

Chancellor's Welcome | Te Mihi a te Tumu Kaunihera



Ms Sue McCormack

Members and friends of Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | the University of Canterbury (UC), tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, kia ora tātou katoa.

This UC Annual Report is my first since being elected as Tumu Kaunihera | Chancellor. The year 2019 was a turning point for the University. In January we farewelled our former Tumu Whakarae | Vice-Chancellor (VC), Dr Rod Carr, who led the University through the earthquake response and initial recovery. The UC community remains grateful for the foundation that was laid for subsequent leadership to build on.

In February we welcomed Professor Cheryl de la Rey as our new VC, who joined us following nine years as VC at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. In making this appointment, Te Kaunihera o Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha

| the University Council intended to focus on academic standards and leadership. Professor De la Rey's skills and experience in that domain have been well received, and her significant experience in management has also proven valuable. Two extremely tragic events, the mosque shootings of 15 March and the death of first-year student Mason Pendrous, could not have been anticipated, and Professor De la Rey's leadership helped UC navigate through these unprecedented events.

Post-quake recovery of the University drew to a close, with celebrations marking the conclusion of the projects. The official opening of the Rehua building by the Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education represented the end of the long journey to unite the academic functions of the University on one campus. The Beatrice Tinsley building was also completed and formally opened, rounding off the redevelopment of the Science precinct. Another significant event was the completion and opening of the new University of Canterbury Students' Association (UCSA) building. After almost a decade, our students now have a permanent, dedicated student space again. The building was gifted the name Haere-roa (the long journey) by mana whenua, Ngāi Tūāhuriri. The name reflects both the historical use of the area and the lifelong education UC desires for our students. Our students have a fundraising campaign under way to close a funding gap and to ensure that their new centre is, in line with UC tradition, majority student-owned and operated. I urge you to join us in supporting the cause.

In 2019, construction commenced on a new 500-bed, student accommodation block, which will go some way to satisfying the forecast increase in demand for on-campus accommodation. This complex is due to be completed in 2020, with the first students taking up residence in 2021.

The Council adopted a new institutional strategy in September, which is the outcome of an extensive consultation exercise led by the VC. This strategy will guide the University's development for the next decade and positions UC to make a significant contribution to teaching and research for the economic and social benefit of Waitaha Canterbury and Aotearoa New Zealand society.

In 2019, the University Council awarded an honorary Doctorate of Letters to Elisabeth Calder CBE, an alumna who has been counted among the world's leading literary editors and publishers. A gift for identifying outstanding writers saw her rise through the publishing world and become a founding director of literary giant Bloomsbury Publishing. Calder was named Editor of the Year at the British Book Awards in 1997, received an Order of Merit for Services to culture in Brazil in 2004 and was named a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 2018. During a busy career, she also co-founded Women in Publishing (1979) and served as Chair of the Royal Court Theatre in London. She was a founder of the Groucho Club and was a judge for the Orange Prize for Fiction in 2010 and the 2019 Booker Prize for Fiction.

Also in 2019, the Council granted the highest awards it makes in recognition of

the achievements of our academic staff to Associate Professor Ben Kennedy (Tohu Pākai Ako | UC Teaching Medal), Professors Steven Ratuva and Jason Tylianakis (Tohu Pākai Rangahau | UC Research Medals) and Distinguished Professor Geoff Chase and Professor Geoff Rodgers (Tohu Pākai Rangahau | UC Innovation Medals).

Leaders in the field of earthquake mitigation devices, Professors Rodgers and Chase designed a low-cost suite of energy dissipation and seismic damping devices. Their innovation has already enabled major changes in how structures are designed and built to create economically resilient cities and communities following an earthquake.

The recipient of the Tohu Pākai Ako | UC Teaching Medal, Associate Professor Kennedy, has a 10-year track record of effective and wide-ranging teaching leadership at the University and beyond, and has made a significant impact internationally. He is an innovative teacher who uses a range of technologies to support his teaching, as well as being a prolific researcher who has supervised many postgraduate students.

Professor Ratuva, recipient of one of the two Tohu Pākai Rangahau | UC Research Medals awarded in 2019, is a productive, internationally ranked researcher. He recently led a global research project on race and ethnicity, involving 100 global experts on ethnicity, which culminated in a 2,000-page work of unprecedented breadth and complexity. An excellent scholar, he has not only pursued his own research endeavours but has shown remarkable leadership in encouraging collective research collaboration among students and scholars with similar interests across the globe.

The second Tohu Pākai Rangahau | UC Research Medal was awarded to Professor Jason Tylianakis, a pre-eminent international ecologist in terms of innovative thinking, quality of publication and the extraordinary citation impact of his work. His work has challenged conventional approaches and has bridged different sub-disciplines by relating ecological networks to ecosystem function. Professor Tylianakis' achievements have been recognised through a number of research awards – for example, he became an inaugural Rutherford Discovery Fellow and was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society Te Apārangi in 2018.

In another year of significant academic achievement for the University, 2019 saw

4,208 degrees and diplomas granted to 3,985 graduates. Of particular note is the increasing proportion of postgraduate qualifications awarded, as the University enhances its international standing. Another milestone was achieved when we returned to the Christchurch Town Hall for the 2019 graduation ceremonies, with the first processions in 10 years through the central city from the University's former home, now the Arts Centre of Christchurch, in December.

This year the University has adopted new accounting standards that bring into the financial statements the results of Tūāpapa Hononga o Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | the UC Foundation and those of an amalgamation of donations, bequests and trusts that we call the UC Trust Funds. This change has enabled us to recognise in our financial statements for the first time the financial support to students and staff received from our many generous donors. The assets will never belong to the University and cannot be used for anything except the specific purposes for which funds were given, but are considered to fall within the 'economic unit' of the University's activities.

To keep the separation clear, our report splits results into restricted and unrestricted activities – where 'restricted' consists of the financial contribution from the UC Foundation and UC Trust Funds. The University is meeting its revenue budget and is controlling costs, leading to a \$21.007 million consolidated surplus for the year ended 31 December 2019 (2018: \$5.221 million).

Our period of rebuilding after the earthquakes is at an end, and we are starting 2020 and our new Strategy with \$219 million in cash and \$1.779 billion in net assets. The repayment of the \$50 million Philanthropic Bond, accompanied by the delisting from the NZX, at the end of December 2019 was a watershed event and the University is now virtually free of debt and finance costs.

The Council recognises the successful efforts of management to keep a tight rein on expenditure and sustain operations in a difficult year, and to maintain high standards of internal control, leading to an unqualified audit opinion.

The Council met 12 times over the year, as well as holding 10 workshops to ensure members were well informed prior to taking significant decisions. The Finance, Planning and Resources Committee, chaired by Catherine Drayton and Peter Ballantyne, met 10 times, providing

a stream of considered advice to the Council on major decisions across its spectrum of portfolio responsibilities. The Audit and Risk Committee, chaired by Peter Ballantyne and Keiran Horne, met six times, closely monitoring the risks facing the University and ensuring that, in all aspects of its work, the institution complied with its statutory and regulatory obligations. These two committees are the engine-room of the Council and their work placed significant demands on chairs and members.

I would like to note the retirement from the Council of former Tumu Kaunihera | Chancellor, Dr John Wood, and Catherine Drayton. Dr Wood's contribution to the leadership of the University in the post-quake period cannot be overestimated. The University was fortunate to have a man of his skill and experience to lead our recovery over the past decade. Catherine Drayton has been a stalwart of the Council as Chair of the Finance, Planning and Resources Committee for the majority of her term. Her commercial and pragmatic approach to matters considered by the Council will be very much missed. My thanks also go to Malcolm Peterson Scott for his contribution to Council discussions over the past four years as the elected professional staff representative and to 2019 UCSA President Sam Brosnahan who served a year as the student representative on Council. We have appreciated their input and perspectives.

I welcome Keiran Horne (appointed by the Minister for Tertiary Education) and Gillian Simpson (appointed by the Council) as new Council members. Keiran Horne brings a wealth of commercial and governance experience. Gillian Simpson brings wide leadership experience in all levels of education, including senior management and governance roles. I would also like to welcome Liz Bond, who joins the Council as the elected professional staff representative. Her detailed knowledge of the University's operations will be valuable as we implement our new strategic direction.

Finally I thank all Council members for their individual and collective contributions to our large, complex and demanding institution over the past year. I look forward with anticipation to 2020.



Ms Sue McCormack
Chancellor | Tumu Kaunihera