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LIBRARY

College of Education comes under the UC umbrella



The new faces of the University of Canterbury. UC students are photographed at the College of Education for the 2007 international marketing campaign.

On 1 January 2007 the Christchurch College of Education (CCE) officially merged with the University of Canterbury.

Training the country's teachers, which was the function of CCE since 1877, will now be carried out within the University of Canterbury College of Education. The College becomes the University's sixth college/school joining the colleges of Arts, Business and Economics, Engineering, Science and the School of Law.

The inclusion of the College into the University community means an additional 230 academic, general and technical staff.

Currently heading the College is Pro-Vice-Chancellor Dr Graham Stoop. The former CCE principal leaves in March to become Chief Executive of the Education Review Office in

Wellington. UC's Director of Finance Jeff Long has been appointed Acting College Manager.

The Academic Dean of Education is John Freeman-Moir. Three new associate deans have been appointed: Lynda Boyd (Early Childhood Teacher Education), Barry Brooker (Primary Teacher Education) and Neil Lancaster (Secondary Teacher Education).

The directors of the College's four schools are: Professor Bob Manthei (Educational Studies and Human Development); Lynne Te Aika (Māori, Social and Cultural Studies in Education); Julie Mackey (Literacies and Arts in Education); and Ian Culpan (Sciences and Physical Education).

The College is situated off Dovedale Avenue with additional teaching sites in Nelson and

Tauranga. In Rotorua the College works with the Waiariki Institute of Technology to provide primary and secondary teacher education, and in New Plymouth with the Western Institute of Technology to provide early childhood teacher education. UC Education Plus (previously called Teacher Support Services) is located at 155 Montreal Street, with branches in Greymouth, Timaru and Nelson.

Dr Stoop said he was very pleased with the transition to the new structure.

"Key appointments have been made and there are other appointments processes in train. We have worked hard over the December-January period on enrolment processes and also on sector engagement. There has also been a strong marketing campaign.

"Focused induction sessions that are being run by Human Resources will also help make the transition easier," he added.

Dr Stoop said a start has been made to new signage so that the Dovedale Avenue site would sit comfortably in the wider UC campus environment and Facilities Management had been working with the College on implementing its accommodation plan.

"We are very positive about the future. The future of teacher education in this region is now secure and we look forward to being part of UC and making a significant contribution to academic life within the UC context. In short, the merger has been effected and effected in a positive manner."

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Freshwater ecology students catch top prizes at national conference



Celebrating their success at the recent New Zealand Freshwater Sciences Conference are (from left) Helen Warburton, Darragh Woodford, Michelle Greenwood, Amy Whitehead and Jonathan Bray.

Canterbury University freshwater ecology students scooped the prize pool at the recent New Zealand Freshwater Sciences Conference.

Five out of the six student awards presented at the annual conference, held in Rotorua in November, went to UC students.

Doctoral student Amy Whitehead received the award for best overall student presentation for her work on the threatened Blue Duck (Whio), while fellow doctoral student Darragh Woodford received the Conservation Award for his presentation on the interactions between trout and non-migratory *galaxiids*.

Jonathan Bray won the award for best masters presentation on his work on algae in acid mine drainage systems; Helen Warburton won the award for best presentation by an honours student on her research into the effects of low flows on stream insect populations; and Michelle Greenwood received the award for

best poster outlining her work on cannibalism among aquatic spiders.

Associate Professor Angus McIntosh and Dr Jon Harding (Biological Sciences) were thrilled with the results.

"It says something about the quality of the research our students are producing compared with what's happening at other universities in New Zealand," Dr Harding said.

Professor McIntosh added that the successes also illustrated the high level of communication skills the students had developed during the academic year through departmental showcases.

For four of the five students it was the first time they had presented their research at a national conference and it was the fourth time in six years that a UC student had won the conference's award for the overall best student presentation.

Joint venture creates new post at UC and Botanic Gardens

The University of Canterbury and the Christchurch City Council have teamed up to create the new post of Curator of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens and Professor of Plant Sciences.

Council Transport and Greenspace Unit Manager Michael Aitken said the joint appointment had benefits for everyone.

"It is extremely exciting for the city to bring together the expertise inherent in a professorship with the vision and direction to take the Botanic Gardens forward," Mr Aitken said.

"By having this as a joint appointment we believe it will be a highly sought-after position on the international market."

Mr Aitken said previous curators of the gardens had University links and the appointment would reinforce the gardens' management plan to strengthen educational and research links.

Christchurch Mayor Garry Moore said the council had been looking at raising the level of science and research in the gardens for some time.

"We are delighted to be working with the University to together raise the standard of

research to return the gardens to their former standards. Earlier curators were professors interested in the science of the gardens and we are delighted to see this continue."

Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Science) Professor Ian Shaw was similarly delighted to be able to announce the joint venture.

"This is part of our drive for the council and University to work more closely together and in this case to bring a research focus to the Botanic Gardens so that we can better utilise the city's superb collection of plants to further our knowledge and understanding of plant science."

Chronicle

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Welcome to the new look *Chronicle*

This issue marks an important milestone in the 43-year history of the *Chronicle* with the introduction of full colour. Colour photographs have been used previously in one-off editions of the magazine, but from this month will be a regular feature. Editor Jeanette Colman said changes in technology and a reduction in printing costs now made colour production an affordable option.

"The University of Canterbury is a colourful place and it is great that we can now reflect that in the staff publication. A colour version of the magazine has been available online for two and a half years but now all readers will be able to better appreciate the excellent work of photographers Duncan Shaw-Brown and Eve Welch."

The *Chronicle* team welcomes all new readers in the College of Education. The additional

staff means 3200 subscribers around the world now read the magazine.

College of Education comes under the UC umbrella *continued from page 1.*

Vice-Chancellor Professor Roy Sharp echoed Dr Stoop's comments on the smoothness of the transition to the new structure.

He said he looked forward to working with staff of the College as it moved ahead.

An official celebration to mark the merger and to welcome former CCE staff into the University will be held on Friday 9 February. Invited guests will join Professor Sharp and Chancellor Dr Robin Mann for a powhiri on Ilam Fields with lunch to follow.

Academic promotions a cause for celebration

The School of Law is celebrating after seven of its staff were successful in the 2006 academic promotions round.

The School now boasts two new professors, four new associate professors, and a new senior lecturer.

Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Law) Professor Scott Davidson said he was delighted with the results of the promotions round.

"This number of promotions to senior level in the Law School in a single promotions round is unprecedented. I am delighted for my colleagues who, by their commitment to research and teaching of the highest standards, have earned their promotions.

"I am also pleased for the University, since these promotions, together with those of other colleagues promoted in this round, show that the new promotions criteria are working well."

In all, the University has promoted 11 academic staff to professorships and 20 to associate professorships.

The new professors are: Ross Barnett (Geography), Richard Blaikie (Electrical and Computer Engineering), Athol Carr (Civil Engineering), Geoff Chase (Mechanical Engineering), Bill Davison (Biological Sciences), Jeremy Finn (Law), Juliet Gerrard (Biological Sciences), David Wall (Mathematics and Statistics), Duncan Webb (Law), Mark Williams (Culture, Literature and Society) and Bryce Williamson (Chemistry).

UC staff and the wider community will have the opportunity to learn more about



Celebrating their promotions are School of Law staff (from left) Professor Jeremy Finn, Associate Professor Ursula Cheer, Senior Lecturer Chris Galvin, Associate Professor Cynthia Hawes, Associate Professor Richard Scragg and Associate Professor Elizabeth Toomey. Absent is Professor Duncan Webb.

each professor when he or she delivers a public lecture during the year as part of the University's Professorial Lecture series.

The new associate professors are: Jim Briskie (Biological Sciences), Ursula Cheer (Law), Chris Cree-Brown (Music and Theatre and Film Studies), Mark Davidson (Civil Engineering), Steven Durbin (Electrical and Computer Engineering), Charles Fleischmann (Civil Engineering), Martin Fuchs (Sociology and Anthropology), Janinka Greenwood (Māori, Social and Cultural Studies in Education), Cynthia Hawes (Law), Jennifer Hay (Classics

and Linguistics), Simon Kingham (Geography), Wendy Lawson (Geography), Margaret Maclagan (Communication Disorders), Angus McIntosh (Biological Sciences), Carol Mutch (UC Opportunity), Roger Nokes (Civil Engineering), Edwina Palmer (Languages and Culture), Richard Scragg (Law), Yvonne Shanahan (Accountancy, Finance and Information Systems) and Elizabeth Toomey (Law).

The promotions round saw 20 academic staff promoted to senior lecturer above the bar, and a further 17 promoted to senior lecturer.

Fellowships an opportunity for secondary teachers to enrich their material



Geology PhD student Kate Bodger shows NZ Science, Mathematics and Technology Teacher Fellow Keith Machin some of her thesis work.

Keith Machin counts himself as one of the luckiest teachers in the country.

The Rangi Ruru Girls' School science teacher is one of only 55 teachers nationwide to receive this year's NZ Science, Mathematics and Technology Teacher Fellowships.

The fellowship scheme, funded by the

Government and administered by the Royal Society of New Zealand, offers primary and secondary teachers of mathematics, social sciences, technology and the sciences the opportunity to enrich their teaching through experience in technological or scientific practice.

As a teacher fellow, Mr Machin will spend a year based in the Department of Geological Sciences at the University of Canterbury enjoying the luxury of immersing himself in his own research, unfettered by classroom teaching.

Mr Machin, who has been teaching for 35 years, said the opportunity to spend a year out of the classroom gaining new experiences and understanding was like winning the lottery.

"I'm really, really very fortunate and very excited about the year. When I return to teaching next year I expect it will be with renewed vigour and enthusiasm and I'll be able to use what I learn this year in the classroom."

As a physics and science teacher with an interest in geology, Mr Machin said he looked for a way to "marry the two together" in his

research programme for the year entitled "Exploration Geophysics".

"I'm looking at how physics can be used in 'real world' science teaching."

For his major project he will be learning how electromagnetic methods and ground-penetrating radar are used to define and describe sub-surface structures. He would like to carry out field research on Kaitorete Spit looking at Māori archaeological sites.

Mr Machin is one of four NZ Science, Mathematics and Technology Teacher Fellows who will be based at UC this year.

Greg Preston from Burnside High School has already joined the Geography Department for the year to research "Neural networks for local wind forecasting". Christine O'Connor from Christchurch Girls' High School (CGHS) will be based in the School of History from February looking at "Cemeteries and their stories", while her CGHS colleague David Clare will be co-hosted by the School of Sociology and Anthropology at UC and the Canterbury Museum as he delves into "The exploration and settlement of Polynesia".

Four general staff receive VC awards for professional development



Celebrating their General Staff Development Awards with Vice-Chancellor Professor Roy Sharp (centre) are (from left) Dr Liz Tully, Matthew Ayton, Lee Barber and Matthew Walker.

Four University of Canterbury staff members have received funding to attend courses, visit other educational institutions and do further study in the latest round of the Vice-Chancellor's General Staff Development Awards.

Staff development awards of up to \$5000 are available every six months for general staff. They are designed to encourage and support professional development activities such as further study, specialised training, staff exchanges and conference attendance.

The latest awards were presented to the recipients by Vice-Chancellor Professor Roy Sharp at a special ceremony last month.

Audio Visual technician Matthew Ayton (Information Technology Services) received

funding to conduct research which will help further develop the WebCT and online lecture services offered by the UC Audio Visual Group.

Mr Ayton plans to visit Stanford and Berkeley universities in California to see how they are implementing new teaching techniques revolving around the use of podcasting, iTunes and similar audio technologies aimed at mobile use.

Mr Ayton said his research would have University-wide benefits.

"By keeping abreast of, and possibly implementing, new teaching devices employed by other leading universities worldwide, we will arm our students and lecturers with the latest in teaching and learning aids. There is also increasing interest

in these technologies for making research seminars available to the public and raising the profile of the University's own research and eminent visitors."

Lee Barber, administrator in the School of Social Work and Human Services, received financial support to enable her to commence studying this year towards a Graduate Diploma in Business Administration.

Ms Barber said she was looking forward to the new challenge and the fresh perspective she would gain by being "in a student's shoes".

Community Education Manager Dr Liz Tully (UC Opportunity) will use her funding to take advantage of being in Europe this July for an Interdisciplinary Social Sciences conference to also visit some organisations in England involved in the provision or promotion of adult/continuing education.

Dr Tully hoped to gain some new and different ideas, particularly focused on programme planning and delivery, which she said would be timely given the Tertiary Education Commission's requirement that university-based adult and community education programmes more distinctly reflect the role and purpose of a university.

Clinical Educator Matt Walker (Communication Disorders) will use his award to attend an upcoming Hanen Programme workshop in Brisbane. The Hanen Programme is a unique family-focused programme for parents of children with delays in language development.

"It will allow me to develop a different skill set in students and bring extra breadth to the clinical programmes we offer in the department," he said.

Thelma Leggat 1942-2006



Thelma Leggat, curator of architectural drawings at the Macmillan Brown Library from 1996 to 2006 and wife of former University of Canterbury Chancellor Ian Leggat, died in

December after a long and courageous fight against cancer.

Mrs Leggat joined Macmillan Brown when the library was expanding all its research services in major ways, to catalogue its collection of just over 5000 architectural drawings. Over the next decade she added a further 100,000 drawings to the collection as she picked up the accumulated drawings of every important architectural firm in the city. As a

result the collection now comprehensively covers the history of building in the region from Benjamin Mountfort to the present day, reflecting her passion and scholarship.

With encouragement and support from colleagues and from Ian Lochhead in the Department of Art History Mrs Leggat transformed her cataloguing role into one of significant curatorship as she persuaded architects to entrust the historical record of their firms' work to the library. The result is a resource which will support generations of research effort not only in architectural and design history but also in social history. The collection has become a major achievement of practical scholarship, used by architects and engineers, planning and heritage professionals from the city council, Historic Places Trust staff, art historians and research students. She was the right curator in the right library at the right time.

Mrs Leggat had her priorities right; learning and scholarship always came first. Everything else — practicalities such as where to put things, how to pay for things — was rightly subordinated to the core purpose of serving the needs of scholarship. She had the right attitudes to her work as a collection specialist to a pre-eminent degree. What she brought so fruitfully to bear on her work in the library was her rootedness in European traditions of landscape design and architectural history. She transferred this expert appreciation to New Zealand landscapes and gardens, to New Zealand architects and buildings. A second edition of her standard history of Canterbury gardens is currently in preparation. She was also the author of a history of the Christchurch Beautifying Association and of numerous reviews.

Max Broadbent

Human changes to rainforests damage web of life

Converting the rainforests of Ecuador into intensely farmed agricultural land has had a dramatic impact on the region's web of life, according to a paper co-authored by a University of Canterbury ecologist which has been recently published in *Nature* magazine.

The paper, written by Dr Jason Tylianakis (Biological Sciences), Dr Owen Lewis of Oxford University and Professor Teja Tschamtko at the University of Goettingen, looks at the impact human changes to the environment have had on "food webs" — the interactions between wild bees and wasps and their natural enemies in the Choco-Manabi region of Ecuador.

Dr Tylianakis said scientists had known for some time that humans' conversion of natural habitats caused the extinction of some species but what was less clear was what happened to species that were left behind — did they interact differently or did they continue as before?

Ecuador was chosen for the study as it was a country that was rapidly transforming, Dr Tylianakis said. It is one of the most biologically diverse regions in the world but because of high levels of poverty much of the rainforest is being converted to agriculture.

"These changes are already having an impact on local climate and are affecting the country's biological diversity. Once biological diversity is altered it will affect the whole structure of species' interactions and will, down the line, affect humans."

The researchers spent 17 months studying more than 7000 individual wild bee and wasp nests. They looked at how the bees and wasps were attacked by their natural enemies, mainly parasitic wasps, and whether the interaction between the species was affected by their habitats. The nests were located in tropical rainforests, agricultural areas and in coffee plantations grown beneath the forest canopy.

"We found that bees and wasps in modified agricultural areas became more heavily attacked by their parasitic enemies, which raises the question of whether bees will continue to survive and perform well in these areas," said Dr Tylianakis.

"It also raises issues for local farmers who rely on bees to pollinate their crops and use wasps as biological control agents of pests such as caterpillars.

"If wild bees and wasps are more heavily attacked by their natural enemies, farmers will have to hand-pollinate crops and use chemicals to control pests or suffer low crop yields."

However, Dr Tylianakis said the study found that coffee plantations grown under the forest canopy had a similar structure of species interactions to that of the tropical rainforest, rather than the altered structure typical of intensive agriculture such as rice or pasture.



Human-made changes to the environment can have a huge impact on the web of life according to research by Dr Jason Tylianakis.

"Coffee plantations are managed at a low intensity and while providing an income for farmers, do not significantly harm the environment. This shows that it's possible to manage habitats in a way that is compatible with agriculture and is better for the species that live in the area."

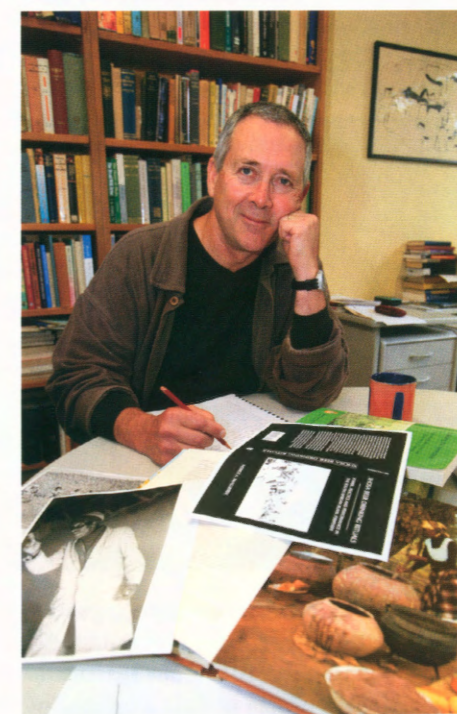
The only downside to this was the low price farmers received for coffee.

"But the increasing popularity of fair-trade

coffee may help with that, and provide financial incentives for farmers to manage their crops in a sustainable way."

Similar studies have been carried out in Germany and Australia. Dr Tylianakis hoped to do research along the same lines in New Zealand, using quantitative interaction webs to look at whole communities of plants, insects and their natural enemies in natural and agricultural habitats.

Beer drinking book named one of the best of 2006



Associate Professor Patrick McAllister.

A UC academic's book on the beer-drinking rituals of an ethnic group in South Africa has been named one of the outstanding academic titles of 2006 by the American Library Association (ALA).

Associate Professor Patrick McAllister's (Sociology and Anthropology) book, *Xhosa Beer Drinking Rituals: Power, Practice and Performance in the South African Rural Periphery*, has been included in the list of top titles for 2006 in the January issue of the ALA's magazine, *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*.

Choice offers reviews of more than 7000 academic books, electronic media and internet resources of interest to those involved in higher education each year. Each January the magazine produces a list of what it believes to be the best of the scholarly titles reviewed during the previous year.

Professor McAllister's book, which looks at the social and cultural importance of beer-drinking rituals among the Xhosa people of Transkei, South Africa, was one of 640 titles on the best of 2006 list.

Professor McAllister said he was delighted to have his book placed on the ALA list and to have it so positively reviewed.

"Feedback of this kind is very important for academics," he said.

- *Xhosa Beer Drinking Rituals: Power, Practice and Performance in the South African Rural Periphery* by Patrick McAllister, published by Carolina Academic Press, 2005.

Graduation ceremony marks milestone for successful students



Professor Jacob Bercovitch celebrates receiving the University of Canterbury Research Medal with his wife Gillian (back left) and daughters Daniella (front left) and Liara.

More than 450 University of Canterbury students donned cap and gown for the University's pre-Christmas graduation ceremony on Wednesday 13 December.

The 470 students from across all disciplines were capped in the Christchurch Town Hall ceremony while a further 67 students graduated *in absentia*.

During the ceremony one of two University of Canterbury Research Medals for 2006 was presented to international relations expert Professor Jacob Bercovitch (Political Science and Communication). The second medal will be presented to volcanologist and petrologist Professor Jim Cole (Geological Sciences) during April's graduation.

The Research Medal is presented annually for excellence in research.

Professor Bercovitch works in the general area of international conflict resolution and international mediation. One of the international referees for the award described him as the founding father of the science of international conflict mediation studies.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Roy Sharp gave the graduation address. He said he hoped Canterbury had instilled a sense of intellectual independence in each of its graduates.

"I hope we have taught you how to think independently — not what to think, but how to think."

Professor Sharp reflected on the many graduates who had passed through the University, challenging the graduates to pick up the mantle of leadership and be the leaders of tomorrow.

Nine teaching awards were also presented to University staff for excellence in teaching achievement. The recipients were: Dr Megan Clayton (UC Opportunity); Professor Peter Harland (Chemistry); Stephen Hickson (Economics); Associate Professor Angus McIntosh (Biological Sciences); Dr Colleen Mills (Management); Dr Ken Morison (Chemical and Process Engineering); Dr Cornelia Sears (American Studies); Dr Natalia Chaban (National Centre for Research on Europe); and Dr Alan Wright (Theatre and Film Studies).

University success a dream come true for masters graduate

Graduating from the University of Canterbury with a Masters degree was beyond the wildest dreams of solo mother of two teenagers, Qing Tang (right).

Qing graduated with a MEd (Counselling) during the University's December ceremony after battling language barriers, cultural difficulties and personal hardship.

"It was like a dream for me," she said. "I never thought I would make it this far. Eight years ago I didn't know how to speak English and I thought I didn't know anything. I never believed I would ever graduate from a university, not even in a dream."

Qing is now employed as a full-time counsellor with a local agency, a job she finds both challenging and rewarding.

"People open up to you, which is very unusual in today's world. It's a privilege to be allowed to share a part of their lives. In a way, they give me an opportunity to grow both professionally and personally."

Qing was born in Beijing in 1962. Her mother was killed in 1966 during the Chinese Cultural Revolution, one month before Qing's fourth birthday, and her father was sent into exile to



China's rural countries for 12 years. Qing said she was raised "like a football", being passed around without a chance to establish roots. In the 1980s she trained as a nurse, working as a dental nurse and a paediatrics nurse in two Beijing hospitals before moving to Christchurch with her husband in 1988. Qing said she found the move difficult as she did not speak English, struggled to find work and suffered from culture shock and relocation adjustment. Six years later she had to rebuild

her life again after her marriage broke up.

In 1998 Qing said she set herself a goal — to see what university was like. She took two papers — sociology and women's studies — and passed both. Since then Qing has not looked back, receiving the Belinda Trainor Undergraduate Memorial Scholarship in 2001, completing a BA in psychology and women's studies in 2003 and in December last year graduating with a MEd (Counselling).

"Counselling appeals because of the personal development involved. You grow and learn a lot in the process as each case and each session is different. I like that challenge."

She said studying at Canterbury had been "fantastic" and gaining her degree had given her more self-confidence and a sense of what she could achieve. UC also provided her with an opportunity to learn, to grow, and to challenge herself as well as enjoy the fruits of education.

"I now feel that I can do more than I ever thought I could. I am very proud of myself. I used to think that if I stayed alive and lived to see my children grow up that would be good enough. But this is even better."

Struggle and perseverance wins through for BSc graduate

Six years ago, a serious illness left Neelusha Memon in a coma for four months and she lost her speech, mobility and most of her eyesight.

Fast forward to last December and Neelu was crossing the stage at the Christchurch Town Hall to receive her Bachelor of Science degree, with a smile on her face stretching from ear to ear.

The 22-year-old had battled through years of "hellish" rehabilitation and had to persevere with her studies and fight her way through many obstacles on her path to graduation.

In 2000 as a result of a minor virus Neelu contracted acute disseminated encephalomyelitis. The resulting inflammation in her brain and spinal chord left her with only 40% vision in each eye (which makes her legally blind) and saw her having to relearn how to walk, talk, swallow and use her hands.

"Rehabbing was hell. It's not a process I would ever want to go through again. It required every ounce of my strength. You don't get through it if you're not 100 million per cent determined."

Neelu faced her academic goals with the same dogged determination she tackled her physical rehabilitation.

"I had such difficulty reading. When I started I could only read a sentence at a time and my eyes would be tired. But I persevered and kept pushing my eyes."

She said she faced major challenges almost daily during her university studies towards a double major in physiology and geography. Lecturers pointing to PowerPoint presentations during classes which she couldn't read, and accessing library books for assignments both provided frustrations but fortunately she had a great support network to help her over such hurdles.

"I had a lot of help. This degree has not been just my work. I've had help from the Foundation of the Blind, tutors, amazing lecturers and even just friends and PhD students in different departments who have helped me with my material. And Disability Support Services at UC — Gill Fowler and her team — were fantastic. I wouldn't have got through my degree without Gill. I owe her half my degree."

Neelu is now working as a project officer at Community and Public Health, a division of the Canterbury District Health Board. When not behind her desk, she can be found on the back seat of a tandem bicycle pedalling her way towards realising another dream.

In 2005 during the third year of her degree, Neelu, inspired by watching Sarah Ulmer's golden performance at the Athens Olympics, took up cycling. Neelu is able to cycle as a tandem rider with a sighted pilot and,



Neelu celebrates her graduation day with her parents, Farida Memon (International Office) and Professor Ali Memon (Lincoln University).

along with two-time New Zealand road race champion Annalissa Farrell, has her sights set on representing New Zealand at the 2008 Paralympiad in Beijing.

Neelu said she has plenty of advice and words of encouragement to share with students

working their way through a degree.

"Don't look at anything as a barrier. Fight through it. University isn't meant to be easy and sure it can be harder for people with disabilities but you've just got to have the drive to keep thinking about the end goal."

Graduation organiser farewells event after 28 years

After overseeing more than 100 Canterbury University graduation ceremonies, Michael Sykes (right) recently bade a fond farewell to the event he has organised for the past 28 years.

Mr Sykes, project manager in Student Administration, retires on 16 February and the 13 December graduation was the last ceremony he will be involved in.

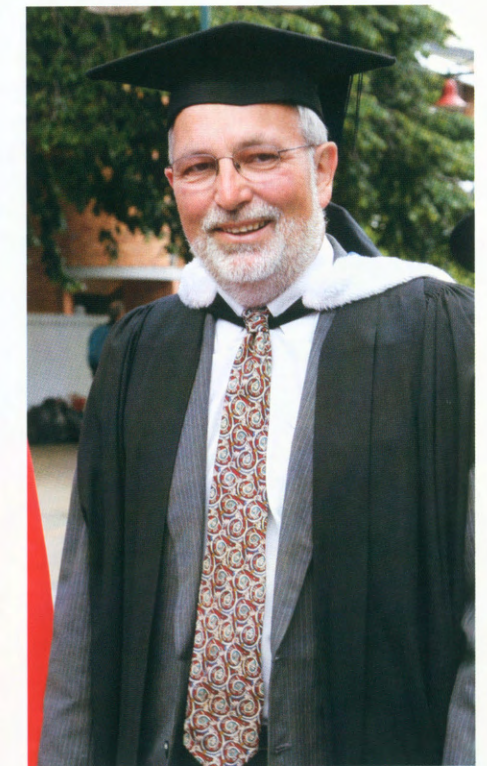
While looking forward to retirement and the many opportunities it would give him to play more bridge, bowls and golf, Mr Sykes said he would miss being involved in the graduation ceremonies.

"Graduation is probably the best part of the job. It's the pomp and formality I like and the fact the students enjoy the occasion. You can see them celebrating all that work and the achievement of completing their degrees."

At December's graduation Mr Sykes, wearing Victoria University Bachelor of Science regalia, sat on stage with the University Council and academic staff during the ceremony, something he had never done before.

"I'm usually looking after things behind the scenes," he said.

Mr Sykes was thanked for all his work by Vice-Chancellor Professor Roy Sharp during the graduation address.



Commerce staff train for 100km crusade for charity



The Commerce Crusaders team – (from left) Simon Arnold, Professor Nigel Healey, Toni Hodge and Glenda Lorimer – limber up before an Oxfam Trailwalker training session.

A team of four University of Canterbury College of Business and Economics staff are gearing up to walk 100km around Taupo this April in New Zealand's only charity ultrachallenge.

Calling themselves the Commerce Crusaders, the team, comprising Accreditation Manager Toni Hodge, College Manager Simon Arnold, External Relations Director Glenda Lorimer and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Business and Economics) Professor Nigel Healey, will join more than 180 teams from around the country taking part in the Oxfam Trailwalker NZ 2007 on April 14 and 15.

The event, which is held as a major fundraiser to support Oxfam's humanitarian and development work, involves teams of four people taking on the physical challenge of walking 100km in a 36-hour period.

The motivating words on Oxfam's website read that every three seconds a child dies of extreme poverty and that in the 36 hours each team has to complete 100kms, 43,200 children will perish needlessly. That is the equivalent of every single New Zealand child under the age of three wiped out in a single weekend from a completely preventable cause.

The idea to form a team to enter the event came from team leader Ms Hodge who saw a news item about the inaugural New Zealand Oxfam Trailwalker last year and was quick off the mark to invite College staff to take up the challenge when this year's event was launched. In addition to the four who put their hands up to take part, College Management Accountant Verity Webber and Personal Assistant to the PVC Irene Fussell will accompany the team as support crew.

Ms Lorimer says all the team agree it is a worthwhile cause to support but also see the event as both a personal challenge and a great team-building opportunity.

"This event not only provides an opportunity to build stronger relationships between team members and to get involved with all College staff through fundraising events, we would also like to think we could inspire an annual UC commitment with teams entering from other colleges or service centres."

The Commerce Crusaders have committed to raise at least \$5000 for Oxfam and are already well on their way to reaching their target thanks to the generous support of colleagues

at the College and wider university, family and friends.

They have held raffles, received pledges and donations online, and each member of the team and crew has agreed to make at least one "sacrifice" each, with the money saved being put into a collection jar each week. Ms Lorimer, for instance, has foregone her regular caffeine fixes and fellow team members will regularly walk to work and put the petrol money saved in the jar.

Between now and April the team will hold a number of fundraisers including more raffles, a garage sale and sausage sizzle, a movie night at Rialto and a salsa night at the Coppertop. These will be advertised in *UC Diary*.

The team began training in November and has been focusing on individual training programmes as well as meeting up weekly for longer team walks up the Port Hills and around Banks Peninsula, invitations to which have been extended to any staff members who wish to join in and help spur the team on.

To follow the Commerce Crusaders training and fundraising progress check out the team's blog at: www.oxfam.org.nz/events/OTW07_079.