

# CONTACT

2021 edition

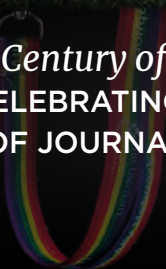
## Children of the **REVOLUTION**

THE UQ LECTURER WHO GREW UP  
IN A SAFE HOUSE FOR CHILE'S  
MOST-WANTED POLITICAL FUGITIVES

*Catching serial killers*  
THE GRADUATE WHO  
CRACKS COLD CASES

*Century of headlines*  
CELEBRATING 100 YEARS  
OF JOURNALISM AT UQ

*Living with COVID-19*  
HOW TO LIVE SAFELY  
AND FREELY





# Message from the Chancellery



**R**esilience and agility – they are the two personal attributes that our graduates will need in abundance as they move on from our campuses and into workplaces that are being completely transformed by technology and innovation.

So, as I look for the silver linings from these past two years of disruption, I can see that the pandemic has been an object lesson in resilience and agility for us all – both individually and collectively.

Here at UQ, the astounding agility and resilience of our community came into sharp focus on the last day of July, when South-East Queensland abruptly went into yet another COVID-19 lockdown. As fate would have it, on that morning we were preparing our St Lucia campus for the annual UQ Open Day, which was due to be held the following day.

Our staff and students responded almost by reflex – and, overnight, they shifted our Open Day to an online-only event. The next day, more than 4500 prospective students ‘attended’ the event (from home) by participating in online seminars, chatrooms and virtual tours of the campus.

For me, that experience really highlighted that we’re now much more adaptable – and we’ve made a monumental leap forward in how we use technology for work, learning, socialising and accessing all sorts of services and information.

That leap forward is evident right across the University. For instance, despite Australia’s closed borders, we have managed to find

new ways of teaching and engaging with our international students who are located offshore. Similarly, the widespread adoption of online conferencing and livestreaming has facilitated closer collaboration with our global partners and the international research community.

It’s also been inspiring to see how UQ researchers have responded to the pandemic by furthering global understanding in some vital areas of research. The story of the UQ COVID-19 vaccine team is well known, but that same team is now busy developing a second-generation vaccine to protect against variants of the virus. Another team of UQ researchers is proceeding with clinical trials of needle-free vaccines delivered via a patch that is applied directly on the skin.

Beyond vaccines, UQ researchers are leading globally in discoveries and impact related to agriculture and food security, water management, energy and climate change, aviation, biotechnology, health care and the treatment of disease.

In this edition of *Contact*, several UQ experts analyse the changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic for society more broadly (see page 12). It’s a fascinating exploration of just how ‘normal’ our lives will be as we adapt to ‘living with the virus’ in 2022 and beyond.

Although much of our collective interest is currently focused on the world outside UQ, the future also holds some exciting new building developments closer to home, which will significantly enhance our student experience, teaching and research facilities, and offer great benefits for the alumni community, too (see page 22).

Throughout the pandemic, our alumni community has provided invaluable support to our staff and students – in the form of mentoring, volunteering and giving to various UQ causes. Thank you for your kindness, concern and generosity.

Undoubtedly, we will face new and unexpected challenges in the recovery phase of the pandemic. But I think we can take some comfort that, as a society, the last two years have armed us all with new reserves of agility and resilience to aid in our response.

Best wishes.

**Professor Deborah Terry AO**  
**Vice-Chancellor and President**



## Contents

- 4 HITTING THE OPEN ROAD**  
Find out who and what is driving the resurgence of the great Australian road trip.
- 8 CHILD SPIES OF CHILE**  
Meet the UQ lecturer who grew up in a safe house for Chile’s most-wanted political criminals.
- 18 CATCHING SERIAL KILLERS**  
Find out how a UQ graduate helped bring America’s most prolific serial killer to justice.
- 24 THE RED DOG VET**  
The UQ graduate who turned a vet degree into a business empire, with the help of a famous dog.
- 28 FROM MUSIC TO MEDICINE**  
UQ student Cameron Callope shares why he gave up a successful music career to pursue medicine.
- 50 OLYMPIC HEROES**  
Relive the triumphs of UQ’s Olympic and Paralympic athletes as they smashed through barriers in Tokyo.

### COVER IMAGE

School of Languages and Cultures  
Senior Lecturer  
Dr Sol Rojas-Lizana, who grew up in Chile during the military dictatorship of president Augusto Pinochet. Her childhood home was a safe house for Chile’s most-wanted political fugitives during the time.

Image:  
Anjanette Webb

**CONTACT** is produced by Marketing and Communication and Advancement, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, QLD 4072, Australia

**Telephone:** +61 7 3365 9723  
**Email:** [contactmagazine@uq.edu.au](mailto:contactmagazine@uq.edu.au)  
**Website:** [contact-magazine.uq.edu.au](http://contact-magazine.uq.edu.au)

**Editor:** Michael Jones

**Design:** Michael Jones, Craig Oddy, Jenny Phillips, Paul Thomas

**Contributors:** Professor Nicholas Aroney, Chris Clarke, Mikaeli Costello, Professor Katharine Gelber, Associate Professor Paul Griffin, Associate Professor Paul Harpur, Professor Jolanda Jetten, Jennifer Karlson, Associate Professor Matt McDonald, Zoe McDonald, Lisa Millar, Chelsea Morrigian, Paul O’Farrell, Andrew Kidd Fraser, Suzanne Parker, Dr Kirsty Short, Greta Usasz, Associate Professor

Gabby Walters, Rachel Westbury, Genevieve Worrell, Effie Zahos

Material in this publication does not necessarily reflect the policies of The University of Queensland.

**Printing:** [printcraft.com.au](http://printcraft.com.au)  
*Contact* is printed on FSC certified paper manufactured from sustainably managed forests.

© The University of Queensland 2021  
**CRICOS Provider Number:** 00025B

### UPDATE YOUR DETAILS

To update your details, visit [alumni.uq.edu.au/update-your-details](http://alumni.uq.edu.au/update-your-details)



### GET MORE ONLINE

Stay up to date with the big issues and connect with your UQ peers on the *Contact* website. With more online content than ever before – including news, features, opinion, advice, picture galleries and videos – *Contact* brings you the latest UQ and alumni news, plus expert commentary and analysis.

We also encourage you to have your say on the stories and issues that matter to you.

Visit [alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine](http://alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine).



 **THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND**  
AUSTRALIA



# CAMPING

## *out is back in*

There's a resurgence of the great Australian road trip, but it's a new generation of happy campers who are hitting the highway. *Contact* speaks to the UQ experts about the latest off-track travel trend.

By Rachel Westbury

If you're craving an escape to the country, you're not alone. One in three Australians took a camping or caravan holiday between January and March this year, according to the Caravan Industry Association of Australia's 2021 State of the Industry report.

An astonishing 4.1 million caravan and camping trips were taken in this same timeframe, equalling a total of 16.3 million nights away.

Why are Aussies so keen to set up camp? According to Associate Professor Gabby Walters from the UQ Business School, in the time of coronavirus, the great outdoors have never looked greater.

"Since COVID-19, people have a newfound appreciation for the outdoors, particularly regional tourism destinations that they are able to drive to," Walters said.

"This is primarily due to the large, open spaces and fresh air, as opposed to urban and hotel experiences."

Despite international borders opening, new research by Walters suggests the regional travel trend is here to stay.

Just 51 per cent of Australians plan to travel overseas once international borders open, according to Walters's latest online survey of 560 Australians. Up to 33 per cent of Australians would prefer to travel domestically, while 16 per cent said they would not travel at all.

"My studies in both 2020 and 2021 revealed that regional and coastal destinations are preferred over cities, and this is where the majority of camping spots are," Walters said.

The kinds of people you will meet on your holiday are changing, too. Caravan and camping holidays are often associated with 'grey nomads' – retired Australians who spend their time travelling. However, more young Australian families are hitting the road. The Caravan Industry Association of Australia reported that parents with

children at home were the largest market for caravan and camping holidays this year.

Associate Professor Pierre Benckendorff from the UQ Business School explains that in addition to travel hesitancy among grey nomads, this change has also been influenced by parents looking to strengthen family ties.

"The pandemic has just reinforced the importance of family and magnified this trend," Benckendorff said.

"Very few sectors of the Australian tourism industry cater well for families – hotel rooms are almost always set up for couples, and holiday rentals better suited to families can be expensive.

"Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, a lot of caravan parks identified this gap in the market for affordable family style accommodation, and put in facilities like mini golf, pools, water slides, bouncing pillows, go kart tracks, playgrounds and larger cabins targeted at families."

Amid the stress and uncertainty of the pandemic, UQ Doctor of Philosophy candidate and graduate Casey Fung (Master of Communication '16), and his partner Maya Robinson-Kennedy, wanted an escape. So, they packed their bags and set out for a trip around Australia.

"My partner Maya and I set off in our old Troopy [Toyota Landcruiser troop carrier] at the beginning of 2021 with no schedule, timeframe, or route in mind – other than generally heading in a counter-clockwise direction," Fung said.

"I find planning and scheduling a little bit stressful, so just going with the flow really suited us. It's much better to wake up each day and decide if you feel like staying or travelling down the road a little further."

Fung said their Troopy was "like a house on wheels", with all the creature comforts catered for.

"We had an amazing tent to sleep in on the roof, and could easily carry two weeks of food and water," he said.



**SCAMANDER, TASMANIA**

UQ graduate Casey Fung with his partner Maya Robinson-Kennedy (above), and on the Western Explorer Highway in Tasmania (main image).  
Images: Casey Fung

"Plus, we had dual batteries and a solar set up, so we could run a fridge, lights, and even charge our laptops. The back of the truck was also set up like couches, so you could hang out inside when it was raining or cold."

Fung said that the road trip also helped him learn more about the Indigenous cultural heritage of the lands he visited.

"We both thought it was important to acknowledge that this was and always will be Aboriginal land. We tried to always learn stories and the real names in each Country. It is important to respect traditional owners' requests, like being silent, not taking photos, or not visiting certain places."

While the couple don't fall into the key demographic of 'parents with children at home', during their great Australian road trip, they discovered that they soon will.

"My favourite memory from the trip? I'll never forget the beautiful moment when I found out Maya was pregnant on the side of the road in outback Queensland."

### TOP TIPS FOR ROAD TRIPPING

To read Casey's tips, and to track his route across Australia, view this article online at [alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine](https://alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine).





# 2021

## the year that was



UQ researchers find that synthetic cannabidiol has been shown to kill the bacteria responsible for gonorrhoea, meningitis and legionnaires disease.

*Soils for science* citizen project is launched. Spearheaded by UQ's Institute for Molecular Bioscience, it aims to unearth new antibiotics in backyards, gardens and farms.

Sir Llew Edwards AC passes away. Sir Llew was a member of the UQ Senate for almost 25 years, and served as UQ Chancellor from 1993 to 2009.



UQ partners with the Minderoo Foundation to determine levels of micro and nano plastics in the human body.

Emeritus Professor Dr Mary Mahoney AO passes away. Dr Mahoney was a UQ Senator, the first female Deputy Chancellor, and advocate for women in medicine.

UQ researchers will lead a national blueprint for screening melanoma. The program will answer key questions about who needs skin screening and how often people should be screened.

JAN

MAR

MAY

JUL

SEP

NOV

FEB

APR

JUN

AUG

OCT

DEC

JAN

MAR

MAY

JUL

SEP

NOV

FEB

APR

JUN

AUG

OCT

DEC

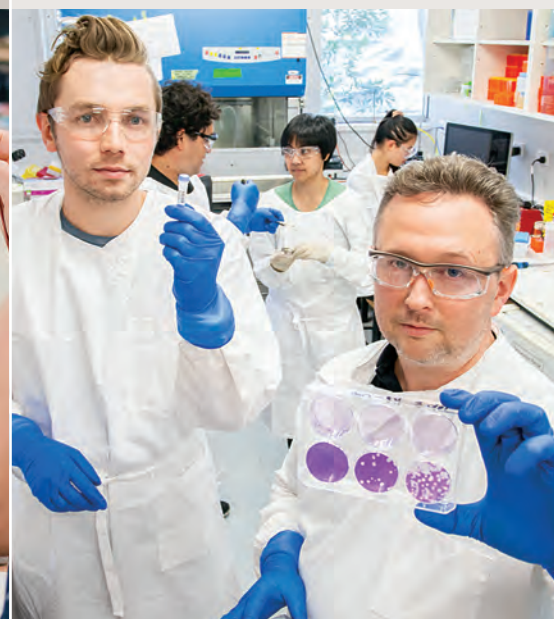
UQ researchers discover that regular exercise can help prevent dementia, with women benefitting almost twice as much as men.

UQ Alumni Book Fair and Rare Book Auction is held at St Lucia. The money raised supports scholarships, research and teaching.

UQ researchers help develop a needle-free COVID-19 vaccine using Vaxxas Patch technology.

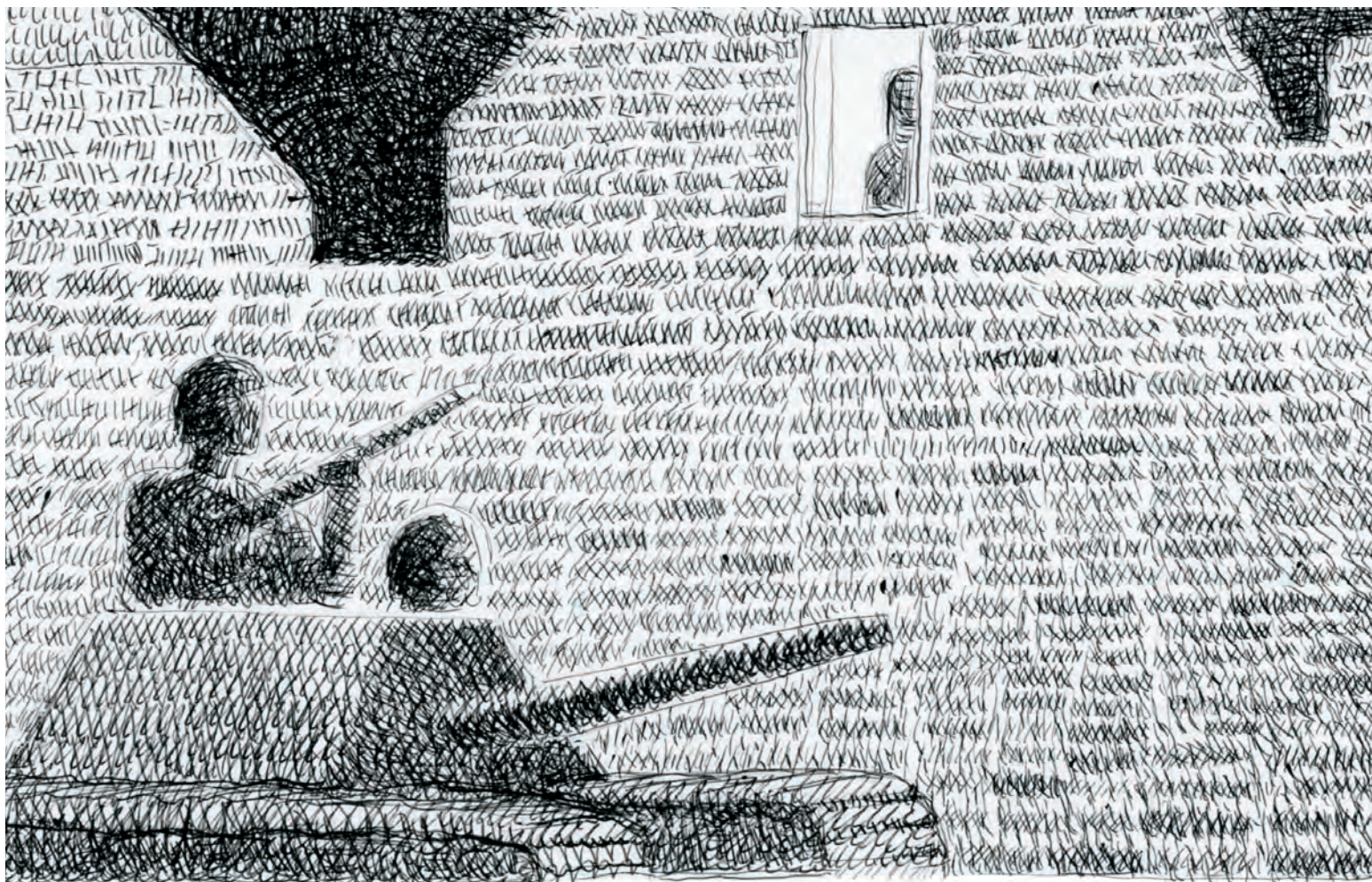
Donations from more than 1680 donors were match by UQ on Giving Day to help raise \$2.1 million for causes across the University.

Twenty seven graduation ceremonies are held at UQ. For many, it is a chance to finally attend ceremonies that were postponed last year due to COVID-19.



Musician, tech entrepreneur and philanthropist will.i.am and UQ graduate Andrew Liveris AO deliver a UQ community lecture on how global business cooperation drives innovation.





# THE CHILD SPIES

## in a rebel uprising

Dr Sol Rojas-Lizana grew up in a safe house for some of Chile's most-wanted political fugitives. She reveals the hidden memories of her childhood – when one false move could have led to the death of her family and the 'criminals' they harboured – and how those memories inspired a graphic novel.

By Chris Clarke

Sol Rojas-Lizana and her older brother Ariel didn't make a sound. The two children held their breath and glanced at the wanted man seated nervously across the room of their unassuming brick home.

Somewhere outside, a truck of Chilean soldiers patrolled the city streets of Santiago at the order of their president and military dictator Augusto Pinochet.

Any member of the socialist resistance who dared to challenge their US-backed junta would be apprehended or killed.

It was 1979 and Sol and her family of seven were acutely aware of the danger they faced. Pinochet and his army had seized control of the nation and overthrown former president Salvador Allende six years earlier.

The Lizanas harboured the wanted man on and off in the decade that followed.

The man was Hernán Aguiló Martínez, one of the leaders of the rebel political party (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria) MIR, or Movement of the Revolutionary Left.

He and his partner would come and go, using Sol and Ariel's home as a safe house.

At other times, another of the family's notorious guests was Andrés Pascal Allende, the leader of MIR and the nephew of the deposed president. Still alive, Pascal Allende is also a relative of Hollywood actor Pedro Pascal, known for his roles as The Mandalorian in the *Star Wars* universe

and Oberyn Martel in *Game of Thrones*. Together, the group had orchestrated a rebel uprising from the family's dining room table.

Of the 20 leaders within MIR, Aguiló Martínez and Pascal Allende would be among the few survivors of Pinochet's reign of terror.

Sol, aged 12, had grown to accept the presence of strangers. In fact, they would become her family.

Their presence heightened her sense of security. She knew that one wrong move meant the group faced execution.

On this day in 1979, as they contemplated death, Sol heard a pair of feet crunch the gravel at the entrance.

Four loud bangs at the door echoed through the home.

Sol peered carefully through a gap in the front gate of the property and could see a set of combat boots.

Now in attack mode, Aguiló Martínez and Sol's family clutched at their machine guns and the family slowly opened the door to meet their fate.

Each member breathed a sigh of relief when they saw the familiar face on the other side.

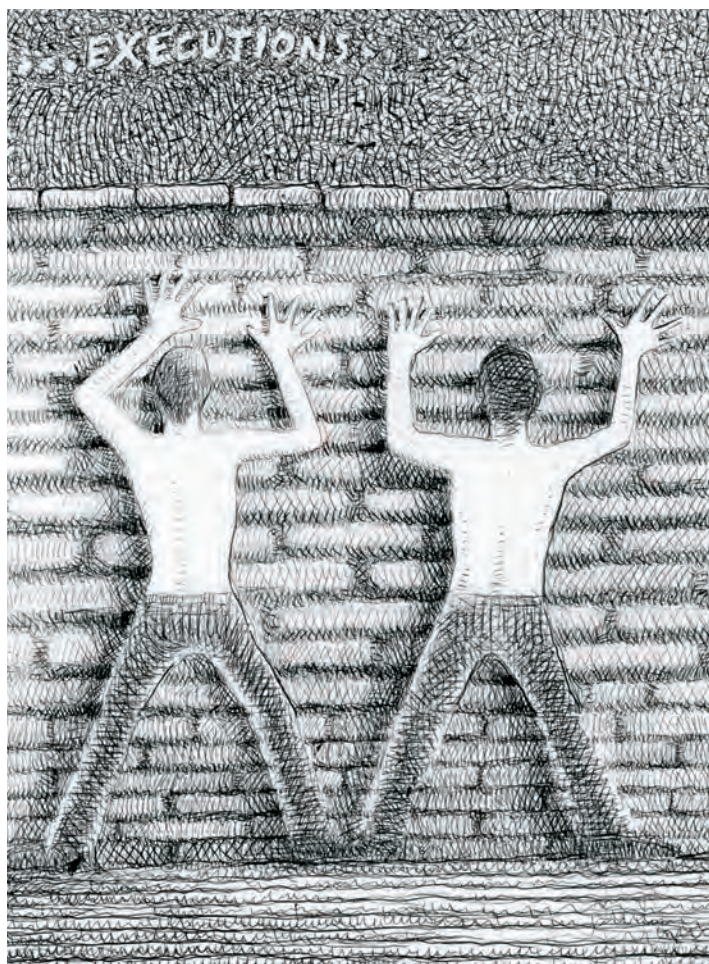
It was the gardener, called by Sol's aunty days earlier.

Although it had been a false alarm on this occasion, the group knew they may not be so lucky next time.

Fast forward more than 30 years and Sol is now a senior lecturer at UQ's School of Languages and Cultures.

With a PhD in Discourse Analysis and Comparative Cultural Studies, Sol has written more than 40 publications, including three books and five books as a translator. ►





Her most famed of these, *Historias Clandestinas*, is a graphic novel that translates to *Hidden Memories*.

Written with older brother Ariel, the pair document their experiences growing up during a genocide in Chile, sharing a safe house with the likes of Aguiló Martínez and Pascal Allende.

Over four years, Sol sent paragraphs from her home in Brisbane to Ariel, who still lives in Santiago. Ariel then drew illustrations to match the text and sent it back for review over the course of countless weekends and holidays.

The incredible true story is now being turned into a film – a snippet of which premiered at France's Marché du Film, a showcase that takes place the week before the Cannes Film Festival each July.

Ariel's childhood spent illustrating his experiences in the family safe house has become the premise of the film version.

"We lied to so many people for so many years," Sol reflected.

"Even to my best friend, I couldn't say anything. We couldn't tell anybody else about our lives at the time – not our relatives, our grandmother, or boyfriend.

"It was a very special kind of life and a part of history that not many people know about.

"When you read history, you don't read that type of thing. You don't read about people in the resistance and what it was like growing up a part of that."

Humbled by the acclaim the book has received, Sol remains grounded by her experiences and hopes a publisher will also consider turning *Historias Clandestinas* into an English version. Currently, only a Spanish version has been printed.

Much is still unknown about the ordeals faced by Chileans from 1970 to 1990, when a referendum was held and a new democratic government was formed.

A 'period of silence' followed the end of Pinochet's tyranny as president, although he remained in office as the military's commander-in-chief until 1998.

"It's very common that when you leave a traumatic time in history, there is a period of silence that follows," Sol said.

"This is what happened with the Holocaust. After the Holocaust, there was a period of silence in terms of survivors not writing about it.

"It wasn't until 20 years later that people started to write about their own lives and this is how it was with Chile because the dictatorship didn't finish until 1990."

The graphic novel recreates some of the most terrifying moments faced by the siblings while growing up under Pinochet's rule.

Sol and Ariel illustrated being used by the resistance to carry out dangerous undercover

**We lied to so many people for so many years. I couldn't say anything. We couldn't tell anybody else about our lives at the time.**

missions their adult leaders couldn't. As juveniles, their family and the leaders of MIR felt they would be unsuspected weapons in the fight for freedom.

Hidden by the masses in the streets of Santiago, Sol recalled being given money one day to buy each of the nation's major newspapers. She was given strict orders to purchase each paper from a different newsstand in a different district, so not to raise suspicion or attract unwanted attention from the military's intense surveillance.

The family also helped to produce its own secret newsletter to spread hope to other parts of the country.

The children were then responsible for disseminating it because their fingerprints could not be traced.

"When you are 16 years old you get your ID card and they take your thumbprint and you are in their system. Because we were so young, we didn't have our prints in the system. So, we were the ones that handled everything," Sol said.

"In this dictatorship, you cannot write anything – if they catch you with something like that you go to jail.

"It was forbidden, so our newsletter had to be produced in our house.

"We all contributed. My brother would do drawings and then the editor would write it, and my mum would put it on the typeset."

At one point, Sol and Ariel's family decided to relocate in order to accommodate more people. At the height of the resistance, 10 people lived in the family home.

Prior to the release of *Historias Clandestinas* in 2014, many of the family's stories had never been told before.

Sol explained that their journey towards publication was made difficult by the distance that separated her and Ariel, along with the challenge of finding time to write while balancing work and life.



The book also created emotional and spiritual challenges associated with reliving their childhood trauma.

Ariel originally felt uncomfortable with turning their ordeal into a graphic novel.

But ultimately, the pair found the experience cathartic, as they were able to use the writing process to heal wounds that had remained open for decades.

"On a personal level, it was really good for me," Sol said.

"It was healing. It was healing for Ariel, too.

"Although I wasn't as traumatised by our childhood as my brother was, it was a really good experience for him, too, and it also got us closer together."

While the graphic novel is not yet available in English, it has already been used in three university courses in Australia, including at UQ.

The book's content is currently being taught as part of UQ's literature course by Sol herself.

It has also been used in PhD theses in Chile, Germany and the United States, while other researchers around the world have published papers and chapters using *Historias Clandestinas* as the subject of research.

Dr Sol Rojas-Lizana with the graphic novel *Historias Clandestinas* (above), which she co-authored with her brother Ariel Rojas-Lizana, and (left) illustrations from the book.

Above image: Anjanette Webb

Illustrations: Ariel Rojas-Lizana

## SEE MORE IMAGES

To see more images from the graphic novel, view this article online at [alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine](http://alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine).





# Eyes back on the SKIES

After almost two years of snap lockdowns, travel bans and restricted freedoms, Australia is meeting the vaccination levels required to finally begin living with the COVID-19 virus.

But, as the risk of illness and virus variations remain, what does living safely with the virus actually mean, and just how 'free' will we be in the future?

Contact spoke to a range of UQ experts to find out.

## LIVING SAFELY WITH THE VIRUS

**Associate Professor Paul Griffin**

**Mater Clinical Unit  
Faculty of Medicine**

As borders open, we need to continue to get vaccine rates as high as possible. But living safely also depends on what we do in parallel. We can't forget about the things that have helped Australia to get into this strong position. The future is about getting the balance right between the mitigation strategies, that come with unintended consequences, and allowing the freedoms that we know can be done safely. We're still going to use testing and ask people who test positive to remove themselves from the community. In certain circumstances, we're going to use testing to our advantage – we may have rapid testing in high-risk communities at events and before travel. And, of course, we need to continue to work on therapies. New variants like Omicron will continue to emerge. The best way to combat this is to have high vaccination rates around the world to reduce the pool of susceptible hosts in which the virus can replicate. We must remember with any new variant, the basics that have helped us manage so far – like social distancing, hand hygiene, ventilation, masks and high rates of testing will still work. If, or when, our vaccines need to be updated to deal with a new variant, this can be done relatively quickly. If we do all those things right, I'm confident we can live safely with the virus in the community. We need to give people confidence that we're not going to rely on harsh measures again and utilise every available strategy before we contemplate lockdowns and border restrictions.

## VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

**Dr Kirsty Short**

**School of Chemistry and Molecular Biosciences  
Faculty of Science**

I'm comfortable with the 80 per cent vaccination rate milestone that was set. However, I am concerned that these milestones are for Queensland as an average. We've seen higher vaccination rates in Brisbane than in regional Queensland, and I think that could potentially leave regions vulnerable to lockdowns once the state opens. If you do get COVID-19 in a community that's only 40 per cent vaccinated, there aren't many options available to you. In areas with high infection rates and low vaccination levels, there are also risks of virus variants occurring – like we have seen with the Omicron variant. Living in a remote community won't protect you once we allow the virus in, so the best thing to do is get a vaccine. The primary goal of vaccination is to break the link between infection and hospitalisation, and that is working. In the UK, we are seeing high case loads and low hospitalisations. The question then becomes: is that because all restrictions have been lifted, or is that because they were too slow with their paediatric vaccine and booster rollout? To a certain extent, we can learn from overseas. Australia is in a unique position, especially the states that have 'COVID zero', because other countries had to employ vaccinations when the virus there was widespread. In Queensland, we're employing vaccinations before the virus has spread through the community – which changes the dynamics completely.

## TRAVEL AND TOURISM

**Associate Professor Gabby Walters**

**School of Business  
Faculty of Business, Economics and Law**

Even as borders open, uncertainty around travel will still affect people because they are traumatised by snap lockdowns and forced border closures. I recently surveyed 560 Australians about their international and domestic travel behaviours. Compared to April 2020, people's sentiment towards COVID-19 has changed. Previously, people felt uncertain and uneasy about the virus, however the latest results indicate people are now feeling restricted and frustrated. Yet, only 51 per cent of respondents plan to travel overseas once borders open – concerns about getting 'stuck' overseas, travel being too restrictive and regulated, and a lack of faith in different health systems were all common themes. However, there's also growing sentiment for Australians to choose to travel domestically due to a desire to help the Australian tourism market recover. But whether its domestic or international, the way in which people travel will be different. Risk management and mitigation will play a central role in planning and Australians will engage various risk-reduction strategies, such as ensuring they and their travel party are fully vaccinated, choosing destinations that have a health system of a similar standard to Australia, choosing transport and accommodation providers that offer full refunds, as well as avoiding physical contact with those outside their travel party.

## FREEDOM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

**Professor Nicholas Aroney**

**TC Beirne School of Law  
Faculty of Business, Economics and Law**

Vaccine certificates are likely to dictate much of how we live, but a vaccine certificate that is required for travel, employment or access to shops or restaurants will place a burden on human rights. Fundamental internationally recognised human rights include liberty of movement, freedom to leave a country, and freedom from scientific or medical experimentation or treatment without free and informed consent. They also include the right to work. Some of these rights, like the right not to be subjected to medical or scientific experimentation, are so fundamental that they cannot be derogated from, even in situations of emergency. In the European Union (EU) it is recognised that freedom of movement restrictions must be limited to those strictly necessary to safeguard public health. The EU COVID-19 certificate is therefore available to anyone who has been vaccinated against COVID-19, has received a recent negative test result, or has recovered from COVID-19. In my view, if vaccination requirements are going to be imposed in Australia, we should adopt a similar approach. They should only be imposed to the extent they are strictly necessary to protect those who are vulnerable to severe disease.

## LEARN MORE FROM UQ EXPERTS

For more expert analysis on a range of topics, visit [alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine](https://alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine).





# 100 years of journalism

This year marks 100 years since UQ first began offering journalism degrees to students. UQ Bachelor of Arts graduate and co-host of *ABC News Breakfast* Lisa Millar reflects on the changing nature of the industry and acknowledges the importance of a solid educational foundation for future journalists.

On a Friday evening in September, I changed my shirt, put on some lipstick and sat down in front of my laptop at my dining room table to interview James Bond star Daniel Craig.

I was one of hundreds of reporters from news organisations around the world taking part in a global media call ahead of the launch of the latest 007 film.

Over the next two hours, I would be moved from one virtual room to another, interviewing – among others – actor Rami Malek and filmmaker Cary Fukunaga. When my allotted time expired, I closed the laptop and went to bed.

I re-recorded my questions the following week in the ABC studio and an edited version was broadcast on the film's release in Australia.

Welcome to journalism in 2021.

Just try to imagine a UQ journalism student a century earlier taking in that scene; a national television presenter, her tracksuit pants and socks just out of sight, interviewing a Hollywood star on a computer.

The arrival of COVID-19 added to the velocity of change we were already witnessing in our industry.

It makes this 100-year anniversary of journalism at UQ an ideal time to reflect on the changes that have improved the media landscape, while also delving into the changes that have challenged what we do and how we do it.

For a third of that century, I have been a working journalist, beginning as a cadet newspaper reporter intimidated by the stern subeditors and compositors who set the pages and created the plates to deliver a newspaper. I've experienced the shock of a sudden redundancy and the highs of a Walkley award.

I've watched as the country paper that launched me into journalism printed its last physical paper and moved online.

As circulations fell, the eulogies were being readied for the newspaper industry.

There are glimmers of hope, of old hands re-entering the landscape, buying into small country papers, vowing to breathe life into them.

The question remains though: are Australians becoming more willing to pay for access to their news? Why should they when they've had so much of it delivered for free, the

vast bulk of it on social media platforms that have offered no certainty about the material's origins or truthfulness?

Another casualty of the pandemic has been facts.

As simple as it was for me to turn on my laptop and score an interview with a movie star, so too has the ease with which bad players with ill intent have been able to flood the feeds of Australians with fake news and misinformation.

Quicker access to the platforms for everyday users coincided with the rise of Donald Trump, who not only participated in the deceit but also encouraged it.

The genie was released from the bottle and the social media giants have been left to scramble for excuses as to why they didn't act sooner to stop serving as a gateway for the rise of fake news.

Governments have only just begun to realise the damage that can be inflicted.

I am heartened by the quality of good journalism that is still produced on a daily basis and how determined the passionate journalists are.

Four years ago, in the midst of the turbulent Trump years, *The Washington Post* adopted the slogan 'Democracy Dies in Darkness'. It's a slogan we should remind ourselves of when each day can feel like a slog.

We need to respond fiercely to events such as the federal police raid on the home of News Corp's Annika Smethurst in their hunt over the publication of classified material, and the raid on the ABC's Sydney headquarters over the reporting of alleged war crimes in Afghanistan.

We need to push governments to end their increasing reluctance to complete Freedom of Information requests. There are countless examples of applications being dragged out and then redacted so extensively to make them almost useless.

We need to argue for a culture of transparency, not secrecy.

In the past 100 years, this educational bedrock has produced countless journalists who have done just that, who have stood proud and played an active part in creating a better, more equal society.

May the University continue to encourage its students to take this path.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lisa Millar is an award-winning journalist and television news presenter. She is currently the co-host of *ABC News Breakfast* and was previously a bureau chief in both London and Washington, D.C. Millar graduated from UQ with a Bachelor of Arts in 1989 and began her career at the *Gympie Times*, before winning a Walkley Award in 2005 for investigative reporting. Millar's new book, *Daring to Fly*, was released in September this year. Referencing her time as a student at UQ, the book is a story about a country girl from Queensland who conquered fear to find a way to see (and report on) trauma and horror, while still holding onto joy.



## CENTURY OF INNOVATION

Turn the page to read about how journalism studies first began at UQ, how the School of Communication and Arts programs have changed over the years, and how the School has adapted to meet the needs and challenges of the ever-changing industry. ►



# Century of innovation and passion

By Rachel Westbury

When *Telegraph* journalist F.J. Bryan penned a letter to the UQ Senate in 1920 proposing “a scheme for the higher education of journalists”, little did he know it was the beginning of a long legacy of Australian journalism.

Bryan was the president of the Queensland Branch of the Australian Journalists' Association (AJA) at the time, and one of many Australian journalists who, after the end of World War I, wanted to raise the status of the journalism profession.

That meant establishing professional standards and ethics, as well as professional wages. A university degree seemed like the best way to make this happen.

Bryan's letter led to the development of the nation's first tertiary journalism qualification, then known as the Diploma for Journalism at UQ. The diploma first offered studies with a focus on the subjects journalists needed to have a working knowledge of, such as English, politics, history and economics. Bryan's letter on 17 June 1920 suggested a list of topics for lectures, including:

- history of British journalism
- history of Australian journalism
- law of libel
- meaning of 'news' and news values
- headlines, paragraphing and summarising
- relations of a newspaper to the public
- treatment of foreign news
- organisation of a newspaper office
- policies, methods and style of the world's great newspapers
- the use of books of reference; and
- interviewing.

He went on to write that this list could be “easily made to cover 20 lectures”.

It wasn't until 1934 that the subject range was broadened to include studies in journalism, covering, for example, legal and ethical issues.

UQ accepted its first intake of journalism students in September 1921. Three students enrolled – two of whom sat their first exams in November that year.

Each student paid a £1 fee (\$2 – or equivalent to \$30 today based on inflation) to attend classes. The first student to earn UQ's Diploma for Journalism was Daniel Quillinan, who graduated in March 1923.

The legacy of journalism at UQ has come a long way. Professor Bronwyn Lea, Head of School at UQ's School of Communication and Arts, said UQ's journalism program was still one of the most respected 100 years on.

“I believe it says a lot about the quality of the program, and UQ's continued pursuit of excellence,” Professor Lea said.

“Since 1921, this program has helped shape the national media landscape by producing outstanding graduates, such as the ABC's Lisa Millar (Bachelor of Arts '89), who returned to UQ this year to make a keynote address as part of our 100 Years of Journalism at UQ celebrations.



Head of School at UQ's School of Communication and Arts Professor Bronwyn Lea, and UQ graduate and 4ZZZ Station Manager Stephen Stockwell.

“We are the oldest journalism program in Australia, and arguably the most extensive. Our journalism teaching team is comprised of distinguished scholars and leading industry practitioners. It's this teaching excellence, innovation and passion that allows our program to remain a legacy.”

For Bachelor of Journalism/Bachelor of Arts student Alys Marshall, having access to industry practitioners helped inspire her to aim high in her journalistic pursuits.

**Our journalism program continues to pivot... to ensure that our students are industry ready, whatever the future may hold.**

Marshall was the recipient of the 2020 JB Fairfax Scholarship for Rural & Regional Journalism and Communications. The prestigious national award encourages and supports a young student who is passionate about pursuing a career in rural journalism and communications.

“I am most excited about the people that I get to meet through the program. Obviously having UNESCO Chair in Journalism and Communication Peter Greste as a lecturer would make any journalism student feel a bit starstruck, but I have also been introduced to so many industry contacts through my journalism professors,” Marshall said.

It was this access to industry that helped shape the career of UQ graduate and radio journalist Stephen Stockwell (Bachelor of Journalism '08). After almost a decade as a cross-platform reporter for Triple J's *Hack* program, Stockwell has come full circle – now in the role of Station Manager at 4ZZZ.

“When I was a student, UQ invited the news coordinators from 4ZZZ to deliver a lecture in my Journalism in Sound course,” Stockwell said.

“When the lecture finished, they asked if anyone was interested in volunteering at the station and I put up my



Journalism students in 1982 and (inset) a letter from the president of the Queensland Branch of the Australian Journalists' Association, F.J. Bryan, suggesting classes for the Diploma for Journalism program in 1920.

Images: The University of Queensland Archives.

hand. Two days later I was reading the news headlines on-air at 4ZZZ and I haven't looked back.”

According to Professor Lea, it's student and alumni stories like these that make her proud to be heading the School of Communication and Arts in its centenary year.

“We endeavour to produce outstanding graduates and equip our students with multiplatform media, writing and research skills, as well as traditional journalistic attributes of fairness, accuracy, persistence, curiosity and news sense,” Professor Lea said.

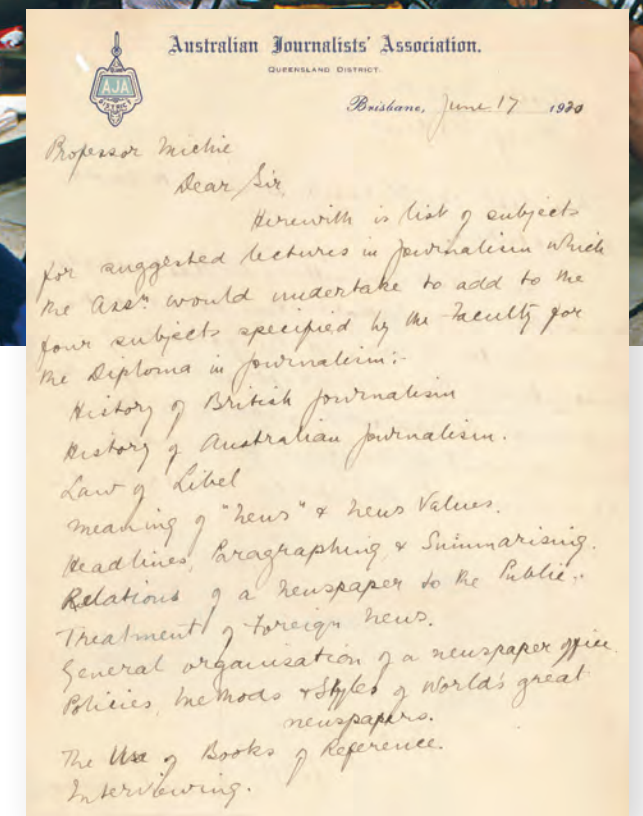
“It showcases 100 years of professionalism, creativity and scholarship that underpins our program.”

That same creativity was necessary last year, when the journalism program needed to adapt to the challenges that came with the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the beginning of Semester 1 2020, all the mainstream newsrooms across Brisbane closed their doors to journalism interns. With 16 students enrolled to complete their mandatory internships that semester, Dr Richard Murray teamed up with JACDigital Coordinator Donald Johannessen to create the UQ COVID-19 Newsroom.

The mobile newsroom saw students creating industry standard cross-platform content themed around ‘the untold stories of COVID-19’, with all editorial meetings held over Zoom. The project went on to be nominated for the UQ Award for Excellence in the ‘Response to COVID-19’ category.

“This program reflects the way we are continually innovating to ensure our students can report and deliver



news under a disrupted environment created by the COVID-19 pandemic,” Professor Lea said.

“It's not all about the past – our journalism program continues to pivot to adopt cutting-edge techniques for news gathering and production to ensure that our students are industry ready, whatever the future may hold.”

**100 YEARS OF JOURNALISM AT UQ**

To watch a video of the 100 Years of Journalism celebration event held at Customs House, visit [communication-arts.uq.edu.au](http://communication-arts.uq.edu.au).





# CATCHING SERIAL KILLERS

As a student, Dr Angela Williamson wanted to be like Dana Scully from the *The X Files*. She's now helping to crack cold cases for the FBI, proving no dream is too far fetched when armed with a UQ degree.

UQ graduate Dr Angela Williamson didn't initially plan on catching serial killers.

A forensics expert, Williamson (Bachelor of Science (Honours) '98; Doctor of Philosophy '02) manages major forensic programs for the United States (US) Department of Justice, and also works for the FBI's Violent Criminal Apprehension Program – the real-life unit that inspired the Netflix crime thriller series *Mindhunter*.

Her work involves cracking cold cases, and in 2018 she helped to identify the most prolific serial killer in American history, Samuel Little.

For Williamson, who now lives in Washington DC, it's a world away from the cane fields of Bundaberg where she grew up.

As a youngster, Williamson had her sights set on becoming a vertebrate palaeontologist.

"I was always obsessed with dinosaurs," she said.

But by the time she arrived at UQ, Williamson realised she had outgrown that childhood interest.

Another daydream she entertained was to be like Dana Scully, the fictional medical doctor and FBI agent in *The X-Files*.

She changed tack, studying biology, zoology and parasitology as an undergraduate, soaking up the sun in

the Great Court between classes. Williamson looks back fondly at her time as a student.

"I just had a great time and that's why I stayed at UQ for seven years," she said.

In 2002, Williamson completed her PhD in microbiology, working on developing vaccine candidates against parasitic infections. Around that time, modern forensic science was coming into its own, and Williamson was drawn to the idea of working in a field where she could see immediate tangible impacts.

After a research fellowship at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., Williamson got a forensics job in Queensland, working for three years examining evidence for sexual assault and homicide trials. A DNA sampling method she was trained in there – where a scalpel is used to scrape fabric for cells – would later come in handy.

In the unsolved case of JonBenét Ramsey, an American child who died at age six, Williamson would later use the same technique to clear Ramsey's immediate family of the murder. Williamson said many other cases were cracked using the same technique, though she is still frustrated that the Ramsey case remains unsolved.

In Queensland, Williamson was also involved in testing some evidence in the Daniel Morcombe case. Morcombe, a ►



“Little said that he always picked victims who wouldn’t be missed as much. But what he got wrong was that they were all missed by somebody.”

UQ graduate and forensics expert Dr Angela Williamson (right).

Image: Supplied

13-year-old, was abducted and murdered while waiting at a bus stop on the Sunshine Coast in 2003.

His disappearance became one of the most publicised and extensively investigated crimes in Queensland’s history.

“It definitely impacted me a lot. There are times when it’s in your community and you suspect it’s not a happy ending. Those cases can be hard, but I was privileged to be able to work on them,” Williamson said.

The job was a formative one for her, but the US beckoned – there was a dream career as Dana Scully to be lived out.

“I was inspired by the fictional TV character, and I arrived in the US with two suitcases,” Williamson said.

She spent eight years at the Bode Technology Group, America’s largest private forensic DNA laboratory, and at the US National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), leading their forensics and biometrics unit.

“Unfortunately, there are hundreds of John and Jane Does in this country who are children – they don’t have a name and you don’t know who killed them,” she said.

“I really worked on identifying deceased children.”

While she was at the NCMEC, then US Vice-President Joe Biden spearheaded a national cold case effort focusing on sexual assault. Williamson was hired to oversee the program, which led to her US Department of Justice (DOJ) work.

These days, Williamson is a senior official at the DOJ, working on big-picture programs such as the funding of national and state forensics and crime initiatives. Her work with the FBI is more granular: she works at the



individual case level, lending her knowledge as a subject matter expert on DNA and body-fluid identification.

“At any one time, it could be 10 to 15 cases,” she said.

On the day she is interviewed for *Contact*, Williamson has been consulting on a cold case, discussing where to find stored evidence, years after the crime was committed, to forensically test it.

An average sexual assault or homicide case, Williamson estimates, usually takes about six months to solve – but many cold cases can take far longer.

Investigations into Samuel Little, who the FBI has linked to at least 60 murders, is still ongoing (Little died in December last year and had confessed to killing as many as 93 women).

Many of Little’s crimes were committed in jurisdictions where cold case investigators were funded by the DOJ. Williamson was heavily involved because of her DOJ role, and was able to leverage a network of investigators across the US.

She was initially going to oversee forensic testing of evidence, but “Little had a knack for not leaving behind DNA, which so many of these offenders do”.

The job switched to crime analytics, painstakingly combing through databases

and old news clippings to match Little’s confessions to specific victims.

“For two years that case was pretty much my life,” Williamson said.

“Most cases don’t end, especially if it’s part of a series. That’s the one thing about the United States: all the serial offenders. It’s not so common in Australia.”

Through her investigations into murders and sexual assaults, Williamson regularly encounters examples of humanity at its worst.

So how does she process or cope with the heinous acts she sees in her line of work?

“I focus on violent crime – the worst people in society,” she said.

“But you’ve got to remember that these people are a snippet of society doing bad things. They’re not the majority.”

“In contrast, I work with the best people in the world. I work with detectives, prosecutors and victim advocates who dedicate their lives to the cause. They sacrifice family time and their own personal lives to solve these cases.”

“Their dedication, and how they go above and beyond for victims and their families, outweighs the bad.”

Despite working on several high-profile cases, Williamson said the cases she is most proud of solving remain – for the most part – outside of public consciousness.

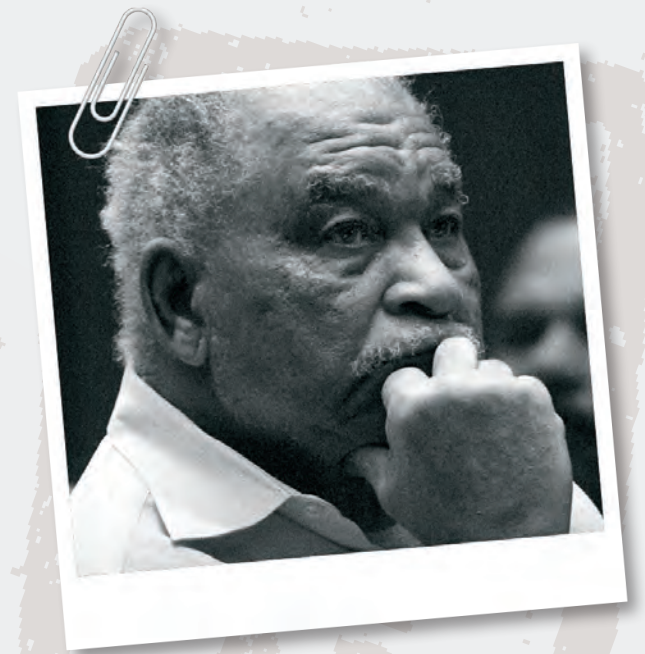
“Cold cases are often solved because someone is championing them – family members who are educated and know to go to media or know to call up law enforcement,” she said.

But there are many cases where victims have been in less fortunate situations.

“Being the voice for those victims and getting them solved – I don’t care what the media thinks [in those cases] when you know that you’ve fought for that victim and that you’ve got an answer,” she said.

“In the Sam Little investigation, Little said that he always picked victims who wouldn’t be missed as much. But what he got wrong was that they were all missed by somebody. And every victim we identified, every phone call we made – someone cared.

“That’s what it’s all about.”



## CATCHING SAM LITTLE

**2012:** Little is arrested in Kentucky and extradited to California, where he is wanted on narcotics charges, according to the FBI. DNA links him to three Los Angeles cold-case homicides – the 1987 killings of Carol Alford, 41, and the 1989 slayings of Audrey Nelson, 35, and Guadalupe Apodaca, 46.

**2014:** Little is convicted of murdering Nelson, Apodaca, and Alford, and sentenced to life in prison.

**May 2018:** Little agrees to speak with Christina Palazzolo, an FBI crime analyst, Angela Williamson, a Department of Justice senior policy adviser, and James Holland, an investigator with the Texas Rangers. Hoping to get a prison transfer, Little confesses to at least 90 killings dating back to the early 1970s, officials said.

**July 2018:** Little is charged with murder in one of the killings he confessed to, the 1994 slaying in Odessa, Texas, of Denise Christie Brothers.

**December 2020:** Little dies in Los Angeles.

Source: ABC News (US)

### THERE’S MORE ONLINE

To view more images and other interactive content, view this article online at [alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine](http://alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine).





# What's new at UQ

A world-class home for chemical engineering, a state-of-the-art student residence and a new Brisbane CBD hub headline an exciting array of new UQ building developments that will greatly benefit UQ's students, staff and the local community for years to come.



## KEV CARMODY HOUSE (STUDENT RESIDENCE)

### Overview:

Kev Carmody House is the newest student accommodation located on the St Lucia campus. Owned by the University, it is named after Indigenous singer-songwriter and UQ graduate Kev Carmody (Diploma of Education '81). The residence offers 610 rooms, gourmet kitchens, games and music rooms, study spaces, communal gardens and a rooftop pool. The historic Cairngorm homestead will be refurbished – incorporating a sense of Queensland's indoor/outdoor lifestyle. Kev Carmody House is designed to be a thriving community, located within walking distance of classes, so that students can get more out of their time on campus.

### Location:

Corner of Walcott, Rock and Hood streets, St Lucia campus.

### Completion:

Student residents are due to move in for the start of the 2022 academic year.



## ANDREW N. LIVERIS BUILDING

### Overview:

The Andrew N. Liveris Building supports researchers and students to address sustainability challenges facing our world and create positive change for developing populations. The building is the new home for the School of Chemical Engineering and will serve as a vibrant hub for industry and interdisciplinary collaboration to address global challenges in areas such as energy, water and sustainable manufacturing. The building was named in honour of UQ graduate Andrew Liveris AO (Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) '75, Doctor of Science (honoris causa) '05), who – with his wife Paula – spearheaded an extraordinary effort to support UQ innovation and leadership initiatives across the state and around the world.

### Location:

Building 46, Staff House Road, St Lucia campus.

### Completion:

Completed in Semester 2, 2021.

## STUDENT CENTRAL

### Overview:

Student Central is the heart of the re-invigorated approach to service students at UQ. The complex combines many existing essential services under the one roof, such as student administration, counselling and wellbeing services, learning support and employability guidance. However, Student Central is more than a service location, with purpose-built workshop spaces, complemented by plenty of open and inviting spaces to relax, recharge and connect.

### Location:

Level 2, Building 42, Staff House Road, St Lucia campus.

### Completion:

The precinct was officially opened on 25 October 2021.

*New developments will enhance our student experience, teaching and research facilities, and offer great benefits for the community.*

To learn more about how UQ is improving its connection with students, staff and the community, visit [about.uq.edu.au/initiatives](https://about.uq.edu.au/initiatives)



## UQ CITY CAMPUS

### Overview:

UQ has acquired the iconic Chambers building in the Brisbane CBD's 'Golden Triangle', as well as a premises at 88 Creek Street, which will house UQ's School of Architecture and the UQ Business School. The CBD campus will provide premium facilities for UQ's signature MBA program and help UQ meet a significant increase in demand for executive and professional education. The campus will offer a beautifully restored venue for students, staff, and alumni to attend courses, meetings and events. The two buildings are close to large city firms, as well as key public transport and CBD amenities.

### Location:

308 Queen Street and 88 Creek Street, Brisbane CBD.

### Completion:

Due to be completed in March 2023.

## PATINA (ALUMNI COURT RESTAURANT)

### Overview:

A new restaurant and events venue nestled in Alumni Court will offer a new place for students, staff, alumni and members of the community to meet and dine on campus. The space will include indoor and outdoor dining areas, an events space and landscaped gardens. Managed by the award-winning Customs House team, the restaurant will accommodate up to 90 people and will be available to hire for functions and events, as well as providing premium catering services for meetings, workshops and more. Alumni Court was originally built in 1970 with the help of The Alumni Friends of The University of Queensland Inc, and the design of the new development takes this history into account, incorporating the existing structure of the heritage-listed Former Radon Laboratory as part of the overall dining space.

### Location:

Alumni Court, St Lucia campus.

### Completion:

Due to be completed in early 2022.



# THE RED DOG VET

Meet Dr Rick Fenny, the UQ graduate and Western Australian icon who turned a veterinary science degree into a business empire.

By Andrew Kidd Fraser

Dr Rick Fenny is as Western Australian as the Nullarbor Plain, Kim Beazley, and the Fremantle Doctor.

He's not only been a vet for 50 years in most parts of rural Western Australia, but also has a media profile as the real-life vet to Red Dog, the kelpie who famously roamed the Pilbara region in the 1970s. In recent years Fenny has also become a reality TV star in the series, *Desert Vet*.

Now in his early 70s, looking after creatures great and small has been the centre of Fenny's life. But he has also branched out from being an animal vet to becoming a serial entrepreneur, using the veterinary facilities he set up to establish a broader business empire.

The Rick Fenny Group remains privately owned and consists of not only veterinary practices branded as Pets & Vets, but also farms, pastoral stations, the Ocean Park Aquarium, and Maitraya Private Retreat.

As it turns out, Fenny (Bachelor of Veterinary Science '71) is not the only veterinary science student to have developed an entrepreneurial streak – UQ graduate Graham 'Skroo' Turner (Bachelor of Veterinary Science '71), also studied at the UQ School of Veterinary Science at the same time.

The two knew each other at university, but after graduation Turner went to London, where he got the travel bug and set up Top Deck Travel, before returning to Australia to establish Flight Centre.

Fenny himself is a big guy in the west. He's twice been a finalist in the Western Australian of the Year Awards, and has lived almost all his life in the state. But it's the 'almost' that's important, because 'Mr Western Australia' spent five years – from 1967 to 1971 – obtaining his veterinary science degree in Brisbane's western suburbs at UQ.

"There wasn't anywhere else to go to," he said with a laugh, jovially crackling down the line from Perth when asked why he decided to study at UQ.

"Perth didn't have a vet school until the 1980s. And in the 1960s, the only vet schools

in Australia were in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane.

"Sydney and Melbourne tended to look after their own, so I went to Brisbane. New Zealand didn't have any vet schools either, so they came across as well. It was a pretty diverse bunch from all over the place."

Fenny's childhood and adolescence were spent in Albany, on Western Australia's southern coast. After finishing school, he made the move to Perth, quite the change for a quiet country boy.

Perth was 'the big smoke', very different from Albany. Fenny completed the first year of his vet science degree at the University of Western Australia, doing science subjects such as Biology, which formed the basis for the rest of his degree.

*A lot had been to Queensland Agricultural College or had worked in rural industries. There was a bit more maturity about the vet students.*

At the time, Fenny was a cadet with Western Australia's Agriculture Department, but he wasn't alone in crossing the Nullarbor for his training – six of them got on the train at Perth for the four days it took them to get over to Brisbane.

Yet while he was a long way from home, Fenny, like many Western Australians, felt at ease in Queensland.

"Maybe it's because both Western Australia and Queensland are frontier states, and both have a strong tradition of no bulls---. They're both very practical people. Anyone who tries to be pretentious gets short shrift," he said.

"And we had a good group in the vet school. Many were a bit older and hadn't come straight from school. A lot had been to Queensland Agricultural College or had worked in rural





Queensland police questioning UQ students during a protest in 1967 (top left), Dr Rick Fenny with Western Australian Premier and fellow UQ graduate Mark McGowan, and Member for Pilbara Kevin Michel (top right), and Fenny with a red Kelpie in Western Australia (main image).

Images: The University of Queensland Archives and The Rick Fenny Group

## SHARE YOUR UQ PHOTOS

Dr Fenny is seeking images to include in his second book, which is all about his time at UQ. If you have photos of your time at UQ between 1966 and 1971 – particularly veterinary science images – he would love to hear from you. Email [Rick@rickfennygroup.com](mailto:Rick@rickfennygroup.com).

industries. There was a bit more maturity about the vet students.”

Fenny started at UQ in 1967, and in his first year at UQ – although it was the second year of his vet science degree, his year at UWA counting as the first – he struggled with study, to the extent that he failed and had to repeat the year.

“Looking back, I probably wasn’t mentally prepared. But in retrospect, failing that year and having to repeat was one of the best things to happen to me. It was a bit of a slap in the face and taught me to get real and grow up a bit. What it also did was set me up for a lifetime of setting goals and working towards them.”

The late ‘60s were, of course, a time of radicalisation on campus and, while Fenny admits he’s hardly left-wing these days, he was one of the 4000 UQ students to march from campus into the city in September 1967, in what was the first of many major street marches.

“I saw a photo from the march a couple of years ago, and I’m almost certain that it’s me in the background getting dragged away by the police. I didn’t get arrested, but I did get dragged off the street,” he said.

“There was a lot of stuff floating around on campus, and [prominent activist] Brian Laver used to stand up on a table at the refectory to address the students at lunchtime – mostly about the Vietnam War and civil liberties – but he wasn’t getting much traction.

“But then Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen brought in this legislation that limited the right to protest – I think that having more than three people on the street was an illegal gathering – and that got me and a lot of others stirred up. Civil liberties became a big issue. So off we went.”

Fast forward to 1971 and graduation, Fenny returned to Western Australia and the

Kimberley region to work out the bond to the Agriculture Department that had helped him financially through his study.

But when that finished, he wanted to explore the potential for a private practice in the Pilbara, which he saw as a country full of adventure and opportunity, where mining was starting to dramatically change the physical and psychological landscape, and new towns were springing up.

Being a vet in such a remote area required a different kind of practice than a city one – snakebites, for example, were more common, with the area having many brown snakes, whip snakes and death adders – while heatstroke was a common ailment in an area where 40-degree temperatures were not unusual.

He initially opened a practice in Roebourne, then set up a veterinary hospital in Karratha, before opening other practices in Perth, Albany, Newman and Tom Price, before branching out of Western Australia into East Sussex and Wales in the UK, and Victor Harbor in South Australia.

He also branched out into other areas, building up tourism and pastoral businesses. His celebrated claim to fame was when Lady Gaga stayed at one of his properties on the remote coast near Albany, becoming so moved by the spectacular surroundings that she composed two songs on the piano.

But it was *Red Dog*, the 2011 film about a dog in the north-west who no-one owned but who belonged to everybody, that brought Fenny to a wider audience.

*Red Dog* actually existed back in the 1970s, just as Fenny was setting up his practice in the north-west, and he often came across the peripatetic kelpie in his travels, often giving the dog a lift.

He had to treat *Red Dog* several times for various ailments but in 1979, after what he

“Four dogs, four eras, four different geographic locations. That’s the plan, anyway.”

suspected was a dose of strychnine poisoning, he had to do the most humane but hardest act of all when forced to euthanise the much-loved kelpie. The *Red Dog* legend was established in the north-west well before the 2011 movie – a statue of the dog sits on the outskirts of Dampier.

So, while Fenny has become known as the ‘Red Dog vet’, the *Red Dog* of movie fame is only one of several important red dogs in his life, the first being his boyhood dog, Pip, in Albany.

Fenny has worked the theme of four red dogs, all representing different eras of his life, into four planned books. He has already released *Red Dog Vet – Pip, my first red kelpie*, which deals with his early years. The book is selling well and he is now writing a second, which is all about his years at UQ.

The third in the series will focus on his times in the Kimberley region, while the final one will be set in the Pilbara region and will include true, never-before-heard stories about *Red Dog*.

“Four dogs, four eras, four different geographic locations. That’s the plan, anyway. And my life has always been about setting goals and then reaching them.”





# Music, medicine and a touch of MAGIC

After decades in the Australian and international music scene, UQ student Cameron Callope is back in the spotlight as he pursues a new gig – a career in medicine.

By Zoe McDonald

When Cameron Callope had surgery on his shoulder, he decided – like the doctor who treated him – he wanted magic hands that could fix people.

But being a surgeon hasn't always been on the Bachelor of Health Science student's radar. Despite spending periods of his young adult life homeless, Cameron forged a successful career in the music industry, performing as a rap artist and working with international stars like Snoop Dogg and the Kardashians.

Through it all, Cameron remained committed to finding the best and most authentic version of himself. He wanted to give back and, after he saw the power of medicine in his own life, he decided to use it to transform the lives of others.

Cameron is from the Gkuthaarn peoples of the Gulf of Carpentaria – a place full of bush and open blue skies.

It was here he began to form the most fundamental pillars of who he was, and which would continue to guide him throughout his life.

"My uncle was the first one to leave the bush," he said.

"He'd come back from boarding school in Brisbane and he'd tell us stories of life down there. He brought imagination, and he infused it with courage. He told us that, out there, was opportunity. You can be whoever you want to be."

Cameron said these early lessons kept him strong.

"I had adverse childhood experiences, but I also had agency – I had elders and a grandmother who raised me and kept me safe. My great-grandmother, the matriarch of my people in the Gulf, used to tell me I was magic," he said.

"If you tell a child they're magic, the world can throw anything at them... anything."

The world did, indeed, throw things at Cameron. At the age of 19, after moving to Brisbane, he was sentenced to three months in prison on a minor charge, despite having no criminal record. To Cameron's surprise, a Senior Counsel came across his case and took it to the Supreme Court, where the judge declared it a gross miscarriage of justice. Cameron's record was expunged – legally, it never happened – but he had still experienced it.

Through the challenges, music had always been an outlet for Cameron. At 20, he performed his first professional gig

as a musician, a career in which he would spend the next period of his life. It wasn't surprising that he was drawn to music; growing up, there was always a guitar and, if there were no drums, he and his friends would use bins. Even in kindergarten, he wrote love songs to a girl in his class.

"Music went hand-in-hand with openness to experience, because it allowed me to create a world in my mind that I wanted to live in," Cameron said.

The Aboriginal rap group Cameron helped form – Native Ryme Syndicate – went on to win a Vibe Australia National Music Award and nominations from the Australian Recording Industry Awards (ARIA's). In 2013, Cameron received what he sees as his most meaningful recognition – a Legend Award from the Australian Independent Music Awards & Music Oz for his contributions to the Australian people through music.

However, in the beginning, few were willing to give his music a chance.

"They said nobody wanted to hear rap, and especially not Aboriginal rap," Cameron said.

"I kept coming back until I annoyed them into giving me a go. I knew that people looked past preconceived ideas if they saw the product was good," Cameron said.

Two years later, Cameron's career started taking off. After a chance opportunity to stage-manage a concert, he found his way into major international special-events management as a freelance agent.

"I got myself into the 'Holy Grail room' of the music industry through years of hard work, but also as someone who thought outside the box. You can't be afraid to try to turn the system on its head," Cameron said.

"That room gets you access to everybody – Snoop Dogg introduced me to Justin Bieber, and that opened doors to Johnny Depp and the Kardashians.

A lot of it came back to my uncle telling me there's a world out there full of opportunity. I was never afraid to ask because the worst somebody could say was no."

While Cameron found success in the music industry, he also spent a significant part of the early years of his career without a permanent home.

Between the ages of 18 and 24, Cameron was transient. At 22, when his music career took off, he could afford a room at a men's homeless shelter in Fortitude Valley. At 25, he moved into his own place.

*If you tell a child they're magic, the world can throw anything at them... anything.*



Cameron said homelessness is a difficult experience to describe, but he chose to see through the chaos of his experience, and to find order in the disorder.

"Being in that place in your life, your innovation is your own mind," he said.

"I wanted to be present in the experience because I knew it was trying to teach me something. My Aboriginality gives me that base of seeing a problem and thinking, what is it trying to teach me?

"When I was homeless, I remember looking up and seeing people in City Hall through the big glass windows and thinking, up there are successful people.

"I wondered who they were and what their stories were."

Cameron recalls standing in one of those windows in City Hall years later after receiving a job offer as an executive concert producer and looking back at that same spot where he'd once watched others. He was reminded of what he'd learned and how far he'd come.

"It was my time to really take note and not disassociate myself from the lessons I learned," he said.

Cameron has always tried to remain true to the best version of himself he could be, and at the pinnacle of his music career, he realised he'd started to drift from this path.

"That life was great, but it was lonely. It wasn't of service to people. Being Indigenous and growing up with the pillars of belief I had, I wanted to ask more of myself," he said.

Cameron found his way into medicine after injuring his shoulder while working at a factory. Orthopaedic surgeon and UQ graduate Dr Kelly Macgroarty (Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery, '95) was his doctor.

"When Dr Macgroarty walked in, I looked at his hands and thought: this man has trained for a long time, and now he has magic hands. He puts his hands inside people's bodies, and he fixes them. I decided then that I wanted magic hands too."

As a Bachelor of Health Sciences student, Cameron is well on his way to getting magic hands. He was the first ever first-year student to be offered a place as a Medical Research Scholar at the Child Health Research Centre and has been personally endorsed by UQ Chancellor Peter Varghese AO as an Indigenous medical students mentor.

Alongside his studies to become a surgeon, he is working with Professor Andrew Fairbairn in the School of Social Science on a Student-Staff Partnership program to design a course for UQ Archaeology studies, called Keeping Country. He is also piloting the IMPACT Mentoring Program, an internship for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students run by UQ's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (ATSIS) Unit and Global Engagement, through which he is interning with UQ International Development.

Cameron was also a key part of UQ's 2021 Giving Day as a recipient of the Fiona Kennedy Memorial Scholarship, sharing his story to help inspire others to support students.

"When I left music, I knew I wanted to do something where I was the most authentic version of myself that I could be, but I didn't know what that was until now."

## THERE'S MORE ONLINE

To view more photos of Cameron Callope during his music career, view this article online at [alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine](http://alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine).





# The good doesn't STOP

UQ's Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Advancement) Jennifer Karlson reflects on the remarkable achievements and generosity of the UQ community during one of the most challenging periods in history, and discusses why tackling the big issues front-on is crucial to future success.



As we welcomed the New Year in 2020, many of us declared it would be 'our year'. We were entering a new decade – a new roaring 20s – and a new chapter in our lives.

Then, of course, a pandemic arrived. As we headed into 2021, we approached such declarations with a little more caution.

While 2021 has not been without its challenges, I think I can confidently say that – as a UQ community – it has, indeed, been our year.

There is so much to be proud of as a UQ alumnus. In January, we closed the University's first comprehensive philanthropic campaign, *Not If, When* – the Campaign to Create Change.

To have surpassed our ambitious \$500 million goal by \$107 million is truly extraordinary. We accomplished more than we ever could have imagined, and all of it was possible thanks to you – our alumni and donor community – who went above and beyond in championing this effort as volunteers, advocates and, of course, donors.

While this campaign may be over, we have been inspired by your response, ideas and commitment to our shared future. Because of you, the good doesn't stop as we continue to partner with you to navigate the global challenges and support the next generation of leaders.

Giving Day 2021 was a fantastic example of the continued momentum you've created. At the close of the day, 1683 donors stepped forward to unlock university matching to raise more than \$2 million for causes across the University. It was inspiring to see so many members of our community come together to rally behind this shared ambition.

Another part of our 2021 commitment to our alumni and friends was to engage in the big, complex questions and the thorny issues of the world. This truth-telling was at the heart of our ChangeMakers event series – from our panels on the Black Lives Matter movement in Australia to body image and finding resilience during challenging times – and is a key pillar of the editorial direction of *Contact* magazine.

*Contact* strives to be fearless in its approach to storytelling and content selection. From topics such as Voluntary Assisted Dying and the return of the Taliban to the debate over COVID-19 vaccine certificates, *Contact* aims to deliver expert commentary and analysis on the issues that matter, while providing a platform for the community to join the conversation.

*Because of you, the good doesn't stop as we continue to partner with you to navigate the global challenges and support the next generation of leaders.*

But these conversations cannot be one-directional. It is with this belief that the University commenced the Regional Roadshow with our Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Deborah Terry AO. Listening and learning has been at the heart of our visits to Toowoomba, the Gold Coast, Maryborough, Hervey Bay and the Sunshine Coast this year – and we're just beginning. After all, we are The University of Queensland: every Queensland community is a part of who we are and what we – together – are capable of doing.

There are countless more highlights I could mention, from the annual Alumni Awards (see page 44) to our global alumni networks helping alumni remain connected across the world. This year was full of milestones, achievements, and new experiences, but I have no doubt – with the strength and determination of the UQ community – 2022 will be even better.

## CREATE CHANGE TODAY

Your support – no matter how big or small – can go a long way. If you would like to give to a cause at UQ, visit [alumni.uq.edu.au/giving](https://alumni.uq.edu.au/giving).



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jennifer Karlson is the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Advancement) at UQ. She is responsible for the University's extensive alumni and community engagement efforts, along with philanthropic partnerships. Karlson led UQ's first comprehensive philanthropic campaign, *Not if, When* – the Campaign to Create Change, raising \$607 million to support research, student scholarships, and teaching and learning innovations.



# WOMAN *as default*

UQ student Chelsea Morrigan reflects on how transphobia – both from the world around her, and from within herself – shaped her identity on her journey to transition.

I grew up in a world where people like me were only ever portrayed as the butt of cruel jokes, or as a serial killer.

A world where I was always out of place and what was expected of me felt vaguely wrong.

I would tell you what that's like, but the truth is I don't remember most of my childhood.

I do remember that I experienced depressive periods throughout my teenage years, and I remember being a woman in my dreams, identifying with female characters, and finding more comfort in friendships with women than with any man.

I knew something was different, or wrong – but from what I could gather, every teenager felt like they were different, so how was I to know my struggles were different again?

I was top of my class in my first year at university.

However, that early academic success was soon cut short by an abusive relationship and severe depression, and my memories of that time became locked away like the ones during my childhood. Eventually, I saw a psychiatrist and learned techniques that gave me mental space to work out what had been troubling me all along.

At that time, I didn't even know the word 'transgender', but I knew I wanted to be a woman.

The psychiatrist told me that shaving my legs and wearing women's clothes didn't make me a woman, and that wanting to be a woman was just a sexual fetish. At the time, in a vulnerable mindset and with everything I had experienced up to that point reinforcing his viewpoint, I had no choice but to accept it. He did conversion therapy.

I would tell myself that because I did not experience womanhood as a child and teen, it would not be worth it, that I would make an ugly woman, and that it was nothing more than a fetish.

For the next 10 years, I internalised these thoughts and repressed the desire to be myself – a woman – but it never truly disappeared.

I would always cross-dress at parties, and it never felt like a thrill, but instead something natural, more comfortable. It was the socially acceptable way for me to be myself – as a joke. But I would still remind myself that this didn't make me a woman.

For a time, things worked out. I went to a new university, made new friends, and restarted my life.

But after several personal crises triggered a severe depression, I again underwent therapy, and with that headspace again to consider how I felt, I realised that I no longer wanted to repress the urge to be myself.

I knew, and I feared what I knew.

I feared what it would mean for my relationship of eight years, and for my friends and my family. I knew of many who had been disowned by their parents, lost most of their friends, or lost their partners. I knew I could be left with nothing.

But still, it had become do-or-die – literally – for me.

I took a few days to gather the courage to tell my partner, and I still cried as I did. Her reaction was all I could ever have hoped for; we were honest with each other and, while we didn't know what it meant for our relationship, she was willing to stay with me and see how things felt for her as I transitioned.

I knew it would challenge her idea of her sexuality. While that would be too much for many, it wasn't for her.

You have to pick your battles when coming out. You decide carefully whether, to whom, and when to come out, and how might that impact your relationships with the people in your life.

Before I had come out to many people, my grandmother ended up in hospital with inoperable ovarian cancer.

I only got to see her once more before she passed. I decided not to tell her about my transition.

While I thought she would at least eventually accept me, I decided that nobody needed that stress placed on them during such a difficult time.

I still don't know whether I did the right thing, but she went to the grave thinking no differently of me. I could not bear the possibility of souring any family relationships while she had so little time left. ▶





Thankfully, I already had support from the person who mattered most.

But one of the most painful battles was within – I still had to fight the lingering doubt that I wasn't really trans, and that I didn't deserve to be a woman, all while bracing myself for possible hostility each time I came out.

Every one of those moments of vulnerability and fear helped me become more myself.

I felt confident enough to go out in public, into the city, dressed in feminine clothing. And although I enjoyed some anonymity in the city, being so vulnerable in public was emotionally taxing and exhausting. But I did it.

Everything went extremely well and eventually I was out, and just 'Chelsea' to people. It was liberating, but at the same time I found the vulnerability humbling.

However, my experience doesn't simply end there. Every time I enter an old space, it's terrifying until I feel accepted as I am. Even though I feel confident about who I am, I still feel emotionally fragile without the safety of my old shell.

One interesting change was that I noticed the shift to experiencing sexism when I started presenting as feminine full-time.

Whenever I manage to pass as cis-gender, I am now subject to 'standard' sexism.

But when it's obvious that I am trans-gender, the sexism I experience is often different, morphing instead to deny me of my womanhood, make me other-than or less-than a woman.

In these cases, I am cast as either a dangerous predator or sexual fetish; I am not even someone's daughter.

I do not get to be a woman by default, even to those who should know better, like medical professionals.

Listing my medication to doctors outs me as trans, and often, it all of a sudden seems like my genitalia is the only thing that matters.

I also have to run through a big spiel: "Yes, my name is this but my legal name is that, please use these pronouns, please remember that my hormones are in typical cis-female ranges so I have these risk factors and not those," otherwise they default to thinking of me as a man.

It's exhausting – and a health risk.

The emergency room is even worse. Every new hospital staff member needs me to repeat my spiel – the paramedic, the receptionist, the nurse, the doctor, the other nurse – but

anything severe enough to necessitate a trip to the ER doesn't usually leave you with a lot of spare energy.

I am a woman if I feel that I am a woman, and the only thing I can do to prove that to others is to live as a woman.

But understanding that does not undo the years of programmed self-hatred it took to

UQ student  
Chelsea Morrigan.  
Image: Anjanette Webb



repress my true self in the first place. When I first saw myself as a trans-woman, every feature I saw in the mirror was abhorrent: my own insecurities and fears were being reflected back at me.

My voice sounded as pleasant as nails on a chalkboard, and even though I know beauty standards are also harmful to cis-women, as a trans-woman, I am still held up to the same mark, except that I start even further from it.

I was intensely jealous of those who managed to transition before puberty ravaged their body, because they wouldn't be left with a frame wrought by testosterone, but with none left to support it.

And despite celebrations of pride, practical things like finding clothing to fit me are still difficult, and a constant reminder.

However, I have also noticed the struggles that all women have with clothing and their bodies, and all I can do is try my best with what I have been given.

I continue to pay attention to all the little things that bring me such joy – the change in my scent, seeing 'her' emerge in the mirror, my partner's strength, and photographing cute

animals and then sharing that joy with UQ Duckspace.

At present, few trans folk seem to escape childhood and natal puberty unscathed.

I survived it with what I now understand is a dissociative disorder.

Too many, from all walks of life, who grow up in places where they are segregated, outright illegal, or with resentful or unsupportive parents, don't make it at all.

But I am beginning to hear stories of parents who allow their children to be who they are, and that is very promising. I work every day in the hope they do not have to feel the same pains I endured.

May those children be saved from the scars the rest of us bear.

*I do not get to be a woman by default, even to those who should know better, like medical professionals.*

## FIND SUPPORT

To learn more about inclusion at UQ, visit [uq.edu.au/sexuality-inclusion](https://uq.edu.au/sexuality-inclusion).





# Give your income a BOOST

Low interest rates are great for home buyers but terrible for savers. With interest rates on savings accounts expected to remain at rock-bottom levels for some time, any way retirees can boost their income is a welcome relief. Bachelor of Economics ('90) graduate and *Today* money expert Effie Zahos shares four ways to help you add more to your income.

## 1 KNOW YOUR PERKS

According to National Seniors Australia, concessions are one of the most talked about topics among older Australians. The trouble is, not everyone realises what they're eligible for as concessions are not always automatic.

To help put some money back into retirees' pockets, National Seniors Australia has launched a free online concessions calculator.

You simply tick which concession card you have (Pensioner Concession Card, Seniors Card, Veterans' Affairs Concession Card, Commonwealth Seniors Health Card or Health Care Card) click on your state, tick yes or no to a few questions, then view all the concessions available to you.

Concessions can include energy rebates, water and rates subsidies, and medical and transport assistance.

One thing this calculator does highlight is that all states and territories are willing to pay a little more when it comes to concessions.

National Seniors Australia Chief Advocate Ian Henschke said some states, like Western Australia, could afford to offer generous concessions to seniors because they were flush with mining cash and had a lower proportion of older people. While other states, like Tasmania, are much more targeted at seniors on low incomes, likely because they have the opposite in terms of budget and demographics.

## 2 UTILISE THE WORK BONUS SCHEME

If you're an eligible pensioner, the Work Bonus scheme can help you earn more income from working, without reducing your pension.

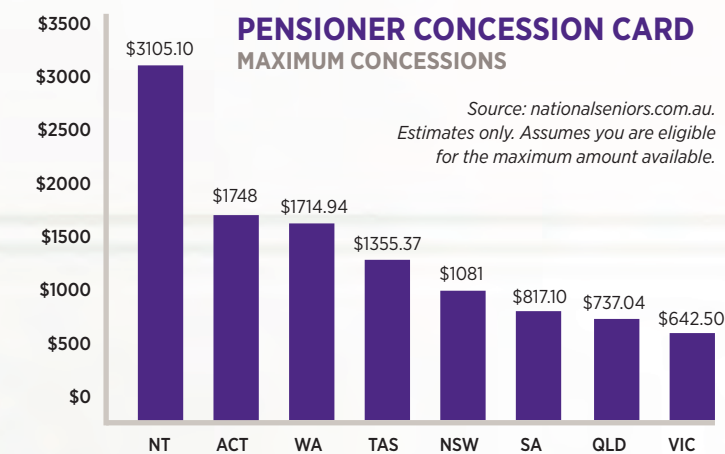
The first \$300 of fortnightly employment income is not assessed or counted under the Pension Income Test. Any unused portion is accumulated in an 'income bank' up to a maximum amount of \$7800. This balance is not time-limited and, if unused, it will carry forward, even across a number of years. This should happen automatically, as long as you report your income to Centrelink.

Even better, Work Bonus operates in addition to the Pension Income Test free area.

## 3 SUPPLEMENT YOUR INCOME WITH THE PENSION LOANS SCHEME

The Pension Loans Scheme works a bit like a reverse mortgage. You effectively take out a loan with the Australian Government, secured by your home. You may be eligible for the regular pension plus a Pension Loans Scheme, worth up to 150 per cent of the maximum fortnightly pension.

Self-funded retirees can access the whole 150 per cent of pension as a loan. The Pension Loans Scheme is currently paid in fortnightly



instalments. But, from July 2022, it will be available as a lump sum.

There are catches. The Pension Loans Scheme comes with an interest rate of 4.5 per cent, and the earlier you take up this option, the more you could end up owing.

It's best to get expert advice here.

## 4 SHRINK YOUR HOME, BOOST YOUR SUPER

Releasing equity built up in the home to boost retirement savings may be a worthwhile strategy for some people.

In addition to some quick cash, changes introduced in recent years allows older Australians to make a non-concessional downsizer contribution of up to \$300,000 each, or \$600,000 as a couple, from the proceeds of selling the family home.

From July 2022, the downsizer super contribution will be available for 60-year olds, down from those aged 65 today. Be sure to check with a financial adviser if you do want to boost your super with some of the sale proceeds, as the downsizer contribution is not exempt from the Age Pension Means Test. If you are getting a full- or part-age pension, you should check how it will affect your payments and other benefits.

*The information provided in this column is general in nature only and does not constitute personal financial advice. The information has been prepared without taking into account your personal objectives, financial situation or needs. Before acting on any information in this column, you should consider the appropriateness of the information for your own objectives, financial situation and needs.*

### LEARN MORE FROM UQ EXPERTS

For more expert analysis on a range of topics, visit [alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine](http://alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine).





# Breaking free from



Queensland Brain Institute researchers are using deep brain stimulation to provide a fresh start for Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder patients.

By Chris Clarke

Imagine waking up every day in fear of accidentally harming someone you love. Or feeling so covered in germs that you wash your hands over and over until the skin breaks.

This is the reality for many Australians living with severe Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD).

For a group of nine particular Australians, this psychiatric illness had robbed them of their ability to lead normal healthy lives. It had rendered them unable to work or have meaningful relationships.

But that all changed when they took part in an Australian-first trial, led by Queensland Brain Institute (QBI) neurologist Professor Peter Silburn and QBI Director Professor Pankaj Sah.

The study also involved neurosurgeon and QBI researcher Associate Professor Terry Coyne, as well as Clinical Research Fellow and psychiatrist Dr Philip Mosley, from the UQ Faculty of Medicine and QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute.

The trial worked by placing probes into targeted areas of the brain. The patients were awake during the surgery, given tasks and shown pictures which triggered them, so

the surgeons knew they were in the right area. The probes were then attached to a pacemaker-type device placed in the abdomen, which constantly stimulates the brain.

This process is called deep brain stimulation, a technique that Professors Sah and Silburn, and Associate Professor Coyne, have used to change patients' lives.

Since the trial, all participants have undergone an incredible transformation. One has started his own business, while others have become married, and had children.

"The people in the study had decades of symptoms that had not responded to the best medication that we've got and the best therapy that we've got, so they were really suffering," Dr Mosley said.

"By targeting brain circuits implicated in anxiety and compulsive behaviour, we were able to modulate those circuits with electricity and reduced the persistent symptoms of their psychiatric illness."

Deep brain stimulation has previously been successful in alleviating the symptoms of Parkinson's disease, but there have been far fewer studies involving severe OCD.

The participants in the trial were aged between 35 and 60 and had lived with crippling OCD for several decades. The first participant was implanted with the device in 2015 ►





*The first thing they notice is that intrusive unsettling thoughts are less intense. As they become less intense, they are able to resist some of the behavioural rituals that take up so much time.*

and the last was implanted in 2019, with the trial lasting more than four years.

Incredibly, the treatment had no negative effects on the patients' quality of life during the trial.

They were able to swim, play sport and travel. Only deep-sea diving and welding were off limits, due to the electrical interference these activities create.

It was the first time in Australia that researchers had used a randomised double-blind trial involving deep brain stimulation for a psychiatric illness.

"What we've done in this trial is contribute further to the evidence base that deep brain stimulation is a real, effective treatment option for people with a severe psychiatric illness who haven't responded to any other treatment," Dr Mosley said.

For three months during the trial, the participants didn't know whether their devices were turned on or off.

There was no way for them to tell, as they couldn't feel the stimulation working.

The people assessing them were also unaware if the devices were on or off.

Only after the three months were the participants informed.

"These people have the system and it's always on and it's always there alleviating symptoms," Dr Mosley said.

"It seems from worldwide experience that this needs to keep going for life."

The clinical trial indicates that it takes anywhere from six to 12 months for the deep brain stimulation to start creating real change to a patient's behaviour.

"It's like a snowball effect," Dr Mosley said.

"The first thing they notice is that intrusive unsettling thoughts are less intense. As they become less intense, they are able to tolerate more and they're able to resist some of the behavioural rituals that take up so much time.

"They have a lot more time in the day, they are less distressed, they are now able to work, they're able to interact with other people and create relationships."

One of the participants, Nanette Vardy-Forth, has lived with OCD since she was five.

Before she left the house, she found herself checking every tap and every light multiple times to ensure that they were turned off.

She believed that if she failed to do this properly, something awful would happen to a loved one.

Now aged 51, this obsession had become a ritual that consumed most of her waking day.



"It's [a lot of] rearranging everything until it feels right in your head that something bad's not going to happen," Ms Vardy-Forth said.

"And that can take a while... leaving the house was a challenge. If I did go out, I would still drive by the house three to four times to make sure all the doors were shut.

"It was easier to just sit and watch TV all day rather than deal with all the checking."

Her OCD got to a point where it controlled her life. It determined what she wore, and she began to believe that bad things would happen to her if she didn't wear certain outfits on certain occasions.

Conventional medications and cognitive behavioural therapy did not help.

So, when her doctors offered her the drastic step of brain implants, she said yes.

Dr Mosley stressed that the treatment was only for patients with the most severe symptoms of OCD imaginable.

These patients had become resistant to regular forms of treatment. By treating this small group of patients, the team was able to precisely show the benefit in potentially providing the treatment to more Australians.

"This treatment is really at the pointy end of psychiatry," Dr Mosley said.

"It's reserved for people who are treatment-resistant, and is a treatment that needs to continue long-term."

The next step for the team of researchers is to demonstrate that this treatment should be made available to all Australians.

Dr Mosley hopes the Australian Government will consider subsidising it under the Medicare scheme.

"If you take a more longer-term view of it, the fact that you have people coming off welfare and going into jobs, that's obviously very good for the economy," he said.

"In order to offer it to more people in Australia, we need to convince the Australian Government to reimburse it through the Medicare system.

"That's one of the things we're going to be looking at next, going to them and providing our evidence – and evidence around the world – and saying that we think this is an option for a small number of people and we want to offer this treatment for carefully selected members of the public in specialised treatment centres like ours."

Queensland Brain Institute researchers Professor Peter Silburn, Associate Professor Terry Coyne and Professor Pankaj Sah.

Image: Neurosciences Queensland

#### LEARN MORE

To learn more about life-changing research at the Queensland Brain Institute, visit [qbi.uq.edu.au](http://qbi.uq.edu.au).



Professor Peter Silburn examines scans from a deep brain stimulation procedure.  
Image supplied





# Educating the disability champions of TOMORROW

Associate Professor Paul Harpur explains why universities are in a unique position to create meaningful change when it comes to disability inclusion in the workplace.

I was 14 when I lost my eyesight after being hit by an electric train on 12 October 1993. Only a matter of days after the accident, I realised society now regarded me as different. In the weeks that followed I started to truly comprehend how my life would now be discounted – especially when it came to education. I struggled to access instructional materials when I returned to school, and my employment options seemed destined to be limited.

Even now, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Australians with disabilities who are active in the labour market are twice as likely to be unemployed, compared to people without a disability. While, according to Vision Australia, unemployment rates go up markedly for people with disabilities like blindness.

I beat the odds and completed my undergraduate and master's degrees in law, before undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy. I was a good lawyer, but I felt a calling to make a difference in disability rights as a law academic.

Today, as an Associate Professor within UQ's TC Beirne School of Law, my teaching and research expertise span disability rights, anti-discrimination laws, work health and safety laws, and corporate social responsibility. As a former Fulbright Fellow and Australian Research Council Future Fellow, I have had many opportunities to work with people around the world to help promote a more inclusive society.

The ability to be gainfully employed is a basic human right, and it's alarming that so many people with disabilities continue to be excluded from the labour market. However, universities have an opportunity to lead the way when it comes to creating meaningful change.

## RESPONSIBILITY TO DRIVE CHANGE

Universities educate the disability champions of tomorrow, employ the disability leaders of today, and produce research and innovation that can transform societies. This is transformational, but the relationship between these three areas creates a synergy that is unique to higher education.

Students are being trained to become future leaders. And the presence of academics with disabilities ensures that students without a disability observe how these academics can succeed in life.

Thus, those students are exposed to how society can be inclusive. Students with disabilities also benefit from the presence of academics with disabilities through mentorship if barriers to ability equality arise. Likewise, academics with



disabilities also benefit from working relationships with students with disabilities.

Australian anti-discrimination laws place greater obligations upon educators to avoid discriminatory barriers to equality. These laws establish a legal responsibility to provide fair and safe teaching environments, where all staff and students have equal opportunities. Many barriers to students with disabilities also impact staff with disabilities. For example, when a staff member with a disability advocates for a ramp to be installed – or for a software package to adopt universal design – then those staff will benefit when it is made inclusive for students.

The impact of including staff with disabilities at all university levels cannot be underestimated. Staff with disabilities, who conduct research into disability inclusion, are contributing directly to a more inclusive world.

However, academics with disabilities are not limited to researching on disability alone. They work across all industries; the difference is, when academics with disabilities conduct research – even when the topic is not focussed on disability – those research projects almost always consider disability inclusion. An architect who uses a wheelchair, for example, is unlikely to design a product without advocating for wheelchair access.

## TAKING ACTION

When I started working as a UQ academic in 2011, there was no one with a disability leading the strategic group that monitored the University's Disability Action Plan (DAP).

So, one day I walked across to the Chancellery and pitched an idea to have representatives with disabilities given a seat at the table. UQ has always believed in promoting diversity and inclusion, and this was no exception.

The UQ Disability Inclusion Group appeared in the next iteration of the DAP, and I became the Chair.

In late 2019, I was awarded my Fulbright Future Scholarship, which included a three-month project working between Harvard Law School and the Burton Blatt Institute at Syracuse University in the US. My project was intended to collect data and build relationships between Australian and US advocates and researchers involved with the development and promotion of design that is accessible to everyone in society, whether they be able or disabled.

Like too many stories about 2020, though, this one starts with '...and then the pandemic hit.' That was an incredibly challenging time to be in a foreign country as a blind man. I had only a few weeks to orient myself with Harvard before things started to turn, and navigating a campus and city that was amid lockdowns, panic, and ever-changing conditions – that would have been difficult for anyone, let alone a person who couldn't see.

I was still able to work with some incredible academics and advocates during my too-brief time in the US, and came back to UQ inspired to drive more change at my own institution.

The UQ Disability Inclusion Group – which I continue to chair – monitors the DAP, and reports directly to the Deputy Provost, as well as to the Senate Sub-Committee for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Associate Professor Paul Harpur is a leading international and comparative disability rights legal academic and was awarded a four-year Future Fellowship with the Australian Research Council. Outside the law, Dr Harpur was a professional athlete, competing in the 2000 Sydney and 2004 Athens Paralympics, as well as the 2002 Manchester and 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games. In November, Dr Harpur was named the 2022 Blind Australian of the Year.

This has resulted in research into understanding how the University can be more inclusive, and then devoting resources to implement the findings.

Some key achievements of the DAP in recent years include improved communication for students and staff of support services, improved physical and digital accessibility for physical environments, greater support for mental health conditions, improved accessibility to library resources, staff training and education, and enhanced disability employment initiatives.

These efforts are widely recognised, with UQ becoming the founding higher-education member of the Australian Human Rights Commission IncludeAbility network.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

While you may not have control over recruitment at your workplace, here are some practical ways you can start to make a difference in your work environment:

- 1 Recruit and/or promote people with disabilities if they're qualified for the position.
- 2 Find ways to proactively make people with disabilities feel included and supported in your work environment – both in your team culture, and in work processes and physical environments.
- 3 Focus on the person, not the disability or impairment – avoid getting caught up in semantics and be willing to listen to feedback and constructive criticism.
- 4 If you're not sure how to help a colleague with a disability – ask, and listen to them.

Everyone can make adjustments to consider ways to be more inclusive. Whether you're arranging a function for clients, designing a website, or purchasing office furniture, you can ask the right questions to ensure it is inclusive for everyone, regardless of their abilities.

## LEARN MORE ABOUT DISABILITY INCLUSION

For more information about diversity, disability and inclusion at UQ, visit [uq.edu.au/disability-inclusion](https://uq.edu.au/disability-inclusion).







# UQ Celebrates EXCELLENCE

Meet the outstanding recipients of The University of Queensland 2021 Alumni Awards.

**A** philanthropist, world-leading orchestra conductor and an acclaimed author are among The University of Queensland 2021 Alumni Awards recipients.

This year's UQ Alumnus of the Year title was awarded to Caroline Frazer (pictured), a renowned philanthropist who is passionate about education and the arts in Queensland.

Mrs Frazer – together with her husband Professor Ian Frazer AC – has significantly advanced the next generation of talent in the state through her generous support.

By co-leading UQ's first major philanthropic campaign, Mrs Frazer helped to attract over 30,000 gifts and more than \$607 million to support a range of causes at UQ, with support of students closest to her heart.

"I was brought up being told I would be a teacher. I used to sit all my little friends in front of the blackboard and talk in front of them from an early age. So, I've always been a teacher and education is still very important to me," Mrs Frazer said.

"As a philanthropist, you get to make decisions about what is important to you and what you'd like to support and, for us as a family, education is very important. Having the opportunity to help mobilise donors to support students who wouldn't otherwise be able to go to university: that was something I felt passionate about and was confident I could advocate for.

"The more people in the community who know that there are ways to support students and help build a better-educated society, the better."

Other award recipients include International conductor Simon Hewett, who was one of five recipients of the Vice-Chancellor's Alumni Excellence Award for his work in building opportunities for young Queensland musicians, while sexual assault survivor advocate and acclaimed author, Bri Lee, was among the recipients of a Distinguished Young Alumni Award.

The University of Queensland Alumni Awards have been hosted annually since 1992. They recognise the achievements of alumni who have accomplished outstanding success in their fields and who have made exemplary contributions to their communities. Continue reading to learn more about all the alumni award recipients. ►

## Vice-Chancellor's Alumni Excellence Awards



### ALLAN DAVIES

**Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) '74  
Emmanuel College**

Davies has more than 40 years of experience in the Australian and international coal and metalliferous mining industries. He is currently Co-Founder and Chairman of the Australian Rhino Project, with the goal of establishing a breeding herd of black and white rhinos in Australia. In 2007, he and his family founded the Dalara Foundation, which focuses on medical research, education, animal protection and human welfare, including Indigenous youth.



### DR MARGUERITE EVANS-GALEA AM

**Graduate Diploma in Science '94,  
Bachelor of Science '92,  
Bachelor of Music '92**

Evans-Galea is an internationally recognised scientist and advocate for women in STEMM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine). She is Co-founder and CEO of Women in STEMM Australia, a non-profit organisation that connects women in science across every professional sector at a national level.



### SIMON HEWETT

**Bachelor of Music (Hons) '97**

Hewett is the Music Director of the Queensland Youth Orchestra and continues to serve in the role of Principal Conductor with the Hamburg Ballet in Germany. In 2020, Hewett and his wife Maria, with others, initiated the Berlin Residency Award, which provides a UQ graduate student with accommodation as well as research and living expenses.



### DR DARYL HOLMES OBE

**Bachelor of Dental Science '87  
King's College**

After practising as a Dental Officer in the Royal Australian Air Force, Holmes established the Townsville Family Dental brand and business model in 1991. He has since pioneered and perfected a range of innovative marketing techniques for his dentistry business, 1300SMILES. He also tirelessly volunteers on the Youth with a Mission medical ships in rural and remote Papua New Guinea.



### AMANDA JOHNSTON-PELL

**Bachelor of Human Movement Studies (Education) '92  
Women's College**

Johnston-Pell is currently serving as the Chief Digital Officer, Vice President Digital Sales across the Asia Pacific and China regions for IBM. She has served with community, education and private diplomatic initiatives including (but not limited to) the Australia American Leadership Dialogue, the AALD's Young Leadership Dialogue, Chief Executive Women Australia, the Sydney School of Entrepreneurship and Sparsha Trust, serving underprivileged children in India.



## Distinguished Young Alumni Awards



**DR BONNY CUMMING**  
Bachelor of Veterinary Science (Hons) '08  
Women's College

With a deep understanding of how the social and cultural determinants of health impact remote communities, Cumming is committed to addressing inequity through genuine partnerships that support and empower First Nations communities to improve the health and wellbeing of their pets, and in turn, the health and wellbeing of their communities and Country.



**DR JAMES FIELDING**  
Bachelor of Business Management '10, Bachelor of Science '10, Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery '14, Graduate Certificate in Executive Leadership '14

Fielding is the Founder and CEO of Audeara, Founder and Director of Robotics Engineering Research Laboratories, Founder and Director of Yumm! Confectionary, and Founder and former Director of Field Orthopaedics. ASX-listed Audeara is a hearing health technology company using personalised sound to enhance quality of life.



**BRI LEE**  
Bachelor of Arts '14, Bachelor of Laws (Hons) '14, Master of Philosophy '20

Lee is an author, editor, freelance writer, speaker, researcher, qualified (though non-practicing) lawyer, and PhD candidate. She is one of Australia's most impressive rising literary talents and a leading voice for reform of Australia's consent and sexual assault laws.

*The more people in the community who know that there are ways to support students and help build a better-educated society, the better.*

### READ MORE

To read the full profiles of all award recipients, visit [alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine](https://alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine).



**DR BAVAHUNA MANOHARAN**  
Bachelor of Science '07, Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery '12

Manoharan is the State Clinical Director of the Queensland Vaccine Command Centre and COVID-19 Vaccination Taskforce. He plays a leadership role in navigating Queensland's response to the COVID-19 crisis. He is also the Australian Medical Association Queensland Vice President.



**MIKHARA RAMSING**  
Bachelor of Economics (Hons) '15, Bachelor of Laws (Hons) '14

Ramsing is the founder of Miks Chai, a social enterprise that funds suicide prevention through sales of chai tea, and Ethnic LGBT+, a national resource platform for culturally and linguistically diverse LGBTIAQ+ communities.

## Colleges' UQ Alumni Award



**SCOTT YOUNG**  
Bachelor of Arts '87, Graduate Certificate in Executive Leadership '17  
King's College

Young attended King's College from 1984 to 1986 and, since then, has spent time on the College Council and as Chair of the Foundation Advisory Committee. Young is a highly experienced business and sports leader and former international rugby union referee.

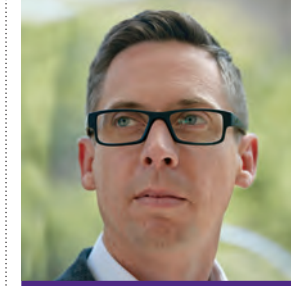
## Indigenous Community Impact Award



**KEVIN O'BRIEN**  
Bachelor of Architecture '95; Master of Philosophy (Architecture) '06

O'Brien is a leading Australian architect who places Indigenous knowledge of Country at the centre of his practice. In 1997, he became a founding member of the Merrima Aboriginal Design Unit of the Government Architects Office of New South Wales. He has also served as a Director of Architects Without Frontiers.

## International Alumnus of the Year



**DR RYAN TAFT**  
Doctor of Philosophy '09

Taft is the Vice President, Scientific Research at Illumina in San Diego. He led a global team that discovered a new disease called HBSL. Taft sits on the Scientific Advisory Board of the Mission Massimo Foundation and is a member of the Medical and Scientific Advisory Board of Global Genes, a leading rare disease advocacy organisation.

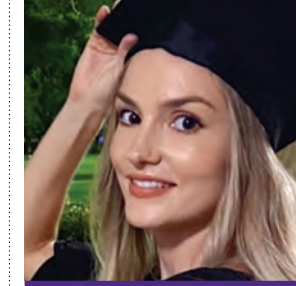
## UQ Sportswoman and Sportsman of the Year



**NATALIE GRIDER**  
Current student – Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science (Hons)

Grider is a member of the 2021 Brisbane Lions AFLW premiership-winning side. The Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science (Hons) student was drafted into the Lions squad in 2018 and had a breakout season in 2021, being named the club's Most Competitive Player.

## Awards created by Alumni Friends



**UQ GRADUATE OF THE YEAR**  
**JESSIE HARPER**  
Bachelor of Agricultural Science (Hons) '21

As an undergraduate student, Harper received a University Medal, was Valedictorian of the School of Agricultural Science, and received several Dean's Commendations for Academic Excellence in every semester of study. She is now undertaking a PhD at UQ on a prestigious Westpac Future Leaders Scholarship.



**UQ ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR**  
**CAROLINE FRAZER**  
Master of Educational Studies '97

Frazer is a world-renowned philanthropist and Co-chair of *Not If, When* – the Campaign to Create Change. She was integral to the mobilisation of UQ's community and the achievement of ambitious fundraising targets, making tertiary education an attainable goal for generations of students.

## Gatton Gold Medal



**DANIEL KELLY AM**  
Diploma in Applied Science '74, Bachelor of Applied Science '75

Kelly moved to Southern Sudan in 1983 during the threat of civil war to help establish an agricultural program. He later worked in humanitarian aid organisations, such as World Vision. While there, Kelly managed the responses to 40 major emergencies, including Hurricane Katrina, and Ebola and Zika viruses.



# From centre stage to a PREHISTORIC AGE



Find out how UQ PhD candidate Tim Richards closed the curtain on his theatre career to be in the spotlight of Australia's largest flying reptile discovery.

By Suzanne Parker

For a dinosaur-obsessed boy who always wanted to be a doctor, life has certainly delivered – but not in quite the way he expected.

UQ PhD candidate Tim Richards has nearly finished his Doctor of Philosophy and he's played the role of doctor several times on stage, but his current 'practice' involves repairing bones found in dirt rather than the human body. Yes, this 'dramatic dinosaur doctor' is performing a role that many would cherish, chasing our paleo past from the vantage of the present – including analysing Australia's largest flying reptile, which once soared over outback Queensland.

"I've always had a great curiosity about why the world is like it is today," Richards said.

"And with my research I've been able to discover some interesting facts that have shaped the planet."

But his path to this point has been decidedly non-traditional.

"When I didn't get the marks to do medicine, I accepted a place in a science/psychology degree at the University of Newcastle because my late mother had been a psychiatric nurse and I thought I'd have a connection with her," he said.

"Quite by chance, I enrolled in a drama subject instead of physics. I had been in the choir at school and had always loved acting the clown, so I thought it would be fun."

He was right; however, the fun snowballed and acting took over his life. He began performing in numerous stage productions in both amateur productions and with the two professional companies in Newcastle at the time, Freewheels and the Hunter Valley Theatre Company.

Richards soon realised that if he wished to make a career of acting, he had to move to Sydney or Melbourne. So, when his girlfriend (now wife) Terri was accepted into the technical production course at NIDA, he withdrew from from his degree and decided to apply to NIDA too – and got in on first audition.

"[At NIDA] we had the freedom to practise our art and spent 14 hours a day doing what we loved," Richards said.

"Because Terri was in production and I was in acting, we knew nearly everyone, making friends for life and so many industry contacts."

Straight after graduating from NIDA with a Bachelor of Dramatic Arts, Richards began working as an actor and acting tutor.

He felt he was on a 'pretty good wicket' here in Australia and the several months of 'couch-surfing' in Hollywood during pilot season never appealed to him.

"You can get noticed here," he said.

Which he did – for the next 15 years – scoring stints in television soaps, films, three or four stage shows a year and the occasional voiceover. Perhaps his most memorable jobs were performing on stage with Cate Blanchett AC and Joel Edgerton in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and appearing as Pumbaa in the two-year Sydney season of *The Lion King*.

"It brought tears to my eyes the first time I saw the full production of *The Lion King* and was well worth the 12-month audition process with its 10 call-backs from the American producers to get it," Richards said.

Although acting had not lost its appeal – apart from the "endless parade of castings" – the yearning for a more immediate 'scholarly' connection with an audience propelled Richards to move on to the next stage of his life. He decided to become a scientist.

"I'd been thinking about it for many years. When I looked at my bookcase, I noticed that half was made up of scripts and art history, and the other half was about dinosaurs. I'd loved dinosaurs as a kid and never lost that love – so palaeobiology, plus genetics, was an obvious choice of specialty," Richards said.

He decided to complete an undergraduate science degree online while continuing working in Sydney and later found a suitable Honours course at the University of New England.

Richards also serendipitously managed to find the subject for his PhD thesis after presenting at the Paleo Down Under conference in South Australia.

"I met Dr Patrick Smith from Kronosaurus Korner, who alerted me to some pterosaur bones that had been found in nearby Richmond, and so I asked Dr Steve Salisbury, head of the UQ Dinosaur Lab, if he would supervise me in their analysis.

"He said yes, and four years later, here I am." 'Here' is analysing and naming a new species of pterosaur, *Thapunngaka shawi*, the largest discovered to date and one of only four flying reptiles ever found in Australia.

"This pterosaur – the first back-boned animal to take a stab at powered flight – would have been a fearsome beast, with its spear-like mouth and wingspan around seven metres, when it soared over Queensland's inland Eromanga Sea during the dinosaur era," Richards said.

"Having thin-walled and relatively hollow bones, it's quite amazing these fossils exist at all, and I feel privileged to have added to the body of knowledge with my research."

## QUEENSLAND'S 'FEARSOME DRAGON'

To learn more about Australia's largest flying reptile discovery, visit [uq.edu.au/news](http://uq.edu.au/news).



## GREAT READING WITH UQP



### My Brother Ben by Peter Carnavas

A timeless story of birds and boats, and of brotherly love that is bigger than a wedge-tailed eagle, bigger than the sky.



### How to Repaint a Life by Steven Herrick

A novel that delves into the themes of rising above the past and taking control of your future.



### Believe In Me by Lucy Neave

An unforgettable novel about three generations and the healing power of understanding where you've come from.

To see the latest UQP book releases, visit [uqp.com.au](http://uqp.com.au).





# GOLDEN HEROES

**An Olympic year during a pandemic was always going to throw up some challenges. This is the story of how UQ athletes smashed through barriers to lap up Olympic and Paralympic glory.**

By Michael Jones

**L**akeisha Patterson didn't want to create any excuses ahead of her Tokyo Paralympics campaign. But the gold-medal hero admits there were moments when she doubted she'd be able to swim at all.

The UQ Bachelor of Communication student (pictured) has battled ongoing health complications and also navigated a change in classification in 2019, which shifted her focus towards freestyle events. Her goal was to swim in both the S9 100 metres and 400 metres freestyle, and possibly the relays. Despite adhering to the selection criteria, the 22-year-old missed out on selection in the 100 metres, which left her with just the 400 metres – her pet event.

"At times I doubted whether I could push through, or be ready in time to compete," Patterson said.

"Fortunately, I have an incredible team surrounding me. Behind the blocks, I reminded myself that I don't have to feel good to swim good, and I had given 110 per cent to get to this position. I wasn't going to let anything stand in my way.

"This is why I didn't tell many people before the Games what I was actually facing behind closed doors. I didn't want to distract myself from the goal at hand, nor create excuses."

No excuses were needed, and the millions watching on television around the world saw no inkling of ill health as Patterson produced one of her gutsiest performances ever to hold off a fierce challenge from Hungarian rival Zsolia Konkoly.

Konkoly briefly took the lead in the last lap, but Patterson stormed home to win the S9 400 metres freestyle final by just .08 of a second, defending her 400 metres Paralympic title from Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

"To even be standing behind the starting blocks at Tokyo was a massive achievement considering the lead up I'd had, so to come away with a gold medal was phenomenal and hard to articulate into words," Patterson said.

Diploma in Science student Rachael Watson continued Australia's gold-medal streak in the pool, winning the S4 50 metres freestyle. She also swam above her class in the S5 100 metres freestyle, and broke the S4 class Paralympic record with a time of 1:35.27. It was a shock result for Watson, who admitted she didn't expect to defend the gold medal she'd won in the same event at the Rio Paralympics in 2016.

"I am so incredibly proud of my support team who helped make this moment happen," Watson said.

As Watson fought back tears after the race, she delivered a heartfelt message to her family back home, who were unable to attend.

"My family had saved up for years to be able to come and watch me compete in Tokyo," she said.

"After winning, I felt quite emotional and really wished they were able to be there in the crowd. But knowing my family and friends were watching from home in Australia and overseas meant a lot to me."

Three UQ representatives competed at the Tokyo Paralympic Games. Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science graduate ('17) Brenden Hall just missed out on a medal, finishing fourth in the men's S9 400 metres freestyle final.

UQ athletes were also successful at the Tokyo Olympic Games, collecting bronze medals in rowing and in the pool.

UQ graduates and UQ Boat (Rowing) Club members Caitlin Cronin (Bachelor of Chemical Engineering '19) and Ria Thompson (Bachelor of Science '19) combined in the Australian women's quadruple sculls team, claiming bronze in a thrilling finish to one of the fastest races in Olympic history. China won in an Olympic-record time of 6:05.13 minutes, with Poland 6.23 seconds behind and edging out the Australians by just 0.72 seconds.

On top of all the challenges that come with qualifying for the Games, Thompson recalls the extra barriers athletes faced ahead of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

"They say an Olympic year never runs smoothly, and I think that has never been truer than the 2020/21 saga," Thompson said.

"We started by having to relocate to Tasmania at the beginning of 2020 because the smoke from the bushfires made it unsafe to train at our National Training Centre in Penrith. And then COVID-19 hit.

"Since then, we have dealt with our training centre being closed, the Olympics postponed, as well as countless plans changed due to ever-changing restrictions."

Back in the pool, UQ swimming sensation Thomas Neill, claimed a bronze medal as part of the Australian men's 4x200 metres freestyle relay team. The Bachelor of Advanced Business (Honours) student anchored the team and helped Australia storm home into third behind Great Britain and Russia.

In total, nine UQ students, graduates and club members competed at the Olympic Games.

Bachelor of Biotechnology (Honours) student Kiera Gazzard was part of Australia's Artistic Swimming team that finished ninth, while Bachelor of Physiotherapy student Himeka Onoda helped Australia's first ever Olympic Rhythmic Gymnastics Group finish in 14th place.

On the open water, Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) student Mara Stransky finished 14th overall in the Women's Laser Radial sailing event.

Bachelor of Advanced Finance and Economics (Honours) student Abby Andrews and Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours) student Gabi Palm helped Australia secure fifth place in women's water polo.

Bachelor of Engineering ('07) graduate and Tonga's famous flagbearer Pita Taufatofua finished seventh in the men's heavyweight (+80kg) taekwondo.

## THE EYES OF THE WORLD WILL BE ON QUEENSLAND

The Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games may seem a long way down the track. But ask any athlete and they'll tell you, no matter how far away the finish line seems – or how distant the opportunity is – it'll come before you know it. So, what do we do with this time? To find out what the UQ experts have to say, visit [alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine](http://alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine).







THE UNIVERSITY  
OF QUEENSLAND  
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

# UQ Stories

You can now listen to your  
favourite *Contact* stories

UQ Stories is a series of audio articles and podcasts from  
UQ's *Contact* magazine and *Research News* websites.

Listen to the most engaging and inspiring stories from  
across the UQ community while you're on the go.

**Listen and subscribe**

[alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine](https://alumni.uq.edu.au/contact-magazine)

[research.uq.edu.au/news](https://research.uq.edu.au/news)

**Or wherever you listen to your podcasts**