



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

2009 EQUITY INITIATIVE GRANTS

SHOWCASE

Tuesday 16 February 2010
Purdue Room, Callaghan Campus
9.00am – 12.30pm

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INTRODUCTION

The University has an obligation to eliminate discrimination, value diversity, promote equity and to establish policies and practices that positively assist equity target groups.

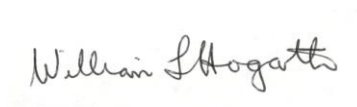
The Equity Initiative Grants were established in 2007 as a way of supporting “grass roots” activities that assist equity target groups. The Grants provide up to \$5000 for individuals and groups within Faculties and Divisions, to develop innovative activities that enhance staff and student equity and diversity.

The Equity Initiative Grants are one example of the framework that the University has developed to ensure that activities to promote equity and diversity are developed and implemented in partnership with stakeholders. This approach aims to build capacity and create opportunities for all members of the University and its communities.

The conceptual framework that underpins the University’s approach to equity and diversity is characterized by the following principles:

- **Educate and Promote:** We will promote and celebrate our diversity by educating our communities on the value of creating a work and study environment where everyone can reach their full potential.
- **Resource and Support:** We will develop programs that offer support and provide opportunities to all members of our University community and embed our efforts into mainstream activities so that they are part of day to day operations.
- **Evaluate and Compare:** We will evaluate our activities and benchmark ourselves against relevant institutional and community partners

Eight Equity Initiative Grants were awarded in 2009 to project teams across the University, including one located in Singapore. I congratulate all of the project teams for their wonderful work and I thank them for their personal and professional commitment. It is through dedication such as this that we can continue to develop our University as a place of opportunity.



Professor Bill Hogarth

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Development of “University of Newcastle Safer Community” resources

Dr Cathy Stone, Ms Anna Braithwaite, Ms Kim Foster, Dr Stephanie Brookman

Aims:

Liaison between the University of Newcastle Behavioural Risk Group (BRG) and Monash University led to an interest from the BRG in the suite of documents on risk management that has been produced by Monash. These include information and advice for staff on dealing with student behaviour that is potentially harmful to themselves and/or others, as well as other safety/risk issues such as impact of drugs/alcohol, risk-taking behaviours etc. Monash was willing for these to be used by other Universities as long as they were acknowledged. The Behavioural Risk Group saw a need to adapt these documents for use by the University of Newcastle, to enable staff to have immediate advice on dealing with student safety issues.

Desired Outcomes:

The Equity group potentially benefiting the most from this project are students with disabilities, particularly those with psychiatric/psychological disabilities and/or substance abuse disorders. Students from low SES backgrounds and rural/remote students will also benefit from the project as staff become more alert to incidents of risk-taking behaviours and lack of personal safety amongst students. A study on student safety, conducted by Ruth Gresham and colleagues with the assistance of a 2008 Equity Initiative Grant, indicated that students from rural/remote areas were more at risk, in terms of personal safety, than were local students.

Strategies:

- Workshop for a range of staff, including those on the BRG and other appropriate staff, presented by Monash staff, on the development of their safety strategies and their Safer Community Program.
- Gathering of appropriate and accurate information, collating this for the contents of the documents and liaison with the Marketing Unit over production
- Design and printing of materials
- Development of “Campus Care” Program – including web site and launch
- Production of A5 flyers and larger posters with key points to alert staff to the information and pointing them to a web-site.

Challenges:

- Adapting the documents not always straightforward – many details to take into account
- Decisions to be made over the most appropriate use of one particular document (Social and Academic Functioning Scale) – eg. who should use it; training required; where the information goes etc
- Decisions to be made about the Campus Care line – email/phone/face-to-face; which area it sits in; who makes the decisions; how referrals are made etc

Such challenges were dealt with by discussion and consultation, including very helpful input from legal unit. A member of the legal unit was invited to be part of the

BRG to assist with some of the more difficult legal and ethical issues. This has proved to be a crucial part of the process.

Evaluation:

The project has not yet been completed. Some of the key documents have not yet been rolled out, as training will be required. The type and method of training is being planned for 2010, in association with Mental Health First Aid training for staff.

Once completed, evaluation of the usefulness of the documents will be conducted.

Capacity Building:

This project has assisted the University to:

- Protect the safety and well-being of the university community
- Mitigate the risk of lethal violence on campus
- Ensure application of best practice with regard to campus and student safety
- Promote a culture of care, concern and early intervention
- Bring together knowledge and expertise within different areas of the University to work together to create a safer environment

The experiences of clinical educators and mentors with international nursing students in clinical placements

Sarah Yeun-Sim Jeong, Michael Hazelton
Carol Norton, Noelene Hickey

Aims:

Background of the project

While the University is taking various measures to ensure the best possible support for international Bachelor of Nursing students and staff in the University, little thought has been given to the clinical educators and mentors who provide mentorship and support to international students during clinical placements. This finding is also supported in the literature (Dragon, 2009; Giordano et al., 2007) that the work and effort involved in clinical education are often unacknowledged and unsupported. Therefore, it was necessary to examine how the clinical facilitators and mentors support and mentor the international students, what challenges they have encountered, and what resource/support(s) are needed for themselves.

Dragon, N. (2009). Nurse education today: Our students our future. *Australian Nursing Journal*, 16(7), 22-25.

Giordano, L., Mahalik, A., & Bartlett, D. (2007). Mentors at the bench: Supporting clinical educators. *Canadian Journal of Medical Laboratory Science*, 69(6), 242-245.

Aims of the project were to:

- explore clinical educators' and mentors' experiences with international nursing students in clinical placements
- identify the challenges that clinical educators and mentors have encountered with international nursing students
- identify the strategies/approaches used by clinical educators and mentors to deal with international nursing students
- develop a resource/structure/system(s) that will support clinical educators and mentors to promote 'safe practice' by international nursing students in clinical placements

Desired Outcomes:

The project aimed to develop a resource to help both clinical facilitators in clinical settings by examining the challenges they have encountered and the strategies they have successfully implemented to promote 'safe practice'.

Strategies:

Seven clinical facilitators were individually interviewed between August and November in 2009. The interviews were recorded in audio-tape then transcribed in verbatim for in depth analysis.

Challenges:

Tight timeframes were an issue as clinical staff had competing priorities. A longer time period would have facilitated greater involvement from this group. EIG be offered earlier each year to enable successful candidates to complete the project in the same year.

Evaluation:

The findings will be presented to the academics, conjoints, and contract staff in the Teaching & Learning week at the School of Nursing and Midwifery, and the showcase of the EIG in Feb 2010. The responses will be considered for ongoing action and strategies to be implemented.

‘Enhancing success of medical students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) in doctor-patient interactions, particularly patient directed consultations involving sensitive issues such as sexuality’

Dr. Sue Outram
Dr. Conor Gilligan

Aims:

To develop an audiovisual resource that gives CALD students an opportunity to 1) experience real life scenarios involving culturally challenging situations; 2) provide practice in responding and 3) see demonstrations of best practice responses, in order to achieve required clinical competency.

Desired Outcomes:

To develop an audiovisual resource that gives CALD students an opportunity to 1) experience real life scenarios involving culturally challenging situations; 2) provide practice in responding and 3) see demonstrations of best practice responses, in order to achieve required clinical competency.

Strategies:

Literature review outcomes.

- 1) CALD students tend to perform more poorly in assessments involving complex communication skills.
- 2) Patient centred consultation and the partnership model is not universally accepted and the appropriateness of each model should be presented to students.
- 3) There is some debate about the appropriateness of using simulated patients to assess skills involving genuineness and empathy. The latter is complex and contextual.
- 4) One large study found there were three main aspects that predicted performance at oral assessments in undergraduate medicine (OSCA's): empathic versus interrogatory style; thematic staging; values and attitudes. These themes helped inform the emphasis and written teaching material to go with the DVD.

Focus Group.

CALD students who failed a communication skills assessment (sexuality and counselling skills) in year 3 or had been identified in clinical practice as needing additional help were invited to take part in a discussion about their experiences of learning counselling skills and sexuality, and the OSCA assessment. Any cultural or linguistic barriers experienced were explored.

Skills Laboratories.

CALD students who failed a communication skills assessment (sexuality and counselling skills) were invited to an individual review and remediation session with a tutor. This included: a student role-play with a simulated patient, filming of this and of discussion with the tutor. Student responses (feelings, thoughts, actions) were documented, feedback exchanged.

Production of a DVD.

Using the information collected above a DVD was produced. The DVD consists of:

- 1) a simulated consultation between a Dr. and a female patient who has presented to a sexual health clinic with a sensitive sexual health issue. (asking to have STI testing and distressed because her husband has had an affair).
 - 2) interviews with past CALD students talking about the difficulties they had with sexuality and counselling skills.
 - 3) interviews with simulated patients giving feedback about good and poor consultations they have experienced.
 - 4) An interview with a specialist doctor, an international medical graduate, who describes his experiences in learning patient centred consultation in Australia.
- Learning prompts, including questions for reflection, will be incorporated in the DVD. Written support materials will accompany the DVD.

Challenges:

Finishing within the timeframe was always going to be difficult - there are many things still to be completed.

As one's enthusiasm for the project grows the vision becomes larger and the budget limited what could ultimately be produced. More money could have produced a top-class resource that could have been marketed and sold.

An advisory group was formed but due to extremely busy academic staff a full face-to-face meeting was never managed and we had to rely on e-mail communication.

Evaluation:

The DVD has not yet been finalised. There are plans to use the DVD with medical students studying sexuality and counselling skills in semester 1, 2010. It has been initially designed for self study therefore each student will be asked to complete a series of evaluation questions, and these will be collected when they return the DVD. Feedback from tutors will be collected and trends in examination results will be examined. A meeting of the advisory group is planned to review the use of the DVD and to discuss a research project incorporating evaluation of this project.

Understanding and enhancing the experience of male occupational therapy students enrolled at the University of Newcastle

Kirsti Haracz

Joseph Judge, Professor Susan Ryan

Aims:

According to a labour force study conducted by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in 2006 only 6.4% of the occupational therapy workforce are men. An Australian study by Meade, Brown and Trevan-Hawke (2005) found that job satisfaction among male and female occupational therapists was similar and the timeframe for males considering leaving the profession was longer, 8.4 years compared to 7.8 years. These findings would suggest that the issue behind the low proportion of men in the profession is the recruitment and retention of male students in entry level degree programs.

This assertion is consistent with statistics from the University of Newcastle where male students comprised, on average, less than ten percent of the total enrolments in occupational therapy each year from 2004 to 2009. Attrition from the program of male students compared to female students was consistently high, averaging 17.8% versus 6.6%. As a result the proportion of males completing occupational therapy degrees in the years 2004-2008 was on average 6% of the total cohort.

Desired Outcomes:

This project had two core aims which were;

1. To increase understanding of the experience of male students within the occupational therapy program at the University of Newcastle.
2. To develop and implement ongoing strategies to improve the experience of this group of students

Strategies:

- Focus groups were conducted with male students and local male OT's.
 - Ethical approval was gained from the University HREC (Approval no. H2009-0185).
 - Discussion points included, why men choose occupational therapy as a profession, participants' positive and negative experiences in their undergraduate program and ideas for enhancing both the appeal of occupational therapy as a profession for men and the student experience of men in undergraduate occupational therapy programs.
 - Discussions were audio-recorded, transcribed and thematic analysis of the transcripts was conducted.
- Findings from the focus groups have, and will continue to be reported to OT academics and practice educators via:
 - Presentation to occupational therapy academic staff in November 2009
 - Paper at the OT Australia NSW/ACT conference in November 2009
 - Paper to be submitted to the Australian Occupational Therapy Journal
 - Presentation scheduled in the occupational therapy seminar series at UoN in 2010

- Four networking events were organised throughout the year (three funded by the grant) for male students and occupational therapists.
- Other strategies to improve the experience of male occupational therapy students were identified from focus group data and are in various stages of implementation:
 - Involving more men in occupational therapy program delivery at university
 - Considering ways to ensure male students have the opportunity to have a male supervisor on placement, ideally early in their degree
 - Supporting male students having the opportunity to work with other male students
 - Inclusiveness, without singling male students out for special attention
 - Being aware of catering to different learning styles and needs both in program delivery and on placement
 - Developing awareness among female practice educators re. accommodating and including male students on placement
- Dissemination of these strategies has and will continue to occur via;
 - Inclusion in Practice Education courses
 - Fact sheets to practice educators allocated male students
 - Discussion with OT academics and conjoints

Challenges:

Small numbers of male occupational therapy students, and therefore a small pool to draw from for focus group research – a decision was made to include local male occupational therapists who are involved in the networking group.

Evaluation:

- A total of 14 students engaged in the networking events. These events were also supported by the participation of a total of nine local male occupational therapists.
- In an evaluation survey students described a range of benefits of the events, including
 - opportunities to get to know other male students,
 - having a sense of belonging to a larger group rather than feeling isolated,
 - opportunities to share experiences and learn from the experiences of others, in particular the clinicians, and
 - one student reported that it had helped him to decide to stay with occupational therapy.
- The networking events were also identified in the focus group discussions as being of benefit and highly valued by the students.
- Time frame has not allowed for evaluation of other strategies at this stage.

Capacity Building:

This project has added value to the university's commitment to enhancing equity by giving voice to a minority group of students and implementing practical strategies to improve their student experience.

‘Developing, Implementing and Evaluating a pilot Peer Mentoring Scheme for Open Foundation by Distance Students’

Dr Keryl Kavanagh
Dr Susan West, Ms Helene Clark, Ms Joyleen Christensen

Aims:

The English Language and Foundation Centre has been conducting a mentor scheme for its on-campus students in Open Foundation since 1999. It is widely recognised that peer mentoring provides significant help to new students as they adjust to a University learning environment. It is also recognised that students who study by distance mode often have difficulties with managing their time, with feeling that they know how their study materials relate to the overall course objectives, and just feel isolated. The drop-out rate for students studying by distance is higher than that for students studying on-campus. Consequently, there was a real need to provide a mentor scheme to students studying by distance in order to provide an equitable experience, but also so that distance students could experience the benefits of peer mentoring.

Desired Outcomes:

The project set out to train a number of former Open Foundation by Distance students as peer mentors and to put them in contact with current students. Mentors would encourage students to think about time management, keeping up-to-date with their work, listen to any issues that students might have with the course, recommend contact with student services and/or lecturers to resolve any difficulties. Mentors contacted current students on two occasions in the semester – first in week 2, and then in week 6. Mentors debriefed with the Centre’s Mentor Co-ordinator. As this was a pilot scheme, feedback was sought from Mentors and Mentees, with a view to refining the scheme ready for implementation in Semester 1, 2010.

Strategies:

In conjunction with the University’s Transition and Retention Manager, a training package was developed for mentoring in a distance context. Appropriate former students were identified and invited to participate in the project. A 4 hour training session took place where mentors were given advice about the role of a mentor, an information package with essential contacts and undertook a role-play exercise to alert them to possible difficulties that may arise in a mentoring situation. A telephone script for each of the two interventions was developed and work shopped as part of the training package.

Mentors were allocated a group of 6 students, and asked to phone them twice during semester. Mentors would debrief with the Centre’s Mentor Co-ordinator after each round of phone calls.

Challenges:

The project encountered a number of challenges, from finding suitable dates for Mentor training, to fielding questions from Mentors about how many times they should keep trying to contact students.

Most challenges were overcome by having a flexible approach to the project. Eleven students attended the Mentor Training Session. However, a small number of students, who had undertaken the University Mentor Training with the Transition and Retention Manager, were unavailable to attend the Distance training. For these students we provided an on-line version of the training, and a telephone role-play with the Centre's Mentor Co-ordinator. Closer liaison between Mentor and Mentor Co-ordinator was maintained for those receiving training in this way.

Evaluation:

The project has been evaluated in a number of ways.

Initially the training package was evaluated by the University's Transition and Retention Manager.

Mentors evaluated the training they received immediately after the training day, and subsequently after each round of student contact.

Mentors and Mentees were sent an Evaluation Survey which they completed anonymously and returned to the project co-ordinator.

Both Mentors and Mentees reported that the project was worth doing and that they enjoyed being part of the project. Some mentees have indicated that they would like to train as Mentors in 2010.

Capacity Building:

The project identified an area of activity where students were not receiving the same support as on-campus students. The project addressed a logistical issue – how to train mentors for a Distance program – and a support issue both for current students and mentors.

As a result of the Distance Mentor Scheme, there are now a number of mentors with training that allows them to provide a significant service to the University by supporting new students through the difficulties they face early in their first semester of study.

Is there a way with AWiL at the University of Newcastle?

Judith Scott, Pauline Chiarelli, Deborah Cockrell
Robin Callister, Chris Paul

Aims:

It is widely acknowledged that there is insufficient representation and participation of academic women in senior leadership roles in Australian universities. To remedy this situation Universities Australia has developed an “Action Plan for Women” which aims to increase number of women in Australian universities with high academic appointments - Associate Professor and Professor - and appointments to senior leadership roles in universities.

Since 2006, the University of Newcastle has introduced a range of initiatives to enhance the active representation and participation of academic women in senior leadership roles in the University. Such initiatives include the establishment of *Women@UoN* and the accompanying program of activities, Career Enhancement Fellowships for Women and Equity Research Scholarships, all of which have experienced strong participation by academic women at the University.

A significant initiative of the University in this area has been the *Academic Women in Leadership (AWiL)* program which commenced in 2007. The AWiL program aims to provide academic women with the opportunity to gain skills and insight into leadership, to foster individual talents in this area and to help women find the highest level of fulfilment in leadership roles in the university. In particular, it is hoped that participants will gain knowledge and experience of the practice, systems and structures of the University, develop an understanding of their individual styles of leadership, and develop the skills of leading and managing within a diverse community.

The program is conducted throughout the year and consists of four 2- day workshops conducted off-campus and facilitated by an external expert in leadership development. Contemporaneous activities include a mentoring program, executive coaching, a guest speaker program with speakers sourced from within and without the university, and a range of reading materials.

During 2007 and 2008 thirty five women completed the program, with a further 19 women undertaking the program in 2009.

The aim of this project was to evaluate the outcomes of the AWiL program with respect to the attainment of individual and institutional goals in female academic leadership.

Desired Outcomes:

The project aims to determine if the AWiL program has assisted participants in their personal development and goal setting, with a view to their taking up leadership roles in the University. Has participation in the program assisted academic women to achieve personal leadership goals and/or placed them on a forward trajectory

towards achieving their goals? Has the AWiL program resulted in more women being appointed to leadership positions in the University?

Outcome data will be used to determine future directions in this area in the University.

Strategies:

This project was carried out in three stages.

The first stage was the development of a questionnaire, which allowed the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, to be distributed to all participants from the 2007-8 AWiL programs (n=35). Wide consultation ensured that the outcome data would assist in the formulation of future directions for the University.

The second stage involved personal interviews, either face to face or by mail with respondents to the questionnaire. Interviews were conducted by a research assistant who themed the responses and will also transcribe and analyse the qualitative data obtained. All participants were asked identical questions regarding leadership goals before and after the AWiL program, perceived leadership trajectory before and after the program, and key aspects of their trajectory believed to have changed or accelerated as a result of the program. Participants were also asked to describe whether and how the program improved their actual or perceived leadership prospects and to identify leadership roles attained following the program. The data was analysed to identify emergent themes regarding leadership (or other) outcomes, future directions and the degree to which the AWiL program was related to those outcomes and directions.

The third stage will be the organisation of a half day workshop involving 2007-9 AWiL participants (n=54) to present the findings of the research project and discuss future directions for promoting women academic leadership in the University. An important goal of the workshop will be the development of short and long term objectives for promoting female leadership at the University and clear strategies to make them happen. The workshop is proposed for early 2010.

Evaluation:

The questionnaire and interview invitation was emailed to 30 participants in the 2007 & 2008 AWiL programs. Thirteen participants returned the questionnaire and 11 of the 13 were interviewed. One participant submitted a written response to the interview questions. Approximately half of the participants attended the 2007 AWiL program and half attended the 2008 program. A range of academic levels from Senior Lecturer to Professor were included in the study group.

Key themes to emerge from the interviews are summarised below.

Attitude towards career advancement/career progress before the AWiL Program

Approximately half of the study group described themselves as ambitious and wishing to take on higher level leadership roles in the University, while the other half, some of whom were already in leadership roles, were not ambitious to undertake more senior roles in the University.

Challenges to achieving career goals

A number of external and internal challenges were described. These included juggling career and family needs, personality not compatible with high level success in a university environment, not having the time/background in research to enable promotion, and poor mentorship and support in career goals from senior university staff. Approximately 20% of participants indicated that there had been no significant challenges to their achievement of career goals.

Changes in approach to leadership and career advancement since commencing the AWiL program

A large number of changes were reported. All participants reported greater clarity regarding career pathways, with the majority moving towards career advancement through personal confirmation of career goals and the subsequent development of a strategic approach to achieving individual goals. All reported greater confidence to apply for/take up new leadership roles and all believed that they understood the University structures and processes better, particularly the requirements for academic promotion in the University. Approximately one third of participants believed that they had learnt valuable management skills through the AWiL program which had assisted them in their university roles.

On a personal level, participants reported a greater sense of confidence and empowerment and a greater sense of personal awareness in their current university roles and/or personal style of leadership. Approximately half of the study group reported that the AWiL program directly supported them achieving promotion or a successful scholarship/fellowship, with the remainder indicating that the program assisted them in less direct ways to achieve success in their roles. With respect to the contemporaneous activities, almost 100% of participants found the mentoring sessions very useful and all regarded the readings and executive coaching highly.

Appointment of women to leadership positions at the University of Newcastle

Overall, women at Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor levels at the University of Newcastle have increased from 28.8% in 2006 to 31% in 2008. However, at the Head of School level, only 6% are women. The personal empowerment of women reported in this project should result in more women seeking senior leadership roles in the near future. Career development, including the opportunity to attend an AWiL program early in a woman's academic career may also assist with developing future female leaders in the University.

Capacity Building:

The project has provided important data for determining the future direction of the University with respect to equity initiatives supporting academic women to undertake leadership roles in the University.

Challenges:

The project was difficult to complete in the timeframe allowed. However, the final part of the project – the half day workshop with all AWiL Participants – will take place early in 2010 and useful future directions should emerge from this final workshop.

The low percentage of respondents was also a challenge. The original timeframe was extended to gain more participants.

“YOU ARE HERE NOW” – Celebrating GLBTIQ Lives at the UoN

Mr Gregg Heathcote & Dr Marguerite Johnson
Mr Gianni Di Gravio, Ms Lyn Keily
Mr Peter Longworth

Aims:

In keeping with similar equity initiatives at other Australian and overseas universities, an ALLY network was instigated at the UoN in 2007. The goal of such ALLY networks is to grow awareness of and support for GLBTIQ (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex & Queer) staff and students on campuses. The YAHN project was a pioneering effort to promote such growth, being perhaps the first exhibition of its kind on an Australian campus, and certainly the first exhibition of its kind in the Newcastle region.

Desired Outcomes:

YAHN was intended to put the ALLY ethos into very visible effect, raising the profile of GLBTIQ staff and students through a major exhibition and seminar highlighting their historic and ongoing contributions to the life of the University, providing a proud fillip for GLBTIQ members of our community, and establishing the presence of the ALLY network as a servant of diversity within campus culture.

Strategies:

The YAHN project was accomplished collaboratively, in the process forging tremendously valuable connections with individual queer staff members, the local queer community, and the student association's Queer Collective. The exhibition and seminar were effectively promoted via Facebook; were held in conjunction with the annual Rainbow Festival; and cooperatively involved the staff and relevant collections of Newcastle Regional Museum. Local impact was enhanced thereby, and the attention YAHN attracted was magnified.

Challenges:

Appropriately flamboyant decoration of the exhibition space was not without its difficulties. Careful planning and consultation was required. Nonetheless the necessary approvals and assistance were smoothly secured, and the renovated space was met with much public delight. One incident of homophobic graffiti applied to an exhibition mannequin posed a curatorial challenge. Fortunately the offending stain was removed with relative ease. Moreover the incident plainly vindicated the exhibition's necessity, and the strong official condemnation of such homophobic vilification posted in response clearly demonstrated the University's commitment to see a culture of genuine equity firmly established.

Evaluation:

Thorough documentation of the YAHN project's success is available online at the Cultural Collections blogsite <http://uoncc.wordpress.com/2009/10/14/you-are-here-now-exhibition-launched/> with links to still photos, video footage, radio interview, and the exhibition guestbook complete with a fine array of overwhelmingly positive comments. Further comments collected via Facebook, and in person, support these very strong indicators of the project's success.

Capacity Building:

The UoN ALLY network is still in its youth and the outstanding success of the associated YAHN project has now generated significant momentum for the network's future endeavours, and its further growth. Several staff and students have suggested that a YAHN-type exhibition should now be an annual event. Planning is certainly underway for a smaller version of the exhibition to be mounted at the Central Coast Campus. YAHN has also nicely complemented the University's reputation for research and teaching in the area of gender diversity, a sympathetic strength which should furthermore serve our ALLY network well.

‘Enhancing research grant application and success amongst Indigenous academics’

Judy Alexander, Cheryl Newton, Jodie Ryan, Carolyn Fairhurst

Aims:

The Research Office was previously holding bi-monthly morning teas with Indigenous academics to discuss grants (in particular ARC grants) as well as holding targeted meetings for major grant rounds with potential applicants. Whilst these were offered problems were still experienced with timely application preparation and researchers requiring a large amount of Research Services’ staff time late in the application process. Whilst senior researchers were available to provide a peer review the applications were not well enough developed for comprehensive assessment and feedback. When Indigenous researchers were successful in obtaining funds problems were experienced in the timely establishment of these grants and ongoing management. The first aim of this project was to train a Wollotuka staff member who would then be in position to work closely with Indigenous researchers on the completion of their application and establishment of their grants so that this process commences at an earlier time and is easier for all involved. The second aim was to develop a manual for Indigenous researchers on grant application and award processes as a valuable ongoing resource within Wollotuka.

This was particularly important in light of Wollotuka’s move away from a Faculty such that the previous access to Faculty provided peer review and administrative research support will have to be provided from within Wollotuka.

Desired Outcomes:

By building up the grant expertise in Wollotuka this project helps ensure that Indigenous researchers are provided with easily accessible support in the grant applications process, knowledge of grant opportunities and establishment. In addition this support would hopefully encourage new researchers to make the first step towards application submission which can seem very daunting initially. This has implications for participation, career development and research performance.

It is envisioned that this would lead to an increase in the number of grants applied for and held by members of Wollotuka. This would be evaluated using the Research Office database system to report on grant activity by Wollotuka staff members. This can report on the number of grants applied for, the number of successful grants and the size of grants awarded.

Strategies:

This project involved the secondment of Cheryl Newton who is a staff member from Wollotuka to the Research Office to learn about the research grant process. Cheryl attended the Research Office on a Monday and Tuesday from August to September and participated in a training program. This Training Program covered identifying grant funding opportunities, applying for grants, establishing grants (ethics, safety, creating accounts, etc), managing grants (finance, reporting etc), internal research funding and involved staff from the Research Office, Finance and HR.

During this process Cheryl Newton and Carolyn Fairhurst developed an 'Indigenous Research Manual - A Guide for Indigenous Researchers and Research Administrators'. This is a great document and is attached for reference.

Evaluation:

The major quantitative evaluation of this project will occur in 12 months and longer to see if there has been an increase in grant applications by Wollotuka researchers.

In the short term the project has been successful in the knowledge now held by Cheryl Newton. This can be identified by the online manual which she has developed using the knowledge learnt whilst participating in the training program. Both Cheryl and Carolyn should be proud of the online manual which is very professional and should prove to be a helpful document for both the Research Office and Wollotuka.

Capacity Building:

Positive knowledge transfer to and from the Research Office and Wollotuka. Personal training of Cheryl Newton in the research grant process as well as learning who to contact within the Chancellery for various enquiries relating to research grants including units outside Research Services such as Finance and OHS.

Challenges:

Initially it was envisaged that a Research Office staff member would be seconded to work with Cheryl but due to staff shortages within the Office this was not possible. The program for Cheryl's training had to be flexible to deal with these changes as they occurred as well as Cheryl and the Research Office staff incorporating this time with their other duties. Due to the commitment of Cheryl and Carolyn this project succeeded despite these hurdles.

Evaluation:

The major quantitative evaluation of this project will occur in 12 months and longer to see if there has been an increase in grant applications by Wollotuka researchers.

Promoting Mental Health Awareness@UON Singapore

DR PETER WARING, DR DOREEN KUM

Background and Introduction:

UoN Singapore has a projected enrolment of over 1600 EFTSL in 2009 in the ten degree programs it offers to local Singaporean and International students. In recent times, both staff and students have reported what appears to be a growing number of students with mental health problems ranging from relatively common concerns such as acute stress and anxiety disorders through to reported incidents of 'self-harming' and threats of suicide. UoN Singapore's partner, PSB Academy, has responded to these growing problems by appointing a Clinical Psychologist and an additional counsellor to bolster student counselling services on campus. Additionally, UON Singapore and PSB Academy are jointly developing a comprehensive mental health strategy involving, primary, secondary and tertiary elements. The primary response plan will address critical incidents on campus while the secondary plan involves efforts to educate staff and students on the mental health resources they can access. The tertiary plan involves a major program of mental health education and awareness designed as a preventive measure.

Aims and Desired Outcomes of Project:

This project was designed to support the tertiary component of preventative mental health strategy through promoting mental health awareness on campus. There are two key elements to this project. The first and most significant component was a Mental Health Awareness Day held on 28 Oct 2009 involving a campus-wide competition for student teams. Five student teams were given a budget of \$100 each to develop a way of educating fellow students on a single mental health problem, how that problem is generally treated, and what resources are available to students should they need help. Students used a variety of communication methods including short films, short plays, performance art, or a series of songs to communicate their mental health issue. Students were judged on their performance and ability to convey their mental health issue. Prizes were awarded to the top three teams. In addition, all students were invited to participate as audience members.

The second method of increasing mental health awareness was by means of distribution of literature to students on mental health issues and the resources they can access should help be required. This literature was distributed to students along with a small 'corporate gift' (pen) which carried the PSB Counselling Service telephone number to serve as a continual reminder of the help available to troubled students (sample door gift enclosed). Local organizations such as the Singapore Association of Mental Health and Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association also participated in this effort by setting up booths in the event hall to hand out pamphlets on relevant topics.

Strategies:

The Mental Health Awareness Day was organized jointly with PSB's Student Affairs Unit. To encourage participation in the competition, posters (see Appendix 1) were displayed at prominent student areas from August. In addition, Dr Shirley Low, the Clinical Psychologist, was available to provide advice to participating teams.

Lecturers were also roped in to promote this event to students during class time. On the day of the event, a banner was displayed at the lobby to attract students to attend the competition. Lucky draw prizes were offered to attendees. Lunch was also provided.

Evaluation:

In our opinion, this event was a big success. More than 300 students turned up to watch the competition. As such, our objective to promote mental health awareness to the student body was achieved. In addition, the five competing teams put together performances that met the objectives of educating students about the symptoms, impact, and help available for particular mental health issues (see Appendix 2 for information on the teams' items). The judging criteria are attached in Appendix 3. The judging panel made up of Ms Porsche Poh (Founder and Director of Silver Ribbon Singapore, Board Director of World Federation for Mental Health and Chairperson of World Mental Health Day 2009 Committee), Mr Zaki Amrullah (Senior Producer for Channel Newsasia's Prime Time Morning News), and Ms Yeo May-Fung (Director of PSB's Student Affairs Unit). All three judges were pleased with the students' performance. Students also benefitted from their feedback. PSB was also well pleased with the event and had expressed interest to have this as an annual event. A video recording of the event is enclosed.

Capacity Building:

We believe that this event led to better understanding of mental health problems among our students as well helping to de-stigmatise mental health issues so that students can be more supportive of those who face such challenges.

Challenges:

As this was the inaugural Mental Health Awareness Day, more publicity of the event was needed to attract student participation and attendance. As such, our expenses exceeded the awarded grant budget. We are thankful to UoN Singapore for contributing to make up for the short fall.