

## October 2023

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### Introduction

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The year-end examination period began on 30 October and runs through to 11 November. About 13 000 students take part in at least one of over 400 exams across that period. Exams are conducted in a range of modes from online to face-to-face and remain an important milestone in the academic year.

October was a busy month of 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration events with the Alumni and Community Weekend offering a range of options as summarised in the section below.

### Engagement

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UC hosted a Multifaith celebration on campus on 24 October to recognise UC's religious heritage in its 150<sup>th</sup> Year, as well as the importance religion plays in present-day UC. Congregants from various faith groups attended the event in the spirit of peace and unity.

Over 50 former senior staff and Emeritus Professors attended a cocktail function at the Staff Club on 24 October, arranged by UC to recognise their contribution to the University. It was great to see previous colleagues and we thanked everyone for contributing to 150 successful years of UC.

I welcomed our alumni to campus for our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Alumni and Community Weekend 27-29 October. Over 40 events were hosted by faculties, the Advancement and 150<sup>th</sup> teams. Key events included:

- The Welcome Function on Friday night where we welcomed guests from around New Zealand and the world to the reunion weekend. Alumni then attended dinners with their relevant cohorts.
- Saturday was a faculty and university engagement day to showcase what the University has on offer, as well as an opportunity for alumni to see how UC has changed. Saturday began with a Golden Graduates Morning Tea, where they reunited with old friends, reminisced, and explored the *Treasures of the University of Canterbury* with Associate Professor Chris Jones.

The inaugural Young Alumni Awards closed Saturday's activities, with five awards presented to outstanding young alumni, recognising the important professional and community contributions they are making.

- Sunday was our day to learn about the 150th Book from Associate Professor Chris Jones and to engage with the community at the Community Picnic. The sun was shining, party games and food were on offer and I had the chance to engage with more than 100 attendees over the tongs at the sausage sizzle. The city campus was also open on Sunday for tours of the Arts faculty and Teece Museum.
- To conclude the weekend, we hosted an afternoon tea for our Malaysian alumni with more than 40 people attending. This was an important opportunity to reinforce the University's long and fruitful relationship with Malaysia, which began with the Colombo Plan scholarships more than 70 years ago. At this event, the Malaysian Business Council announced a gift in support of UC's scholarship program.

The UC 150th photo board travelling exhibition completed its tour of the Canterbury Districts at Te Ara Ātea in Rolleston.

The UC Advancement team hosted the CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education) on 20 October for day of workshops delivered to a wide audience including UC Council, the Senior Leadership Team and external guests from Lincoln and Otago Universities and local schools. Sessions included a Fundraising and Philanthropy Workshop, and *Challenges Education Institutions Face in Growing a Thriving Philanthropy Program*.

To mark the upcoming publication of Dr John Wilson's *A New History: The University of Canterbury 1873-2023* by Canterbury University Press, UC hosted an academic symposium Ka titiro whakamuri, ki te anga whakamua | Guided by the Past, Shaping the Future on 18 October attended by 37 staff. Speakers Mike Grimshaw, Chris Jones and I participated in the panel discussion.

As part of strengthening our relationships with the business community, nurturing talent and contributing to growing the economy of Ōtautahi and the wider region, with the support of Christchurch Employers Chamber of Commerce and ChristchurchNZ we hosted the Ignite breakfast on 19 October attended by 50 business leaders. Panellists Amy Carter, Oliver Hunt and Dr Logan Williams provided insightful commentary on the current and projected future business landscape.

## **Education – Accessible, Flexible Future Focussed**

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October marks the arrival of the end-of-year exam season, however, the University continues with other key educational initiatives. UC continues to expand its summer school offerings with growing numbers of students taking up work integrated learning (WIL) opportunities in the summer. Summer Professional and Community Engagement courses, which focus on WIL, have grown to its highest ever offerings with nearly 100 students enrolled to date.

Growing enrolments in UC Online indicate learners' eagerness to participate in education outside of the standard academic year. The launch of the first two full qualifications in UC Online, The Master of Organisational Psychology and the Certificate in Criminal Justice, have exceeded expectations in terms of enrolments, and short courses and microcredentials remain highly popular.

Student success was celebrated in the end-of-year celebration on 24 October for Te Kakau a Māui students, their whānau and all those who have supported the scholars including home-base leads and alumni mentors were acknowledged. It was pleasing to note the great success the students have had academically and to see the generosity of UC staff and alumni in offering their time to support our akonga. A highlight of the celebration was an address by former UCSA Vice-President Tori McNoe who is a shining example of student success.

At the end of the year we usually honour staff who have played an important role in advancing the education of our students. After the UCSA awards which honoured several staff, the UC teaching awardees were named. This year, in addition to teaching excellence, awards were given to teams and individuals who supported student success. A common theme in this year's winners was improving access for diverse learners. The Teaching Excellence Award winners were Teen Henderson, Lecturer in Te Reo Māori, and Toni Collins, Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Law. The Outstanding Teaching and Learning Transformation Award went to the ENGME! Team for their student led, Faculty supported mentoring initiative. The Hapori Community of Practice Award, which acknowledges impact on student success, went to UC Library Kaitakawaenga Ako Lisa Davies.

## Research – Impact on a Changing World

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UC researchers were recently recognised at the national annual Kiwinet Research Commercialisation Awards for their roles and impact in research commercialisation. Congratulations to Sean Feast, CEO and Founder of Precision Chroma, for winning the Sprout Agritech Breakthrough Innovator Award. Sean is a PhD alumnus of UC and is commercialising a new method of chromatography based on 3D printing for efficient and cost effective purification of biological therapeutics which was developed here at UC.

Monique Lau, founder of Endosoothe, was the winner of the Momentum Student Entrepreneur of the Year Award. Her company is developing a range of natural anti-inflammatory and pain relief products for women. Monique started the idea as part of her undergraduate study and is now doing a Master's degree in Product Design. Olivia Ogilvie, postdoctoral fellow at UC, was also a finalist in the Breakthrough Innovator Award for her role as co-founder and CEO of Opo Bio, which develops cells for cultivated 'meat' development.

We recently hosted the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor Workshop on campus, *Connecting Researchers and Policymakers*. The focal point of this event was to bridge the gap between evidence and policy by cultivating robust relationships and fostering enduring collaborations. Attendees from Wellington included Professor Dame Juliet Gerrard, together with the Chief Science Advisors for the Ministry of Social Development, the Department of Conservation, the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, the Ministry of Health, the National Emergency Management Agency and the Ministry of Transport (UC's Professor Simon Kingham). Professor Michael Plank, together with representatives from ChristchurchNZ and Christchurch City Council, were also speakers at the event. Over 150 researchers and support professionals from across the South Island attended the event.

UC is also pleased with the success of three new Rutherford Fellows recently announced - Dr Tom Logan (Civil and Natural Resources), Dr Amy Yewdall (Biological Sciences), and Associate Professor Elizabeth Macpherson (Law). This fellowship provides funding of \$800 000 over a five year term.

## People – Nurturing Staff, Thriving Students

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This month we celebrated the achievements of the participants in the 2023 Student Ambassadors programme. This series of workshops, run as a pilot for UC, was a collaboration between the Student Accommodation Services team, the New Zealand branch of the International Student Advisors' Network of Australia (ISANA) and our accommodation provider partners. The programme aimed to strengthen understanding and relationships between international and domestic students through education about the cultures of workshop attendees.

In support of students over the final study week of the year, the Student Wellbeing team transformed the Living Room space (located next to the bookshop) into a self-care area, with fun activities and refreshments – customised tea blend creations, paint-by-numbers murals, board games, colouring activities, cream and jam scones, pastries and mocktails. A 'paint and sip' session was provided in the same space for students to indulge their inner artists alongside cheese, crackers, and a variety of non-alcoholic beverages. Throughout the week, snack and fruit drops were distributed for students in the Undercroft and the Community Hub in Rehua to boost their study sessions. The Kaiwhakatere Oranga | Wellbeing Navigators also put together a student-led workshop on how to beat procrastination and sustain motivation in the lead up to exams.

A new pilot initiative this year was the introduction of a peer support group for students who have experienced grief or loss. Developed and led by students from the Kaiwhakatere Oranga | Wellbeing Navigators with support from Atawahi Ākonga | Student Care, the initiative successfully concluded with the final session of the year in October.

The Student Care team has completed another successful term of Dungeons and Dragons therapeutic group sessions for neurodivergent and socially anxious students with the aim of developing and strengthening social skills and communication. Year-to-date student engagements for Student Care are 3 534 compared with 2 921 student engagements in 2022.

The student incident at Tupuānuku hall was widely reported in the media, and appropriate action was taken by the relevant staff to manage the situation and ensure the safety of residents. The University published communication to students, staff and Council to advise of the situation. While the matter is currently with the Police and the Court, UC will continue to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of students and staff. Support and counselling have been offered to students through various channels.

Participants in *Run72* raised more than \$35 000 for free counselling for UC students. *Run72* was organised by student group Lads Without Labels and was a running relay of about 18 000 laps of campus over 72 hours.

Over the past four years we have seen an improvement in the performance of the clubs associated with our service level agreement (rugby, netball, hockey, basketball, netball, and football). This has provided additional support, assisting the clubs to thrive. A few highlights of their achievements are:

- 1<sup>st</sup> – UC Women’s Premier Basketball – Premier Women’s Winners, Patron Trophy
- 1<sup>st</sup> – UC Men’s Premier Basketball – Miles Toyota Men’s Premier League Winners (Piet Van Hasselt – UC Blues Coach of the Year)
- 1<sup>st</sup> – Women’s Premier Rugby – Bascik Transport Premiere Winners, UC Rugby Team of the Year, UC Blues Awards Team of the Year
- 1<sup>st</sup> – Men’s Football Premiere League Winners, Promotion to Southern League 2024, UC Blues Team of the Year (Anthony O’Connor, Coach – Blues Award, Overall Contribution to Sport)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – UC Women’s Netball Christchurch Premier Competition

25 student athletes have been named in top representative teams, including the Mainland Tactix, Silver Ferns, Black Ferns, Crusaders, All Blacks, Fiji Men’s Hockey, Otago Hockey, Canterbury Rams, Mainland Pouakai, NZ Māori Football, NZ Futsal Ferns and Canterbury Futsal Dragons.

Staff are currently completing the latest in the series of online core training modules *Introduction to the Pastoral Care Code*. Core training modules cover specific requirements outlined in UC Policy, legislation and regulation and are designed to give staff information to help them in their daily work.

After another busy year, regular reminders about annual leave over the summer break have been provided to managers and staff, emphasising the need to plan time off with family and friends. The last day at work for most staff at UC in 2023 will be Friday 15 December. We are encouraging as many staff as possible to take four days annual leave during 18-21 December. UC opens in the new year on Wednesday 3 January, and staff are also encouraged to take annual leave for 3-5 January. Arrangements will be made for the small numbers of staff who past experience suggests may be needed to work through the holiday period.

## **Internationalisation – Locally Engaged, Globally Networked**

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Following a significant break during border disruptions, in October UC finalised planning to restart our Summer international short-course program in January 2024. The program promotes the strength of UC’s learning environment to prospective students from global partner universities.

On 7 October it was announced UC will host the 8<sup>th</sup> Adaptation Futures Conference (AF2025) in 2025, as part of the United Nations World Adaptation Science Programme. The conference will convene 1500 world leaders in this field at Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre. Chair of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Lisa Tumahai and Deputy High Commissioner of New Zealand to Canada Kirsty Pelenur formally accepted the host handover of the conference. Also present were Professors Shaun Ogilvie and Bronwyn Hayward who, together with Distinguished Professor Steven Ratuva, played a vital role in securing the bid for AF2025.

Her Excellency the French Ambassador Laurence Beau and I met on 6 October to discuss collaboration opportunities. During her visit to campus she also met with French students and faculty for morning tea.

In early October we featured an article about UC's approach to First Nations and the Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership in The Chronicle of Higher Education (CHE), a well-established and respected online platform with the largest readership for higher education in North America.

Associate Professor Cathy Andrew, Acting Executive Dean of Te Kaupeka Oranga | Faculty of Health attended the Council of Nursing Deans Meeting in Sydney. This is the peak organisation representing the Deans and Heads of the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery in universities that offer undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in nursing and midwifery throughout Aotearoa and Australia.

Professor Gail Gillon delivered a keynote presentation on inclusive early childhood education and UC's research leadership in this field at the NZ Early Childhood Education Symposium in Shanghai. The symposium was attended by 100 000 online participants and 350 on-site participants, and received broad local media coverage.

On 17 October we hosted a long-standing UC partner, the President and his delegation from Huazhong University of Science and Technology (HUST). HUST hosted affected students during COVID border disruptions, and actively supports our bilateral student exchange program.

Dr Jalal Mohammed, Faculty of Health Senior Lecturer, was one of four New Zealanders this year to be conferred on 10 October as a Fellow of the Australasian College of Health Services Management and a Certified Health Executive.

## **Organisational Efficacy – of a sustainable scale by 2030**

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The Digital Information Programme is making positive progress in supporting UC's corporate records to move from the existing state to one secure cloud based digital storage. This move provides greater efficiency in accessing and storing corporate information which in turn decreases the risk of relying on ageing technology, the need for excessive digital storage space and overdue destruction of information. In October, a self-servicing provisioning tool called "Wizard" was established to assist staff with understanding how they can align their digital storage with UC's Information Records Management framework.

After a range of pilots, the Whaowhia tō kete | Professional Development and Review online system is available to leaders and staff from November 2023. Staff training is available to support the programme, including three modules for leaders – Coaching Behaviours, Coaching Skills and Coaching Practice.

## **Environmentally Sustainable**

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A building energy management pilot trial is now underway in the Meremere building, installed by Kaizen Energy - an Energy Information System platform with portfolio-level and building-level capabilities that include support for multiple metering options. This system will allow for improved optimisation of energy consumption and, if successful, it will be gradually rolled out across other campus buildings.

World Car Free Day was celebrated on campus with high engagement from students and staff and included UCSA voucher giveaways for students who had chosen to commute sustainably.

To celebrate Te Ao Earth Week, about 50 students participated in planting 200 native trees on campus. A food waste reduction event was also held in conjunction with the Christchurch City Council, for staff and students to connect with Council on significant changes in the waste system and how individuals can reduce their own food waste.