest communication between all the stakeholders and consideration of all the issues from Law Reform, through risk cover, to the needs of the community and the proper training of our future health care professionals.
New projects find a funding path

Minister Clive Brown, Professor Michael Barber, industry partner Paul Kristensen and Director of the Office of Innovation and Industry, Dr Andy Sierakowski at the launch of the Pathfinder fund at UWA recently. The UWA initiative recognises the gap between research funding and traditional pre-seed funding offered by the venture capital industry. Funds will be offered on a competitive basis and overseen by UWA’s Office of Industry and Innovation.

New funding for the first stages of commercial development of University projects has been given the thumbs-up by Clive Brown, Minister for State Development and Small Business. The Minister launched the Pathfinder fund at UWA recently. The University funds will provide support for early stage projects developed within the University. Its aim is to shape innovative technologies and applications into investor-ready opportunities.

It will be used typically for evaluating potential commercial opportunity; market research and business planning; development of a working prototype; purchase or rental of equipment for proof-of-concept work; and field trials.

The UWA initiative recognises the gap between research funding and traditional pre-seed funding offered by the venture capital industry. Funds will be offered on a competitive basis and overseen by UWA’s Office of Industry and Innovation.

Continued on back page
Tuesday 8 October
SOIL SCIENCE AND PLANT NUTRITION
‘Molecular mechanism on zinc efficiency in wheat’, Dr Futong Yu, International Visitor. 4pm, Agriculture Lecture Theatre.

POPULATION HEALTH SEMINAR
‘Lifestyle and environmental factors associated with obesity and overweight’, A/Prof Billie Giles-Corti. 11am, Hew Roberts Lecture Theatre.

Wednesday 9 October
PERTH MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE GROUP TALK
‘The ring and the book: the christening of early German texts’, Dr Jane Emerson, Life and Physical Sciences. 7.30pm, Postgraduate Lounge, Hackett Hall. All welcome.

CHEMISTRY SEMINAR

CCRN SEMINAR
‘Is there any progress in psychiatric genetics?’ Prof Dieter Wildenaur, Director, Molecular Genetics Laboratory, Psychiatry, University of Bonn, Germany. 1pm, Seminar Room 3, Gascoyne House, Graylands Hospital.

Thursday 10 October
INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES
The Institute of Advanced Studies presents a literary reading by Israeli writer Etgar Keret. 6pm, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery.

FREE LUNCHTIME CONCERT
British soprano Jane Manning performs a selection of her favourite repertoire, including works by Fauré. 1.10pm, Octagon Theatre.

Friday 11 October
ASIAN STUDIES SEMINAR
‘The colonial Tuan Djek: up close and personal’, Stephen Dobbs. 1pm, G.25 Seminar Room, Ground Floor, Social Sciences Building.

MICROBIOLOGY SEMINAR
‘Inflammatory myopathies: genetics and mechanisms’, Prof Mike Garlepp, School of Pharmacy, Curtin University. 9am, Seminar Room I.1, First Floor, L Block, QEIIIMC.

LAWRENCE WILSON ART GALLERY IN ABSTRACT TALK
‘Abstraction: a broad brushstroke of its century’, Annie English, Director, Visual Culture, Open Learning Australia, Curtin University. 1pm, LWAG.

Tuesday 13 October
THE 2002 REFUGEE WEEK PUBLIC FORUM
‘Refugee issues near and far’. The guest speakers will be Fr Mark Raper and Fr Frank Brennan from the Jesuit Refugee Service and Uniyaa, the Jesuit Social Justice Centre in Sydney. The new refugee play ‘In My Father’s House’ will also be performed. Enquiries: 9325 9330 (entry by donation). Organised by AUSTRACARE and supported by UWA Institute of Advanced Studies, Office of Multicultural Interests and SmokeFreeWA. 2 to 4pm, Winthrop Hall.

Monday 14 October
ANATOMY AND HUMAN BIOLOGY SEMINAR
‘The significance of disturbances of implantation for the development of pre-eclampsia’, Professor Henning Schneider, Chairman, Dept of Gynaecology and Obstetrics, University of Bern, Switzerland. 4pm, Room I.81, Anatomy and Human Biology Building.

Tuesday 15 October
POPULATION HEALTH SEMINAR

SOIL SCIENCE AND PLANT NUTRITION
‘Something to do with red mud’, Katherine Snars, Mineralogy, Soil Science. 4pm, Agriculture Lecture Theatre.

POPULATION HEALTH SEMINAR
‘Measuring the physical environment for physical activity’, Terri Pikora. 11am, Hew Roberts Lecture Theatre.

Wednesday 16 October
REID ORATION 2002
Professor Stuart Macinoyre, Ernest Scott Professor of History and Dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne on ‘A parcel o’ rogues in a nation: Australian attitudes to politics and politicians’. 6pm, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery.

ANATOMY AND HUMAN BIOLOGY SEMINAR
‘Mandibles in old world monkeys: ecological implications for phylogeny and evolution’, Ruliang Pan. 1pm, Room I.81, Anatomy and Human Biology Building.

CCRN SEMINAR
‘Oxidative stress in Alzheimer’s Disease brain: central role of amyloid beta-peptide 1-42’, Dr Allan Butterfield, Professor of Chemistry, Director of the Center of Membrane Sciences and Faculty Associate, Sanders-Brown Center on Aging, University of Kentucky, USA. 1pm, Seminar Room 3, Gascoyne House, Graylands Hospital.

Saturday 18 October
FREE LUNCHTIME CONCERT
The University Brass Ensemble presents the world premiere of Hercules by Perth composer James Ledger, Britten’s Russian Funeral and Canzon XVI by Giovanni Gabrieli. 1.10pm, Octagon Theatre.

Friday 21 October
CLIMA SEMINAR
‘Experiences from the innovation front line’, Doug Hall. 4pm, CLIMA Seminar Room.

MICROBIOLOGY SEMINAR
‘Molecular biology of central nerve repair’, Prof Lyn Beazley, Zoology. 9am, Seminar Room I.1, First Floor, L Block, QEIIIMC.

LAWRENCE WILSON ART GALLERY IN ABSTRACT TALK
‘Abstraction: a broad brushstroke of its development through the twentieth century’, Annie English, Director, Visual Culture, Open Learning Australia, Curtin University. 1pm, LWAG.

ADVANCE NOTICE
Monday 21 October
ASTHMA AND ALLERGY RESEARCH INSTITUTE SEMINAR
‘Development of an appropriate model of allergic sensitisation in mice’, Dr Debbie Turner, ICHR. 12.30pm, Joske Seminar Room, Medicine, Fourth Floor, G Block, SCGH.

Tuesday 22 October
EUROPEAN LANGUAGES AND STUDIES SEMINAR
‘Heimat in contemporary German film’, Dr Alexandra Ludewig. 1pm, Asian Studies Room I.33.
Workskills Professionals are proud to be a wholly owned and operated WA Company and are a preferred supplier to State Government agencies through the DoIT 63200 panel contract.

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Research Grants & Contracts

Continued from front page

DITR: AUSINDUSTRY—COMPETITIVE GRANTS FOR R&D

VRI BIOMEDICAL LTD
A/Prof Susan Prescott, Paediatrics: ‘Probiotic allergy prevention study’—$150,000 (2002).

NEUROTRAUMA RESEARCH PROGRAM
Dr Gary Thickbroom, Neuromuscular and Neurological Disorders and Dr Michelle Byrnes, (both below) Pathology: ‘Neural re-organisation and recovery of function after brain injury’—$25,000 (2002).

GRACE VAUGHAN AWARD - 2003

In 1984, friends and colleagues of the late Grace Vaughan provided a sum of money to establish an award to be offered annually to individuals wishing to pursue studies in the area of social justice and human rights at UWA, or individuals with a demonstrated scholarly or professional concern for social justice and human rights wishing to travel in Australia or overseas for further studies likely to benefit the community.

Previously, the award has been given to candidates to assist with:

• To assist with travel and accommodation costs associated with presenting a paper on her research on familial, custody and access at the Melbourne conference on family law.
• To assist with travel and publication costs associated with research for and publication of her work on the experiences of families who have lost someone through murder.

The award for 2003 will be $2000. The closing date for applications is 29 November 2002.

Interested applicants or those requiring further information should contact the Faculty Administrative Officer (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) at UWA on (08) 9380 2096 or visit the website: www.arts.uwa.edu.au/gracevaughan/

Classifieds

WANTED TO RENT

MATURE, NON-SMOKING ACADEMIC COUPLE (no children) seek air-conditioned house/apartment to rent from early-mid Jan 2003 for 6 weeks in Perth or Fremantle. Excellent references available from colleagues in UWA. House exchange (Oxford, UK) also possible. For details see http://www2.bioch.ox.ac.uk/~awaits/listings1.html.

GOING ON SABBATICAL? Two American teachers and one child need a home from mid-January 2003 to end July 2003. They will be teaching at an independent school in the western suburbs. Rent negotiable. Call 9384 9404.

TO LET

SCARBOROUGH unfurnished villa (one of four with street frontage), 3 bedroom, lounge, dining, kitchen, bathroom, air cond., reticulation from a bore for the small private garden. Garage. $225 per week. Please phone Sue on ext. 2116.

NEDLANDS, Everett St, five-bedroom, 3 bathroom house, fully furnished, $800 per week. Email Jean at jrupert@cyllene.uwa.edu.au.

COTTESLOE family will be away from end November for up to 12 months and are looking for responsible family to rent their large 4/5 bedroom new home. Ph 9384 9404.

Visiting ACADEMIC COUPLE from Strasbourg require short-term accommodation from early November to 31 Jan, preferably Shenton Park or Nedlands. Please contact Robyn on ext 2839 or robyn@cse.uwa.edu.au.

For Sale

PC PENTIUM 100, 1.0GB hdd, 64mb RAM, Microsoft Office, speakers, CD ROM, FDD, keyboard, mouse, 15” monitor, 28.8k modem, Internet Ready, Canon B200ex printer with 2 new cartridges. $275 ono. Contact Derek: mailto:derek.ellerton@uwa.edu.au or 041 995 0628.

JAGUAR XJ6 MOTORCAR, 1980. Lovingly maintained with full service records. $5000 negotiable. Contact Norman on ext. 2138 or email nether@arts.uwa.edu.au.

Men

IF YOU WERE A CAR
Would You Be a Hot Rod
Or a Clapped Out Bomb?

You have your car serviced regularly.

So how about doing the same for your body?

You should conduct regular preventative maintenance to make sure your machine is firing on all cylinders.

Spark Plugs
Checked for leaks in your testicles recently?

Oil Pressure
Have your blood pressure measured regularly to ensure you don’t blow a gasket.

Duco
Is rust making an appearance in your Duco? Check your skin regularly for signs of skin cancer.

UWA MEDICAL CENTRE invites men to put their bodies over the Pits

Tuesday the 15th October
10am-2pm Guild Village

See if you pass the Pits with flying colours or are issued with a yellow sticker for follow up maintenance. No appointment required.

For further information on these checks

CONTACT
Tricia Wylde UWA Medical Centre
9380 3989
pwylde@admin.uwa.edu.au

Redundant Equipment for Sale

Bids should be accepted by Monday 21 October with departments to have first option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM (Photographic)</th>
<th>PRICE</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>CONDITION</th>
<th>CONTACT</th>
<th>EXT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agfa Varioscope 60 Photo enlarger with numerous accessories.</td>
<td>Offers</td>
<td>30+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Herb</td>
<td>2654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilford Multigrade 500S enlarger head with numerous accessories.</td>
<td>Offers</td>
<td>10+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Herb</td>
<td>2654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various darkroom trays and chemicals.</td>
<td>Offers</td>
<td>10+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Herb</td>
<td>2654</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Departments are reminded that all University equipment available for sale must be advertised in the UWABRAIN. Receipts should be PeopleSoft account coded 490 (computing with barcode), 491 (non-computing with barcode) or 493 (items with no barcode). If equipment has an existing barcode please contact extension 3618/2346 for details.

CONDITION refers to the general condition of item (1 = as new; 2 = good; 3 = serviceable; 4 = unserviceable). AGE refers to the nearest year.