Ben Lexcen Scholarships

Five UNSW Medicine students have been awarded with prestigious Ben Lexcen Sports Scholarships by UNSW Vice Chancellor and President Professor Fred Hilmer at the UNSW Sport and Recreation’s recent awards night.

In 1988 UNSW was the first Australian University to offer sports scholarships with the Ben Lexcen Sports Scholarships the pinnacle of these. Over 160 students have been awarded these scholarships since then, including numerous Olympians and Australian international representatives. Each is given their own Ben Lexcen Scholarship number which they keep for life.

No 141: Ashleigh Dind - Touch Football
Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS)

Ash captured the UNSW women’s touch football team at the Australian University Games. They successfully defended their title to take gold again in 2011. Ash was also selected in the Green and Gold team for the fifth year running. She played in the Vawdon Cup Grand Final representing the Canterbury Bulldogs, where they narrowly lost to Wollongong.

Ash plays in the newly formed ‘Elite 8’ national Touch competition with the Sydney Mets. They were undefeated last season, and Ash was selected in the NSW Women’s Opens Squad.

No 148: James McNeil—Cricket
Bachelor of Exercise Physiology

James had a very successful 2011-12 season playing for the minor premiership winning UNSW 1st Grade team. He has scored 387 runs at an average of 43, with a high score of 75 not out. James is rated as the best fieldsman in the club and has taken 7 catches and made 8 run-outs this season. He has won the UNSW club fieldsman of the year award the past two seasons.

In 2011, James led the UNSW cricket team to the Australian
University T20 championships in Perth, with the team winning Bronze. James was the leading wicket taker for UNSW. In 2009 and 2010 James was selected in the Green and Gold Merit teams.

**No 151: Shaun Abbott—Swimming**

*Bachelor of Exercise Physiology*

Joe Norman Lecsen Scholar

In 2011, Shaun finished 7th in the 50m Breaststroke at the Australian Championships and 8th in the 50m breaststroke at the short course nationals. At the recent 2012 Australian Championships, Shaun made the semi-finals of the 100m breaststroke.

Shaun was team manager and led the UNSW Swim team at the Australian University Games, winning a number of medals. He won silver in the Men’s 50 and 200m breaststroke and bronze in the 100m breaststroke. He also won silver in the 4x100m and the 4x50m medley relays.

**No 159: James Shute—Touch Football**

*Bachelor of Exercise Physiology*

In 2011, James represented Australia in the Youth Trans Tasman series against New Zealand which they won with a clean sweep. His team, the Sydney Rebels, finished 5th in the Elite 8s competition. James’ team were also semi-finalists at the 2011 Vawdon Cup.

James captained the UNSW team at the 2011 Australian Uni Games, where they won silver, and was rewarded for his performances by being selected in the Green and Gold Merit team.

**No 160: Sianne Toemoe—Athletics**

*Bachelor of Arts and Medicine*

Sianne had her strongest season to date last year, placing 3rd at the Australian National 800m Championships. She was 3rd in the Australian Athletics Tour Final with a PB, and 1st in the NSW State Athletics Championships. In 2010 Sianne won the 800m at the Australian University Games in Perth.

Sianne qualified for the 2011 World University Summer Games, but was unfortunately unable to compete due to injury, and also had to miss out on competing at the AUGs. Sianne is now in Europe training and racing, hoping to post a qualifying time for the London Olympics.
The ceremony held on the 17th May 2012 awarded merit based prizes to the top performing students in the School within each department. We would like to congratulate all of the award winners. They are:

**Physiology**
- Calvin Leung
- Jayant Ravindran
- Kate Polglaze
- Hyun-Sun Song

**Pharmacology**
- Patrick Hosie
- Stephanie Isaac
- Joshua Glass
- Hangyu Yi

**Anatomy**
- Yng Kai Tou
- Shadi El-Wahsh
- Dougall Norris
- Tseng Wen-Cheng
- Philip Bressel
- Sam Vo
- Vincent Tsui

**Pathology**
- Stephanie Isaac
- Calvin Leung
- Jayant Ravindra
- Nelson Russia
- Samatha Bobba

**Exercise Physiology**
- Whitney Brown
- Jake Atkinson
- Gemma Brown
- Luke Darwall
- Ashley Woodbury

**PhD Thesis**
- David Williamson

**Medicine**
- David Prince
When you hear the term ‘exercise physiology’, do you think of lean, muscular bodies performing at their peak? You’d be forgiven if you did, but these days the discipline has a lot more to do with exercise as therapy for the rest of us; professional athletes are only a small part of the picture.

Ben Barry, head of the exercise physiology program at the University of NSW, knows the popular misconceptions well. His own high-school ambition was “to be an exercise physiologist and work with athletic women”. But he says he soon realised there was more to the story.

“Luckily I grew up and realised that old people and people with chronic disease need more help.”

While still an undergraduate, inspired by his teachers at the University of Queensland and his experience working in several coaching and clinical roles, Dr Barry began to develop an interest in motor control and exercise for older people.

“I’m still fascinated by how the brain controls movement and wish I had more time to spend contributing to the knowledge in this field,” he says.

Significant achievements in research came early in Dr Barry’s career. He co-authored a successful ARC Discovery grant while still a graduate student. Postdoctoral work at the University of Queensland was soon followed by a stint as a researcher at the University of Colorado.

Now a senior lecturer at UNSW, Ben is responsible for the four-year program that leads to the Bachelor of Exercise Physiology. He says academic management is “not the easiest of roles” and that it leaves him little time to pursue research of his own. But the opportunity to shape an entire degree program, as distinct from individual subjects, is something he relishes.
“With only a few exceptions, such as the UNSW medicine program, universities offer degrees, but they run courses. My role is to encourage collaborative work in teaching, with a program focus, and for this to be delivered by a diverse group of academic staff.”

The job is not without its frustrations. “It involves lots of meetings and emailing, accompanied by the sheer delight of dealing with accrediting bodies and teaching rosters.” But Dr Barry thinks the work he has put in over the past four years is making a difference to how the degree is perceived by students and the industry. One teaching innovation he is particularly proud to be involved with is a national project to develop simulated learning environments to address shortages in clinical placements for students. “Of course, it’s been a big team effort,” he says, adding that his own motivation is sustained by the goodwill and collaborative spirit of the university environment.

“I love being in an intellectually generous environment, where people share ideas and understanding, and then head to the pub at the end of the week to keep it real.”

“With many of his relatives working in either health or education, Dr Barry describes his choice of a career in health academia as a case of hedging his bets. But it’s a path he looks set to continue on for now. “In 2009, I purchased an academic gown with the government economic stimulus. At that point, I accepted that I was committed to an academic career.”
Get into Your Head Space for Brain Awareness Week

Derek Williamson

Get Into Your Head Space (GIYH) was a Brain Awareness Week (BAW) event coordinated by Thomas Fath (President of the Sydney Chapter of the American Society for Neuroscience) and Richard Vickery to raise awareness of Brain biology, health and research at UNSW. GIYH was run over two days and one night and included talks, self experiments and interactive activities.

A diversity of presenters including the good doctors themselves and a plethora of their associates, students and colleagues, was one of the things the audience appreciated. As one audience member commented the best thing about the evening was the “Very interesting and passionate facilitators”.

8 schools sent a total of 240 year 9 and 10 students across the two days, with two schools coming from as far afield as the Central Coast. Students were thoroughly engaged by the interactive nature of the day, with few ready to leave at the end of their allotted 2 hours.

No surprise that the students particularly enjoyed investigating the working of their semi circular canals – which involved being spun around in a motorised chair “Barany, 1907”, however this was much less popular with the older audience in the evening.

Teachers were particularly enthusiastic about the exposure their students had to the university and particularly the many aspects of research and careers represented for their students. “…the fact that students are made aware of post-school opportunities in Science…” and “…opportunity to be at uni/see that science is a genuine/valid poss-

sibility for their future…”.

So what did people do:
• tested their reflexes
• learnt about balance
• were intrigued by the development and differentiations of the brain
• Spent hours understanding the way neurons connect and function using the virtual slide collection

And we made it into the Korea Science Times - http://bit.ly/HyQjNk

Video Conference Series
May 28 & 29 and June 1, 30 schools attended sessions with a total of 500 students. Thanks to the long list of presenters who gave of their time and expertise from across SOMS, Medicine, Science and Engineering.

Upcoming Events
• Disease evening July 16th Lung diseases and cancer – Prof. Rakesh Kumar
• PDHPE Teachers day August 10th

Know Your Enemy and Pickled for Obscura Day

On Saturday April 28th, 50 people descended on the Museum to get to know their mortal enemies – the disease that will kill nearly all of us. They spent hours listening to our resident experts on the day Patrick de Parmentier and Ann Wong from SOMS talk about their research on skincancer and hearing respectively. We also had Michele Madigan from Optometry lead visitors through an eye anatomy introduction, dissection and pathology course over the afternoon.

In the evening Museum technician Dave Cutting taught people how to pickle and mount their own heart specimen. Photos from this event can be found on our Facebook page while you are there feel free to LIKE us.
20 Things You May Not Know About Fergus Grieve

My worst job was..?
Pizza delivery driver. Two weeks and one car crash later I figured it was time to move on.

What would you like inscribed on your gravestone?
Not very original but you can’t beat, ‘I told you I was sick’.

Use the word future in a sentence.
By the time you read this, the future perfect tense will have cemented its position as one of the least frequently used in the English language.

What is your favourite food?
So many to choose from! Anything that doesn’t have soylent green in it.

Have you ever met a famous person?
I saw Richie Benaud walking down Belmore Road the other day. Marvellous.

What cartoon character best describes you and why?
Barney Rubble from The Flintstones - it’s the hair, mainly.

If you could live anywhere in the world for a year, where would it be?
New York City.

Complete the statement? "I recommend..."
I recommend the sausage rolls at Biblio, the cafe near the UNSW library.

What was your most embarrassing moment?
The time I was embroiled in a cash-for-comment scandal involving the SoMS newsletter and sausage rolls at Biblio, the cafe near the UNSW library. Press Council a toothless tiger? I don’t think so!

If you could try anything and not fail (and money was no object), what dream would you attempt?
I’d like to become a property developer in Sydney. I’d build affordable houses that didn’t suck.

What super-power would you most like to have?
I’d like to be able to make magnets stick to my fridge again.

Truth and Trickery - share two unique things about yourself and your life, one is true the other false - let the reader decide.
I’m a vegetarian with three false teeth.

What was the last book you read, movie you saw, TV show you watched?
Cabaret starring Liza Minelli. Life is a cabaret, old chum!

If you had to sing a karaoke song what would it be?
Small Town by John Mellencamp or anything by Elvis.

I would be...?
Marlon Brando.

What are your pet peeves?
Inappropriate use of the word ‘around’.

My favourite song to dance to...?
Creep by Radiohead.

My last meal would be?
A sausage roll with red sauce.

Fergus Grieve is employed by SoMS as the Administration Officer - Information Systems. You can contact Fergus on 9385 8288 or via email at f.grieve@unsw.edu.au
Needlestick, sharps and puncture wound injuries are a key risk in SoMS

Blathnaid Farrell

In recent times we have seen a spike in the number of incidents being reported that involve needles, sharps or puncture wounds. A minor rodent bite to a member of staff in another Faculty resulted in a severe hand infection requiring surgery, it’s important that these are not ignored.

Reporting such incidents are encouraged and the HS Unit wish to remind all UNSW staff and students of the procedures should such an event happen to you.

- Clean the wound, seek first aid advice, inform your supervisor
- Go to the UNSW Health Centre or the nearest Casualty Department or your own medical practitioner for assessment as soon as possible (within 2 hours if possible exposure to HIV). A blood sample and prophylactic treatment may be required.
- The NSW Health Needlestick Injury Hotline (1800 804 823 – a free 24-hour service) can provide confidential advice / counseling.
- Report the incident using the on-line hazard reporting in MyUNSW
- We would ask that if you work with sharps or animals that bite you consider the following:
  - Can the sharp be eliminated e.g. use a blunt drawing-up needle instead?
  - Can you use single-use disposable scalpels instead?
  - Are you using the right type of scalpel blade for the procedure e.g. is it strong enough?
  - Are you using a scalpel-blade-remover?
  - Do you leave needles or blades lying on the bench, which could injury others?
  - Are you double-gloving?
  - Are you following correct animal handling techniques?
  - Are you overfilling the sharps bins?

Should you require assistance with HS in your area please contact Blathnaid Farrell on 9385 9750.
Andrew Tosolini and Renee Morris


"This work describes the organisation of the motor end plate region along various rat forelimb muscles, which was then subsequently used as a guide for intramuscular injections of retrograde tracers. The results of the retrograde tracer experiments confirmed that motor neurons are organised into columns that exhibit substantial overlap in all axes with neighbouring motor neuron columns. This is a seminal paper that formed the basis of my PhD in vivo work as precise knowledge regarding the muscle-motor neuron topography provides target points for my gene therapy experiments," Andrew explains.

"My PhD project involves intramuscular injections of adenovirus containing the gene sequence for brain derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) after targeted spinal cord lesions. The overall aim of my project is to modulate the expression BDNF within motor neurons so as to encourage lesioned axons to grow toward and reconnect with these neurons, a process that is essential for functional regeneration. Hopefully I can accumulate interesting data within the next couple of months."

Angie Shum, Theodore Mahendradatta, Rylan Taylor, Arran Painter, Melissa Moore, Maria Tsoli, Timothy Tan, Stephen Clarke, Graham Robertson and Patsie Polly


"Our studies identified a myogenic transcription factor Myocyte Enhancer Factor (MEF) 2C as a potential regulator of the structural and metabolic disruptions in skeletal muscle wasting of tumour-bearing mice," Angie said. "It is of high relevance to cancer cachexia, which is a highly debilitating paraneoplastic disease commonly observed in advanced cancer patients and directly contributes to 20% of cancer deaths. Loss of skeletal muscle mass and function is a defining characteristic of patients with cancer cachexia and is associated with poor survival".

Stefanie Reyes, Yuhong Fu, Kay Double, Lachlan Thompson, Deniz Kirik, George Paxinos and Glenda Halliday

"GIRK2 expression in dopamine neurons of the substantia nigra and ventral tegmental area", Journal of Comparative Neurology, DOI 10.1002/cne.23051

"My work aims to identify what makes an individual cell survive or degenerate in Parkinson’s disease. Studies to date, however, have almost exclusively been done in animal brains, so it is important to understand the differences in vulnerability in the human dopamine neurons. In this study the G-protein regulated inward-rectifier potassium channel 2 (GIRK2) was examined as a protein that marks vulnerable neurons in Parkinson’s. Our findings contradicted this concept as GIRK2 protein did not differentiate vulnerable from resistant dopamine neurons. Anatomical differences between the density of neuronal subpopulations in the human and rodent substantia nigra seem to be the main reason for the previous misperception."
**Luck of the draw**

We have a new member in the SoMS community and that is a spanking new SMEG barbecue. This deluxe barbie officially belongs to the pharmacologists, but I’m fairly certain that if you have a community minded event and you return it in its pristine condition you might just be able to broker a deal for its use.

The barbecue was a windfall that resulted from the purchase of a portable fume hood from Gallay Medical and Scientific (GMS) in May 2011. During a GMS recent lucky prize draw the SoMS purchase was attached to a winning ticket and as they say, the rest is history.

Pharmacology is currently looking into the purchase of a stand that will allow the barbie to be portable and become a shareable resource. In the meantime, should you wish to make enquiries about usage please contact Balu Daniel via email at b.daniel@unsw.edu.au

**New resources from the Library**

**Methods Navigator**


**Primal Pictures systemic anatomy**

Covers the 9 body systems with 3D views to choose in each section, each accompanied by explanatory chapter text. Included are 2500 anatomical structures each with specific text.

(Please note we also have access to Primal Pictures: Regional Anatomy)

**New Pathology e books:**

Robbins Basic Pathology, 9th edition 2012
Robbins and Cotran Pathologic Basis of Disease, Professional 8th ed

Please contact Kate Dunn (kate.dunn@unsw.edu.au, 51012) for more information on these resources, e-books for teaching, tracking research impact.

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**Postdoctoral Academy Program 2012**

**TOPIC**

“Grand Challenges”

**PROFESSOR FRED HILMER AO**

President and Vice Chancellor, UNSW

**DATE:** Thursday 5 July 2012  **TIME:** 4:00pm – 5:30pm

**LOCATION:** 4th Floor, Lowy Cancer Research Centre

**REGISTRATION:** Log into myUNSW, select ‘My Staff Profile’ tab and choose ‘Training Registration’ in the left hand menu. Select the course type ‘Post Doctoral Academy and then ‘Grand Challenges’.

**CONTACT:** Karen Walker | k.walker@unsw.edu.au | +61 2 9385 1664
10 Ways to Work Sustainably
The green office pledge

1. **Use durable crockery, cutlery, cups and bags** to avoid unnecessary waste from non-biodegradable disposables.

2. **Conserve my paper** use by double-sided my photocopying & printing on recycled paper. Use once-used paper for all drafts, notes and internal documents. Reuse unused single-sided sheets for scratch paper.

3. **Reduce my energy** use by activating power management settings and turning off computers, lights and equipment when not in use.

4. **Recycle everything you can**, including paper, bottles and cans, printer cartridges, cardboards, batteries, IT and furniture.

5. **Promote well-being in your workplace** by participating in activities that promote a work/life balance.

6. **Promote sustainable transport** by walking, cycling, catching public transport and carpooling to/from work whenever I can.

7. **Promote environmental responsibility** amongst new staff, students, visitors, contractors and suppliers.

8. Whenever possible, **purchase environmentally responsible products** such as paper, remanufactured printer cartidges and other preferred products.

9. Whenever possible, **make socially responsible purchases**, including locally-produced, fair trade and organic products.

10. Encourage others to **take the Green Office Pledge**.

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www.sustainability.unsw.edu.au
UNSW has been awarded $1.227M by Health Workforce Australia for a project to enhance clinical training.

This grant will enable the development of enhanced web-based simulation tools, to deliver virtual patient case studies to students of Medicine, Nursing and Midwifery, Allied Health and Medical Laboratory Science.

UNSW will lead a consortium including UTS, UNewcastle, UWS and ACU, which will work closely with the UNSW spinoff company Smart Sparrow Pty Ltd. The new educational resources to be developed will have a particular emphasis on cross-disciplinary and interprofessional collaboration. The project team from UNSW Medicine is led by Dr Benjamin Barry and Prof Rakesh Kumar of the School of Medical Sciences, together with Assoc Prof Gary Velan, Dr Patsie Polly and Dr Rachel Thompson.