



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NEWCASTLE  
AUSTRALIA



# The Gift

## UON philanthropy news

### **\$50,000 for breast cancer research**

With a \$50,000 boost in funding, the future of Dr Nikki Verrills' breast cancer research is looking bright.

Almost all of us have been touched by breast cancer in some way. This connection is what has driven the bi-annual Pink Frangipani Ball, in honour of Sandra Rufo, who passed away ten years ago. The Ball has kindly donated \$50,000 this year to assist the work of UON researcher Dr Nikki Verrills with funds from the most recent donation enabling the research to move into the next phase of pre-clinical trials.

Dr Nikki Verrills is a highly regarded biochemist and researcher of leukaemia and breast cancer at the

University of Newcastle; she has collected a number of early-career awards, fellowships and major grants in recognition of her ground-breaking research. Studying the molecular pathways of cancer, identifying genes and proteins in cancer cells in order to make comparisons between normal cells and cancer cells, Dr Verrills also analyses differences between cancer cells that respond well to drug treatments and those that do not.

With the inspiring efforts of generous donors such as the Pink Frangipani Ball Committee, the University continues its work towards a better world on many fronts.

*Photo: Dr Nikki Verrills*

# A message from the Director



Thank you! We recently held a thank you for our donors at the University Art Gallery; it was so wonderful to connect with those of you that were able to make it and to hear the stories as to why you give. Each story is different and each story is special; it is truly one of the aspects of my role that I love, so thank you!

This edition we meet Roszarie Behrens, who made her way to university as a mature-age student through the Intensive Open Foundation program and whose big dream is to become a barrister of the Supreme Court. Thanks to the generous supporters of the Shaping Futures Scholarship Fund, which assists students facing financial hardships or challenges, the impossible is now possible for this remarkable student. Please read her story to find out why.

Along with the success of our scholarship students, we're also celebrating some exciting achievements for UON. The University has been recognised as one of the top 250 universities in the world in the fiercely contested QS World University Rankings. This is the first time we've made it to the top 250, a rise of more than 50 places over the last three years. UON was also recognised as one of the top 250 global universities in the prestigious 2016-17 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings. We are so grateful to our many supporters who have provided the foundation for this success – providing opportunities through philanthropy to students, researchers and programs that make UON the outstanding community it is today.

People are at the heart of every community and ours was deeply saddened by the passing of former Chancellor Conjoint Professor Trevor Waring AM in August this year. For five decades, Professor Waring made significant

and enduring contributions to UON – as a student, a leader in clinical psychology, as Chancellor from 2004 to 2012, and well beyond. More than 500 people, including colleagues and friends from overseas, came together for his memorial service to celebrate his life and work, and share many heartfelt stories. Professor Waring's great warmth, wit and wisdom will be sorely missed – but always remembered – by our whole university community.

Looking forward to 2017, we're enthusiastically planning our next charity fundraising challenge in support of Indigenous education and research with the stunning Larapinta Trail in Central Australia as our backdrop. We'll be looking for people to take up the challenge – so get in early if this sounds like you! Another source of excitement has been the growth of our Philanthropic Programs team. You'll get to know lots of new faces over coming issues, starting with our Head of Philanthropic Programs, Brad Holmes.

The university sector is always changing, which makes philanthropic support all the more crucial. We're sincerely grateful to our many generous supporters who continue to work with us to provide educational opportunities to people who need it most, to areas of research that continue to improve lives, and to positioning UON for an even stronger future in our community. Our University – your community – thanks you.

Please enjoy The Gift.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Rebecca Hazell'.

Rebecca Hazell  
Director of Advancement

# Donor feature

## Brighter futures through healthy behaviours

Professor Billie Bonevski is one of Australia's leading Health Behavioural Scientists, and a recipient of the Brawn Fellowship. As a leading Health Behaviour Scientist, Professor Bonevski studies why people engage in healthy or unhealthy behaviours, like smoking tobacco, drinking too much alcohol or unhealthy eating. The information is then used to design programs and advise government on policies to empower people to be healthier.



"My research is not about finding cures, it is about preventing people getting sick in the first place"

The Gladys M Brawn Memorial Fellowship was established in 1995 through the generous bequest from the late Leslie Harold Brawn in memory of his wife Gladys M Brawn. The Brawn Fellowship is a significant fellowship providing support to UON scholars to assist them in becoming world recognised academics or clinicians in medicine.

### Five ways fellowships make a difference to research:

- 1 Enable fellows to travel to conferences to **present their research**
- 2 Help form **crucial networks and collaborations** with other prominent researchers
- 3 **Directly fund research costs** on small pilot studies that help design larger projects
- 4 **Attract nationally competitive grants** to fund larger research programs
- 5 Build UON's profile as an **internationally renowned research institution**, attracting the best scholars, PhD students and staff to join our teams.



## Meet the team Head of Philanthropic Programs – Brad Holmes

**My job, in a nutshell, is to:** Drive the fundraising and philanthropic outcomes across the University to benefit students, research and the community as a whole. One of the aspects I've most been enjoying is that I get to speak to so many of our generous donors, both locally and internationally, and to hear first-hand the stories of not only why they give but also to share the impact their gifts to UON have had.

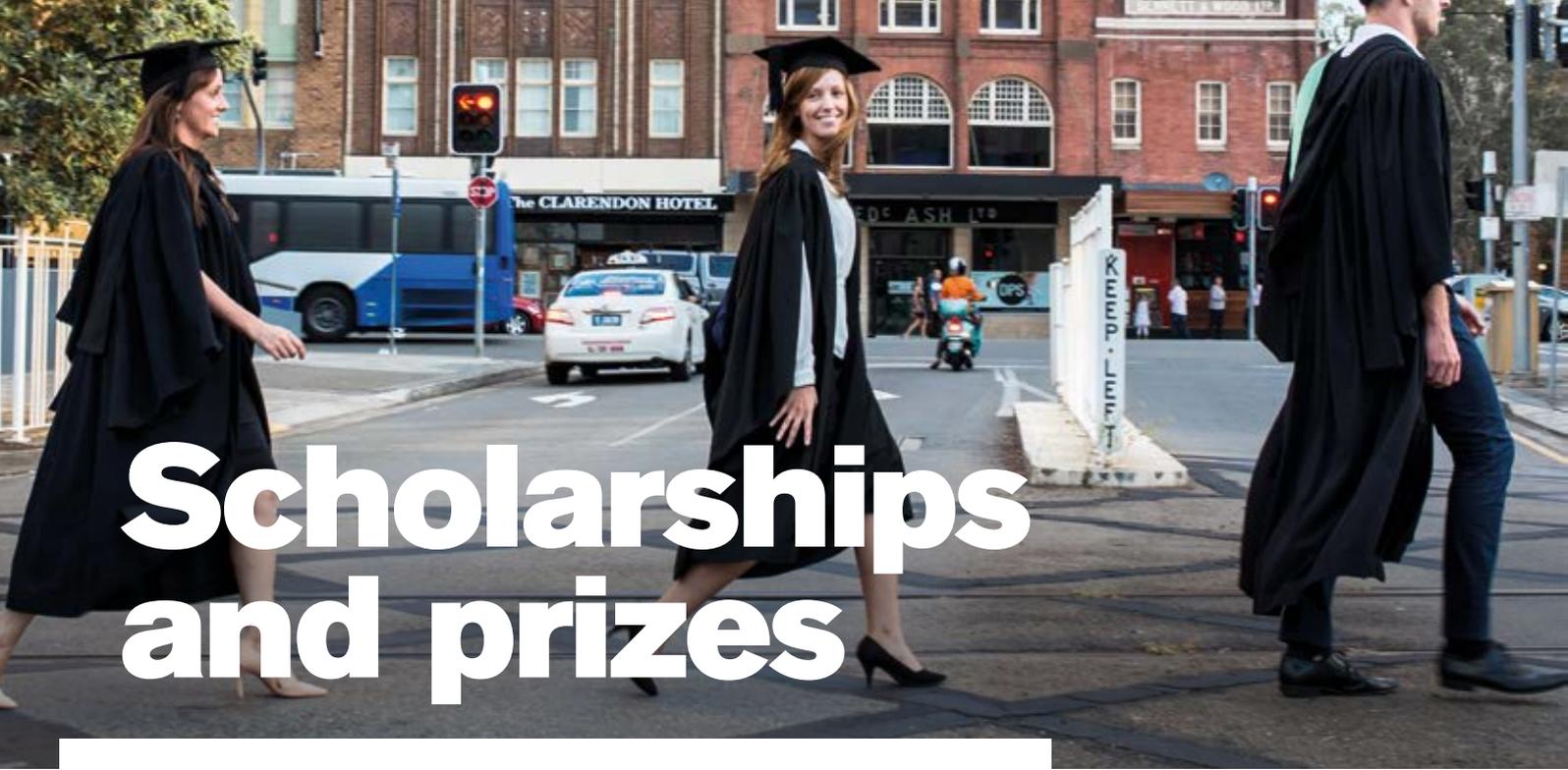
**After having just relocated to Newcastle, my next big project is:** To work with the team to bring to life our 2017 peer-to-peer fundraising challenge, the Larapinta Trail, a 5-day, 65-km trek in the Northern Territory. This will be a real challenge, not just for our

trekkers but for everyone involved in supporting and bringing this amazing adventure to life.

**One day I'd love to:** Indulge and take the family on an extended holiday to Italy (we all love food!). And maybe also see Richmond win another AFL premiership.

**I'm inspired by:** The unwavering generosity and support of our wonderful donors, and the positive and profound impact they enable in their chosen fields of interest.

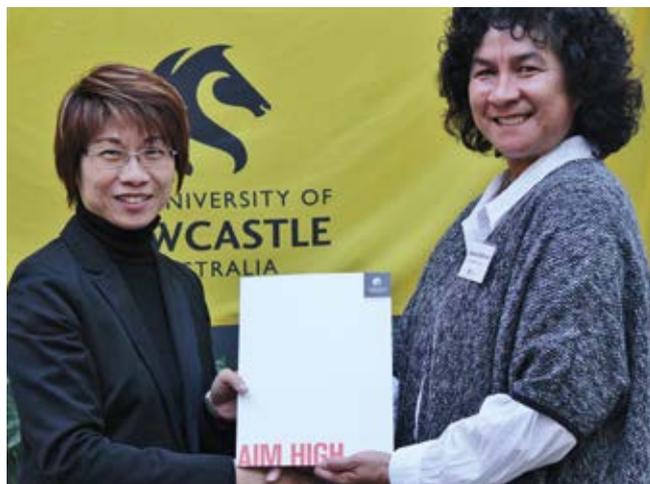
**My friends and family would describe me as:** Determined, reliable, loyal and a family-man.



# Scholarships and prizes

## Here's to a bright legal future

Roszarie Behrens has big dreams; she wants to become a barrister of the Supreme Court. But her path to the bar has not been without its challenges.



*Roszarie Behrens, 2016 scholarship recipient thanks to the 2015 Great Wall of China Walk supporters*

**Challenging times:** Roszarie is profoundly deaf. No stranger to overcoming difficulties, she made her way to university as a mature-age student through the Intensive Open Foundation program. But her deafness makes studying at University difficult and has significant social impacts too. Unable to hear lecturers, tutors or fellow students, Roszarie found it almost impossible to participate in class discussions, isolating her further.

**The breakthrough:** Receiving the Shaping Futures Scholarship in 2016 has turned her life around. Roszarie has been able to replace her broken, outdated hearing aids and use the “T-Loop” technology for the first time.

Now she has set herself another goal - studying a Combined Bachelor of Aboriginal Professional Practice/ Bachelor of Laws (Honours).

“For the first time, I’m able to hear my lecturers’ voices, understand my tutors’ questions and participate in discussions, without worrying that I’ve misunderstood the questions. It’s such a relief not having to triple check the requirements of every assignment. I’m much more confident about working with and communicating with other students.”

“For the first time, I’m able to hear my lecturers’ voices, understand my tutors’ questions and participate in discussions”

**What happened next:** The Shaping Futures Scholarship has made a huge difference to Roszarie. A simple purchase of new hearing aids has had enormous ramifications, making the pathway to her dream of becoming a barrister of the Supreme Court that little bit smoother.

# Rewarding hope and determination

Ask any parents with three young children if they're busy, and the answer will be a resounding, yes. But for Ashley Chakahwata, her busy-ness is on the extreme side.

**Challenging times:** Four years ago, Ashley, her husband and their children, left everything behind and arrived in Australia. Desperate to change their future, make a new life for their family and increase their career opportunities, they enrolled to study at the University of Newcastle.



Ashley Chakahwata, 2016 scholarship recipient thanks to the 2015 Great Wall of China Walk supporters

But as any student knows, trying to combine both study and work is a challenge. Add the pressures of settling into a new country, with a new language and culture, and the challenge seemed almost insurmountable. They are doing all of this with no family nearby to help.

**The breakthrough:** You won't find Ashley and her husband relaxing at weekends. They take turns looking after their children and studying at the library. But despite this drive and determination, Ashley admits the pressures are intense. As a recipient of a 2016 Shaping Futures Scholarship, she's looking forward to having the financial burden that weighs so heavily being lifted slightly from her strong and capable shoulders.

"The scholarship means I will be able to complete a full load of subjects and work less."

**What happened next:** Despite all her challenges, dedicated Ashley has maintained a credit average in her degree in Development Studies. Even so, she's keen to do better and aims to study honours.

"Last semester, I had to drop some subjects to work more hours to support the family. This semester, I am more hopeful. The scholarship means I will be able to complete a full load of subjects and work less."

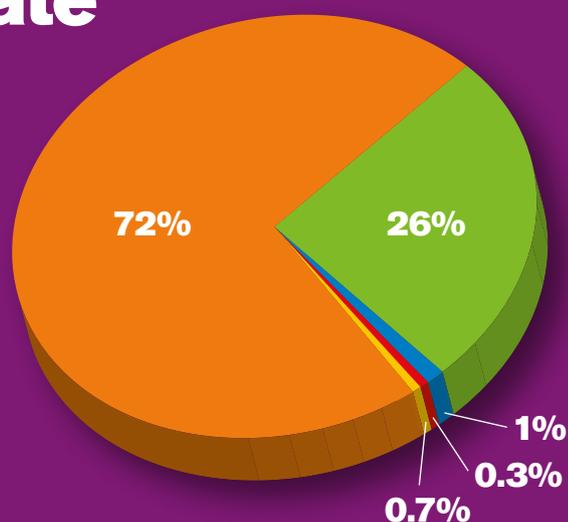
## 2016 June Appeal update

**Thank you!** Your donations to the 2016 June Appeal have raised a total of \$72,937 toward students, education and research. UON Appeals allow you, our supporter, to nominate how funds are allocated to philanthropic priorities. The majority of donations received were allocated by our supporters to the Shaping Futures Scholarship Fund. This will allow us to allocate Scholarships to academically capable students facing significant hardships.

Of the **\$72,937** received our supporters chose to allocate their donations to the following funds:

- Shaping Futures Scholarships Fund
- UON Research and Discovery Fund
- UON Endowment Fund

- Vera Deacon Regional History Fund
- Science and Engineering Challenge Fund





## From China to outback Australia

Stay tuned! In 2017, UON's charity challenge is returning to the unique, challenging and beautiful landscapes of Australia! This is your opportunity to support Indigenous education and research as well as other progressive UON indigenous initiatives – either as a supporter or right in the centre of the action.

Last year, the Great Wall of China Trek brought together an amazing team of sixteen champions including staff, students and alumni of the university and representatives from the broader community. Through their influence and connections in their individual spheres they raised funds to directly support UON's Shaping Futures Scholarship Fund. They also shared the philanthropic objectives of UON, and completed the challenging trek to raise a total of \$80,498. We can't wait to do it again.

As a leader in indigenous education, UON is proud to include the largest number of Indigenous students of any Australian university. Additionally, the UON's own Wollotuka Institute has recently received accreditation by the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium, an Australian first.

For more information about how you can become a challenge champion or help support the 2017 charity challenge, please contact;

Connor Brown  
T: +61 2 4985 4178  
E: [connor.brown@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:connor.brown@newcastle.edu.au)  
W: [newcastle.edu.au/donate](http://newcastle.edu.au/donate)

*Photo: China Walk Champions meet scholarship recipients at the Great Wall of China Walk thank you event*

## NeW Space taking shape

The iconic building that will be the new central hub for UON's city campus is progressing well and will be ready for students and staff by the start of semester two 2017.

As construction continues at an impressive pace, we can start to see the final building shape and form of NeW Space. In September, the construction team celebrated the 'topping out' of the building, when the project reached its highest point.



Visit [newcastle.edu.au/newspace](http://newcastle.edu.au/newspace) to follow monthly construction updates and see the latest time-lapse photos of the construction.



# Staff giving

## Why do you give?

### Tanille Elley

#### Executive Officer, Faculty of Education and Arts The University of Newcastle

##### What do you give to?

The Wendy Miller Memorial Prize and The Glen Avery Shaping Futures Scholarship Fund.

##### Why do you give?

I give to honour the legacy of two great former employees of the University. I worked with Glen Avery in Student Administration and he was such a character. He would just love having a scholarship in honour of his work for the UON. Wendy Miller was one of the most inspirational women I've ever met. She was a stellar academic in the field of education, so generous in spirit and had extraordinary courage. While I only knew Wendy for a short time, she taught me how important it is to truly live life to the fullest.

##### How long have you been giving?

Since the UON's payroll giving program launched in March 2012.

##### Any unexpected benefits of giving?

It was a lovely surprise to hear that one of the recipients purchased a bike with her scholarship to help her travel to uni more easily. Hearing this made me realise that my small financial contribution makes a real difference.



##### What has giving taught you?

To donate from your fortnightly pay is so easy. I really don't miss the small amount I contribute. I think there's a misconception that to donate, it needs to be a large amount. My work team approached the Glen Avery Memorial Scholarship as a group, and each signed up to contribute a few dollars each fortnight.

For more information on supporting UON's students and researchers through UON's payroll giving program, or to join our valued group of staff giving champions, please contact Lisa Calder-Patrick in the Office of Alumni and Philanthropy at [lisa.calder-patrick@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:lisa.calder-patrick@newcastle.edu.au).

# UON supporter thank you

October 2016



# Bequest morning tea

October 2016



## How to give:

### MAIL YOUR CHEQUE TO:

UON Office of Alumni and Philanthropy  
IDC Building, University Drive  
Callaghan, NSW 2308

### TELEPHONE:

Call us on: +61 2 4921 8612

### EMAIL:

Contact us on: [donate@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:donate@newcastle.edu.au)

### DONATE ONLINE:

At our secure website:  
[newcastle.edu.au/donate](http://newcastle.edu.au/donate)

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**Privacy:** The University of Newcastle complies with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998. Your personal information will be securely stored.