Reinventing economics
A journey inspired by Thai orphans

by Lindy Brophy

A young man with a big agenda is the inaugural winner of WA’s General Sir John Monash Award – a prize on a par with the prestigious Rhodes scholarship.

Eight General Sir John Monash awards for post-graduate study have gone to high-ranking students around Australia, with WA’s first scholarship going to economics student Jean-Paul Carvalho.

The awards, which will be presented annually, are for research leading to a higher degree at any university in the world. They are awarded to post-graduate students who have an excellent academic record, who show leadership potential, and who have been involved in community service.

Jean-Paul, who is completing a PhD in accounting and finance at UWA, has chosen to go to Oxford University to study development economics for his DPhil.

“I am interested in the social consequences of economic problems,” Jean-Paul said, which is not surprising when you hear his history.

He remembers, as a four-year-old in 1983, living in his native Sri Lanka, the horrors of the Colombo riots. “My mother was very brave. She would have done anything to protect us. She would go out into the street on her own to face armed and angry gangs, pleading with them not to burn down our house or the house next door.

“One we were sheltering a targeted family, when the rioters threatened to force their way into our house. She boldly said ‘come in and look for yourselves’. Luckily her bluff worked and they left. We were safe, but in the end our family businesses were burned down.”

The following year Jean-Paul and his family migrated to Perth. “But we have never had a feeling in our family that we suffered injustice. We look on the bright side, and the education we have been able to get in Australia,” he said.

Jean-Paul’s doctorate will focus on the economics of poor countries. “In poor African countries, the consequences of unemployment are more than just poverty. It can lead to HIV infection, violent crime and even civil war,” he said.

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Language and law: a winning combination

Prize giving season at UWA recognises the best and brightest students across the faculties.

One who shines brightest this year is final year Law student Ben Spagnolo, who will be presented with eight prizes, close to a record for a UWA student.

Ben was a member of the victorious Jessup Moot team, which won the world championship last year and brought home the trophy to UWA. He won best oralist in the championship round and was ranked third overall in all the international rounds.

Next week he will receive the Blackstone Anniversary Prize for Constitutional Law; Butterworths Prize in Law; John Norman Barker Prize in Law; Anita and Meyar Davis Prize in Jurisprudence; LBC Information Services Prize in Evidence 310; Freehills Prize; Minter Ellison Prize in Administrative Law; and a Jean Rogerson studentship.

On top of these prizes, Ben has also won a Convocation/Student Guild Matilda award for Cultural Excellence; and the Jackson McDonald Prize for Mooting.

In each of his years at UWA, Ben has been a multiple prize winner, taking six prizes in each of 2002 and 2001, and three or four in other years.

He completed an Arts degree with first class honours in Latin and French, at the end of 2002, winning five of his six prizes that year for his arts subjects, including an Honours bursary for study in France.

Ben has always been a high achiever, finishing secondary school with a TER of 99.95, the third highest in WA. The following year, he was a delegate to the inaugural Global Young Leaders Conference in Washington DC and New York.

“I have enjoyed the study of law immensely,” Ben said. “It’s all about words and expression, really another language. And studying Latin gives you a greater understanding of languages, so I feel it’s been a good mix.”

He said that one of the most rewarding and, at the same time, confronting — aspects of his time at UWA was engaging with highly intelligent teachers and students.

Although he has not yet decided what avenue of the law he hopes to pursue after graduation, Ben hopes one day to work towards simplifying the language of his chosen profession.

Ben Spagnolo scoops the pool for Law

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Reinventing economics

“My broader agenda is to bring the discipline of economics back to the social sciences, where the study of economics started.”

He said that in the late 1940s and 1950s in the US, the quantitative method for studying economic problems gained prominence.

“Then economics became more of a mathematical science than a social science, and so became confined to studying quantitative aspects such as profit and consumption. For example, human welfare is often viewed in terms of the quantities of goods and services consumed. Yet we know that the human experience is far richer than this. The real problem arises when people believe that economic analysis built on these models describes the whole human experience.

“We need a view of economics that places the human being at its centre; that first and foremost asks ‘what factors promote human well-being?’". When economics was a new discipline, scholars used to stand on the street corners and simply observe people. We must get back to that idea.”

It was an experience that Jean-Paul had immediately after his honours year that set him on his current academic journey.

“I was halfway through my honours year, sitting at a desk, staring at a wall, and I suddenly felt that I had to get out and back onto the front lines for a while.

“I wanted to do something to help people, but not being a doctor or a nurse, it was difficult to get into the system via the usual channels. So I went to my parish priest, whose old classmate happened to be the Bishop of Chiang Mai. I found myself in northern Thailand for three months, living in a hostel for 54 hill tribe children, who otherwise would not have access to schooling or who were orphans of AIDS or the drug trade.

Jean-Paul worked on the hostel’s farm, drove the children to school and taught them English.

“I was sharing a room with two boys who were a bit younger than me. They were doing tertiary studies and they worked so hard. But I found out that, no matter how hard they worked, they would never break through the social barrier and fulfill their capabilities in jobs of their own choosing.

“Because they were village people, they were destined always to be village people, and end up working in the chemical-soaked fields. Any professional jobs in the area would always go to people from outside the village.”

Jean-Paul said he kept thinking about the injustice of the system and realised then that he wanted to do something about the social consequences of economic problems.

He will go to Oxford later this year to take up his scholarship.
Students with a ring of confidence

When Marc Tennant and Lena Lejmanoski graduated from dental school, they say the transition from student to practising dentist was ‘cataclysmic’.

They now devote part of their professional lives to ensuring a smooth transition for graduating dental students. And the new curriculum, coupled with the facilities in the $38 million Oral Health Centre of WA (OHCWA), have made that task a joy.

Final (fifth) year students now spend an entire year rotating through practical placements in dental clinics, getting diverse experience in (supervised) on the job training that sees them walk out of dental school as skilled, confident practitioners, ready to hang up a shingle and start work.

“They are much more confident than we were,” said Dr Lejmanoski.

“The graduates now are on a par with us, a year after we’d graduated and spent 12 months working for a government dental clinic.

“The current fifth years, the second cohort to go through the new curriculum, are already talking about business plans and setting up practices.”

The final year students work a full 48-week year, divided into four rotations. They spend two 12-week periods at OHCWA, working in the university clinics. They spend one rotation in metropolitan government dental clinics, then they have optional placements, which could be in a speciality, private practice in a metropolitan practice or in a rural town, in another state or even overseas.

“The new curriculum is focussed on giving a broad range of experience to students before they leave,” said Dr Tennant, director of the Centre for Remote and Rural Oral Health.

It’s known as a pre-graduate internship and no other dental school in Australia has such an advanced curriculum, although some are planning to follow the West Australian model now it is successfully into its second cohort.

“The students show a solid commitment to their studies,” Dr Tennant said. “There are a lot of hours and a lot of work packed into their five years. And the final year is full-on. They work four days a week in clinics, working one of three shifts, morning, afternoon or evening. Then, on the fifth day, they attend a personal and professional development session.”

Personal and professional development is a time for discussing various themes including critical appraisal, looking at legal issues, information management, and sharing experiences, discussing problems and making decisions about having more lectures about a particular topic.

“We arrange the lectures they feel they need. Their education is still continuing and it’s important that they know they haven’t finished their course yet. There is still some learning to do,” Dr Lejmanoski said. “The students are very appreciative of the experience they gain in this final year. They can see the difference in their skills and their self esteem, developed over 12 months.”

“We are blurring the line between student and practitioner, and the patients love it,” Dr Tennant said. “We are currently expanding the patient profile, from health care card holders, to low income earners. Access to subsidised dental care is now available to people who don’t hold a health care card but are on a low income. We have set up three evening sessions a week for these people who are at work during the day.”

“They need to understand that it is not just a tooth walking in the door … there is a person attached to that tooth!”

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David Beecham, Henan Ilahi and Ella Malita, and Robert Hamilton at work in OHCWA’s clinic
Vice-Chancellor’s column

UWA’s Senate has set a bold new direction for the University for the coming years with its April 26 decision to adopt the Federal Government’s option of increasing the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) by 25 percent from 2005.

UWA has to live within the parameters of the environment in which it operates. The decision recognises that the funding problems faced not only by UWA, but by universities across Australia, are the result of chronic under-funding of the sector by the Federal Government over at least the past 10 years.

Senate is determined that funds generated from the increase should be used to improve the quality of the student experience at UWA.

The high quality of the debate at Senate was witnessed by the press but unfortunately not by UWA students. Although an expected protest demonstration took place and did delay the Senate meeting UWA students participated in, in the main, in good spirit.

There is little doubt that the comprehensive consultation with students, staff and the community assisted Senate members formulate the decision. I would congratulate UWA Guild President Susie Byers and Executive and UWA staff on their significant contributions to the process which led to the decision.

Senate deferred any decision on the issue of offering full-fee courses for domestic undergraduate students until the Federal Government clarifies how it will distribute extra student places to WA universities in 2005.

The strength of the argument for adopting a HECS plus 25 per cent position lies in the goal of restoring adequate levels of funding per student, and arresting the further erosion of the University’s capacity to sustain both the quality of its staffing arrangements and its facilities and infrastructure to meet student needs.

Senate is determined that funds generated from the increase should be used to improve the quality of the student experience at UWA. What does this mean? It means decreased student/staff ratios, improved library services, better student services and smaller tutorial classes. A package of financial support is to be developed and directed towards those students who may need such support.

The impact of HECS plus 25 per cent will be different for each student since no student was required to pay HECS up-front. The interest-free loan (that is a zero real interest rate but in line with the CPI) would be repaid only when a student subsequently earned sufficient income, and then at different rates depending on their income level and tax bracket.

UWA remains committed to making a significant and positive contribution to the State’s economy and providing high-quality education options for thousands of young Western Australians. This decision will provide UWA with a capacity to fulfil what is an expensive mission.

Alan Robson, Vice-Chancellor

Dentists practise

Dr Tennant, and Dr Lejmanoski, senior lecturer and fifth year coordinator, said the students sometimes had to deal with very nervous patients.

“They do some psychology in second year, and patient fear is something we talk about in our personal and professional development sessions,” Dr Lejmanoski said. “It is much more in the open that when we were students. We were taught very little about how to deal with patient anxiety when we were students.”

She said patient management and relations were extremely important for young dentists. “Not every student will be ‘technically brilliant’ but they need to strive towards that by continuing education and self assessment when they graduate. If they only see dollar signs, they can indeed be doing their patients a disservice.

“They need to understand that it is not just a tooth walking in the door … there is a person attached to that tooth!”

Dr Tennant said the 40 graduates from the Dental School this year (and increasing to 50 soon) will go some way to making up the shortfall of dentists in Australia.

“But it is predicted that, by 2010, there will be a ten percent shortfall across the country and that will be felt even more in rural areas.”

Dr Marc Tennant and Dr Lena Lejmanoski know their students appreciate their final year experiences
About 70 science and engineering students will embark this month on a program designed to inspire high school students.

A peer tutoring program known as SEEK (Science Education Engaging Knowledge) is UWA’s answer to the State Government’s request for help in high school science classrooms.

Second and third year students were asked if they could give two hours a week of their time for a minimum of 15 weeks, to go to high schools and help science teachers, work with small groups of students, encourage them to develop an interest in continuing science studies after school, and provide them with role models.

SEEK coordinator Bronwyn Rakimov, from the Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences, was delighted with the response from the students from her faculty and Natural and Agricultural Sciences, and Engineering, Computing and Mathematics.

“We even had some fourth year students really keen to be part of the program,” she said. “These are not students who are necessarily interested in becoming teachers; but they are eager to spread their love of science and to take the opportunity to enthuse younger students.”

The peer tutors (pictured above) are unpaid volunteers and Ms Rakimov has tried to match them with schools close to their homes or close to UWA if they don’t have their own car.

“One of the interesting things about organising the placements is that I’ve realised we have plenty of students from outside the western suburbs. Often UWA is seen as a university for these students, but, in this scheme, I have students who come from Edgewater to Gidgegannup to Yangebup, and lots of areas in between.

“The schools they’re going to include Girrawheen SHS, Lynwood SHS, Duncraig SHS, Hamilton Hill SHS, Aranmore Catholic College and Shenton College.

“We have 60 placements in ten schools so far and I hope we’ll have more by the time the program begins in the third week of the second school term.

“We have $50,000 a year for four years from the State Government to promote, organise and run the scheme, select and train the tutors and pay them a small travelling fee for each session,” she said.

The students were chosen from applicants and were given basic training in learning styles, strategies and communication skills before being assigned a school.

What they will do at the schools depends on where they are needed. They may be asked to help with extension work for bright students, or to work with students who have learning or attitude problems, or to work on some specific projects or go out on excursions and field trips.

They will work with students from year 7 to year 10 and Ms Rakimov hopes that the students who start the scheme this year will return to work with the same school students for the next few years.

“We will survey all the participants at the end of the first year, to assess the impact of SEEK on the school students, the tutors and the teachers. We hope it will be beneficial to all of them,” she said.

**Cubs thrive in rescue facility**

In our story last issue about saving the dancing bears of India, the loss of bear cubs was mentioned.

This was a general reference to the difficulty of rearing bear cubs in captivity. The bear rescue facility in Agra wants to make it clear that “no bear cubs have died in our facility of a protein deficiency or for the lack of effort to nurture our babies.” Anybody wanting to donate to the Free the Bears Fund can email: info@freethебears.org.au
Cultural identity for everybody

An Australian citizen travels to Ireland in search of her ancestral roots, while not denying her Australian identity …

A New Zealand farmer claims he is indigenous to the land he works, where his family has lived for several generations …

“These people,” says UWA anthropologist and editor of a new book about contesting meanings of land and nature, Professor David Trigger, “are asking what sense they can make of their connection to the land.

“Prompted in part by Aboriginal claims for native title, they are saying: ‘Yes, but other people have a culture too.’”

Disputed Territories (edited by David Trigger and Gareth Griffith) investigates the significance of land for contesting cultural identities in comparable settler societies. It arose from an Institute of Advanced Studies program at UWA in 2000, Land Place Culture Identity, and is a cross-disciplinary collection encompassing anthropology, geography, history and literary studies.

Professor Trigger’s book was launched last month, along with colleague Sandy Toussaint’s edited volume on native title, Crossing Boundaries. He says people have always struggled with the idea of belonging to the land, and their questions, over the past ten to 15 years, have been intensified by the land claims process and increasing attention to complex human/environmental relationships.

They are both reference books that should be in great demand by students, researchers and others across many disciplines as governments, industry and communities find an increasing need for skilled practitioners in native title and broader land management issues.

Both books emerged from UWA conferences. Dr Toussaint’s is a collection of papers from anthropologists, linguists, lawyers and historians, who opened a cross-disciplinary framework for discussion of competing interests in land, in the original Crossing Boundaries conference, convened by Dr Toussaint and Dr John Henderson, also in 2000.

It is the first cross-disciplinary text in the complex field of Australian native title, and looks at practical issues that will be relevant to both practitioners in native title and academic researchers.

“In a very difficult and often highly political field of inquiry with outcomes that have implications for people’s lives and cultures, it is important that indigenous claimants, representatives from industry, government and independent
Learning how to propagate olives was the first step in the long-term goal of planting an olive grove at their school playing fields, for these boys from Trinity College.

The skills they learned from Professor Stan Kailis, at the School of Plant Biology, was one more step along the journey of life for the students, who will probably never study at a university. They are students at Trinity’s Mary Rice Centre, for boys with special needs.

Maree Zwart, coordinator of the post-compulsory (Years 11 and 12) program at the centre, said she and other staff were trying to give the boys as many experiences in as wide a field as possible.

“They won’t be studying for their TEE or doing other traditional academic subjects, but we want these boys to finish school with life skills and employable skills,” she said.

They are creating a worm farm, growing herbs and now planting olive trees, as part of their senior enterprise program. The boys do the laundry for the school canteen and earn money for their program. It will result in them earning nationally recognised certificates in business.

They are also learning skills as diverse as car maintenance, social skills, computer skills and dancing.

“IT was getting the boys interested in olives and olive oil and Stan Kailis’s name kept cropping up, so I called him to ask him if he could help us, and he’s been fantastic,” said Maree.

Professor Kailis said he was always keen to work with young people and pass on his skills and expertise. The students spent a day with him, taking cuttings from the olive trees outside the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Science, preparing them for planting, then embedding them in perlite, all the while taking in Professor Kailis’ wide-ranging knowledge of olives, olive oil and the olive industry.

-Professor Stan Kailis gives the boys a quick lesson in plant biology

The boys prepare their cuttings for propagation

organisations have available to them the best possible integrated knowledge and practice,”

Dr Toussaint said.

“Everyone who works on native title has a demanding job to do. The focus of such work is at the heart of Crossing Boundaries.”

The 20 contributions to the book include discussion of amendments to native title legislation, appeals, controversies over what constitutes evidence in legal proceedings, differences between customary laws and the laws of the state, and divergent interpretations of culture, language, history and identity.

Disputed Territories also tackles a complex and contentious subject from the perspective of different sectors of society, with differing positions on rights of ownership and use of land, management of ecosystems under pressure, importance of economic development and more.

“These can be highly politicised topics for researchers to study,” Professor Trigger said. “Yet each book contains contributions that do not toe any particular political line, while authors courageously ask difficult questions about historical and current struggles over land.”

The colleagues decided to celebrate the scholarship fostered in anthropology by launching their two books together, at the UWA Boat Shed just before Easter.

Crossing Boundaries: cultural, legal, historical and practice issues in native title, edited by Sandy Toussaint and published by Melbourne University Press ($39.95) and Disputed Territories: land culture and identity in settler societies, edited by David Trigger and Gareth Griffiths and published by Hong Kong University Press ($48.95) are available from the Co-op Bookshop on campus.
Health program puts beer on TAP

From an office in the Guild Village, UWA Medical Centre health promotions officer Tricia Wylde works on a campaign to reduce risk-taking behaviour associated with excessive alcohol consumption.

Just a short walk from her office are posters promoting the pleasures of alcohol consumption for members of student clubs. It is within this typical university setting that Tricia is delivering a campaign which aims to balance the reality of a drinking culture by a higher awareness of the potential for harm.

“We’re not here to preach to the students. We know that alcohol is a big part of the lives of students who are in their university years. Any cultural shift will take a long, long time, so our goal is to minimise the short term harms associated with excessive levels of consumption” she said.

The Tertiary Alcohol Project (TAP) is an initiative of Tricia’s that recently attracted $65,000 funding from Healthway to run the program for seven months on campus. It started as a women’s health check for students in 2002. “We realised from the answers to our survey that a high proportion of students were drinking excessively, to the point where they were causing themselves or others harm.”

So TAP was developed and run as a pilot program last year in the residential colleges which established the program was both feasible and acceptable. The Healthway funding followed, and the employment of a project office, Charlotte Ward, to help run a program designed to achieve at least a 75 per cent awareness among UWA students of the health-related effects of excessive alcohol consumption.

Each month, TAP focuses on a different aspect of drinking: alcohol and health; drink spiking; alcohol and study; alcohol and sexual assault; alcohol and unprotected sexual activity; and drink driving.

The UWA Medical Centre and the UWA Guild SOS! produce a monthly newsletter, with 1,200 copies distributed in the colleges and a further 1,200 on the campus. It presents sobering statistics about alcohol (for example, ‘as many as 70 per cent of university students admit to having engaged in sexual activity primarily as a result of being under the influence of alcohol…’); a guide to how much you can safely drink; facts about hangovers; and information about a free ‘Drinkers’ Checkup’ at the Medical Centre.

It also carries a cartoon about three students, relating to each month’s topic, at which Tricia says the students have a good sneer. “They say it’s lame, but surprisingly, our surveys show that most students who read the newsletter retain the information from other cartoon rather than the other information…so I don’t mind!”

The program has trained student volunteers to get the message out and about and it has the support of the Guild, Student Services, Sport and Recreation Centre, the UWA residential colleges and the schools of Psychology and Public Health. The Office of Road Safety, Roadwise, the Drug and Alcohol Office, the Community Drug Service Team, Royal Australian Life Saving Society and other external organisations also support TAP.

TAP is establishing a first aid program to teach students how to look after their friends when they are badly affected by alcohol, drugs or a mix of both. “It’s not always the best thing just to put them to bed,” Tricia said.

The project is the most comprehensive of its kind at a university in WA and Tricia says they will promote it to the other institutions.

If you would like the UniDaze cartoon as a screen saver (which changes every month) please contact Tricia on 6488 2118 or at pwylde@admin.uwa.edu.au
A landscape architect from Iowa has a dream of converting Perth gardens and public spaces to reflect our arid climate.

“Perth has an opportunity to create a new aesthetic,” said Tinka Sack, a lecturer at the School of Architecture, Landscape and Visual Arts.

“You can embrace the dryness without creating clichéd copies of the bush,” she said.

“Perhaps an immigrant has a unique opportunity to see things with fresh eyes and appreciate local species and embrace the challenge of creating Australian landscapes,” said Ms Sack, who came to UWA from the United States six years ago.

Living and travelling in the USA, South and Central America and Europe has given Ms Sack a rich palette of landscapes from which to draw her ideas and designs.

“An engineer father and artist mother also helped!” she said.

She was asked by Danish landscape architect Jeppe Aargaard Andersen to join him in the design for a new public space for the campus of the University of Sydney. The university held an international public competition for the design of two new buildings and a public domain.

About a hundred designs were submitted from around the world for each of the three projects. Ms Sack and Mr Andersen won the competition to turn part of the campus from a vehicular thoroughfare and parking areas into a pedestrian precinct, linking the new and old buildings.

“The design for the buildings are so different from what was expected that our competition design has had to be changed significantly to take them into account,” Ms Sack said. It also gives the landscape architecture team an opportunity to work with the two architectural firms which won the other competitions.

“We hoping to bring clarity to an eclectic arrangement of buildings. The materials we choose will unify and hopefully create an overall elegance to the space, making it functional but, at the same time, a place where people will want to linger.”

Internet technology helps Ms Sack, in Perth, and Mr Andersen, in Denmark, to work effectively together to realise their project for Sydney.

“Although we won the competition, there is still a lot of work to be done on our design. We send our drawings to each other using file transfer protocol (FTP) sites. We download and print each others files, draw on them, then scan them and email them back to each other.

“My students are helpful with the technology when I have a problem,” she said.

Their project is part of the university’s USYD Campus 2010 project, and it will be a few years before the new landscape is in place.

“And, even then, it will be some years before it reaches its full potential. As landscape architecture deals with plants as well as constant materials, we are sometimes designing for our children or even our grandchildren, once trees and other plants mature.”

The space they are working with currently has asphalt roads and parking areas hard up against heritage buildings. You can even see, from their site photos, where carelessly parked cars have chipped bits of masonry off the old buildings.

Their design will convert the area to a pedestrian space, punctuated with small sitting spaces and gardens, using very simple clean lines, as Mr Andersen used with his design for the conversion of the harbour area in front of the Royal Palaces in Copenhagen.

“We hope to use endemic plants in a contemporary and timeless way.

“The scale of the undertaking is huge, and the fact that the university has conducted an international competition with considerable outlay is, I think, visionary.” Ms Sack said. “It makes for a unique opportunity as the winning teams are quite stimulating and very willing to work together.”
PhD skills fit students for life

The first question most PhD candidates are asked when they meet somebody new, is “What are you doing your PhD on?”

Surprisingly for many PhD researchers, it is not so much what they learn about their special subject, but the skills they develop while completing a higher degree, that can determine their future employment or direction.

Most postgraduate students probably regard their particular area of study as the most important part of their work. But Dr Sato Juniper, acting manager of Graduate Research and Scholarships, told a gathering of postgraduate Plant Biology students that the skills they learn and hone while doing a PhD are the same set of skills sought by most employers.

“These skills are communication, teamwork, problem-solving, initiative and enterprise, planning and organising, self-management, learning and technology,” Dr Juniper said.

“Too many postgraduates don’t realise that they have developed these skills and tend to undersell themselves in the employment market,” she said.

Dr Juniper was asked by the Plant Biology postgrads to talk to them at their annual Rottnest summer school, on how to get the most out of their PhDs.

Lindsay Bell, one of the organisers, said the three-day summer school was of great benefit to the researchers. “About 70 of us and most of the academics come along and we all make a short presentation on our research.

“Even though our topics range from marine science to agronomy and from plant breeding to molecular biology, we all give and get feedback from each other, and develop confidence in presentation techniques, which most of us need at some time, at seminars and conferences,” he said.

“Sato Juniper helped us to realise what it is that we want to get out of our research, apart from a PhD and some publications to our names,” he said.

“The Plant Biology summer school fosters the development of skills needed by postgrads, in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. The researchers work on their communication skills, abstract writing, networking, organising and management (they organise the whole thing themselves, developing yet another skill set).

Dr Juniper said initiatives like the summer school were a great way of helping postgrads to identify skills on which they needed to work.

She talked to the postgrads about doing an audit of their skill set. “Think about the skills you have and what needs enhancement and how you are going to achieve this,” she said.

“It’s important that they recognise what skills they have and market them. For example, many postgrads do some teaching, but many of them don’t realise that teaching is a communication skill. They undertake team-work without thinking of it as a particular skill and don’t realise that everything they do is constituting problem-solving, initiative and enterprise, planning and organising, and self-management.

“I tell PhD candidates that independent research doesn’t mean you have to do it alone - there are many resources available that candidates can and should use to assist them, and indeed many employable skills are learned as part of a team. You should see your PhD as a project that you have managed, sometimes making mistakes, and learning skills along the way.”

Dr Juniper’s PhD was in Soil Science and Plant Nutrition. “I use daily the skills I developed during my PhD, despite the fact that my current work has nothing to do with soil science.

“The skills you gain doing graduate research are highly valuable and transferable, no matter what the discipline context.”
Lions Eye Institute researcher Sajeesh Kumar is in Hawaii this week, extolling the advantages of telemedicine to a conference of up to 4,000 eye care workers — and being paid to do it.

Sajeesh, a PhD researcher, was awarded an international fellowship to attend the conference and present a paper. It is the first time the American Academy of Optometry has funded a fellowship for an Australian student to attend one of their meetings.

The Lions Eye Institute’s Centre for E-health nominated Sajeesh for the fellowship, which not only pays for his trip, but allows him to present a paper, rather than just making a short poster presentation.

“It’s the biggest gathering of eye care workers in the world, bringing together professionals, academics and people who work in the industry,” said Sajeesh, who has been working on his PhD at the Institute for about 12 months.

Telemedicine, in the field of optometry, involves digital imaging of eye disease that can be diagnosed by health care professionals across town or across the world. The Institute’s research into telemedicine has attracted interest from around the globe and is being trialled in many of WA’s rural and remote areas.

Sajeesh Kumar is off to Hawaii — already wearing an appropriate tie!

“In emergencies, it can be used to assess an eye injury and advice can be given to health care professionals in remote regions about how to deal with the injury and whether the patient needs to be flown to Perth. In many cases, it is not necessary, but, without telemedicine, local nurses or GPs are not confident to treat the injury.”

Sajeesh’s research is into the financial viability of telemedicine. He is also developing cost-effective equipment to be used on-line. His PhD is being supervised by Professor Ian Constable.

“I am also studying the real benefits of telemedicine to all parties: the patients, the health care providers and society in general. We assume the results will be overwhelmingly positive, but we must prove our assumptions,” he said.
I’m not really sure why I do what I do, nor am I sure where my priorities come from.

They are largely unspoken or framed, but they are very strong and seem to come from something innate in me. This quality has somehow been instilled into me and my brothers and sisters, all six of us. All of us are unable to quietly accept unfair actions and are very outspoken when we see the need to be. In a way, it is that traditionally Aussie trait of fairness, with its lack of willingness to roll over, and a healthy disrespect for authority - the larrikin in us. It gets us into trouble at times.

I grew up as the youngest in a set of triplets (natural), and we are all completely different. We travelled a lot, until I was eleven, and this made us look inward to the family for friends. It also meant that when I became a teenager I hadn’t learnt very good communication skills. It left me with an indelible lack of self confidence. Only now am I realising what it is to have an idea and then have the guts and confidence to go for it. The University has helped me a lot here.

I have always been what I would call natural scientist, a keen gardener as a lad, but not in any conventional sense. I remember having dozens of paint tins growing Karri, Marri and other trees in the back yard as far back as primary school. As the yard was limited in area, and it could take just so many Karri trees, the obvious solution was to sneak out at night and plant them on road verges. I suspect very few of these beautiful trees made it past the first year but I was quite philosophical about that.

I remember taking a bee hive out of the wall of an asbestos house being demolished 300m down the road when I was about 14. With absolutely no knowledge of what I was doing I took me 5 days to do it. The neighbours would have seen me walking up the street with layers of jumpers and jeans gloves, old straw hat with muslin stitched to it and a cardboard box full of bees and a massive cloud of very angry bees swirling about. I probably only got stung about 50 times. I still keep bees and nearly all of the honey is given away to friends.

I studied Physics and then Medical Physics at University. It was while at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital that my focus on sustainability developed. My office, about 3m x 4m had four light registers with two 1.2 m fluoro light tubes in each. A little thought showed that there was about 3 kW of lighting in my room and when multiplied by the floor space of the building, and 8 floors, it works out to be more than a Megawatt of electricity. Most of this ends up as heat in the building and so requires another 2 Megawatts for airconditioning. That’s a lot of energy and there are some very simple ways it could be dramatically reduced.

Since then I have started the WA Branch of the Alternative Technology Association (ATA); ran an electric bike rally out at Curtin Technology Park; organised a project to refurbish the Homestead Farm at the Perth Zoo as a collaborative project between the ATA, UWA Architecture and the Zoo, scoring a $21,000 grant from the State Government; installed a 2.4 kW solar power station at UWA using $10,000 from the Australian Greenhouse Office; been the instigator for and heavily involved in a project to install a 3 MW cogeneration unit at the QEII Medical Centre; worked for six years to build a 7.2 MW wind farm on Rous Head; run several Biodiesel workshops (the next one is Saturday May 15); and organised the Perth Sun Fair on the Oak Lawn.

I have installed a 1.5 kW solar PV power system on my house and applied some of the basic sustainability technology to our house and lifestyle. The changes are small, low key, and have little impact on the time and effort required to live. Full details of the PV system including data from logging energy use and production can be found on the web site below.

The Perth Sun Fair was the most ambitious project so far. The intention is that it become a focus for the large diversity of sustainability groups and related business in Western Australia. It was a great success, and the University has been absolutely fantastic in allowing me to indulge myself staging it. Details of the Fair can be found at www.sustainability.ofm.uwa.edu.au. The fair will be an annual event so watch out for it.
Research Grants & Contracts

ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION OF WA
Dr Daniela Ugliati, A/Prof Lawrence Abraham and Dr P. N. Hollingsworth. Biomedical and Chemical Sciences, UWA Centre for Medical Research and Centre for Molecular Immunology and Instrumentation: ‘Regulation of the Complement Receptor Type 2 (CR2/CD21) in Patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis and Systemic Lupus Erythematosus’ — $30,000 (2004).

ASTHMA FOUNDATION
Mr G. L. Hall, Mr Peter Franklin and Dr S. M. Stick. ICHR and Paediatrics and Child Health: ‘Measuring Airway Responsiveness to Adenosine Monophosphate (AMP) in Pre-school Children Using the Forced Oscillation Technique’ — $43,428 (2004).


AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL: DISCOVERY PROJECTS

AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL LINKAGE/ADVANCED NANO TECHNOLOGIES PTY LTD
Dr Allan Mckinley, Dr Martin Saunders. Biomedical and Chemical Sciences and Centre for Microscopy and Microanalysis: ‘Development of the Methods to Tailor Photocatalytic Activity of ZnO Nanoparticles’ — $238,560 (2003-05).

AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL LINKAGE/CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT

AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL LINKAGE INTERNATIONAL

Dr Eugene Ivanov and Dr Andrei Luiten. Physics: ‘Development of Optical Clocks and their Applications to Precision Frequency Measurements and Time Keeping’ — $36,000 (2004-06).

CANCER COUNCIL OF WA
A/Prof Lawrence Abraham and Maria Franchina. Biomedical and Chemical Sciences and UWA Centre for Medical Research: ‘Transcription Factor Activity in Anaplastic Large Cell Lymphoma’ — $55,000 (2004-05).

JUVENILE DIABETES FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA
Dr Paul Fournier and Dr Luis Ferreira. Human Movement and Exercise Science: ‘Exercise-Mediated Hyperglycaemia in Type 1 Diabetes: A Role for Lactate Glyconeogenesis’ — $4600 (2003).

NATIONAL HEART FOUNDATION
Dr Daniel Green, Dr Gerry O’Driscoll, Dr E. A. Davis and T. Jones. UWA Centre for Child Health Research and Human Movement and Exercise Science: ‘Reversing Vascular Dysfunction in Adolescents with Obesity and Type 2 Diabetes: Optimising the Exercise Prescription’ — $100,000 (2004-06).

NHMRC

FOR SALE BY TENDER
Slightly Damaged Solid Jarrah Gate Leg Tables

The Insurance and Risk Management Officer has for sale by tender three (3) solid jarrah (veneer inlaid tops) tables (will sell separately). Each table measures 1120mm by 1133mm (4ft x 5ft) on steel castors, each table has slight water damage to the edge of the veneer inlay. They would make an attractive side board or occasional table.

They are situated in the Vice-Chancellor at present and can be inspected on 5 May between 12.30pm and 1.30pm. Pick up date will be advised to the successful tenderer(s) as they will not become available for collection until replacement units have been delivered, but this is expected by mid-June. Delivery will be at the purchaser’s expense and they are offered for tender as is and no warranty or other implied guarantee as to condition is provided.

The successful bidder will be required to remove the item(s) within 48hrs of advice.

All tenders should be in a sealed envelope addressed to Grant Wallace at the Insurance and Risk Management Officer (M450) by 4pm on 11 May 2004.

More than a standard lecture
Warren McGregor, one of Australia’s top accountants will surely set a high standard when he delivers the Bateman Lecture later this month.

Mr McGregor has an intimate knowledge of standard setting issues after more than 20 years at the Australian Accounting Research Foundation, where he ultimately became Chief Executive Officer.

He is now a member of the International Accounting Standards Board, based in London, and is coming to Perth to deliver the lecture at the Octagon Theatre on May 10 at 6pm.

He will talk about the implications of the adoption of international accounting standards for Australian business.

The lecture, one in an occasional series organised by UWA’s Business School, is open to the public. Students and the business community are invited to attend. There is no admission charge.
Tuesday 4 May
ANATOMY AND HUMAN BIOLOGY
SEMINAR
‘Innate immune responses at the ocular surface—the role of toll-like receptors’, A/Prof Eric Pearlman, Raine Visiting Professor. 1pm, ANHB, First Floor, Rm 1.81.

MARINE SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING
SEMINAR
‘ADCP measurements of the formation and dynamics of a tidal headland eddy’, Ross Vennell, University of Otago, New Zealand. 4pm, Rm 119, School of Water Research.

Wednesday 5 May
CHEMISTRY SEMINAR
‘Simulating at the nanoscale: dots, tubes and screws’, Julian Gake, Curtin University. 12noon, Simmonds Lecture Theatre, general Purpose Building 5.

Thursday 6 May
FREE LUNCHTIME CONCERT
‘UWA Student Ensembles’, 1.10pm, Octagon Theatre.

Friday 7 May
MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONS
SEMINAR
Presented by Dr Kevin B. Lowe. Leader-ship research has focused considerable attention on identifying those leader behaviours and other contextual factors that predict one or more criteria of interest. Scholars often characterise leadership as a complex composite of behaviours in elegant literature reviews and passionate discussion sections but seldom investigate these concept-ualisations with the bi-variate and multivariate techniques they employ. The objectives of this research to offer a schema to conceptualise leadership more holistically, establish the importance of a gestalt view of leadership; and empirically examine the occurrence, properties and consequences of leadership gestalts. 12noon, Social Sciences South Building 1237, First Floor.

BIOCHEMISTRY AND MOLECULAR
BIOLOGY
‘Evolution, structure and function: looking at what cells do from the inside out and outside in’ and ‘14-3-3 proteins: regulator and co-ordinator of plant metabolism’, Dr Martha Ludwig (ANU) and Dr Thomas Martin (Cambridge). 1pm, Simmonds Lecture Theatre.

ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY
SEMINAR
‘Reform of the law for the protection of water quality in public drinking water catchments’, Alex Gardner, Law School. 4pm, Social Sciences Lecture Room 1.

UNIVERSITY MUSIC SOCIETY
‘From the New World.’ To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the death of the great Czech composer, Antonin Dvorak, University Orchestra celebrates his rich romanticism and haunting melodies with a performance of the majestic and moving New World Symphony.

7.30pm, Winthrop Hall. Tickets available from BOCS outlets on 9484 1133 or the Octagon Theatre on 6488 2440.

Tuesday 11 May
ANATOMY AND HUMAN BIOLOGY
SEMINAR
‘Faunacation: impacts of habitat truncation on Perth’s fabulous fauna’, Dr Ric How, Western Australian Museum. Ric has been examining the fauna of Perth and the Swan Coastal Plain for over 25 years, particularly that remaining on small remnant bushlands. In 1979 he supervised a study that documented the impact of the first 150 years of European settlement on the fauna of the Perth area and in 1986 commenced a long-term monitoring programme of the ground vertebrate fauna of Bold Park. In the late 1990s he completed a detailed fauna survey of 34 bushland remnants across the coastal plain in the Perth area. He will discuss some of the great
diversity of vertebrates on the Swan Coastal Plain, the impact that changed environments have had on their long-term survival and postulate what the future may hold. 1pm, Room 1.81, ANHB.

Wednesday 12 May

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY TALK
‘Being national—when the national institution is in Canberra’, Jan Fullerton, Director-General, National Library of Australia. Jan Fullerton will talk about the National Library of Australia’s efforts to be relevant to all Australians wherever they live and work. Members: free; non-members: $5 donation. 7.30pm, Library Training Room, Ground Floor, Reid Library Building.

Thursday 13 May

FREE LUNCHTIME CONCERT
‘Works including Copland: Piano Fantasy, Roger Smalley on piano. 1.15pm, Octagon Theatre.

Friday 14 May

CLIMA SEMINAR
‘Mapping the chickpea genome: development of molecular markers and their applications’, Theo Pfaff, Murdoch University; ‘Mapping of QTL involved in resistance to Ascochyta blight and other agronomical traits in chickpea’, Judith Lichtenzveig, UWA. 4pm, Biological Sciences Lecture Theatre, Murdoch University.

LAWRENCE WILSON ART GALLERY
‘Buying art from “other” cultures’, Chris Hill. 1pm, LWAG.

Saturday 15 May

WORKSHOP: BIODIESEL WORKSHOP
‘Biodiesel, how to make it, politics and economics’, Phillip Calais, Tony Clarke, Jonathan Thwaites. The workshop will show you, hands on, how to make biodiesel, understand the chemistry and the equipment and materials required. Also covered will be use of unprocessed vegetable oil as a fuel, politics and economics of biodiesel. Biodiesel is a renewable fuel made from vegetable oil (new or used) or animal fat (saturated oils/fat). It is an environmentally friendly replacement for, or additive to, diesel fuel. Renewable fuels like biodiesel are a much more sustainable source of fuel and have the potential to greatly reduce our reliance on expensive imported oil, leading to the creation of local jobs and the improvement in trade deficit. 9am to 5pm, Chemistry Rm 2.22. More information at http://www.sustainability.ofm.uwa.edu.au/welcome/biodiesel. RSVP is required.

ADVANCE NOTICE

Wednesday 19 May

ENVIRONMENTAL DYNAMICS SEMINAR
‘Large eddy simulation of the atmospheric boundary layer over steep terrain’, Robert L. Street, Environmental Fluid Mechanics Laboratory, Stanford University. 4pm, Blakers Lecture Room, Ground Floor, Mathematics Building.
FOR RENT
TWO-TO-THREE BEDROOM HOME, large peaceful rear deck, pool, quiet cul-de-sac location, near public and private schools, backing on to Robin Reserve (bird sanctuary), Sorrento. Five minute walk to beach and close to cafes and restaurants. $3750. Phone 9203 9405, 0143 849 405.

FOR SALE
ALBANY HOLIDAY, fully-equipped granny flat, 5 mins walk to town. Lovely view and very peaceful. 1 dble bedroom, sofa-bed in living rm. $700 p/w or $320 p/week. Call 0407 500 126.

WANTED
SIX MONTHS ACCOMMODATION NEEDED by medical academic family from (approx.) September 2004. Minimum 3 bedrooms furnished house with garden preferred. Proximity to Fremantle an advantage. Please contact Martha Hickey: m.hickey@dbsgni.uwa.edu.au or 9340 1328.

FOR RENT
THREE-BEDROOM TOWNHOUSE with undercover parking and lockable storage room, air-conditioning and rear courtyard. Very quiet location bordering on university colleges in Park Rd, Nedlands. Furnished or unfurnished. Available from early May. Please contact owner on 0418 914 204 or at: crawley-apartment@inet.net.au.

FOR SALE
OFFER FOR SALE
BRAND NEW, RRP $59 each. Offers. Phone Lee at 0438 920 641.

WANTED
ONE ELECTRIC CEMENT MIXER for about $100. Call Barbara on 6488 1398.

HOUSSITTER
Responsible staff member available for housesitting in any area near UWA from June 2004. Short or long term. References can be supplied. Email ezatmcdod@cyllene.uwa.edu.au.