



une

University of
New England

Making an Impact

2019
Giving Report



2018 Annual UNE Scholarship Donor Luncheon

UNE

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Cover photo: SRI Director, Lou Conway and Chair of the SRI Advisory Committee, Matthew Irwin



A message from
the Vice-Chancellor and CEO

Professor Annabelle Duncan

Making an Impact

The hallmarks of a great university are its support for independent thinking, quality teaching and innovative research, and the accessibility of its teaching to all students, no matter their background, geographical location and financial situation.

These characteristics are often made possible through the support of donors and supporters who have the vision to make a commitment to the future of education. The quality of the support we receive at the University of New England makes it possible for our University to have an impact far beyond our size or regional location.

It has been a tumultuous year for the higher education sector, and one which has demonstrated once again the importance of philanthropic and alumni support for the work being done at UNE, especially in the field of research. Every dollar we receive from our donors helps us to provide our researchers with the certainty, continuity and stability they need to see through long term projects across a range of diverse fields.

On behalf of the University, I would like to thank those people who have demonstrated leadership by giving generously to initiate innovative new projects and activities here at UNE, including:

- Philanthropist Christopher Abbott who is enabling the reinvention of the old UNE Boilerhouse as an experiential children's learning and play space that will help us to provide a true lifelong Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEAM) learning opportunity to the young people and their families in our region;
- The Lam family in Hong Kong who were so inspired by their lifelong friendship with UNE lecturer Alfred McCreedy that they have made a major donation to support UNE establishing a new specialist lectureship in Classical Greek Language in honour of his memory;

- Business man and farmer Matthew Irvine, a UNE Alumni and donor who is sharing his extensive knowledge and commercial expertise with our founders as the chair of the Advisory Committee of the UNE Smart Regional Incubator;
- The Perpetual Foundation who are funding the development of a new mobile laboratory to assist with diagnosis and study of Parkinson's disease across regional NSW.

The support that UNE receives from across our community enables students to receive a university education that may have initially seemed impossible, through a variety of scholarships and other financial opportunities.

On behalf of UNE, I thank you for your support and invite you to make an impact through your commitment to our University. Your support will continue to grow in importance as we create a new future for UNE, our students and community through our UNE 2025 Strategy.

Professor Annabelle Duncan
Vice Chancellor and CEO



Chancellor, James Harris and Professor David Lamb at the Royal Easter Show

A message from
the Director, Office of Advancement,
Communications and Events

Robert Heather

Built on a foundation of generosity

Firstly I would like to thank everyone who has made a donation to support the University of New England over the past year. It doesn't matter what size your donation has been, we would like to emphasize that your generous support of our programs, scholarships and other activities is essential to the University and its students.

In making a donation to UNE you are part of a proud tradition that encompasses alumni, staff, students and the wider community.

The University of New England was founded in a great act of philanthropy with the donation of the historic house Booloominbah and 180 acres of parklands in 1937 by Thomas Richard Forster to establish "as a University College for all Australia". The value of this historic property at the time was £30,000 (around \$14 million in today's value) and the local community contributed £10,000 (approx. \$4,000,000) towards the target set by the NSW Government to establish the New England University College (NEUC) in 1938. At the tail end of the Great Depression these were astronomical figures for a regional community to give to any project and were based upon a desire to make a real difference.

The bid to establish the university was based upon a bold new vision to create a centre of educational excellence in regional Australia, something which had never been attempted before and which energized the community of the New England region and much further afield.

The University was an enterprise that stirred the imagination, stimulated the intellect and aimed to create educational opportunities for people in small and large communities across the country. This vision has received support from thousands of people ever since through a stream of donations and support that has included money but also land, property, artworks, historical artifacts, books, research collections and much more.

It is this vision which we ask you to support.

The future success of the University of New England needs to be built upon a wide range of support that moves beyond government funding to include a new era of collaboration with donors, sponsors, alumni, philanthropic organisations and commercial partners in order to thrive and grow.

The people in this report are a cross section of the supporters who have been actively involved in working with the University in 2018 and we want to thank them for their generosity and support, but also for their commitment to the idea of the University of New England and wanting to be a part of its future.

We invite you to also be a part of this future too.

Robert Heather
Director, Office of Advancement,
Communications and Events

Giving Statistics

TOTAL AMOUNT DONATED IN 2018

\$1,591,240

LARGEST GIFT IN 2018

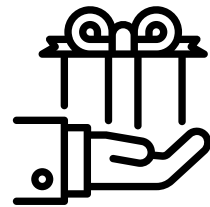
Kwun W Lam, The A.G. and I.C. McCready Honours Scholarship for Classical Languages & The A.G. and I.C. McCready Ancient Greek Lectureship

\$300,000

LARGEST EVER DONATION

2016 Estate of Stanley Droder (Bequest), Carole and Stan Droder Scholarship,

\$3,000,000



NUMBER OF PRIZES SUPPORTED BY DONATIONS

153

TOTAL DOLLAR VALUE OF PRIZES SUPPORTED BY DONATIONS

\$55,030



THE NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED

105

NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS SUPPORTED BY DONATIONS

68

TOTAL DOLLAR VALUE OF SCHOLARSHIPS SUPPORTED BY DONATIONS

\$456,500

NUMBER OF RESEARCH GRANTS SUPPORTED BY DONATIONS

8

TOTAL DOLLAR VALUE OF RESEARCH GRANTS SUPPORTED BY DONATIONS

\$103,392

AVERAGE GIVING AMOUNT FOR 2018

\$2,872

NUMBER OF DONORS

318

HOW MANY DONORS GAVE TO OUR ANNUAL APPEAL

180



The Lam Family Donation

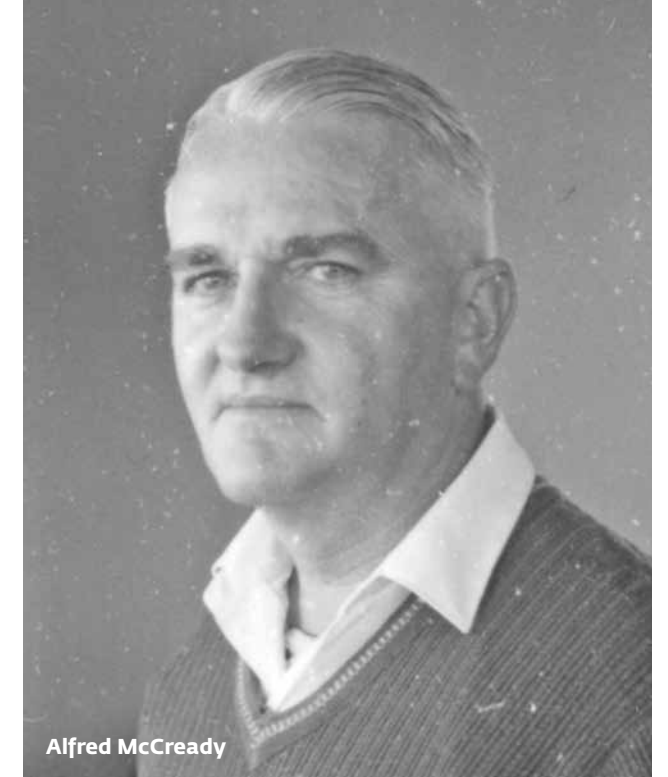
At a time in history when world views are increasingly polarised and “facts” are reduced to tweets, the study of classical languages can seem foreign, even archaic. But classical languages help us to unlock the past and to learn what it means to be human today.

UNE has a long and proud tradition of teaching the classics - they have been a core offering since 1938 - and our scholars come from all walks of life and all corners of the globe. Which makes the generous support of the Hong Kong-based Lam family particularly fitting.

Mr Wai Kwum Lam and his wife Pansy have made several donations to UNE's Museum of Antiquities in honour of their friendship with Alfred McCready, who taught classical languages at UNE from 1958-76, and his wife Irene. The McCreadys befriended Mr Lam when he was a boarder at The Armidale School in the 1960s and they enjoyed a lifelong friendship.

After Alfred's death in 1996, Irene was instrumental in establishing the AG & IC McCready Fund to support the work of UNE's Museum of Antiquities and make UNE's outstanding collections accessible to visitors, students and researchers.

In September 2018, the Lams donated \$300,000 to support the establishment of a new A.G. and I.C. McCready Honours Scholarship for Classical Languages, to be offered for the first time in 2019, and the establishment of a new A.G. and I.C. McCready Lectureship in Ancient Greek. "It is our desire to make a gift to the University of New England in memory of Mr A.K. and Mrs I.C. McCready, to whom we owe so much as a family for their many kindnesses," Mr Lam said.



Alfred McCready

“Our gift in memory of the McCready’s, both of whom were Greek and Latin scholars and teachers, aims to be the catalyst to provide a similar post for Greek studies.”

UNE is one of the few regional universities to offer courses in classical languages and Ancient History, and has long prided itself on attracting dedicated teachers. Before joining the staff of UNE, Alfred was a Classical Gold Medallist at the University of Queensland, where he met Irene. At Armidale, he was widely regarded by both his colleagues and students.

Alfred and Irene shared a passion for ancient cultures and languages and were active in the Armidale community. Irene taught Latin at the New England Grammar School and organised classes in Modern Greek for students from Greek and Cypriot families.

In 2020-21, UNE's Museum of Antiquities will be moving into the Dixson Library as a permanent teaching display. This is expected to create further interest in our classical courses and to honour the legacy of committed educators like Alfred and Irene.



Essential funding

Ebony Adams will never forget the day she learnt she had been awarded an Essential Energy Scholarship.

"It was my birthday and I just cried because it was such a huge relief. I'd been working six days a week while still trying to do my law studies so it was great to be rewarded for that effort."

Ebony is studying for a combined Bachelor of Arts/ Bachelor of Law degree at UNE and is the first person in her immediate family to embark on tertiary education. Originally from Inverell, she is a proud Gomeri woman and comes from a tight-knit family that has been unwavering in its support of her education.

"My family were going into debt to make sure I was able to continue my studies," Ebony said.

"It was hard moving away from home without my support network. To then have to manage financial responsibilities and adapt to university life was a big shock but if you want to do well, which I do, you have to go the extra mile."

The Essential Energy Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scholarship has removed both financial and social barriers to Ebony's university education. She will receive financial support for the duration of her degree and have the opportunity to take up an industry work placement upon graduation.

"The scholarship gives me a better opportunity to achieve academic success," Ebony said.

"The financial support helps with practical things like textbooks, but it also means I can put extra towards my rent expenses, manage my work, and focus more on why I'm here – my education. Now I can invest some of my time in things that interest and stimulate me outside of studies, which is important. It means I can stay connected to my culture and also connect with the community of people that I have here in Armidale."

In addition to her studies, Ebony plays volleyball every Monday night with fellow Indigenous students.

"There's a group of us that have come from Inverell and we have formed this small community," she said. "Being able to connect with other Indigenous young people and having time to engage in these kinds of activities keeps me grounded."

Essential Energy is a New South Wales state-owned corporation responsible for building, operating and maintaining one of Australia's largest electricity networks spanning 95 per cent of New South Wales and parts of southern Queensland.

Developing a diverse and inclusive workplace and contributing to the communities in which it operates is a focus for the business.

The Essential Energy Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scholarship provides recognition and financial assistance to full-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander undergraduate students enrolled at UNE, preferably on campus.



Warialda representatives of the DL McMaster Committee

Douglas McMaster's passion lives on

A passion for the North West Slopes and Plains and its agricultural potential born a century ago is about to inspire a new generation through the D.L. McMaster Fund.

Douglas McMaster, a well known grazier and prominent Graziers' Association of NSW figure, was in his twilight years when he bequeathed 2500 acres (1011 hectares) of his Warialda property Inverness to create a UNE research station in 1964. He saw it as a means of developing the soils he loved so much, giving School of Rural Science researchers the opportunity to practically test and apply new techniques.

Now, following the sale of the property and establishment of the D. L. McMaster Endowment, students from the Warialda shire will have the opportunity to carry on his legacy. The endowment will be used to fund daytrips for Warialda High School students and/or farm groups to visit UNE's Armidale campus and to tour our SMART Farm. It will also provide at least two undergraduate housing scholarships for students from Warialda to study agriculture, and fund research projects into profitable and sustainable whole-farm systems relevant to the North-West Slopes and Plains of NSW. "Uncle Doug was a trailblazer and a very passionate, forthright man," said Mike Donaldson, his great nephew, who worked for him for a time as a jackeroo. "He was an early adopter of rotational grazing. He used to keep his sheep in small paddocks and constantly move them around, saying that even a change of scenery was good for them.

"He was always keen to educate other farmers about how to improve the running of their farms, especially the management of pastures.

"I think he hoped the land he bequeathed to UNE would have a lasting impact."

Douglas' own contribution to the local community and grazing industries was considerable. He was vice-president and later president of the Graziers' Association of NSW, and served as a councillor with the Yallaroi Shire Council and committeeman of the Warialda Show Society.

A newspaper obituary described Douglas as a "practical and successful grazier", who backed the promotion of wool and levies to publicise the advantages of wool over synthetic fibres, and a man "of firm opinions, which he was not afraid to express". While recognising the importance of wool and meat promotion, he also saw a need for research into the problems peculiar to the slopes and plains country of the North West of NSW.

At the McMaster Research Station, in the heart of one of the most fertile areas of the state, no-till, stubble management and rotational farming systems were later trialled.

"He would be happy that other Warialda students, keen to learn and carry out research, might one day help to improve our understanding and management of the region," Mike said. "In many respects he was ahead of his time and his donation of the land was certainly a very unusual and generous gesture for the day."

Investing in future businesses

After a 30-year career in finance, UNE graduate Matthew Irwin understands all too well the courage it takes to establish a business.

"Entrepreneurs are very brave; it requires a big personal commitment, a big family commitment and a big financial commitment to develop an idea and follow your passion," said the senior executive and director.

"But if these businesses are successful, they employ people, encourage investment and help grow regions. We need to continue to find ways to invest in innovation and entrepreneurs, especially in our regional cities, or else we'll continue to have an exodus of smart young people to the cities."

It is this belief in regional development, and dedication to the New England and North West, particularly, that has seen Matthew devote considerable time to supporting UNE's SMART Region Incubator (SRI). As chairman of the SRI's advisory committee, he is generously sharing his expertise and connections with its startup founders.

"I benefitted greatly from my education at UNE (a Bachelor of Agricultural Economics), as well as the friendships I formed living in college (Robb College, from 1982-85) and growing as an individual and developing resilience," Matthew said. "I'm pleased to now be giving something back, especially given I also own a beef farm in Armidale."

Launched in March 2017, with support from the NSW Department of Industry, the University of New England and the Armidale and Tamworth Regional Councils, the SRI aims to support emerging businesses and grow innovation and jobs in the Armidale and Tamworth regions. Forty-three startups that have joined the SRI have already created 19 jobs and attracted investment of just over \$2 million in the fields of agtech, agribusiness, health, social enterprise and regional business solutions.

"Being part of our network, benefitting from the mentoring of our experts-in-residence and access to UNE researchers gives founders a safe and inspiring place to grow their ideas and enterprises," said SRI director Lou Conway. "We're dedicated to upskilling founders and enabling them to follow their idea through to a successful launch. People like Matthew, with international experience and strategic networks, can help our founders to extend their opportunities beyond the region and even into parallel sectors."

"Research shows that 70% of undergraduates, not just at UNE but across Australia, want to run their own business.

We're developing a UNE startup culture to foster and facilitate that."

Among those to have launched their startups through the SRI are Edwina Sharrock, founder of Birth Beat - an online platform that provides childbirth education. Edwina has pitched Birth Beat to investors and stakeholders at the HCF Catalyst Demo Day and appeared on the television show Shark Tank, where she secured funding of \$200,000.

"The startup founders are the real heroes and they need support," said Matthew. "I urge others with valuable experience to engage with the SRI because it is ultimately about community. By supporting the SRI, I feel that I am supporting something that may directly or indirectly benefit my community in the future."

The SRI is also working with students who are either already working on their startup or plan to be developing an idea for market as part of their degree program. Please join the SRI team on social media to follow the students and startups as they build their business at @unesmartri on Facebook and Instagram.

If you'd like to find out how you or your business can get involved, contact Lou Conway at the SRI at mconway@une.edu.au



Founders, Director and mentors of the SRI with Adam Marshall, Member for Northern Tablelands



SRI Director, Lou Conway and Chair of the SRI Advisory Committee, Matthew Irwin



Janice Knight and Iain Knight (Son)

A Knight in shining armour

Janice Knight's affection for UNE runs deep.

She earned a scholarship (just like her future husband Trevor, whom she met on campus) to study at UNE in the late 1950s, Trevor became a long-standing Admissions Officer later in his career, and their youngest daughter studied linguistics at UNE. "UNE was so good to us; it opened up the world to our family," said Janice, who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts and Diploma of Education.

She's now 79 and living in Adelaide, but grew up "in the bush" near Coonamble, in the NSW Central West, at a time when it was not customary for girls to enrol at university. "A friend berated my father for allowing me to attend university because he said I would only get married and have children," Janice said. "But my parents were passionate believers in education. My father told his friend that at least the children would have a well educated mother.

"I was one of five children of farming parents. Neither mine nor Trevor's family could have afforded university education; the scholarship was a godsend."

In later years, Trevor's admissions role gave the couple further insights into the hardships experienced by some students. "For a time, Trevor was in charge of the Student Loan Fund, and we saw first-hand how important a little bit of extra financial support could be," Janice said. "I remember Trevor telling me about a young woman from western NSW. Her mother had died, the family were in the middle of drought, the property wasn't going too well and her father broke down and cried when told she'd been awarded a residential scholarship. It made all the difference in the world to them."

Janice said her long, happy association with the university and personal belief in the importance of education inspired her to begin giving regularly to a UNE scholarship fund shortly after Trevor's death. "I couldn't make a huge donation, but I could make continuous donations that would mount up over time," she said.

"It's my way of saying thank you, for all the happy times we had and the dear friends we made at UNE"

"I didn't want to leave money in my will; I wanted it to be available now. I don't think I am exceedingly generous; it's just the right thing to do, and it will help someone."

An avid reader, and member of two book clubs, Janice still enjoys keeping up-to-date with happenings at UNE. "I've been very impressed by the kinds of scholarships UNE has offered, which have enabled students to travel and do their Masters or PhDs overseas," she said.

Her UNE memories stretch back to when residential colleges were first being built and students were bussed in to Booloominbah for meals twice a day. "The student body was quite small and close-knit in those days and it engendered a strong sense of belonging," she said. "Studying at UNE has stood me in good stead all my life."

UNE



Unlocking the secrets of Parkinson's disease

A University of New England team could be one step closer to solving the mystery of how Parkinson's disease progresses, thanks to Impact Philanthropy funding from the Perpetual Foundation.

Parkinson's disease is the second most common neurological disease in Australia, affecting some 80,000 Australians. The number of people living with the disease is predicted to increase by 30-50% over the next decade and it's rare to find a family that hasn't been touched by the condition.

Symptoms of Parkinson's disease include slow movements, muscle rigidity, instability, tremors, depression and anxiety - all caused by the death of cells that produce the neurotransmitter dopamine in the brain. Diagnosing and treating the disease has always been complicated by the fact that there are at least two (and possibly more) subsets of Parkinson's disease - namely early onset and late onset. Unfortunately, by the time many people are diagnosed, 70% of their dopamine-producing neurons have already died.

Researchers at UNE's School of Psychology are determined to advance the early diagnosis and treatment of Parkinson's, and they're taking cutting-edge technology into rural and regional Australia to further their research.

"Currently, when someone is diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, it can be difficult to determine what type of Parkinson's they have or how quickly the condition will progress," said Dr. Deborah Apthorp, who is heading the study. "If we could diagnose Parkinson's earlier, we might be able to slow the progress of the disease, but first of all we have to better understand its progression. Then we can tailor the treatment more appropriately."

The Impact Philanthropy grant from the Perpetual Foundation will go towards getting a van and partially equipping it for use as a mobile research lab, powered by the sun and based at UNE.

It will enable Dr Apthorp to extend a previous study into Parkinson's, also funded by Perpetual, that she began while at the Australian National University.

"The latest funding will allow us to extend our reach into rural and regional NSW and southern Queensland"

"That's something I am very passionate about. Big research studies tend to get funded in big clinics in major cities. People in rural and regional Australia rarely get the opportunity to participate in research. This is taking the research to the people, and underlines the importance of a regional university and what it contributes to its community."

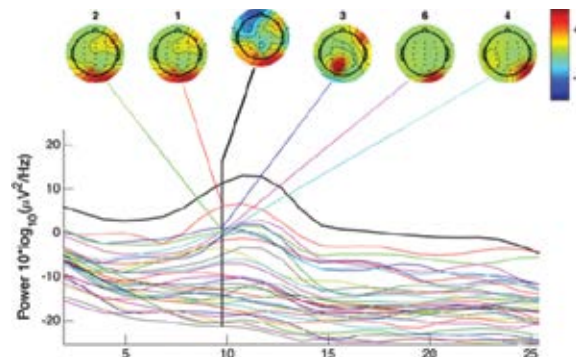
The team will continue to collaborate with colleagues at the Australian National University, tapping the expertise of clinicians and data scientists at The Canberra Hospital and ANU's Research School of Computer Science. In addition to more traditional clinical measures, the research will rely on brain imaging EEG techniques, eye-tracking, visual perception, simple finger-tapping tests, and postural sway to monitor research participants.

A person with Parkinson's disease finds it harder and harder to maintain their upright posture.

As the disease progresses, they start to fall or have difficulty walking. There is also some evidence that speed of eye movement is related to parts of the brain that are impacted by Parkinson's.

"The issue with Parkinson's disease is that some people can do well for quite a long time, while others may be confined to a nursing home within five or 10 years," Dr Apthorp said. "This project aims to track a range of early symptoms to determine if any can be used as an indicator of progression.

"The different types of Parkinson's can look similar at the point of onset, but they may progress very differently. We are hoping the information we collect will differentiate between these different conditions and that, in time, doctors and other primary health professionals are able to conduct simple, accurate tests that can help predict how the disease is likely to progress."



The mobile lab and research may also have other future applications. "I hope to collaborate with other groups that are conducting rural and regional health research into conditions like diabetes and multiple sclerosis," Dr Apthorp said. "The van could be very flexible in terms of the equipment it carries to assess symptoms associated with a range of neurological disorders."

Dr Apthorp said people living in remote and rural regions of Australia typically have difficulty accessing specialised medical care. Patients in the New England region, for example, must travel several hours to consult a specialist neurologist when they are often already struggling with their mobility.

"This project offers the possibility that, eventually, inexpensive technologies such as balance plates, combined with other forms of non-invasive, simple data, could offer sufficient information for

individuals to track the state of their health, disease progression and response to medication in the comfort of their own homes, or in a simple rural clinic setting," she said. "Our team has advanced expertise in signal processing and data analysis to develop these new measures. We just need to be able to reach patients and empower them to participate in research that can shape their future. "Knowing what's in store, how sick they will be and when, could practically and financially change the trajectory of someone's life. That kind of information is very important to the patient."

"In the shorter term our research can contribute to their improved health and wellbeing as well as medical science's understanding of the condition."

But while the research team are now busy planning their bush itinerary, Dr Apthorp explained that the Impact funding doesn't fully cover the cost of all the equipment needed.

"The next thing I will be looking for is money to help me carry out this important research. Time is of the essence, because nearly everyone I speak with knows someone who has or had Parkinson's. This is the kind of research that people can contribute to and really have a direct impact."

If you would like to support Dr Apthorp's research into Parkinson's in our region than please contact the Office of Advancement, Communications and Events directly to discuss making a donation.

Support for play based discovery for life at UNE

That play is good for children's development is widely acknowledged, and donor Chris Abbott wants to ensure that regional NSW children and their families are able to access a great opportunity to play with meaning.

Chris is the Chair of The Abbott Foundation, and previously co-funded funds management company Maple-Brown Abbott Limited in 1984. Three subsequent biotech businesses listed on the stock exchange later, and his investment in personal wellbeing extends far beyond medical and health companies.

The Abbott Foundation has pledged \$3.5million toward the construction of a children's discovery space at the University of New England in Armidale; in the old UNE Boilerhouse on the hill.

The striking brutalist building has in recent months undergone somewhat of a makeover in preparation for its transformation into a joyful and welcoming space; an iconic destination for playful experiences and encounters with Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM).

It is highly appropriate that a boilerhouse will fuel curiosity. From 1948 until 1999 the architectural award-winning building delivered hot water heating across campus in Armidale's cold winters through a coal fired reticulated heating system.



Chris Abbott

It has been decommissioned and anticipation is building for its new life as an all-day, all-weather discovery space featuring up to 10 special experiential spaces, a café and function space, a children's workshop area (for parties too!), amenities, administration and landscaped outdoor play areas.

"Positive play is doing something instead of looking at something" Chris muses. When we visit museums we typically look at something, but in a discovery space we do something. Museums have exhibits, discovery spaces have experiences. In doing so, we hope to encourage the attributes of Creativity, Curiosity Collaboration, Confidence and a Can-do attitude. The Five Cs. "There are plenty of other Cs but that's enough to get on with".

Chris has been on the road to Damascus a number of times in his journey to the discovery space concept, but it all started with the brain.

"In 2002 I met Professor Max Bennett at Sydney University. His discipline was neuroscience. He took me into his laboratory and I looked through his microscope at human neurons to the detail of axons and dendrites. I was hooked."

Seeing where the action took place during childhood development led Chris to serve on the Board of the Brain and Mind Foundation for 8 years. It was here that he developed a determination to direct his foundation's funds toward prevention rather than cure; prevention of many childhood and adult afflictions starts at birth with well supported early childhood development including healthy relationships and chances for unrestricted play.



UNE Discovery's Voyager Program
at St Mary's School, Armidale

Chris is passionate about investment in prevention in the early years of life; it is well known that prevention is a better use of resources than late stage interventions and cures. Professor James Heckman of the University of Chicago has dedicated his life to the economics of human development. His collaborative work clearly demonstrates that quality early childhood development heavily influences health, economic and social outcomes for individuals and society at large. He has shown that there are great economic gains to be had by investing in these first years of childhood development.

So what has a discovery space got to do with prevention?

Discovery spaces that help cultivate the 5 Cs (and more!) offer novel social environments for children to grow synaptic connections at a rate of at least a million new synaptic connections per second. Young children are at the peak of their brain plasticity and capacity to learn, and as we get older our ability to learn new things declines.

"This is why a 4 year old can learn Chinese and I can't" Chris laughs. "Children learn for themselves, more than when they are being taught."

At a discovery space, experiences and encounters with materials, sounds, scents, each other and their families encourages children to use their brains in continually new ways, making synaptic connections by the billion. It is a space where curiosity is nurtured and a growth mindset is encouraged.

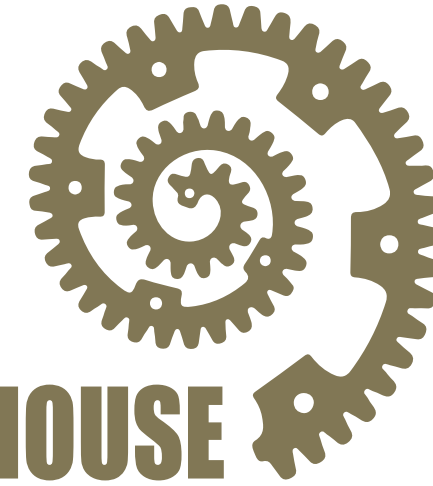
Chris had initially imagined a park or playground. However, after immersing himself in some of the American children's museums the idea for an inside-outside playscape in Australia was born.

The Abbott Foundation donated \$7 million to support development of the Early Start Discovery Space at the University of Wollongong (<http://earlystartdiscoveryspace.edu.au/>). Since it opened in 2015 there have been around 400,000 visitors through the door, of whom 67% are children. On average, a child visits 6 times and stays for 3 hours.

"I like talking to parents and finding out if the kids are enjoying it. It's much more like play than work when compared to biotechnology."

Both Chris and the University are confident that the Boilerhouse project will deliver long term benefits to children and society, especially in regional Australia where children cannot access the facilities that families in capital cities often take for granted. The Boilerhouse Discovery Space will also be the base for the University's successful UNE Voyager outreach program which in 2017-18 visited 197 schools across northern NSW to present STEAM based education programs to over 15,000 students from 4 through to 16 years of age.

"The theory is that if we can encourage children to become more curious, creative and capable, they'll do better when they go to school. Then in time, the university will have a better cohort of students coming into its ranks," said Chris.



"A children's learning space within a university also encourages the local community to engage with campus life and the university to remain meaningful within the local area."

As he has witnessed in Wollongong, he's looking forward to helping create an engaging environment at the Boilerhouse where children can open their neural pathways and get their synapses firing. Chris hopes his leadership donation at UNE will be a catalyst for changing how people think and get them to support ground-breaking projects like The Boilerhouse that have the potential to make a real difference for the life prospects of children in regional communities

"It's amazingly hard to get people to put their hands in their pockets," he said. "I don't know why. There are only so many oysters you can eat and you only need one hot shower a day."

The \$3.5 million pledge from The Abbott Foundation has activated a fundraising campaign to redevelop the \$18 million Boilerhouse Discovery Space project at UNE, which will seek a mix of private donations, philanthropic and government funding, as well as corporate sponsorship to achieve the vision of truly lifelong learning at Australia's oldest regional university.

To find out more about making a donation, contact the UNE Office of Advancement, Communications and Events. Follow the progress of The Boilerhouse at <https://uneboilerhouse.org.au/>



Chris Abbott and UNE Discovery Program Leader, Dr Kirsti Abbott at the Boilerhouse site

Staff Donor Profile – Kate Hadfield

Workplace Giving

Why did you first give to UNE?

In my role as Stewardship and Research Officer with the Office of Advancement, Communications and Events, I routinely ask people to support the students and work of UNE. My thinking is that if I don't believe in the organisation enough to give my own money, then I can't expect anyone else to. But it's more than that. UNE is my alma mater - I graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce in 2000 - and I want to see it continue to flourish.

What does it mean to you to give to UNE?

It's important to me to support UNE. I believe in UNE's uniqueness and its heritage as the first distance education provider in Australia.

What motivates you to give?

I think it's important to contribute to society in whatever way you can and to support causes you care about.

What other organisations do you support and why?

I first started making gifts as a teenager, when I would do the World Vision 40 Hour Famine, and I've sponsored children through Child Fund Australia since I was 20 years old. I try to make decisions about the charities I support year on year. There's so many worthy causes and we can't give to everything. I have supported Wildlife organisations such as WWF and 'adopted' an orangutan. I have also donated to OzHarvest and I'm a regular donor to the Armidale-



based BackTrack program, which helps youth at risk to reconnect with education and training. Mental health causes are close to my heart and I have supported the Black Dog Institute, Beyond Blue and Headspace, as well as the Butterfly Foundation.

What are you most passionate about and why?

I am passionate about raising my children to be considerate and responsible citizens. I am also passionate about people and their stories: I think stories are how we connect with each other as human beings. I care about those who are not as privileged as I am. I care about our environment and making small improvements to reduce the damage we are doing to it.

What would you like to pass on to future generations?

The message that you can make a difference. Everyone can and should make a difference.

What would you say to others about workplace giving?

Workplace giving is just so easy. All you have to do is arrange it with your HR department. You don't see the money, and because you've already got the tax benefit from paying out of your pre-tax salary, you don't have to claim it as a deduction in your tax return. It couldn't be simpler.

A memory that lives on

David Murray's life had not been easy before he enrolled to study at UNE. A workplace accident, severe injury and personal issues had cast him adrift. He engaged rarely with others and refused to leave his Sydney home during daylight hours.

"They were very difficult years," said his mother Joan, now 80. But she convinced him to consider pursuing a new direction through study and he eventually found himself studying for a Bachelor of Economics (Econometrics) online at UNE. "The change didn't happen immediately, but after the first residential it was like a transformation," Joan said. "He kept saying that he didn't know why he hadn't studied before. But it wasn't just the study; it was the interest that his lecturers took in him and the good friends he made." David moved to Armidale to live in college for part of his subsequent Honours year - which he described as "a golden year of happiness" - and had completed his final exams when tragedy struck. He died suddenly at the age of 37, in 2004, due to heart failure.

"He may not have had the chance to apply what he had learnt, to go on to complete his Masters and PhD, but all his dreams were there," Joan said. "I was so grateful to UNE for restoring the young man that I knew and restoring his dreams. UNE turned his life around. David found his niche at UNE and it created a whole new world of possibility for him."

It's the reason that, as well as a bequest in her will, Joan has budgeted for a small annual award - the David Murray Memorial Award for Economics - to reward the highest performing Economics Honours student. "It's my way of honouring David and keeping his memory alive, but also rewarding another student who is trying to realise their dreams," Joan said.

"David won a few small awards during his study and they were terribly important recognition for him. This award affords another student the pleasure of that positive experience and hopefully inspires them to go on to do their PhD. It says congratulations for all the hard work and be proud of yourself."

As for the bequest, she said it is her way of thanking UNE for the major role it played in David's recovery.

"I hope it will help to further the education of other students," said Joan, a former primary school teacher and principal, "as well as acknowledge that UNE is a university that cares about the welfare of its students. UNE and Armidale became home for David and that's because UNE made him feel at home. It lit him up and I would like to see other students benefit in the same way."

Postscript: Although David sadly did not get to personally receive his First Class Honours in Economics, his then eight-year-old son James accepted it on his father's behalf. James is now enrolled in his first year of a Bachelor of Historical Inquiry and Practice at UNE.





Claire Baker with Chancellor, James Harris

A dream realised

Claire Baker completed a Bachelor of Arts (Sociology and Philosophy) and then Honours at UNE, earning the University Medal for her efforts. But she says she would never have been able to tackle a PhD or realise her academic aspirations without the help of her benefactor James Harris.

"I've been studying at the tertiary level for the past 19 years, combining study and part-time work with raising three children. Moving on to PhD study was always going to be really tough financially, as I knew I would need to supplement my Australian Postgraduate Award scholarship by piecing together academic and professional roles.

As a result of being awarded the University Medal for my Honours research, my PhD project came to the attention of James.

He took a keen interest in my project, which takes an interdisciplinary look at a small district's experience of change in a globalising agricultural economy. I wanted to explore the impact of policy change and broader trends in Australian agriculture, including farming in a market-oriented system.

I met with James early in the application process and he was keen to help me in the most practical way possible. When he asked me what would help,

the answer was simply that I needed some time and space. In the fine balance of combining study with multiple work roles and raising three children, financial breathing space through the provision of a top-up scholarship was exactly the help I needed.

I was so relieved and excited when James said he would support me with a scholarship. It was the difference between me being able to take it on full-time and therefore finish it in just over three years. This gave me the opportunity, for the first time in my long experience of tertiary study, to study full-time. In that final year, especially, it was what kept us going. It enabled me to do long, sustained bouts of writing when I needed to maintain my focus without work disruptions.

After completing my PhD I earned the Chancellor's Doctoral Research Medal in recognition of research of exceptional merit, which was a great honour and I was so happy to feel that I had made the best of the opportunity that the scholarship afforded to me. I was contemplating moving to Melbourne or Canberra to try and find a full-time academic role but when a permanent position lecturing in Sociology came up at UNE I was able to finally piece together my teaching experience with the completed PhD to get the job.

This appointment means a lot to me because it is the realisation of a dream that I have had for a long

time. I remember attending my first Sociology lecture 19 years ago and it changed my life and my view on the world. I looked at my lecturer and just thought 'I want his job!'. That was the vision that sustained me, and 19 years later I finally do in fact have that job!

James' scholarship has opened up a whole new life that wouldn't have been possible without it. It was absolutely critical. I have been published in a leading international academic journal, I have presented at conferences and universities around the world and am now in conversation with publishers about turning my thesis into a book. I am simply unable to ever thank James enough for the opportunity that his generous support has given to me."

It was not the first or last time that James Harris, now UNE's Chancellor, has supported postgraduate research at the university. He helped support a student 15 years ago who was investigating Coolatai grass - "something that I was interested in and wanted to help fix" - and this year he supported Growing Regional and Agriculture Students in Science.

"I've been motivated to help postgraduate students because it's a chance to make things better for someone or something; to make the community a better place," James said.

"It feels plain old good when you help somebody else. I hoped that helping Claire would make her life a bit easier so she could put more time and energy into her research."

"This kind of financial support is well worth giving. If you have an interest or something you are passionate about, you can help others to further their knowledge, even if it's a one-off scholarship. There's no starting point in terms of how much you give and UNE staff are always happy to discuss flexible options - whether it's setting up a new fund or putting money towards an existing one. You've just got to start somewhere. You could be part of something that could change peoples' lives for the better or improve a community. That's incredibly rewarding and I'd encourage others to consider supporting students in this way."



Outgoing Chair UNE Foundation, Paul Barratt with Vice-Chancellor, Annabelle Duncan

A personal commitment

The UNE Foundation is charged with overseeing community donations is administered by an independent board with considerable expertise and life experience, including outgoing Chair of four years Paul Barratt AO.

As Mr Barratt prepares to step down from the Director role he has held for 13 years, he reflected on his long and proud association with the University of New England.

"I received an honours degree in physics from the University and my father was the very first student enrolled at UNE, in the initial intake in 1938 (at what was then New England University College)," Mr Barratt said. "My father (also named Paul) returned to the University straight after the second world war and later become the third Professor of Psychology at UNE. I more or less grew up on the campus."

Mr Barratt junior went on to enjoy a distinguished public service career, culminating in appointments as Secretary to the Commonwealth Government departments of Primary Industries and Energy (1996-98) and Defence (1998-99). During a career spanning 30 years he played an important role in bilateral trade negotiations and conducted government business in more than 30 countries, most notably China and Japan.

His overseas experience gave Mr Barratt a strong interest in the factors affecting the international competitiveness of Australian business, which he was able to pursue as Executive Director of the Business Council of Australia. In 1999 he was made an Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia for service to public administration, public policy development, business and international trade.

This considerable business and life experience was invaluable in his role at the UNE Foundation, which receives donations from individuals, corporations and

public entities to fund scholarships and contribute to the University's teaching and research priorities.

"Over the course of my career, I guess I was accustomed to dealing with all sorts of different people and situations, and was familiar with governance issues," Mr Barratt said. "Having sat at the top of large organisations, I understood how they work."

In the UNE Foundation Director role I had a feeling I was giving back to the University and helping to grow the funds available to scholarships for students, many of them country kids like me."

Mr Barratt said his familiarity with some of the donors added an additional gravity to the role. "It made me very conscious of the fact that we were dealing with other people's money," he said. "At lunches, when we would meet donors and students in receipt of scholarships, it was sometimes quite moving. The opportunity to study at the University opens up a whole new world."



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