

Chancellor's Welcome

Te Mihi a te Tumu Kaunihera



Dr L. John Wood

Members and friends of the University of Canterbury (UC), tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

2016 was a pivotal year in the renewal of our University, in which we closed one of the most challenging and difficult chapters in UC's long history, and opened a new and exciting one. The transformation in our fortunes as an institution, now so visibly, indeed dramatically under way, has been hard won, and squarely based on massive efforts by so many of our people to deliver on first priorities: regaining student numbers; rebuilding and enhancing infrastructure; and restoring financial viability, while at the same time providing for the re-invention of an already world-class University.

Under the umbrella of our UC Futures programme, being pursued in close partnership with the Government as our principal stakeholder, 2016 saw significant progress achieved in the development of our physical infrastructure; the growth and pattern of student numbers, especially full-fee paying international students; progress towards the consolidation of educational teaching and research on the Ilam campus; and in the embedding of the requirements of our enhanced graduate attributes across the University.

Campus Transformation

Our major green-fields project, the Rutherford Regional Science and Innovation Centre (RRSIC), housing science research and teaching facilities, and designed as a regional asset, achieved fit-out stage, and will be completed in early 2017. RRSIC Stage Two is under

implementation, and will provide workspaces for academic staff and postgraduate students from early 2019.

The rolling rebuild and enhancement of our Engineering precinct is being progressively implemented. The Chemical and Electrical Engineering laboratories and offices were occupied in Term Four of this year. The Civil and Natural Resources Engineering and Mechanical Engineering wings will successively open through 2017. Our strongly growing cohort of engineering students will have the advantage of working in learning and laboratory spaces designed and built for the 21st century.

In April this year, the new Structural Engineering Laboratory (SEL) was delivered under budget, and opened by the Minister for Tertiary Education. This facility provides UC with a platform for seismic and stress testing that is unparalleled in the Southern Hemisphere. Its construction has required extremely high precision and collaboration between UC's civil engineers from the Civil and Natural Resources Engineering Department, other UC staff and the design team. SEL will support world-leading seismic civil engineering at the University, and the QuakeCoRE, which is hosted at UC.

In 2007 the Christchurch College of Education was merged with the University. The integrating of the two institutions to the enhancement of both has been a long and at times challenging road, but will be completed in 2017, when the College of Education, Health and Human Development | Te Rāngai Ako me te Hauora moves into the newly refurbished Rehua (formerly Commerce) building on the Ilam campus. Rehua will also house the Beeby Centre for Innovative Education, named for the UC alumnus and academic who was the greatest educationalist this country has produced.

Now that these major projects are visually assuming full height and final form, the University Council has approved, and management has the next tranche of development firmly in hand. This prioritises projects that will enhance the student experience. The University of Canterbury Students' Association (UCSA) building, which had been closed for nearly six years, has been demolished and will be replaced by a new, leaner, exciting and fit-for-purpose building in 2018. Our students have a fund raising campaign under way to close a funding gap and ensure that their new centre is majority student-owned and operated. I urge you all to join us in supporting the cause.

The University is also seeing increased demand from Greater Christchurch, the rest of New Zealand, and internationally, for student accommodation. Kirkwood Avenue Hall will become available in 2017, providing more than 74 additional beds contiguous to the campus. Further accommodation projects are under active development.

In parallel with these infrastructural developments, and in a number of ways more challenging, complex and important than them, UC continues work on its graduate profile programme to ensure a unique package of experience and learning opportunities are available to our students and graduates.

Our graduates will be critically competent in a core academic discipline of their choosing. They will also be employable, innovative and enterprising; biculturally competent and confident in a multicultural world; engaged with the community; and globally aware and connected. The leadership of the University has endorsed and resourced this work and is determined to succeed in it.

Awards

In 2016 the University Council awarded the title of Canterbury Distinguished Professor to Emeritus Professor Roy Kerr. This is the highest academic title that can be granted by the University, and has been conferred only twice before in our 143-year history. Previous recipients were Nobel Prize winners. Professor Kerr was nominated on the basis of winning the Crafoord Prize in Astronomy, awarded in 2016 by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences 'for fundamental work concerning rotating black holes and their astrophysical consequences'.

The University Council also elected to award one honorary doctorate in 2016. Mr Gavin Bishop was awarded a Doctor of Education (honoris causa) for his contributions as both writer and illustrator of children's literature. In both these capacities Mr Bishop has published 70 books, 40 non-fiction stories and 30 educational readers. His works have been translated into 12 languages, including te reo Māori, and have won numerous national and international awards.

Overall, 2016 was a year of significant academic achievement at UC with 3,703 degrees and diplomas awarded to 3,420 graduates. Of particular note are the historic highs being reached in the award of postgraduate qualifications, as the University retains, and in some respects enhances, its international standing.

Consistent with UC's status as a world-class research-led teaching and learning institution, its Research and Innovation medals are the highest recognition of excellence the Council can extend to our academic staff. In 2016 Associate Professor Michael Tarren-Sweeney was awarded the Innovation medal for the development of the Assessment Checklist Series; a set of psychiatric scales that has led to an important breakthrough in the delivery of mental health care for vulnerable populations of children in New Zealand and abroad. Distinguished Professor David Schiel was awarded the University's Research medal. Professor Schiel is acknowledged as one of New Zealand's pre-eminent marine scientists. He has worked on a wide range of topics in marine science, with internationally recognised contributions in aquaculture, fisheries, kelp forest ecology and the functioning of near-shore ecosystems. Professor Schiel is one of the architects of the National Science Challenge, Sustainable Seas, a long-term funding initiative to address important marine management problems.

Council

I am pleased to report that, following consultation with Ngāi Tahu, Mr Shayne Te Aika has been appointed to the University Council, in accordance with the provisions of its 2015 constitution. Mr Te Aika brings to the Council significant leadership and governance experience from outside the education sector. It has been a busy year for the newly reconstituted Council, during which it has settled in well to the less representational model, its revised procedures and amended statutory responsibilities.

The Council has met 11 times, and held 10 workshops to ensure members were well-informed prior to making significant decisions. The Finance, Planning and Resources Committee, chaired by Ms Catherine Drayton, met 10 times, providing a stream of considered advice to Council on major decisions across its spectrum of portfolio responsibilities. The Audit and Risk Committee, chaired by Mr Peter Ballantyne, closely monitored the risks faced by the University, and ensured that in all aspects of its work the institution complied with its statutory and regulatory obligations. These two committees are the engine-room of Council, and in these challenging times their work places extraordinary demands on chairs and members. The Vice-Chancellor Employment Committee met twice and the new Honours and Appointments Committee once. I should like to thank all Council

‘The developments I have discussed, building as they do on the University of Canterbury’s very special holistic learning experience, will ensure that each year our graduates are more and more ready to connect and contribute effectively from their own communities to the world.’

members for their individual and collective contribution to our large, complex and demanding institution over the past year.

Outstanding support

Our University is supported in many ways and by many people – alumni, friends and benefactors. This help is an increasing part of our life blood. It is this which helps the University to offer a unique student experience, providing the tools and the opportunities that promote personal and professional growth. As the result, our graduates are then able to take up roles in the community and the wider world that allow them truly to make a difference.

In particular I should like to thank the volunteer boards of our three charities, led by Mr Barry Ramsay, Chair of the University of Canterbury Foundation, Professor David Teece, President of the University of Canterbury Foundation in America Inc., and Professor Robin Clark, Chair of the University of Canterbury Trust in the United Kingdom. In 2016 the Foundation received from our friends and alumni and investment income more than \$8.5 million in support of scholarships, research and teaching, buildings and facilities, and outreach programmes; this is an extraordinary contribution to an institution in a country of which it was until quite recently said that there was no culture of philanthropy.

In this regard I acknowledge particularly the generous support of Professor David and Mrs Leigh Teece for the creation of the Teece Museum of Classical Antiquities at the University of Canterbury. The Museum will house teaching and learning resources such as the world-class Logie Collection of Greek and Roman antiquities in a purpose-built facility at the Arts Centre, the historical home of the University. The Teece endowment will also

allow the collection to be expanded as and when appropriate items become available.

Finally, let me close my reflections on 2016 by expressing, on behalf of the University, its gratitude for the Government's helpful and proactive support of our UC Futures programme. The Governance Oversight Group established under our Funding Agreement with the Crown, under its independent Chair, Mr Garry Wilson, and including senior representatives of the Tertiary Education Commission, the Ministry of Education and the UC Council, has been particularly collegial and effective in this context. We are also appreciative of the guidance and support from the Tertiary Education Commission, which has played a significant part in our journey towards recovery.

The developments I have discussed, building as they do on the University of Canterbury's very special holistic learning experience, will ensure that each year our graduates are more and more ready to connect and contribute effectively from their own communities to the world. As we conclude what I began by describing as a pivotal year for us, it is timely to pause and acknowledge the very significant progress made by UC since 2010–11, and to recognise why we can look forward to our 150th anniversary in 2023 with such confidence.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.



Dr L. John Wood
Chancellor | Tumu Kaunihera