University of Newcastle teacher ahead of the pack

Dr Philip Morgan from the University’s School of Education is no stranger to receiving accolades.

His commitment to excellence and student achievement has been recognised in no fewer than seven awards in 2006 including the University of Newcastle Teacher of the Year, Australian College of Educators NSW Minister for Education and Training Quality Teaching Award, Australian Teacher Education Association’s Teacher of the Year, Australian Award for Teaching Excellence and Australian Learning and Teaching Council’s award for outstanding contribution to Student Learning, and a Cordock Award for Teaching Excellence.

Dr Morgan has been teaching in health and physical education at the University of Newcastle since 2002. Using research-based approaches to engage, inspire and motivate students, his teaching produces confident education graduates who are committed to the health and wellbeing of children.

“I am often asked what makes an excellent teacher. I believe it is someone who wants to ensure students’ learning experiences are enjoyable, engaging and inspiring,” Dr Morgan said.

Dr Morgan also supervises four PhD students and is a co-investigator on a National Health and Medical Research Council funded project examining childhood obesity.

Professor Michelle Saunders said Dr Morgan’s contribution to teaching and learning at the University was significant.

“Dr Morgan is an inspiring and dedicated teacher who is an example to all,” the University’s Vice-Chancellor said.

The University of Newcastle strives for excellence in teaching and learning. Dr Morgan’s award is testament to the quality and calibre of our teachers, and the excellent learning experience the University offers its students.”
2006 has been a great year of achievement for the University. We set a new record for total research income, and our staff received awards for excellence in teaching and learning, and educational entrepreneurship. The University team won the Indigenous Student Games and our athletes enjoyed huge success in the Commonwealth Games. We won the national mootin competition in constitutional law and were named ABC-FM Choir of the Year. Overseas, we also had a very successful year including the establishment of the University of Newcastle in Singapore; and our four-legged robotic dogs, the NUBots, took out the robotic soccer world cup in Germany.

On the back of this success, this month I launched our new Strategic Plan which will take the University through until 2011. Called Building Distinction, the Strategic Plan contains the following vision:

- We are recognised and respected as a university of distinction
- Our teaching leads in the education of professionals and our research is internationally acclaimed
- Our organisation is responsive, dynamic and strong

The Strategic Plan articulates five priorities for the University to help us achieve our vision. The Plan provides the University with opportunity. I encourage everyone to read Building Distinction and think about how you can contribute to the five strategic priorities of the University. I also urge you to put our students at the centre of your attention, provide the highest quality service that you can, take pride in your work and celebrate the success of others. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their hard work and commitment during 2006. It has been a highly successful year across the University and everyone should be proud of their achievements.

I wish you and your families a safe and restful Christmas, and look forward to seeing you in 2007.

Nicholas Saunders
Vice-Chancellor and President

Brawn Fellowships announced

Congratulations to Dr Lisa Wood and Dr Kyp Kypri, the 2006 recipients of the prestigious Brawn Postdoctoral Fellowships.

Awarded under the University's Gladys M Brawn Memorial Fellowship Scheme, the fellowship will enable Dr Wood to continue her asthma research with her salary paid from 2007 to 2009 plus $10,000 per year toward her research. Dr Kypri will have receive his salary for the next two years, as well as annual funding of $10,000 toward his behavioural science research.

The Gladys M Brawn Memorial Fellowship Scheme was established in 1995 to attract outstanding career scientists to Newcastle and keep them here. The 2006 fellowships are worth a total of $450,000.

A literal celebration

Audiences were wowed by a stellar line-up at the 2006 Ourimbah Campus Festival of Literature held last month.

Speakers included the irrepressible Jackie French, award-winning Robert Dessaix, highly successful children's author, Mem Fox, and the ABC's Chaser Team. The program also featured a host of other well-known and award-winning authors, illustrators, storytellers and media characters. Combined, they thrilled, informed, educated and entertained the captive audience.

"This year's festival featured more than 20 speakers," Chair of the Organising Committee, Dr Jo May, said. "The festival continues to go from strength-to-strength. It's definitely become a highlight on the Ourimbah campus calendar, attracting people from across the Central Coast and beyond. "We look forward to an even bigger and better Festival of Literature in 2007."

UniNews is published by the University of Newcastle
This issue has been edited by Kaye Robinson
Design and layout: Bounce Design

Our thanks to contributors including the University's Media and Public Relations team.
Letters and contributions may be edited due to space restrictions and are not necessarily endorsed by the University of Newcastle.
For UniNews enquires, please phone 02 4927 8856 or e-mail uninews@newcastle.edu.au
Printed by: Print National
Tribute to Phillip Felton

Saturday, 29 August was a very sad day for the University of Newcastle, with the passing of highly popular tutor, Phillip Felton.

With an unerring passion for politics, Phil, who was in the process of writing his PhD, was friend and mentor to many students and staff across the University. Variously described as relaxed, passionate, modest, engaging, amusing, patient and driven, Phil personified the term 'Quality teaching' — as evidenced by his always full-to-capacity politics tutorials.

Thanks to donations from family, friends, staff and students, a memorial prize has been established in Phil's name. Called The Phillip Felton Prize in 1000 Level Australian Politics, it will be awarded annually and ensure the name of a much beloved academic lives on at the University.

Ken Dutton retires from Council

Emeritus Professor Ken Dutton will step down from Council at the end of 2006. Emeritus Professor Dutton has a long history of involvement with the University including a distinguished record of service to the Council. The University thanks Emeritus Professor Dutton for the enormous contribution he has made.

Award-winning Director appointed

Award-winning innovator, Professor Gail Huon, started as the University of Newcastle’s new Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning, this month.

Professor Huon is nationally recognised for her research in teaching and learning. Her focus is on improving the first year experience for students, linking student learning styles to academic performance, designing and implementing peer mentoring programs, and developing web tools to enhance written communication skills.

“The University of Newcastle has an excellent reputation for innovative teaching and learning strategies,” Professor Huon said.

"I look forward to teaming my experience with the University’s existing contemporary approaches to enhance the learning experience and provide high quality teaching resources for our students and teachers.”

Juli takes it all off!

Luckily for Juli Anderson, she has a great looking skull. On Friday, 27 October, Juli had her head shaved in the middle of the Shortland Union courtyard to the cheers of a very supportive crowd.

The ‘nude nut’ look came about as part of National Bandanna Day, which raises money annually for CanTeen.

Juli became a sibling member of CanTeen in 2001, when her younger brother Keith was diagnosed with cancer. She is now CanTeen’s Member Advisory Council member for the Hunter and Northern NSW Division.

"It’s not just about the patients. Siblings and children of cancer patients, as well as bereaved siblings and children, benefit so much from the work CanTeen does. It gives us the opportunity to be around peers who understand what we’re going through," Juli said.

CanTeen is a completely non-profit organisation and relies heavily on fundraising to achieve its mission of supporting, developing and empowering young people living with cancer.
On Saturday, 11 November, almost 200 graduates of the University of Newcastle gathered with family and friends in the Singapore Chinese Orchestra Concert Hall for the conferring of their degrees.

Graduates attending the two ceremonies came from Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Japan, India, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam to have their degrees conferred by Chancellor of the University of Newcastle, Professor Trevor Waring.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Nick Saunders, gave the Occasional Address at the morning ceremony. Acting Provost at Nanyang Technological University and graduate of the University of Newcastle, Professor Er Meng Hwa, addressed the afternoon ceremony.

This was the fourth consecutive year a graduation ceremony had been held in Singapore. The University currently has more than 1,000 students studying in Singapore, in engineering, information technology, communication, business and commerce programs.

The University has some 4,600 international students enrolled in various programs, 1,600 of whom study at locations outside of Australia.

University consolidating its position in Singapore