

2017 PRESIDENT'S REPORT



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

A Report of the
Alumni Advisory
Committee



FAREWELL FROM THE PRESIDENT

As my second term of office as President draws to a close, I reflect on what an enormous privilege it has been to serve on the Alumni Advisory Committee (AAC) both as President and a general member.

Over the past four years in particular, we have seen much change and had much to celebrate - from the 50th Anniversary celebrations, the launch of NeW Futures, the development and expansion of new alumni networks and the extension of alumni programs to foster closer ties to support current students.

These have all been exciting developments I have been proud to be part of and which would not have been possible without the support from the University leadership and Office of Alumni and Philanthropy. Through your tireless support, the relationship between the AAC and the Alumni Program has strengthened over the years in which the AAC has provided an advisory role on the development of new alumni programs and initiatives.

During this period I have valued the opportunity to engage with senior leaders across the University through a regular program of meetings, to learn the core issues and how the AAC may assist. I have never failed to be impressed by the willingness of the members of the Executive Committee to meet or present to the AAC. I also thank and acknowledge those who generously gave their time to present to the AAC at meetings throughout 2017, in particular Professor Steven Larkin, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Education and Research) who shared his vision for Wollotuka and strengthening the leadership capabilities of our indigenous

students through mentoring and internships, as well as Tina Imig, Manager Marketing and Communications, who presented on the NeW University brand.

As this will be my final report as President, I would like to formally acknowledge and thank each and every member of the AAC who has served with me and particularly recognise the contribution and dedication of Vice-President, Mr Murray Evans, and former AAC Presidents, Mr Brian Kennaugh and Mr James Tocci, who have gone above and beyond in helping lay the solid foundations in deepening key relationships with stakeholders and engaging with the University leadership on behalf of the University alumni. This year, many new faces joined the AAC. It is my hope that through the recent discussions regarding the change in strategic direction for the AAC, that you will have greater role clarity and more confidence to explore new ventures and give the alumni a voice as the future strategic direction of the AAC unfolds. I also wish all the convenors and members of alumni chapters and networks the very best, in particular the Hunter Alumni Network.

Thank you for your support. It has been my absolute pleasure to serve you and I look forward to continuing to be involved in working closely with our University Council and each of our Faculties and Divisions to helping the University achieve its NeW Futures aspirations.

Best wishes

Belinda Smith
President

2017 ALUMNI ADVISORY COMMITTEE

BELINDA SMITH

President

Master of Business
Administration 2008

MURRAY EVANS

Vice President

Bachelor of Commerce 1987

BRIAN KENNAUGH

Immediate Past President

Bachelor of Business 1993

STEPHEN BARR

Master of Business 2015

Bachelor of Surveying 1998

JAMES CALLENDER

Bachelor of Commerce 2014

BEN COWBURN

Master of Workplace
Health and Safety 2016

Bachelor of Biotechnology 2010

ZIAH ELLIOTT

Bachelor of Laws/Diploma
in Legal Practice 2015

Bachelor of Business 2012

KATE HETHERINGTON

Bachelor of Business 2011

Bachelor of Commerce 2011

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

NEIL MORPETH

Doctor of Philosophy (Classics) 1988

MEG PURSER

Bachelor of Arts (Communication
Studies) 1993

DANIEL RAMPLING

Bachelor of Laws/Diploma
in Legal Practice 2003

Bachelor of Arts 2001

BHAVI RAVINDRAN

Bachelor of Biomedical Studies 2016

JAMES TOCCI

Bachelor of Business 1998

CHAD WATSON

Bachelor of Arts (Communication
Studies) 1993



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

We began the year with many new AAC members which both provided a fresh perspective and an opportunity for us to reflect on our role and purpose.

While the agenda for the year initially focused on encouraging opportunities for AAC members to engage with colleagues across the University, the review of the Rules of Convocation was never far from front of mind.

AAC members actively participated in alumni speed mentoring sessions across key University events. (James and Ziah are shown above). Collectively, almost 50 alumni met with over 120 prospective and current students during Enterprise and Innovation Week, Open Days (Central Coast and Callaghan), and for the School of Law, sharing their study and career experiences.

The AAC continued to support The Hunter Alumni Network (HAN) in raising their visibility to alumni in the Hunter Region and provided advice on their 2017 engagement program and future strategic positioning.

Similarly the AAC provided advice and feedback on the development of the Alumni Network Handbook aimed to provide better support and create structure for existing alumni groups, both here in Australia and around the world. These new guidelines will provide the clarity of roles, responsibilities and objectives for wider engagement via our regional alumni networks, supporting networking and career opportunities, student recruitment, philanthropy and the University's global reputation.

To deepen our engagement with the broader alumni community we varied the location of our meetings from the University Council room at Callaghan to venues in the Newcastle CBD utilising AAC members' access to meeting facilities (thanks PWC and Murray!), including 376 Hub and NeWSpace shortly after they were unveiled.

A core issue addressed by the AAC this year has been the review of the strategic direction of the AAC and its positioning within the University and its broader global community. This review, whilst ongoing, has provided early insight into the opportunity for AAC to strengthen its advisory role with Council, continue to complement and support alumni programs and further explore its representative voice on matters of importance to the University.



THE ALUMNI AWARDS

The 42nd annual Alumni Awards Dinner took place at the Great Hall on 28th July, showcasing the achievements and contributions of alumni across nine categories and drew from 135,000 alumni now working in 139 countries.

From alumni leading in fingerprint sciences, to understanding early-life impairment of the immune system, establishing accelerator and tech start-ups, and sharing expertise, talent and policy advocacy; our alumni achieve exceptional heights and continue to inspire current students through their success.

The University's flagship alumni event was supported by key corporate sponsors, at which many graduates are employed. Sincere thanks go to APP, CSA, Cutcher and Neale and Dimension Data and we hope we can continue to partner with you in the years to come.

More than 50 nominations were received for this year's Awards. As well as the 26 international alumni finalists, this premier event featured University student talent, with entertainment provided by Berais Masseque and The Afro Fusion student band on the evening, as well as filming by the student YAK team.

Nearly 200 alumni, students and community members gathered in central Newcastle for the warm-up event to the Alumni Awards, Raising the Bar. This year featured inspiring 'PechaKucha' style presentations from a selection of Alumni Award finalists who shared valuable insights into their many and varied leadership journeys. Raising the Bar was co-hosted by HAN, with the support of the AAC, providing another great opportunity for local Alumni and community members to reconnect with their University and recognise the positive global impact of their Alumni.



2017 ALUMNI AWARD RECIPIENTS

ALUMNI MEDAL FOR PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

Professor Dr Carla Treloar
PhD (Medicine) 1995, Bachelor
of Science (Honours) 1991

NEWTON-JOHN ALUMNI AWARD

Susie Porter
Bachelor of Arts 1993

ALUMNI AWARD FOR EXCEPTIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICE

Dr Joanne McCarthy
Honorary Degree - Doctor of Letters
2015, Bachelor of Arts 2003

YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD (JOINT)

Dr Xanthe Spindler
Bachelor of Science (Forensic)
(Honours) 2006

Dr Malcolm Starkey
PhD (Immunology and
Microbiology) 2014,
Bachelor of Biomedical
Science (Honours) 2008

INDIGENOUS ALUMNI AWARD

**Associate Professor
Aunty Kerrie Doyle**
Bachelor of Arts (Psychology)
1999, Graduate Diploma in
Health Science 1993

ALUMNI AWARD FOR REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

Professor Jenny May AM
Bachelor of Medicine (Hons) 1985

ALUMNI AWARD FOR NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Dr Richard Denniss
Bachelor of Commerce 1993

ALUMNI AWARD FOR INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Dr Bryson Bates
Bachelor of Engineering 1978

BERYL NASHAR YOUNG RESEARCHER AWARD

Dr Andrew Bivard
PhD (Medicine) 2013,
Bachelor of Biomedical
Science (Honours) 2009



2018 NEW PARTNERSHIP, NEW DIRECTION

The AAC offers a wealth of talent and for many years, the AAC has partnered with the office responsible for the delivery of alumni programs at the University.

While that tactic has served both the University and the AAC well, this year a working party was formed comprising myself, the Vice President (Mr Murray Evans), the University Secretary and representatives of the Office of Alumni and Philanthropy to specifically explore how the AAC may best serve the interests of Convocation and in doing so provide strategic support for the University.

Opportunities considered included:

- How can we best 'give the alumni a voice', engage with and represent Convocation, and in doing so, contribute to the strategic direction of the University?
- In this capacity, how may the AAC utilise our networks, experience, resources and expertise to provide the maximum impact to benefit current and future students, early career graduates, and support the NeW Futures strategic agenda?
- Where is the AAC optimally positioned within the University governance framework to achieve those aims as the Standing Committee of Convocation?

As a result of our consultation, it was agreed that while the AAC will have an ongoing role facilitating introductions and access to networks to support the University Alumni Program and supporting the Alumni Awards Program, the next natural step is for the AAC to formally be recognised and supported as a Committee of Council.

Through this shift in positioning, there will be greater focus, connectivity and ability to provide strategic advice and feedback on issues considered by University Council. Through regular reports and invitations to programs, members of the AAC will maintain a connection with the Office of Alumni and Philanthropy but will be serviced by the University Secretary and the Council Services team.

We will now apply the skills and abilities of our AAC members on providing strategic support for University Council, to our alumni an independent voice through areas such as driving the research and innovation agenda, identifying the need for change to existing courses and programs including the future needs of employers and promoting life-long learning through the University. These are just some examples of potential areas where our advisory capacity can add value in testing views, making connections and furthering the interests of the University.