

MARCH 2009

# INSIDE | AUT

NEWS FROM AUT UNIVERSITY / TE WĀNANGA ARONUI O TĀMAKI MAKAU RAU

## The key to language teaching

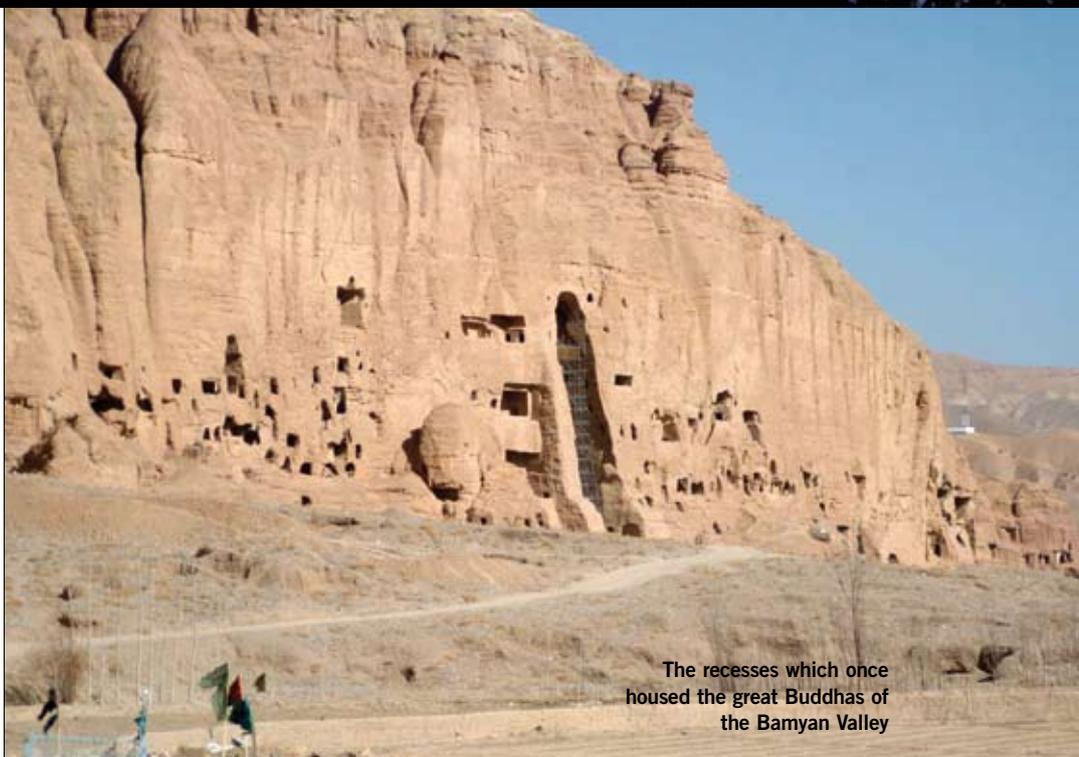
**INTERNATIONALLY** renowned expert in intercultural communication, Professor Michael Byram, visited AUT University last month as the keynote speaker at the Intercultural Competence and Communication seminar, held on campus. The seminar was aimed at language teachers and academics with the purpose of promoting and discussing strategies for teaching intercultural competence through the curriculum, and particularly through the teaching of languages.

Professor Byram says developing intercultural competence is key to language teaching, and AUT's work in the field is unlike any other he has seen. "There is some exciting innovation at undergraduate level of teaching for intercultural competence which I have not met elsewhere. Elsewhere, the work is at post-graduate or Masters level and therefore is of a different nature, so AUT has had to invent its own approach for the age and stage, while maintaining the fundamental principles of teaching for intercultural competence."

Since 2005, the Ministry of Education has provided funding to support immersion sojourns for language teachers, with the aim of improving teaching practice in ways that contribute to improved student learning. In 2008, the Ministry of Education contracted a research team from AUT's School of Languages and Social Sciences to carry out an evaluation of the programme.

Dr Sharon Harvey, Annelies Roskvist, Debbie Corder and Karen Stacey presented their initial findings at the seminar in a paper entitled *The impact of the Language and Culture Immersion Experience on language teachers' classroom practice and contribution to*

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The recesses which once housed the great Buddhas of the Bamiyan Valley

## Dispatch from the frontline

**RICHARD HALL**, OBE, is Head of the Vice Chancellor's Department. Formerly a Colonel in the British Army, Richard and his wife relocated to New Zealand in 2000. Richard is on leave from AUT leading the NZ Army in Afghanistan, he returns to the University in April. In the next two issues of Inside AUT, we will share some of his dispatches home.

### Dispatch from the Silk Road

As I walk out of the wooden hut which will serve as my home for the next few months I can gaze across the Bamiyan Valley, over a crazy paving of mud roofs and the autumnal leaves of the poplar trees, to the great cliff face which dominates the town. The recesses which housed the great Buddhas stand out like the gaping holes in a child's gums when teeth have been extracted. The sight is a constant reminder of the indecent savagery which destroyed one of the wonders of the ancient world and a justification of why we are here. To my right the ancient ruins of Golgola – the

once proud fort raised to the ground by Genghis Khan in the 13th century – stand testament to the importance of this valley when the Silk Road was a vital, throbbing artery between east and west. Like sentries, the snow covered peaks of the Hindu Kush stand in silent guard over the valley at their feet, a natural barrier that has put off all but the most determined.

For all of its natural beauty the province of Bamiyan is a harsh environment. A population of around 400,000 people eke out a living from the dry and barren landscape. The infrastructure remains totally inadequate. Throughout the province there is less than two kilometres of sealed road and less than 6% of the population has access to any form of power. The majority strive to survive.

Yet, despite the grinding poverty, the people exude generosity and joie de vivre. We, who have everything and no doubt appear like millionaires to them,

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## LETTER FROM THE VC



**2009 HAS BEGUN** with an unprecedented surge in applications by people wishing to study at AUT. As we went to press, domestic applications were up 25%, and overall domestic

enrolments were up by 15% on this time last year. While we did expect growth in response to a number of factors, this additional demand is likely driven by the deepening economic recession – tertiary participation rates have tended to rise in the past, whenever the economy has softened. The challenge we face is that we are operating under a capped-EFTS funding model, which limits the number of students that the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) will fund each year. At the time of writing we are negotiating with TEC to increase our EFT funding allocation for 2009.

The new Education Minister, Anne Tolley, visited our Manukau and City campuses in February and received a thorough briefing on AUT and our distinctive contribution as an Auckland university. I think it is fair to say that the Minister was impressed with what she saw, and this was a positive start to our relationship with the new Government.

Significant projects will continue this year, such as building works on the North Shore and City campuses, and development of the Manukau campus. This new campus will make a profound contribution to the communities of Manukau – socially, economically and culturally. An extensive programme of consultation will be a key focus for 2009; with Manukau stakeholders, and internally with the AUT community on our future work at the Manukau campus.

It is my aim to keep you well informed about important operational news and to that end, a new internal communication strategy is being developed, based on the research conducted by the Public Relations team in the latter part of last year. Accordingly, expect to hear more news about changes to the way we communicate, as well as news about the research results themselves. In this issue of Inside AUT, you'll read about some of the changes the PR team will make to this magazine in direct response to your feedback.

The global economic decline is likely to be further felt in New Zealand in 2009, yet around the world governments recognise that the business of education stimulates economies and helps pave the way out of crisis. Barack Obama for example, in his inaugural speech, called for the “transformation of schools, colleges and universities to meet the demands of a new age” citing education as one of the necessary tools for laying a new foundation for growth. In New Zealand, the Treasury Briefing for Incoming Ministers highlighted the need for more degree graduates nationally.

I'm certain that 2009 will be another rewarding year for AUT, and hopefully for you, as we play our part.

*Derek McCormack*

## Dispatch from the frontline

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are routinely invited to share in meals and enjoy what hospitality can be provided. And it is hard to say no. Entering through a low wooden door, designed to force you to bend and thus demonstrate humility before God, you are invited to sit on an array of cushions on the floor. Bones creaking and muscles screaming, you sit cross legged wondering how long you can keep up this pose with any form of dignity. A table cloth is unrolled onto the floor, followed in quick succession by an array of dishes, complemented with endless cups of chai. Conversation ebbs and flows as our interpreters do their best to translate rapidly. Old men, the years etched deeply into the lines of their faces, exude patience and suffering. What sights have they seen? What events have they experienced? For them the promises of a better life have not materialised; their dreams remain unfulfilled and the battle to raise their children, pivots constantly on the edge. A harsh winter, a drought, a poor harvest make the difference between getting by (just) and the downward spiral into hunger, despair and ultimately starvation.

The snow, like a creeping barrage, edges closer to us. Stories of how cold it will get precede the snow as each of us reflect how it will affect us over the coming months. Yet, how superficial our suffering will be. For the people of Bamyan, living in mud houses, using cow dung for fuel and living off what food they have managed to put by, winter becomes a fight for survival. And while we watch with fascination as the snow approaches, the international community dithers as to how to respond to the expected humanitarian crisis. We all know it is coming but policies, principles and bureaucratic processes all seem to get in the way. Why is this most noble of desires – to help those who so sorely need our help – so hard? Let's hope that common sense prevails.

## The key to language teaching

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*improved student language learning.*

“This study shows there is much value for a language teacher to have an immersion experience and experiential learning of being in another country – not just linguistically but also in terms of intercultural understanding,” Professor Byram says.

Professor Byram is Professor Emeritus at the University of Durham and the author of a number of books including, most recently, *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence; Language Teachers, Politics and Cultures.*

## Research to benefit Olympic hopefuls

**WORKING WITH** the best in his field, and travelling somewhere he has wanted to visit since he was a child, was all the enticement Spanish aquatics biomechanist Antonio Cala needed to study at AUT University.

About to embark on his PhD, Cala is also here to support New Zealand's Olympic swimming and triathlon teams, working with the NZ Academy of Sport North Island (NASNI) at the Millennium Institute.

“For someone in my field this is the ultimate place to come,” he says. “It produces great athletes and the approach is both professional and collaborative.”

As Sport North Island's aquatic biomechanist for the next four years he will provide insight to New Zealand's high performance swimming and triathlon coaches and athletes as they prepare for the London Olympics. He will look specifically at improving swimming techniques and conduct applied research

at AUT to assist this.

“It's a unique situation,” he says. “Being able to conduct research and then see your research benefit an athlete first hand is just the best feeling.”

Cala uses underwater cameras, velocity metres, and measures the pressure made by a swimmer's stroke, to better understand an athlete's strengths and weaknesses.

Previous to enrolling with AUT, Antonio worked with the Spanish national triathlon and swimming teams while also lecturing in biomechanics at Madrid University.

Unlike Spain, New Zealand sporting coaches benefit from the support of specialists such as nutritionists and physiologists. Support teams work collaboratively and Antonio is looking forward to the challenges this will bring him.

“Getting the chance to study and work with some of the best athletes in the world is pretty special.”

Antonio Cala at the Millennium Institute's training pool



## Quality of Life conference looks at big picture factors in health

**A QUALITY OF LIFE** conference held at AUT last month reflects an international shift toward health diagnoses and treatment that takes account of individual beliefs, environment, and social factors.

“Quality of life assessment takes into account what people think and feel about themselves in the context of their own circumstances, instead of relying solely on the judgment of experts,” says AUT psychology lecturer Dr Daniel Shepherd.

“For the public, the traditional health system can be overwhelming with its medical practices and jargon centred on the assessment and treatment of symptoms. Quality-of-life measures offer a more intuitive and directly relevant approach to healthcare.”

“Unlike symptom management, quality-of-life measures directly address the health consumer's overall wellbeing and as such

it relates to many aspects of everyday life.”

Dr Shepherd, convenor of the New Zealand WHOQoL Group, says quality of life is not a new issue in the health field but the approach has found new momentum due to the emergence of consumer advocate groups, especially in mental health.

“The mental health recovery movement, initiated by people with a mental illness and by mental health professionals, has reframed the concept of recovery to include not only changes in symptoms and functions, but also quality of life.”

Conference keynote speaker Dr Rex Billington, who worked with the World Health Organisation (WHO) for 18 years, says WHO's Quality of Life (QOL) assessment tools have been around for a long time but they are now finding increasing traction.

“They have been shown to have high reliability and validity, calculated from hundreds of studies and unlike other quality of life scales, the WHO tools don't define quality of life as a unitary concept. WHO has evaluation tools that assess people's perceptions of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live, and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns,” says Dr Billington.

The conference follows the launch of the New Zealand branch of the World Health Organisation's Quality of Life (WHOQoL) initiative at AUT last year.

Later this year the WHOQOL Centre will introduce a New Zealand-specific quality of life instrument, which builds on the international WHO quality of life evaluation tools.

## International research breaks new ground

**AN INTERNATIONAL** research programme into the major metropolitan cities of Asia and the Pacific completed its first project in 2008. Spearheaded by a research group from the Institute of Public Policy in partnership with 16 research teams from cities as diverse as Tokyo, Shanghai, Santiago, Mumbai and Singapore, the international research programme is aimed at recording the 'realities of development' across one of the most diverse and dynamic regions of the world.

Led by Professor Ian Shirley, the Metropolitan Development Programme breaks away from conventional studies of city life, which are dominated by snapshots of 'development' and a preoccupation with short-term economic outcomes. Professor Shirley describes these conventional studies as "limited" in that they provide a partial understanding of urban growth and development

thereby ignoring those "broader patterns of economic, social and political development that have shaped the cities of today".

The team from the Institute of Public Policy designed a research framework for the study and then hosted an international forum in Shanghai toward the end of 2008 at which city researchers reported on development barriers and opportunities.

Opportunities identified during the first phase of the project included urban-industrial strategies, linking local economies to globalisation and trade, and spatial development models seeking to integrate domestic housing and employment – in the case of tourism, opportunities moved beyond the relationship between hotel accommodation and shopping belts to explore sustainable options based on supporting indigenous populations and

environmental protection.

One of the major barriers identified at the forum centred on social and spatial segregation. "Increasing segregation is evident within all the major metropolitan cities (including Auckland) and these deprived neighbourhoods have now become a major impediment to economic and social development," Shirley explains. "How to address economic deprivation is one of the greatest challenges facing the region with barriers most evident in the growth of squatter settlements and the expansion of informal economies."

The second phase of the research programme will concentrate on local development policies and practices within each metropolitan city in order to assess what policies are working and why. The research teams will report on this project at the next forum which will be held in Vietnam in February 2010.



## Mark Orams joins the New Zealand Tourism Research Institute

**PROFESSOR** Mark Orams joins AUT University as Associate Director of the New Zealand Tourism Research Institute (NZTRI) and will also be a member of staff in the School of Hospitality and Tourism.

In addition to his background as a professional yachtsman, and his work with the Sir Peter Blake Trust, Professor Orams (pictured) brings with him experience as a respected researcher in marine science; coastal and marine tourism; sport management; and sustainable development. He holds a Bachelor's degree in environmental planning; a Master of Science; and a PhD from The University of Queensland focusing on marine science. He has published three books and over 30 scientific papers.

Professor Orams says he has been following the growth and success of NZTRI over the last 10 years, and is excited to be joining the team which includes Director, Professor Simon Milne, and fellow coastal and marine tourism specialist Associate Professor Michael Lück.

"Within New Zealand, NZTRI is

the pre-eminent tourism research organisation. It is already reaching out beyond New Zealand's borders into the South Pacific and making a real contribution. I always like to be a part of organisations that really stretch their boundaries and push ahead. Both AUT and NZTRI are like that," he says.

Professor Orams comes to AUT from Massey University where he held a management role in the Deputy Vice Chancellor's office. His role at AUT will see him return to lecturing, as well as taking part in research for NZTRI, and providing a mentoring role for post-graduate students.

NZTRI Director, Professor Simon Milne, says the appointment of Professor Orams is very significant for NZTRI.

"The Institute is committed to improving the sustainability of the tourism industry and Mark will strengthen our capabilities in this vital area. Mark's experience as a professional yachtsman and his time with the Sir Peter Blake Trust also means that he brings valuable leadership skills and industry networks to the NZTRI team."

## Winning attitude

**TODD FERNIE'S** positive outlook is well-known around AUT University, but now his authentic attitude and drive to contribute to his community have received wider recognition by the Attitude Awards.

The Attitude Awards, run by Disability TV's show *Attitude* celebrate New Zealanders who have disabilities, and are excelling in business, sport and life.

Fernie, who works in AUT's Disability Services Team as a Recruitment and Staff Training Advisor, was one of three finalists in the Attitude Community Award category which acknowledges contributions to the disabled community of New Zealand.

Fernie (pictured) says these awards communicate to New Zealanders the important contributions the disabled community can make.

"The awards say that we are passionate; we contribute; we are part of the whole. Not just that, we are a meaningful part of the whole," Fernie explains. "Our contribution is valuable, appreciated and it brings something to

the big picture of society."

While Fernie's positive attitude and outlook are one of his best known characteristics, he says it hasn't always been this way, and he has his family and community to thank for helping him get to this point.

"My wife, my family and the people I love are the ones who stop me giving up. I owe it to them. Having that connection, and knowing that you count in a world that may sometimes discount you, is incredibly important."

Disability Services Manager Diana Murray nominated Fernie for the award and says he has a strong commitment to the disabled community which reaches beyond his work life.

"Todd has been tireless in highlighting disability issues, removing barriers to participation often encountered by disabled students and staff in tertiary education, and building strong relationships between AUT and many community groups and organisations," she says.



### ■ BRIEFLY

#### AUT Business School Vero award finalist

The AUT Business School is an education provider finalist in the 2009 Vero Excellence in Business Support Awards. Last year it won the category. Other finalists in the education provider category are Leadership New Zealand, Palmerston North's New Zealand School of Export, the University of Auckland Business School's The ICEHOUSE and Dunedin-based Upstart Incubation Trustee Company Limited.

#### Te Waha Nui wins

*Te Waha Nui*, the fortnightly newspaper produced by AUT's journalism students, won the 2008 Ossia Award for Best Student Newspaper.

The Ossia awards which are organised by the Australian Journalism Education Association covers journalism training organisations in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific.

Published as part of the editing and design and news production courses, all stories and pages are written, subbed and designed by AUT journalism students.

This is the second time that *Te Waha Nui* (which translates as The Big Mouth) has won the best newspaper category, having taken it out in 2005 also. For the 2008 awards the newspaper also won a second category – the Dr Charles Stuart Prize for Best Student Publication (any medium).

#### Technology Park moves South with new name

AUT's commercialisation portfolio is now called AUT: Innovation and Enterprise with Philip Sallis as Pro Vice-Chancellor Innovation and Enterprise.

The Technology Park activity which moved to the new Manukau Campus at the beginning of March will be called the AUT:Business Innovation Centre reporting to the PVC Innovation and Enterprise.

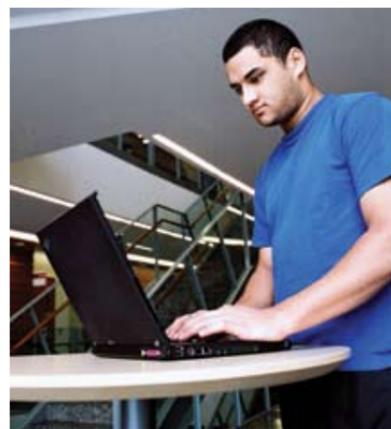
The Business Innovation Centre consists of the Tech Park Business incubator and some research commercialisation groups. The Technology Park already has a network of contacts and partners in South Auckland and the new location will enable it to build on these and contribute to the Manukau region as an agent of economic development.

SPOTLIGHT ON Student Services

## Saving time and the environment

**THERE HAVE** been exciting changes in Registry Services which will allow applicants to check the status of their applications more quickly and easily.

From the start of this year's enrolment season, applicants have been able to log onto the Arion website to check whether they have been offered a place to study; accept, change or decline offers; view correspondence; and pay fees online.



Applicants will receive emails and text messages prompting them to log onto the Arion website (<http://arion.aut.ac.nz>) to check for updated information.

There are many benefits to the new process, including:

- Quicker and easier for applicants
- Reduces postage costs to the University
- Reduces confusion and overlapping letters
- Cuts down wait time
- Reduces our environmental impact
- Students have access to all their application correspondence online
- Easier for programme administrators and admissions staff to process correspondence

Manager of University Admissions Lynette Edmonds says that the new changes usher in a new, quicker, and more environmentally-friendly approach.

"The changes will mean that those applicants who wish to receive correspondence online can do so. It's a

great way to speed up the admissions process and lessen our environmental impact by hopefully reducing the amount of paper we use. Many applicants nowadays are used to doing things online; banking, paying power or phone bills, booking travel. We wanted to make sure that we were keeping up with technology."

All applicants will receive one acknowledgement letter via post which outlines all the necessary steps and how to check their status online. Application forms and guides have been updated with the new process, and flyers and posters will be distributed to key areas throughout the university and to key staff. The website will have all relevant information, and emails will be sent to applicants advising them when they receive new correspondence in Arion, prompting them to go online. Students who still wish to receive correspondence by post can do so by contacting the Student Information Centre on (09) 921 9779.

## Student Services gets an online genius

**ANYONE** who has ever used the internet knows the power of being able to find an answer to any given question within seconds. Tertiary students today, 'Gen Y' in particular, expect information to be online. With this in mind, Judy Rooney and the team at the Student Information Centre have been working on the roll-out of an exciting new online service, *Ask Student Info*.

*Ask Student Info* is a new part of the Student Services website. It is a portal repository of questions and answers, where students can find solutions to common enrolment issues and Student Services information online, whenever they need it.

By enabling students to get answers to commonly-asked questions online, *Ask Student Info* will free up Student Information Centre staff to deal with the

more complex and difficult enquiries and issues; providing better service for all and a better utilisation of staff expertise.

One of the great appeals of *Ask Student Info* is that it's very user-friendly. Students can ask a question – in plain English – and receive an instantaneous list of relevant answers. Students can also browse related answers and provide feedback on the helpfulness of the answers given.

Beyond that, *Ask Student Info* also serves as a means by which students can contact Student Information Centre staff electronically. The service will eventually replace the Student Information Centre email inbox – this is because the design of the system encourages self-service in the first instance, and the back-end software makes it easier for the team to manage enquiries. New questions and

answers are continually added and all questions are then ranked by how many times they are viewed.

*Ask Student Info* can be found at [www.aut.ac.nz/student\\_services](http://www.aut.ac.nz/student_services) where you can take it for a test drive. Judy and her team can also come and demonstrate it in action on request.



Judy Rooney using *Ask Student Info*

**ASK AN EXPERT** Physiologist and research officer with the AUT School of Sport and Recreation, Joe McQuillan has recently spent time training New Zealand fire-fighters for the World Fire-fighter Challenge in Las Vegas. *InsideAUT* asked McQuillan for advice on getting started – and sticking with – a fitness programme.

### Before starting a new fitness programme what do I need to consider?

Primarily you should consider what your motivation is for starting a fitness programme. Ideally you will have set some goals which will help you to maintain your motivation. Typically – especially post-festive season – weight loss is a strong motivator for starting a fitness programme, therefore an adjustment in daily dietary intake may be required to assist weight loss and also maintain energy throughout your workout and your workday. The cost of a fitness programme in terms of time and finances are considerations, especially if you are under financial or time constraints. You may also need to consult with your doctor prior to starting a new exercise programme, especially if

you haven't been physically active for a number of years.

### Is cardio or resistance training more important?

Resistance training will help maintain strength throughout life and will assist with co-ordination of movement as you get older. Cardio or endurance training assists with keeping the heart and lungs healthy as we age, and minimising weight gain. Combining both modes of exercise into a balanced weekly exercise regime is a sure way to maintain muscular strength, muscle tone and cardiovascular stamina in your years ahead.

### What are some accessible sports/exercises that provide cardio and resistance workouts?

Swimming and water running are good ways to get a minimal impact, high intensity workout while also providing resistance. Higher impact activities include running, hill running or hill walking – both of which will extensively work the legs and cardiovascular system.

### How can I keep myself motivated?

The easiest way to motivate yourself is to aim for an event. More than likely this will be a sporting goal however it could be a social event such as a wedding that stimulates your need to exercise. Sporting goals could include a short distance triathlon competed in a team or individually, or a fun run such as the annual Round the Bays. The way to maintain consistency is to aim for a goal or have a series of goals to work towards.

## AUT physiologist puts New Zealand fire-fighters through their paces

**AUT UNIVERSITY** physiologist Joe McQuillan faced a nervous wait as the team of six New Zealand fire-fighters he had been training for the better part of eight months competed in the World Fire-fighter Challenge in Las Vegas late last year.

Approached in April by New Zealand's Team, Black Fire, McQuillan was tasked with increasing the team's fitness and strength to gain entry into the competition.

Competitors are required to carry out fire-fighting related activities such as running up six flights of stairs, simulated forced entry through a door, dragging a hose full of water, dragging an 85kg dummy for 30 metres and lifting hose reels in minimal times.

Referred to as the 'toughest two minutes in sports', this year's winner and three-time World Champion, American Brandon Cunningham, finished in 1 minute 21 seconds.



Black Fire team member dragging an 85kg dummy

McQuillan delivered nutritional advice, strength and fitness training and ran numerous assessments throughout the year to ensure his fire-fighters would gain entry and have a shot at placing.

The challenges in programming for such a sport include increasing aerobic fitness while also building strength and power,

says McQuillan.

"I added combat-related activity (with weights) to the mix to allow for more specific training as the competition date got nearer".

Each team member recorded a personal best time at Challenge, and McQuillan has been brought on again this year to help train the next New Zealand team.

## ■ BRIEFLY

### Doctorial research challenges the meaning of occupational therapy

Understanding what occupational therapy really means to enable better treatment is the topic of new doctoral research, from AUT University's Dr Kirk Reed.

Head of the AUT University's Occupational Science and Therapy department Dr Reed says that traditional meaning around the practice of occupational therapy may be missing the point.

"Researchers have largely focussed on understanding occupation from a conceptual perspective rather than a lived experience (ontological)," says Reed. "The meaning of occupation is complex; it changes in response to what we care about, who we are becoming, and the interaction of those we engage with."

By providing food for thought on the meaning of occupation, Reed aims to strengthen the link between occupational therapy and health, potentially improving further health and rehabilitation practices.

Reed's study in the area concludes his doctorate and officially makes him the first Doctor of Health Science (DHSc) from AUT University.

### Research receives funding

Two major research projects being led by AUT staff were recently selected to receive funding from Ako Aotearoa, the National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence.

Of the \$1.3m total committed by Ako Aotearoa, \$240,000 was dedicated to AUT-led projects. \$95,000 was awarded to Best Practice in Supervisor Feedback to Thesis Writers in New Zealand Universities, led by School of Languages and Social Sciences' Professor John Bitchener.

Te Kawai Kumara – Pilot for the synchronous delivery of a common postgraduate programme in te reo Maori across multiple sites, led by Te Ara Poutama's Professor Tania Ka'ai and Professor John Moorfield, has been awarded \$145k.

Ako Aotearoa supports projects which strategically improve tertiary teaching and learning.

## Under renovations

**FOLLOWING** last year's internal communications survey conducted by AUT University's Public Relations department, *Inside AUT* will be undergoing some renovations in 2009.

The PR team looked closely at the staff feedback from the survey and focus groups and found some recurring ideas around how *Inside AUT* could improve.

Many people requested that the magazine be available online to save on paper usage and waste, while others still wanted to have a hardcopy version of the magazine delivered to them. In answer to both these issues *Inside AUT* will soon be available online in a new format, and while hard copies will still be available, delivery numbers will be reduced to remedy issues around waste.

People also commented on the tone of *Inside AUT*, saying there should be more strategic university news and that it was unclear as to whether it was a publication for internal or external use. *Inside AUT's* primary focus is to give staff a monthly overview of the good news and achievements at AUT, featuring staff, students and alumni of the university. It is designed to be a good news vehicle – and as a result it is picked up by the public and sent to some of our stakeholders.

The staff survey reinforced the need for an internal news source for more immediate

operational news, as well as strategy and direction. The changes occurring in *Inside AUT* will coincide with the development of the staff website. The staff website will become one of the key sources to go to for information concerning strategic direction, executive news, and more urgent time-sensitive issues.

Another major concern from staff was the balance between academic stories and allied staff stories. *Inside AUT* is an AUT staff magazine, and should reflect the university as a whole. To right the balance of editorial content, strategies are being put in place which will make *Inside AUT* a more accurate reflection of AUT as a workplace.

One thing a lot of staff weren't aware of was their ability to contribute ideas or completed stories to the magazine. The magazine is only as good as its content, and with an organisation the size of AUT, it can be difficult to know everything that's going on. Whether you are an allied or academic staff member, if there is something you want everybody to know, whether it's regarding a new staff member in your team, or a success gained outside the university by someone you work with, we want to hear about it.

Keep an eye on the upcoming changes, and don't forget to write in with ideas and stories. Comments and feedback on *Inside AUT* to help us with ongoing improvements are also welcome – just email tessa.prebble@aut.ac.nz

## Budding scientists taste success

**HIGH ACHIEVING** science and technology students from around New Zealand gathered in Auckland this month for the Rotary National Science and Technology Forum utilising partnerships with AUT University, University of Auckland and Massey University.

Into its 20th year, the Forum's main aim is to grow science graduate numbers by exposing high school students to recent developments in science and technology and promoting the many varied science-based career opportunities.

Forum director and Milford Rotary member Peter Best says it's all about opening students' minds to the possible exciting careers that lie ahead of them.

"Many come in wanting to become doctors or physiotherapists but leave contemplating robotics, nutrition or biomedical science."

All 156 16-18 year old students spend two weeks in Auckland and attend two three-hour lectures a day hosted by the three Auckland universities. The lectures cover molecular biology, physics, chemistry, applied maths, biological science, theological science, biomedical science and computer animated design.

One of the three founders of the event was AUT Professor Roy Geddes. In memory of his role, an award is given to two year 13 students each year enabling them to attend the London International Youth Science Forum.

## BMI – a true measure of obesity?

**NEW RESEARCH** from AUT University questions the appropriateness of Body Mass Index (BMI) as a measure for obesity for adolescent girls from different ethnic backgrounds.

It found that existing BMI definitions of overweight were relatively insensitive for predicting excess percentage body fat in South and East Asian girls. Conversely, low specificity was observed for Pacific Island and Maori girls.

AUT researcher Elizabeth Duncan says the association between BMI and body fatness is variable in children from different ethnic backgrounds.

"Children from Asian ethnicities tend to have more body fat at a given height and weight," she says "This means

that our existing BMI scales could be underestimating obesity in these groups."

"While BMI is still the most practical estimate of obesity in population surveys, we may need to consider lowering our BMI action points for obesity in certain ethnic groups, particularly those from South Asian backgrounds."

Duncan went on to develop age-specific BMI cut-off points that correspond to an equivalent level of percentage body fat across all ethnicities. "If we wanted to standardise our definition of obesity we would need to lower the threshold by an average of nearly four BMI units in South Asian girls," she says "Such a change could have a dramatic effect on obesity rates in this population."

The study also revealed that many adolescent girls with excess body fat are unable to recognise their condition.

"Interventions and educational campaigns that assist girls in recognising the danger signs of obesity are a priority for all ethnic groups," says Duncan. "These will increase the likelihood that healthy behavioural changes necessary to combat widespread obesity are adopted."

Subsequent investigation revealed that physical activity levels of the girls were significantly lower in the weekends than on weekdays, and in older girls compared with younger girls. Furthermore, physical activity varied by ethnicity, with Maori girls the most active and South Asian girls the least active.

## Sustainable design concepts on show

**ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING** in graphic design was one of the concepts being explored at the CheckOut 08 exhibition.

Julian Nicol's project "What is good design anyway?" was one of 107 design projects that went on show at AUT University's annual exhibition, which featured work from graduating graphic design students.

"My project presents some of the socially responsible concerns professional designers may be overlooking in their need to answer a client brief, through the question 'who are we responsible?'," says Nicol.

AUT University design lecturer Eden Potter says students are showing a mounting interest in learning about and taking on sustainable design practices.

"The exhibition works showed an increased exploration of animation and moving image, paired with illustration, built structures and photography, and this provides some natural progression toward sustainable design practice," says Potter.

"Students are discovering the potential transferability of design communication forms and vehicles. The outcomes are tailored to suit audiences, distribution methods and content, reinforcing notions of sustainability."

Another CheckOut project reflecting



Teresa Luckman's *TMRW* magazine

sustainable design concepts was Teresa Luckman's *TMRW* magazine, targeting professional women and promoting the benefits of a sustainable lifestyle.

"The magazine is designed to attract busy professionals who are interested in the environment and recognise global warming as an issue, but are too busy to do something about it or

research further into the topic."

Luckman's publication uses 100% post consumer waste recycled stock; two colour design with offset printing to reduce ink and cost; staple binding to make recycling easier; standard paper size to reduce the trimmed paper wastage; and several design features which encourage readers to pass *TMRW* on once they have read it.

## CEPD CLIPBOARD

### New drop-in centre on North Shore campus

AUT'S CENTRE for Educational and Professional Development is delighted to announce that it now has a more visible and accessible presence on the North Shore campus in room AE109.

Peter Mellow, the Flexible Learning Advisor for the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences, is now based in this area, and he can be contacted there most days, ext 7149 (mobile 021-344-610).

Drop-in times for AUTonline sessions are available for staff on Wednesdays between 1pm and 3pm. Please contact Bridgit Bretherton Jones or Peter Mellow to request a specific time-slot.

In addition, Jennie Swann offers a drop-in service for the School of Education on the North Shore campus every Monday morning 9am – 11am in AE109. Other CEPD academic staff will



**Bridgit Bretherton Jones and Peter Mellow in the new North Shore campus drop-in centre**

have a presence in AE109 on Wednesday mornings between 9am-12pm.

CEPD is planning to have a launch of these new facilities at the North Shore campus later in March – watch the Noticeboard for more details.

*Please note that there are no longer any CEPD staff on level 3 of AC Building.*

### AUTonline for all

AUT WILL now provide all students with online support for the papers they are studying through AUTonline. AUTonline is the AUT Learning Management System that allows lecturers to communicate with their students, provide access to information about their papers, and deliver a range of learning experiences through the internet and intranet.

The Design and Creative Technologies Faculty has been working with the CEPD Flexible Learning Team, through the DCT Flexible Learning Advisor (Peter Maclaren), to develop a systematic approach which aims to reduce the workload on lecturers by providing a standard template for setting up an AUTonline 'course' for each paper.

The DCT approach focuses on storing standard documents (such as paper descriptors, programme information, Faculty and AUT policy documents,

and student support information) in the AUTonline Content Management System, and linking them into each course as appropriate. Lecturers assigned to teach a paper will be provided with a pre-prepared AUTonline 'course', with up-to-date information already linked.

The development has been facilitated by a RELT Grant that enabled the employment of additional staff to work on standardising documents. The project has required the cooperation of staff from administrative and academic areas, and over a wide range of disciplines within its four schools (and inter-disciplinary unit).

Work is continuing to ensure all papers are covered this semester. Feedback from staff and students will help refine the approach for the future.

*Peter Maclaren, CEPD, Flexible Learning Advisor to DCT*

### Ako Aotearoa Academy of Tertiary Teaching Excellence

IN OCTOBER 2008, Debbie Calder (School of Languages), Welby Ings (School of Art and Design) and Peter Mellow (CEPD), all previous winners of National Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards, attended the inaugural symposium of the Ako Aotearoa Academy of Tertiary Teaching Excellence.

Consisting of Teaching Excellence Award winners, the Academy has been established by Ako Aotearoa to provide a major resource for enhancing teaching practice in New Zealand. This body of expert tertiary practitioners will aim to become a respected and influential voice committed to working for the benefits of educators and learners.

The short term goals of the Academy are:

- To develop a database of member expertise and interests
- Make that expertise available to all practitioners and educators across the tertiary sector to assist in supporting the development of excellent teaching practice
- Further develop good practice by fostering collaboration amongst members
- Writing workshops for Academy members interested in developing publications in educational research.

For more information visit: <http://ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/>



### WHAT'S ON?

**AUT MBA Consulting Club presents 'Working with Consultants: A Client's Perspective'** with management consultant Daniel Vidal, Thursday 5 March, 7 – 8.30am, AUT Conference Centre WA224B, City Campus. To register, contact: AUT MBA Consulting Club President Maka Paillate: [breakfast@consulting.org.nz](mailto:breakfast@consulting.org.nz) or [maka@consulting.org.nz](mailto:maka@consulting.org.nz)

**Take charge and be reckless** Tuesday 17 March, 6pm-8pm, Gallery 3, 39 Symonds Street. There will be delectable delights to tempt your taste buds if you dare to take the risk. Live performance artists Melissa Durbin and Jules Turner have drawn a line and are inclined to step over it in this playful and surprising art exhibition. Free entry.

**AuSM Orientation Festival 2009** Monday 2-Friday 13 March, AUT University. Spread over two campuses and two weeks, the 2009 AuSM Orientation Festival at AUT University aims to provide entertainment and enlightenment to a diverse range of students. Performances from Concord Dawn, P-Money, Shihad, The Laughing Samoans, Freq Nasty and more. For more info, visit [www.ausm.org.nz](http://www.ausm.org.nz)

**AUT Sustainability researchers get-together** Thursday 19 March, 1-2pm, WF710. Email [kate.kearins@aut.ac.nz](mailto:kate.kearins@aut.ac.nz) for details.

### Comings and goings

#### AUT WELCOMES...

**Design and Creative Technologies**  
Catherine Moller  
Babu Yohannan

**Health and Environmental Sciences**  
Georgina Casey

**PVC – Internationalisation**  
Amy Chen  
Maria Ross

**Services and Operations – Property Services**  
John Hicks

**Services and Operations – Student Services**  
Leslie Moke

#### AUT FAREWELLS...

**Applied Humanities**  
Robyn Bailey  
Karishma Kripalani  
Mieko MacInnes  
Linda Smith

**Business and Law**  
Susan Heap  
Robert Howell  
Hermann Retzlaff  
Langes Supramaniam  
Ma'amora Taulapapa

**Design and Creative Technologies**  
Louise Leitch  
Jane Lin  
Tess Lomax  
Fleur Piper  
Lewis Woodburn  
Kwong Yong

**Health and Environmental Sciences**

Peter Davis  
Donna Gibbons  
Praveen Kumar  
Vivien Lovell  
Pauline Newton  
Maynard Williams

**PVC – Internationalisation**  
Tarek Cherkaoui

**PVC – Commercialisation and Maori Advancement**  
Hana Crengle

**PVC – Research and Commercialisation**  
Emily Bergin  
Rebecca Bergin  
Faye Gao

Jessie He  
Heather Jenks  
Michael Lee  
Fiona Lovich  
Sohelia Mohammadyari  
Charlotte Rea  
Emma Richardson  
Bahram Tehrani

**Services and Operations – ITS**  
Anne Bonos  
Erica Clyde  
Andrew Gous  
Emily Martin  
Stefan Marwick

**Services and Operations – Student Services**  
Tracey Scott-Nicholson  
**University Relations and Advancement**  
Susheel Maharaj

### GREEN SPOT

## Shower Boss wins sustainable design award

**QUEUING FOR** the shower was the driver behind Emil Martin's winning entry in the AUT University Sustainability Design Challenge 2008.

Coming from a family of four teenage boys, the Christchurch teenager was used to his parents yelling "Don't be so long in the shower" and "Turn off the water now!" Often by the time the last person got their turn the shower was cold.

The AUT Sustainability Design Challenge brief was to develop an original idea for an object, product or device with the potential to minimise people's impact on the environment

and/or contribute to improving the environment.

When he saw the challenge, Emil decided to design a device which could limit shower time to reduce use of electricity and water, and the power bill. He came up with the award-winning Shower Boss, a programmable device that can be used on an existing shower by fitting it outside the shower lining between the mixer and the shower head.

After a lot of homework and visiting irrigation suppliers and plumbing outfitters, and with the help of engineer Kenji Irie from Lincoln University, he designed a system using a valve and

programmable chip which cuts off water after a set time. The Shower Boss is programmable to meet the unique needs of each household and has an LED flash to warn the user that the shower is about to turn off.

Emil says his household pays around 20 cents for each unit of electricity. A 10 minute shower uses about four units, therefore every 10 minutes shower costs about 80 cents.

"If the Shower Boss halves your 10 minute shower time each day, saving 40 cents daily, you would save at least \$146 each year. And that would be for only one person in your family."



## Zephyr-AUT partnership drives manufacturing breakthrough

**A RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP** between Zephyr Technology and AUT University has cut manufacturing costs by 300% and improved production processes for the New Zealand company's high-end BioHarness product.

Zephyr turned to the material and design expertise of academics based at the Textile & Design Laboratory at AUT.

AUT's Associate Professor Joan Farrer identified lightweight and breathable materials with high levels of conductivity to enhance Zephyr's personal performance and condition-monitoring equipment.

Zephyr programme manager, Stephen Kent (pictured) says changes to the design also reduced the number of companies involved in the manufacturing process from four companies to two.

"The changes to the design have resulted in a 300% improvement in our manufacturing costs. All of which makes it easier for us to continue with our aim of manufacturing our professional products locally."

"AUT's textile expertise also means

we've now got a better looking product. Our expertise is in the technology. We're not clothing designers so it made sense to find people that understood that side of the product."

The research that enabled the improvements was supported by an \$80,000 grant from Textiles New Zealand, part of a bigger FRST fund to promote local industry research.

"This collaboration was a great example of the importance and value of carrying out research and development locally," says John Molloy, Zephyr product manager. "Zephyr was able to access first class expertise around textiles and design, AUT was able to develop its research and consultancy in this area, and ultimately the manufacturing gains are an incentive to continue producing our products locally."

The market for Zephyr's professional BioHarness includes sports teams, health and sport researchers, and emergency response units like firefighters, as a way to monitor signs of fatigue and physical distress.

## Professor Eagles appointed AUT Law Dean

### PROFESSOR IAN

**EAGLES** (pictured) has been appointed as AUT University Dean of Law.

He holds a doctorate from Cambridge University and before taking up his AUT appointment was Professor of Law at



the University of Auckland. He is one of New Zealand's leading experts in competition law and intellectual property.

In December last year, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) approved AUT to offer a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) degree, starting from semester one 2009.

The degree was approved by the New Zealand Council of Legal Education (CLE), as meeting its educational requirements for a degree which qualifies candidates for admission as barristers and solicitors of the High Court of New Zealand. It was also approved by the New Zealand Vice Chancellors' Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP) as meeting the necessary academic standards for a degree programme in a New Zealand university.

Professor Eagles has published widely, including in the *Cambridge Law Journal*, the *European Intellectual Property Review*, the *International Journal of Information Technology Law* and other peer-reviewed international journals.

For several years Professor Eagles was the Director of the Competition Law and Policy Institute of New Zealand. He is one of the authors of Eagles, Taggart and Liddell, *Official Information in New Zealand* (OUP 1992) and a major contributor to Rickett and Austin (eds) *International Intellectual Property Law and the Common Law World* (Hart Publishing, Oxford, 2000) Macmillan (ed), *New Directions in Copyright Law* (Edward Elgar Publishing, London, 2007) and other influential legal texts.