Clive Palmer to chair Griffith Institute for Health and Medical Research development board

The Griffith Institute for Health and Medical Research (GIHMR) is pleased to announce Professor Clive Palmer will chair the newly established GIHMR Development Board.

Professor Palmer is Chairman and Founder of Mineralogy Pty Ltd., owner of Gold Coast A-League Soccer Club - Gold Coast United and a life member of the National Party. He also has significant expertise in biotechnology development and has previously been involved in the development of a pharmaceutical research and development company.

Supported by Deputy Chair Dr Brian Finn and other board members, Professor Palmer will be the driving force behind the development of the GIHMR and its expansion on local, national and international research fronts.

The GIHMR has five major research programs including Molecular Basis of Disease, Behavioural Basis of Health, Heart Foundation Research Centre, Clinical and Community Practice Research Centre and Population Health and emerging strengths in bone and muscle research. The Institute currently involves 246 active research members as well as 279 research higher degree students.

Other GIHMR Development Board members include:
Professor Ian McKenzie, Mr Steven Howard, Ms Libby Shakespeare, The Hon John Dawkins AO MLC, The Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP, Mr Tony Hickey, Professor Allan Cripps and Professor Lyn Griffiths.
A new year and a fresh start to the grant writing season, a joy enriched this year by the NHMRC’s idiosyncratic new RGMS system. Despite the hang-ups of the new system, researchers in the Health Group appear to have submitted a record number of NHMRC grant applications in the latest funding round.

The Group continues to build on its research capacity with the appointment of Professor Clive Palmer as chair of the newly established GIHMR Development Board. This Board brings a capacity for greater things to come with its expected expansion on local, national and international research fronts. The introduction of two GIHMR awards are fundamental international research links that offer Griffith researchers the opportunity to tap into the international research arena and enhance collaboration and linkages between Griffith Health, overseas universities, research institutions and industry.

In learning and teaching the Health Group continues to demonstrate its capacity for innovation and excellence. Improvement in the process of applying for grants involving a blended learning component, course design and development or enhancement funding, as well as advice on Learning@Griffith pertaining to course sites, are prime examples of the opportunity that the recent appointment of a Blending Learning Advisor has provided.

In an issue surging with success stories and new appointments, it gives me great pleasure to publicly welcome Professor Ward Massey as Head of the School of Dentistry and Oral Health. He has gained extensive experience in academia in Australia, with appointments at the Universities of Adelaide, Sydney, Western Australia and more recently as Foundation Head of the new dental school at Charles Sturt University. His international experience includes the University of Maryland’s School of Dentistry and Harvard University School of Dental Medicine. As Professor in Endodontics, Prosthodontics & Operative Dentistry at the University of Maryland, Professor Massey was a key contributor in the planning and construction of a new ten-storey, 328-chair dental clinical school.

His research interests include bacterial infections and dental caries, autoimmune disease and laser pulse ultrasound examination of teeth.

Professor Massey is a member of the state ADA(NSW) and Federal ADA branches, the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons Education Policy Board and the Australian Dental Council Accreditation Committee.

(Left to right): Mr Chris Pedersen, General Manager of Colgate Palmolive; Griffith University’s Pro Vice Chancellor (Health) Professor Allan Cripps; Colgate Chair in Rural, Remote and Indigenous Oral Health Professor Ratilal Lalloo and Griffith’s Acting Head of Dentistry and Oral Health Associate Professor Jeroen Kroon.

New leadership for dental school

In February 2010, Professor Ward Massey was appointed Head of the School of Dentistry and Oral Health.

He has gained extensive experience in academia in Australia, with appointments at the Universities of Adelaide, Sydney, Western Australia and more recently as Foundation Head of the new dental school at Charles Sturt University. His international experience includes the University of Maryland’s School of Dentistry and Harvard University School of Dental Medicine. As Professor in Endodontics, Prosthodontics & Operative Dentistry at the University of Maryland, Professor Massey was a key contributor in the planning and construction of a new ten-storey, 328-chair dental clinical school.

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New Complementary Medicines Education Group

Dr Evelin Tiralongo, Griffith University’s School of Pharmacy CAM Discipline Head is chairing the newly formed Australasian University Pharmacy Complementary Medicines Education Group.

The group has been formed in response to calls from the profession, complementary medicine experts and the National Prescribing Service (NPS) to more effectively include training on complementary medicines in undergraduate and postgraduate pharmacy programs.

Representatives from 13 pharmacy schools in Australia and New Zealand met for the first time at the Australasian Pharmaceutical Science Association (APSA) annual conference in Hobart in December of last year.

“We feel that we really need to start identifying possible educational gaps and additional teaching needs, and share our experiences in order to better prepare our future graduates for their professional role which includes counselling on complementary medicines,” Dr Tiralongo said.

A recent national survey funded by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia found that 76% of pharmacists would support undergraduate complementary medicines training, especially in light of a growing consumer demand for these products.

Valuing People with Dementia

Professor Wendy Moyle, Deputy Director, Research Centre for Clinical and Community Practice Innovation is leading a team of researchers determined to make a positive impact on the quality of life for people with Dementia.

Dementia currently affects some 227,3001 Australians and the number is expected to increase dramatically with our ageing population. Despite the growing number of people with dementia living in residential aged care facilities (RACFs) there is a striking absence of well-articulated models of dementia care to guide nursing and care practice and its evaluation.

Professor Wendy Moyle recently won a Wicking Trust Grant to tackle this challenge by refining, implementing and evaluating their newly developed model of care, The Capabilities Model of Dementia Care (CMDC). CMDC aims to enhance the quality of life and moral value of people with dementia living in RACFs by focusing on the achievement of important quality of life indicators and developing a culture of value within the care organisation. The model uses education, mentorship, care teams, care planning and reflective diary writing to highlight the values and needs of people with dementia and their active role alongside families and staff in working toward meeting ten capabilities. It has been reviewed and refined by an international advisory panel with expertise across nursing, psychiatry, psychology, ethics and policy.

“The success of this project so far can be attributed to the drive, dedication and professionalism of the researchers and I look forward to continuing my involvement in such a significant area of research,” commented Professor Hughes. Findings from this project will further guide the refinement of the CMDC and related materials and create the opportunity for a sustainable evidence based model of dementia care.

“Thank You” Day Awards 2009 – Friday, 20 November

BMW Edge, Federation Square, Melbourne

“Thank You” Day Awards are the culmination of Research Australia’s “Thank You” Day campaign to raise awareness of health and medical research in the community. The awards celebrate the achievements of organisations and individuals that have helped further research in Australia through philanthropy, corporate giving, advocacy or their own research contributions.

Dr Sarah Whittle was a worthy recipient of the 2009 Griffith University Discovery Award in recognition of an early career researcher whose paper, patent or discovery has already demonstrated its importance. Sarah completed her PhD in 2007 in the Department of Psychology, University of Melbourne, and has since been working as a Postdoctoral Fellow at Orygen Youth Health Research Centre. Her research has addressed neuroanatomical features of individuals at risk of mental health problems during adolescence. One of her unique studies was the first to show that a biological basis exists for the differences in argumentative behaviour in the way teens interact with parents and has significant implications for understanding the aetiology of a range of psychiatric disorders. Sarah’s work has received very positive reviews, resulting in an outstanding record of publications in high impact journals, locally and internationally.

Presented by: Professor Allan Cripps, Pro Vice Chancellor (Health) and Professor Henry Jackson, School of Behavioural Science, The University of Melbourne.

www.griffith.edu.au/health
Another successful science experience

Each January for the last 15 years, groups of about 100 high school students have come to the Gold Coast Campus for three days of fun and science to take part in what many will know as The Siemens Science Experience. This year was no different. Although with the loss of Siemens as the major national sponsor in 2009, there had been some doubt about whether the event would take place. Fortunately, with the generous support of the Gold Coast City Council TechGC initiative and the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility, the Science Experience was able to run again from January 12–14 and was another resounding success.

Over the years, the Science Experience has gone from strength to strength, promoting science and engineering to generations of students about to enter year ten of high school. Many Griffith staff across the Health and Science faculties have devoted their time year after year to providing a fun and stimulating event. To mention just a few, Danielle Clarke provided administrative support for the Science Experience for several years until it was running well. Both Charles Hacker from the School of Engineering and Lyn Griffiths have contributed every year since the Science Experience was first established at the Gold Coast.

Credit must also be given to the national organisation of the Science Schools Foundation, the excellent national sponsorship provided by Siemens, together with the support of the Young Scientists of Australia, Rotary Clubs of Australia, Australian Science Teachers Association, Queensland Government, by Gold Coast City Council this year and, of course, Griffith University.

At a welcome address to this year’s students, MP for Coomera, Michael Crandon, commended the current Director, Dean Pountney, and the local organizing committee for their efforts and spoke enthusiastically of his own involvement in the Science Experience for more than a decade as a Rotarian.

We thank all those Griffith Staff and volunteers who participated and all the students themselves for making another successful science experience.

Griffith Enterprise – delivering commercial research outcomes

The potential of research and its commercial value is not always obvious. Griffith Enterprise (GE) is the element within Griffith University that assists in commercialising Griffith’s staff and students’ expertise and research outcomes.

Commercialisation involves making available expertise and research outcomes for the use and benefit of governments, industry and the community, while generating income for the creators and for the University to support further research and educational activities.

GE is actively engaged with key academics within the Faculty of Health to provide a range of services. For example, GE has been working very closely with Prof Allan Cripps to assist with the commercialisation of a novel bacterial vaccine candidate. GE has also assisted Prof Paul Scuffham (Medicine) to pursue government tender opportunities in Health Economics and Policy.

Typical examples of the type of services offered by GE include:

- assessment and advice on commercial merit of new technologies, ideas or inventions;
- protection of intellectual property e.g. patent and trademark filing;
- assistance with commercial project proposals and tender submissions;
- costing of commercial research projects and contracts;
- negotiation of contracts with external partners; and
- establishing and building ‘enterprises’ that utilise the University’s intellectual assets and resources for academic and commercial benefit.

GE has a number of offices within the University, with the head office located at Bray Centre (N54) on Nathan campus. Other locations include the Graduate Centre at Southbank campus and the newest office at the Science Engineering and Architecture building (G39) on Gold Coast campus.

GE is committed to supporting and expanding intellectual assets within Health. All staff members and students are highly encouraged to contact Dr Naveed Khan, the Business Development Associate – Health, for more information. Additionally, GE can also be accessed via the internal Griffith Portal website: (https://intranet.secure.griffith.edu.au/research/griffith-enterprise).
International clinical placement

In February, 18 third year Griffith University Bachelor of Nursing students travelled to Laos to undertake their clinical placement for course 3979nrs Community Health and Diversity. This highly motivated group paid their own way investing more than $3000 (with 2 x $500 grants from the School of Nursing and Midwifery and the International Exchange Office via the Vice Chancellor), to take advantage of this unique transcultural nursing opportunity.

On arrival in Luang Prabang the group, including three academic supervisors (Elizabeth Emmanuel, Hazel Rands and Rachel Walker) were met by the manager of the health project and a translator who introduced them to the clinical placement schedule and Laotian phrases and words with a focus on health and the body.

Following a day of exploring world heritage listed Luang Prabang, the group loaded into two trucks with their bags on the roof and travelled to Pak Xeng Village in the Seuang River District, their base for the next three weeks. On arrival they met their host families and quickly settled into their new homes. The newness of living arrangements such as sleeping on the floor, mosquito nets, squat toilets and open fires for cooking as well as changes in bowel habits led to lively discussion at mealtimes. The group was quickly embraced by their host families and the larger community of Pak Xeng Village.

Students were divided into three groups consisting of an academic supervisor, two local health workers and a translator each, working in one clinic for 3 to 4 days before rotating to the next clinic.

The experience required the group to immerse themselves into another culture, its language and customs, and to identify and work towards meeting the short and long-term primary health care needs of the village communities along the Seuang River in consultation with the project managers and the communities themselves. The immediate need for accurate client assessment data, medication and clinical equipment was successfully realised during the placement, as well as the permanent connection of electricity to the Pak Xeng Village clinic. Future placements aim to build upon these health initiatives with the continued emphasis on community consultation, participation and sustainability.

The sincerity and generosity of the people of the Seuang River District left a great impression on the group and this was evident in the sad farewells between students, academics and their host families.

Appointment of Ganeshan Rao as Blended Learning Adviser

Ganeshan Rao was appointed Blended Learning (BL) Advisor for the Health Group as part of the University’s BL Strategy. Ganeshan has a range of qualifications in the areas of teaching science (Biology & Chemistry) and experience as a Health & Science Faculty Librarian and as an Educational Designer. He has already developed the Health Blended Learning Implementation Plan based on the University’s BL Strategy. In addition to the staff training he has provided to academic staff in use of ICT in Learning@Griffith, he has worked closely with academics and INS (Learning & Teaching) to refine and review health projects that will be on the 2010 INS(L&T) workplan for program/course design/development. His latest initiative is HERBIE, a Health Education Resource Bank that is available on all Health Learning@Griffith course websites. HERBIE includes information and resources on referencing; academic skills; using L@G and getting on-line; information literacy skills; library skills; link to the Health Clinical Placements website; health & safety information; and academic integrity.

Specific areas of blended learning where Ganeshan can be of assistance include:

- advice on Learning@Griffith pertaining to course sites as well as on educational use and setting up of specific tools such as Wikis, Blogs, Quizzes, Groups, Discussion Boards;
- Lecture capture, digitization of readings etc;
- applying for grants involving a blended learning component;
- applying for course design/development or enhancement funding;
- trials of new technology for learning and teaching purposes in collaboration with Learning @Griffith Team; and
- blended learning aspects during course/program reviews.

Assistance can be provided as one-to-one consultations or through customised workshops for small groups. Contact Ganeshan’s by phone: (07) 55529360 or e-mail: g.rao@griffith.edu.au or at his office: G16_4.15.
STUDENT NEWS

On track for 2010 games

New Zealand’s top female hurdler, Andrea Miller has set up home on the Gold Coast to train with Australia’s best hurdler Sally McLellan and advance her career as a physiotherapist.

When not training on the track, in the pool, or in the gym, Andrea works with patients in the Griffith Physiotherapy and Active Health Centre. A keen athlete since she was seven and a specialist 100m hurdler since she was 17, Andrea has enjoyed some international success with a bronze medal at the World University Games in Serbia. Currently ranked 44 in the world, her sights are now firmly set on the Commonwealth Games in Delhi this year and the London Olympics in 2012.

Andrea became interested in physiotherapy as a career following back surgery in 2003 and a lengthy rehabilitation of about two years. “My physiotherapist at the time really guided me through all that. As an athlete I already had some understanding of the human body and I had worked as a physiotherapy aide with the elderly as well.”

As a recent graduate, Andrea, although happy for the experience of seeing and treating all types of patients in the centre, is contemplating postgraduate training in sports physiotherapy.

Promoting Mental Health – words written by a recent graduate of the Master of Mental Health Practice

Mental health is a fascinating area to work in as it is not only provides diversity and challenges, but it also provides a sense of achievement when you apply the skills that you have learned through your studies to real life scenarios.

Over the past year I have completed a Masters in Mental Health Practice at Griffith University. The aim was to return to university to up-skill and enhance my qualifications. My decision was informed partly by the changes that are occurring in the mental health sector, where it is becoming more professionalised and higher qualifications, rather than work experience, are seen as more desirable by employers.

This course was delivered via correspondence which allowed me to work while studying. The option of taking the course slow or fast is available for those with varying personal circumstances. The interaction online was different to my previous experiences of studying, but once I became used to this mode of communication the subjects flowed and I found that the assessment reflected what was in the provided textbooks and readings.

I would strongly encourage anyone who is contemplating undertaking further education in mental health to contact the School of Human Services and Social Work for more information.

Reza Borzou

Working together for a health community

A project to help migrants from African and Pacific Island nations adapt to their new life in Australia, has provided public health students Rebecca Stoneman and Alice Walker with a rich learning experience. The two students spent about six months developing resources on physical activity and nutrition for new migrants in the Logan area.

The resources, including a DVD and booklets, have been translated into six other languages — Swahili, Arabic, Kirundi, Amharic, French and Samoan.

Rebecca said the project was one of many in the Logan area aimed at meeting the health needs of an increasingly multicultural community. “As part of our studies, we have to do a project in the community or workplace,” she said.

Rebecca said topics such as food safety and school lunches had been identified as useful information for recently settled migrants. “These people face language barriers when shopping or cooking. Even simple information can help, such as knowing that schools don’t have cooking facilities for children to cook their own lunches.”

Input from migrant settlement workers at agencies such as Multilink Community Services and A.C.C.E.S. Services ensured the script for the DVD was relevant and practical. The resources have been distributed via migrant settlement services, government and community based agencies.

Rebecca Stoneman and Alice Walker

Griffith University is committed to ensuring its students experience a relevant industry placement or authentic work-integrated learning component during their studies. For more information on the work-integrated learning symposium and showcase: www.griffith.edu.au/employers/careers-employment/work-integrated-learning or contact Dr Liz Ruinard on tel: 07 3735 7298.
evidence for legal cases around sports in disciplines such as human movement. The multidisciplinary editorial board includes a representative from Australia in civil and criminal law. Peter is the only one with biomechanical knowledge and principles for articles relevant to the application of research, case studies and review.

The new Journal of Forensic Biomechanics was officially launched in December. Chenoweth, whose ambitious project to share the lives and experiences of 1000 people with disabilities was officially launched in December.

Ms Maria Constantinou, lecturer in the School of Physiotherapy and Exercise Science, joined athletes from more than 80 countries across 15 winter sports at the Vancouver Winter Olympics held in February. She worked in the Polyclinic at the Athlete’s Village – assisting athletes from the many teams who travel without their own physiotherapists. Maria is a veteran of elite sporting events, employing her expertise as a sports physiotherapist at many major events including the Sydney and Athens Olympics and the Melbourne Commonwealth Games.

Professor Peter Milburn, head of the School of Physiotherapy and Exercise Science, has been appointed to the editorial board of the new Journal of Forensic Biomechanics. The journal will publish research, case studies and review articles relevant to the application of biomechanical knowledge and principles in civil and criminal law. Peter is the only representative from Australia on the multidisciplinary editorial board. Forensic biomechanics draws together experts in disciplines such as human movement and biomedical engineering to provide evidence for legal cases around sports injuries, motor vehicle or workplace accidents.

Dr Kerry Peart has been appointed convenor of Griffith’s new Bachelor of Midwifery. Dr Peart joins Griffith as the School of Nursing and Midwifery also welcomes its first intake of students for the innovative program. Kerry has 25 years experience as a midwife – most recently at the Royal Women’s Hospital in Melbourne. She also has postgraduate qualifications in maternal and child health and has worked with vulnerable families in that role. She holds a Master of Bioethics from Monash University and a PhD which involved an evaluation of women’s experience of their pregnancy and birth through the use of birth plans. Other research interests have included clinical trials of a non-pharmacological intervention to manage pain during labour. Her academic career has included coordinating undergraduate and postgraduate midwifery programs at several universities in Victoria – most recently in the School of Nursing at Deakin University in Geelong.

Associate Prof Michael Rathbone of the School of Pharmacy was recently appointed to the position of Vice President of the Australian Local Chapter of the Controlled Release Society (CRS) where he will undertake a leadership role in increasing awareness of controlled release drug delivery to Australian academic and industrial scientists. His appointment will strengthen ties between the Local Chapter and the Central Body located in Minnesota, USA where he plays several important leadership roles. These include his position as Chair of the CRS Young Scientists Mentorship: Protégé Committee, Chair of CRS Books Advisory Board, Series Editor of CRS Books (a new initiative aimed at publishing definitive volumes on topics related to controlled release drug delivery), and a member of the Editorial Board of the Journal of Controlled Release. This year, in addition to coordinating young scientists’ activities at the CRS Annual Meeting and Exposition, he is also organising and co-chairing the Veterinary Track of the 37th international meeting which will be held in July in Portland, USA.

Professor Melanie Zimmer-Gembeck has been elected to the Governing council of the Society for Research on Adolescence, a USA-based research society of about 2000 members. Established in the winter of 1984, the Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA) is a rapidly growing society focused on theoretical, empirical and policy research issues of adolescence. Through its biennial meetings and publishing efforts, SRA promotes the dissemination of research on adolescents and serves as a network and forum for its members.

In addition to the abovementioned achievement, Melanie directs The Family Interaction Program in the School of Psychology for which she has been awarded a further 3 more years of funding (approximately $900,000) from the Queensland Government.

Congratulations to the following staff members on their recent achievements:

Dr Li Zhang submitted a successful application to the NHMRC for an Australian based Clinical Research Fellowship. This is a highly prestigious award for early career researchers.

Tony Hall was re-elected to the Society of Hospital Pharmacists Association Federal Council, and has been appointed Chair of the Specialty Practice Reference Group.

Professor Nerida Smith has been appointed to the APC Accreditation Committee. This is a great recognition of her contribution to academic Pharmacy.

John Koutsellis has been promoted to the new position of Deputy Resource Manager (Health). In his new role, John will be responsible for managing the financial activities supporting all of the Health Group’s Clinics.

Dr Caroline Donovan and Ms Sonja March are Behavioural Basis of Health members who received notification that they were successful in obtaining a Rotary grant in the amount of $34,847.00 for ‘A Pilot Investigation of an online, parent-only CBT intervention for preschool children with anxiety’.

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Dr Laetitia Hattingh, Senior Lecturer at Griffith University’s School of Pharmacy, has been successful in obtaining a grant from The Pharmacists Board of Queensland. The Board’s Pharmacy College Trust Grant is worth in excess of $100K and will support a project titled “An Exploratory Study of Extended Health–Care Practitioner Roles in Medication Management in a Rural Community”. Dr Hattingh will be collaborating with Dr Lynne Emmerton from the University of Queensland to examine ‘role extension’ or ‘role overlap’ for existing health–care practitioners in a rural community in the Darling Downs region.

Dr Laetitia Hattingh

Critical Care


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Support Griffith University Research and Health Initiatives, by contacting:

Brenda Tischendorf, Coordinator, Development and Alumni (Health)

“Every gift makes a difference”


