

## Prestigious fellowships a boost for UC researchers



Associate Professor Lianne Woodward.

**Two UC academics have been awarded prestigious James Cook Research Fellowships to undertake concentrated work in their fields of expertise for two years.**

Professor Mike Steel (Mathematics and Statistics) and Associate Professor Lianne Woodward (Psychology) are among five researchers to receive fellowships for 2010/11. Administered by the Royal Society of New Zealand on behalf of the Government, the fellowships are awarded to "forward thinking" researchers who will make a significant contribution to New Zealand's knowledge base.

Professor Steel receives \$240,000 to work on "mathematical foundations for inferring large evolutionary trees" and Professor Woodward also receives \$240,000 for her research



Professor Mike Steel.

entitled "Neural and social pathways leading to neurodevelopmental risk".

Professor Steel said the fellowship would allow him time to research a fundamental question: "how far back in time we can hope to accurately trace evolutionary signal from genetic data?".

"The project is motivated by the inability of current methods to resolve some controversial ancient evolutionary events. These include the origin of metazoa [more than 500 million years ago], the origin of photosynthesis [more than 1.5 billion years ago], and the relationship between the earliest life forms."

A related project will attempt to predict how much genetic data would be needed to build a large and accurate "tree of life".

"What makes it interesting is that no-one really has any reliable idea about what the answer

is," Professor Steel said. "There are plenty of theoretical results but they only tell us what happens in the limit as the amount of data becomes infinite – we want to get results for genetic sequences of any finite length.

"Part of this project will require answering some purely theoretical questions about the performance of maximum likelihood estimation in statistics, in joint work with probability theorists in Israel and USA."

Professor Steel plans to visit a number of research groups in Europe and North America during the fellowship, and to be based for part of the project in Tuebingen, Germany.

Professor Woodward said the fellowship would enable her to dedicate herself fully to implementing the next "and most ground-breaking stage" of a longitudinal study she has been conducting for the past nine years.

The study is aimed at understanding the neurological and environmental processes that place children born very preterm (less than 33 weeks gestation at birth) at risk of a range of neurodevelopment problems such as cerebral palsy, learning difficulties, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and conduct problems. It has involved following a cohort of 108 children born very preterm and a comparison group of 108 children born at full term.

"Findings to date reveal early abnormalities within the developing white matter or cabling networks of the brain, with these abnormalities being highly prognostic of neurodevelopmental outcome.

*Continued on page 2.*

### Inside your Chronicle

4. Tributes flow for Professor Don Beaven.
5. UC scientists map new ground in Antarctica.
7. Hi-tech teaching space launched.

# NCRE impresses Lord Patten

With some people having to be turned away from this year's Europa Lecture the speaker, Lord Christopher Patten of Barnes, said his visit could not have been more successful.

The former European Union Commissioner and Hong Kong Governor spent three days at the University of Canterbury late last month, spending much of the time with staff and students at the National Centre for Research on Europe (NCRE).

The Europa Lecture, which is hosted by the NCRE and the European Union Centres Network of New Zealand, was held in the Great Hall at the Christchurch Arts Centre and attracted a capacity audience.

Lord Patten, who travelled to New Zealand with Lady Patten, delivered a lecture titled "London, Hong Kong and Brussels — leadership and sovereignty in a muddled world".

It drew on his experiences in British and European politics and international diplomacy work.

He said his visit had been "highly enjoyable and valuable", and that he was very impressed by the size of the audiences at the Europa Lecture and other lectures he presented while in New Zealand.

Lord Patten was also "very impressed by the NCRE".

"What an excellent network it has put together and it is doing some serious research into New Zealand's relationship with Europe.



(From left) Vice-Chancellor Dr Rod Carr, Pro-Chancellor Dr John Wood, Lord Patten, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Town and NCRE Director Professor Martin Holland at the Arts Centre where the 2009 Europa Lecture was held.

"I'm not surprised it has been so successful in attaining EU research grants," he said.

NCRE Director Professor Martin Holland agreed that Lord Patten's visit to New Zealand, which was organised by UC and included lectures to about 1000 people, had been a "complete success".

"It profiled Canterbury around the country in an impressive way. And for our students it was an opportunity of a lifetime. He gave them a four-hour session on any topic they wished to discuss. They were inspired by him."

Lord Patten was elected as member of parliament for Bath in May 1979, a seat he held until April 1992. Following the General Election of June 1983, Lord Patten was appointed parliamentary under secretary of state, Northern Ireland Office, and in September 1985 minister of state at the Department of Education and Science. In September 1986 he became minister for overseas development at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. He was appointed to the Privy Council in 1989 and

was appointed a Companion of Honour in 1998. In July 1989 he became secretary of state for the environment. In November 1990 he was appointed chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and chairman of the Conservative Party.

Lord Patten was appointed governor of Hong Kong in April 1992, a position he held until 1997, overseeing the return of Hong Kong to China. He was chairman of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland set up under the Good Friday Peace Agreement, which reported in 1999.

From 1999 to 2004 he was European commissioner for external relations and in January 2005 he took his seat in the House of Lords. In 2006 he was appointed Co-chair of the UK-India Round Table.

He is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, and Honorary Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford. He is current Chancellor of the University of Oxford and a former chancellor of Newcastle University.

## Chronicle

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## Prestigious fellowships a boost for UC researchers

*continued from page 1.*

"The goal of this next study wave is to understand the effects of these early abnormalities on subsequent brain development and function using MRI methods."

Professor Woodward said the availability of neonatal MRI data, and detailed neuropsychological evaluations throughout childhood, offered "an internationally unique opportunity to study brain structural and functional development from term equivalent [40 weeks gestational age] until middle childhood in the preterm and typically developing child".

"This study will be the first to examine brain changes over time in a single cohort of children born very preterm and will shed new light on the mechanisms of neurodevelopmental impairment as well as the opportunity for neural recovery amongst children born very preterm."

Professor Woodward said she would also use the fellowship to help ensure the growth and development of the Canterbury Child Development Research Group, which she leads.

# UC hosts world's newest Confucius Institute

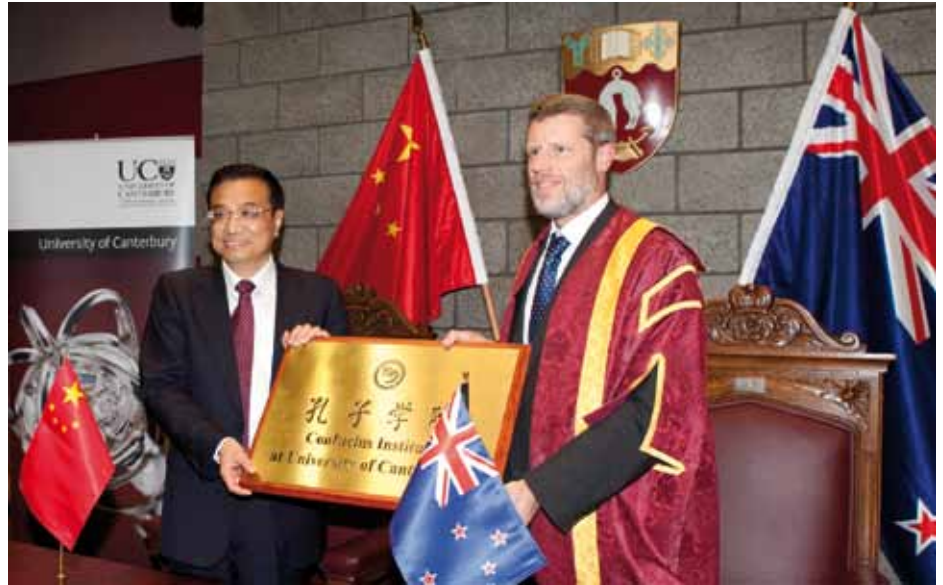
An agreement establishing a Confucius Institute at the University of Canterbury has been signed in the presence of the First Vice-Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, His Excellency Mr Li Keqiang.

The agreement was signed by China's Ambassador to New Zealand, Zhang Limin, and UC Vice-Chancellor Dr Rod Carr during a visit to Canterbury University on Sunday 1 November.

Confucius Institutes are not-for-profit centres within foreign universities designed to support the teaching of Chinese language and culture. They operate in partnership with a Chinese university and are financially supported by the Office of Chinese Language Council International (Hanban), part of the Chinese Ministry of Education. There are about 328 Confucius Institutes around the world.

The University of Canterbury's new Confucius Institute is a joint venture with Huazhong University of Science and Technology (HUST) in Wuhan, widely regarded as one of the top 10 universities in the Chinese higher education system. The University has been co-operating in teaching and research with HUST since 2005, when Christchurch and Wuhan signed a "Friendship City" agreement.

Vice-Premier Li visited the University of Canterbury on the first day of a three-day official visit to New Zealand. Vice Premier Li, who holds an LLB and a PhD in Economics from Peking University, is deputy to Premier



First Vice-Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Li Keqiang (left), and UC Vice-Chancellor Dr Rod Carr at the signing of an agreement to establish a Confucius Institute at Canterbury.

Wen Jiabao and responsible for a broad portfolio including education, economy, finance and development.

Vice-Premier Li led a delegation of approximately 65 members, including the Deputy Secretary General of the State Council and the Vice-Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Agriculture and Commerce. The visit was hosted by Dr Carr and official guests included Pansy Wong, Minister for Ethnic Affairs; Kate Wilkinson; Mayor Bob Parker and Mayoress Joanna Parker; and Karen Sewell, Secretary of the Ministry of Education.

In welcoming the Vice-Premier to the University, Dr Carr stressed the importance of building strong, mutually beneficial relationships between universities in New Zealand and China.

"Tomorrow's graduates will need to be able to do business as comfortably in Beijing as in London and New York," he said.

"The new Confucius Institute marks an important step in the University's strategy of internationalising its curriculum, faculty and student body, to provide an outward-looking, world-class learning environment."

## Youngster's winning flag design to fly in the Chatham Islands



UC Science Outreach Co-ordinator Joan Gladwyn with Diamond Harbour School pupil Theo Fowler.

**A flag designed by Diamond Harbour School pupil Theo Fowler will fly over a hut on Rangatira Island in the Chathams this summer after the youngster won a competition run by the College of Science's Outreach Programme.**

The competition invited primary school children from around the country to design a flag for the Department of Conservation hut where a team from the University's School of Biological Sciences will stay while carrying out field work over summer. They will be studying the endangered black robin and other wildlife on the island.

For designing the winning flag, Theo was given a book voucher, a certificate and a T-shirt incorporating his design which matches those that the research team members will wear. He was presented with his prize by College of Science Outreach Co-ordinator Joan Gladwyn during a presentation ceremony held at the school.

"Theo's design stood out from the others submitted in that it was simple and quite stylised, very suitable for a flag. The colours were vivid and the koru motif on the sun was very imaginative," Mrs Gladwyn said.

When the UC scientists return to Christchurch in January the flag will be given to the school.

Mrs Gladwyn said the competition was part of a larger Outreach programme which would see two science communicators spend time with the scientists over the summer.

The communicators, whose time on the island is being supported by the Brian Mason Scientific and Technical Trust and Canterbury Community Trust, will follow the scientists' work and write about their experiences on the island in a daily blog.

Mrs Gladwyn said the aim of the programme was to "enthuse young people to take an interest in the science taking place on their doorstep".

"We hope the blog will provide valuable information for a wide cross-section of New Zealanders and those living overseas."

She said school children following the programme would be able to post comments and ask questions of the scientists on the island through the blog.

The first science communicator, Alex Sides, headed to the island on 27 October for a five-week stay. The second communicator, Sophie Fern, will stay on the island the rest of the season.

The blog can be found at [www.blackrobin.org.nz](http://www.blackrobin.org.nz).

# Tributes flow for Professor Don Beaven

The University has lost a very dear friend, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Town said last week after the death of Professor Sir Don Beaven.

“His enthusiasm for the work of the University in all facets of health teaching and research will long be remembered,” said Professor Town, a former colleague and friend of Professor Beaven.

“Don was a great visionary, an eternal optimist and intolerant of failure. His leadership in the diabetes community and his advocacy for patients and their families will be a lasting legacy.”

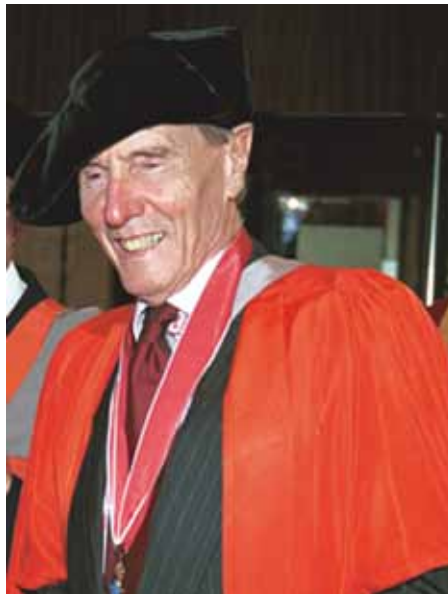
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) Professor Gail Gillon said Professor Beaven had been a strong advocate for advancing health sciences at UC and supported the development of speech-language therapy and audiology.

“I first met Sir Don when I interviewed for a position as lecturer here at UC in speech-language therapy in 1997 and, even at our first meeting, I was inspired by his vision and passion for research into improving New Zealand children’s health and well being.

“He has been a wonderful mentor for many of us over the years. Minor successes that I may have achieved in my career here at UC have always been accompanied by a beautiful handwritten note from Sir Don and I will forever treasure his eloquent words of encouragement and support,” Professor Gillon said.

Professor Beaven joined the University’s Department of Communication Disorders in 1989 to assist with curriculum development and to act as liaison officer to the Christchurch School of Medicine. As an Adjunct Professor he has participated actively in the life of the Department.

The University awarded him the Margaret Condliffe Memorial Medal in 1976 and an



Professor Don Beaven pictured in 2001 when he received an Honorary Doctor of Science degree from the University of Canterbury.

Honorary Doctor of Science degree in 2001. He was a key player in establishing the University of Canterbury Foundation.

After working in an isolated rural practice Professor Beaven trained as a specialist in internal medicine in the UK during the early to mid-1950s. After two years as a senior resident physician in Christchurch he spent two years at Harvard as a Fulbright Fellow and subsequently as an Eli Lilly International Fellow.

Professor Beaven returned to New Zealand in the early 1960s and established the first teaching and research unit in Christchurch as a senior lecturer at the Otago Medical School. In 1971 he was appointed the foundation professor of medicine at the Christchurch School of Medicine.

He worked extensively in India and South East Asia developing medical audit and postgraduate teaching, and was also a New Zealand Diabetes representative to the World

Health Organisation working parties (Africa, India, and the Pacific) and the International Diabetes Foundation for over 20 years.

Professor Beaven was elected to chair the Canterbury Hospital Board in 1989 and served as deputy commissioner until 1994. He was made a Distinguished Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (DCNZM) in 2005 in recognition of his services to people with diabetes.

Other major contributions have been his strong advocacy for increased funding for health research, his passion for research collaboration between engineers and doctors in solving medical challenges and his leadership in the debate about the benefits of graduate entry medical training.

Alumni and Development Manager Shelagh Murray said Professor Beaven was one of the first patrons of the UC Foundation when it was established in early 2003 and was a regular supporter and donor.

“He was a great advocate for philanthropy for the University of Canterbury and was always willing to help in any way. His passion was for Health Sciences and in recent years he assisted with funding for scholarships for this area. He has, I believe, left a legacy to the University.”

Professor Gillon said reflecting on Sir Don’s “amazing positive energy and determination” reminded her of the Māori whakatauki sometimes referred to at the College of Education.

“Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe, me he maunga teitei. Pursue excellence; if you stumble let it be to a lofty mountain.”

Professor Beaven is survived by his wife Gillian (who was a librarian at UC for 37 years) and his two daughters Sarah (an international student advisor at UC) and Lisa.

## New book explores natural history of Banks Peninsula



**A concise and up-to-date summary of the landscape, vegetation and wildlife of the unique volcanic landform of Banks Peninsula has been published by Canterbury University Press.**

*Natural History of Banks Peninsula* is the work of botanist and conservationist Hugh Wilson and draws on information he gathered during a five-year botanical survey of the peninsula.

The book traces the natural history of the area, including the impact of two waves of human colonisation, and looks at the flora and fauna,

geology and ecology of the peninsula today.

The text is accompanied by a range of stunning photographs and a number of the author’s own pen and ink drawings. The book also includes full checklists of species found on the peninsula.

Mr Wilson said the aim of the book was to provide a detailed appreciation of the landscapes, history, plants and animals of the region for local residents, Christchurch citizens and visitors from further afield.

He said he hoped the information would appeal for its intrinsic interest as well as helping all sorts of landowners – farmers, lifestyle, conservation trusts, councils, government departments and home gardeners – with land management.

The publication of the book was sponsored by the Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust and the Josef Langer Trust.

As well as being a botanist, Mr Wilson is also a reserve manager, writer and artist who has lived and worked for more than 20 years on Hinewai Reserve, a nature reserve on Banks Peninsula that is privately owned and funded but open to the public. He has written a number of books on New Zealand’s natural history, including field guides to the plants of Mount Cook National Park and Stewart Island.

- *Natural History of Banks Peninsula* by Hugh Wilson, published by Canterbury University Press, October 2009, RRP \$30, 144pp, ISBN 978-1-877257-82-7.

# UC scientists map new ground in Antarctica

A group of UC glaciologists are in Antarctica for the next month taking ground-based and airborne measurements of land and sea ice for the validation of the European Space Agency's (ESA) CryoSat-2 satellite.

Dr Wolfgang Rack (Gateway Antarctica) and PhD students James Pinchin (Geospatial Research Centre) and Nikolai Krueztman (Gateway Antarctica/Physics and Astronomy) will be joined by Wendy Clavano and Professor Christian Haas (University of Alberta) on the Ice for the field mission and will also collaborate with the University of Otago Sea Ice Group led by Dr Pat Langhorne.

The data the research team is collecting will provide the precision measurements needed for the validation of the ESA's dedicated polar research satellite, CryoSat-2, which is to be launched in early 2010.

"We are looking at surface and internal snow properties — ice layers, crystal size, snow morphology — and sea ice thickness," Dr Rack said.

"We know the Antarctic ice sheet is shrinking at various places but we want to learn to what extent and how fast."

Dr Rack said that while much was known about the ice retreat in the Arctic, less was known about the Antarctic and his team's research, funded by Antarctica New Zealand, would provide significant information critical to understanding climate change and its



(From left) James Pinchin, Dr Wolfgang Rack and Nikolai Krueztman. Dr Rack is holding a model of the CryoSat-2 satellite.

consequence for the southern hemisphere and global climate.

"Ground validation is needed to understand the reflected satellite signal and to prove how accurate the satellite measurement actually is," he said.

Measurements will be taken within an approximately 100km radius of Scott Base and extrapolated to larger areas using other satellite data. For airborne measurements the researchers will use a laser ranger and a digital

camera on a mini UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) developed by the Geospatial Research Centre at UC, and a helicopter equipped with a Canadian instrument called the EM Bird.

"The UAV and the EM bird are being used for the first time at Scott Base and, together with ground measurements, those instruments will provide the first sea-ice thickness map of McMurdo Sound, which is fantastic and absolutely exciting," Dr Rack said.

## Noise monitor wins student scholarship

**Creating a product that monitors noise levels at parties and construction sites has won secondary school student Thomas Scott a \$5000 scholarship to the University of Canterbury.**

Thomas, a Year 12 student at St Thomas of Canterbury College, was awarded the College of Business and Economics Young Enterprise Scheme (YES) Student of the Year Scholarship. The scholarship pays \$5000 towards first-year fees for study towards a BCom.

The YES scheme, run by the Lion Foundation in conjunction with Core Education (a Christchurch-based not-for-profit research and education organisation), introduces secondary students to the challenges of setting up and running a successful business.

Thomas was managing director and sales/marketing manager for the Decibel Control Systems (DCS) team. The team created the DCS 100 which monitors noise arising from events such as parties and construction sites, and provides up-to-date feedback about noise levels via text message. The DCS 100 is powered by a built-in solar panel and has a rechargeable battery allowing it to be left

unattended for prolonged periods of time at sites where noise is an issue.

Team members nominate their candidate for the University scholarship and Thomas' team were unanimous in their praise of his professionalism, shared leadership style, innovative approach and strong marketing and negotiation skills which they believed had led to the considerable interest in their product.

Thomas said participating in YES had given him a sense of self-achievement and confidence in coming up with a viable business idea and following it through.

"I have also learnt to communicate effectively with those within my wider community and build on their experience and skills."

College of Business and Economics Academic Manager Dr Sonia Mazey, who was part of the selection panel for the award, said "Thomas demonstrated a high degree of maturity in the interview, understanding the importance of effective group dynamics and communication to ensure successful business outcomes".

Thomas will take up his scholarship in 2011 and intends to study commerce and law.



## Graduation Shuttle 16 and 18 December

Avoid parking hassles by taking advantage of the free graduation shuttle service running between the University, Arts Centre and Town Hall. Departs from Fine Arts Car Park and returns from Town Hall. Staff, graduands, friends and family are all welcome to use this service.

For more details see [www.canterbury.ac.nz/acad/graduation/shuttle.shtml](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/acad/graduation/shuttle.shtml) or contact the Graduation Office ([graduation@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:graduation@canterbury.ac.nz) or phone 364 2987 ext. 4112).

# Trip to Mansfield conference a dream come true for UC scholar



Photo supplied by Melissa Reimer

UC PhD student Melissa Reimer in Menton, France.

**Having the chance to talk about her favourite subject — Katherine Mansfield — in the balmy climes of the French Riviera surrounded by fellow Mansfield enthusiasts had a Canterbury University PhD student regularly pinching herself to check she wasn't dreaming.**

Melissa Reimer, whose thesis is an analysis of the work of the New Zealand writer, recently presented a paper based on her doctoral research at the Celebrating Katherine Mansfield Symposium, held in Menton, France.

The one-day symposium was part of week-long celebrations organised by the Katherine Mansfield Society to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Katherine Mansfield Memorial Fellowship, now known as the New Zealand Post Mansfield Prize. The prize is awarded annually to a New Zealand writer, giving them a chance to work at the Villa Isola Bella in Menton where Mansfield once lived.

Speakers at the symposium included writers Vincent O'Sullivan and CK Stead, Mansfield's great-niece Janine Renshaw-Beauchamp, playwright and novelist Stuart Hoar and novelist Jenny Patrick.

Melissa said she was "ecstatic" when her paper was accepted for inclusion in the symposium programme.

"I was sick with excitement most of the time. I absolutely love France and I was able to talk about my favourite subject at a conference specifically on Mansfield to people who are, I suppose, 'kin'. I received such a warm

reception and the feedback I received after my presentation was very positive."

Melissa said she was also "enormously appreciative" of the support she received for the trip from the School of Humanities, the New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women and the English department, "specifically from the department co-ordinator, Associate Professor Philip Armstrong, and from the departmental administrator, Jennifer Middendorf".

Melissa's thesis looks at the influence French Impressionism, the 19<sup>th</sup> century artistic movement, had on Mansfield's short stories. Her research is being supervised by UC art historian Dr Emilie Sitzia and English lecturer Dr Anna Smith (Humanities) and is being followed by her previous supervisor, Professor Mark Williams, of Victoria University of Wellington.

The paper Melissa presented at the symposium was on one aspect of her research and looked at the painterly quality of Mansfield's literary rural landscapes alongside the painted landscapes of Impressionist Claude Monet.

"I discussed how the landscapes of their childhood influenced their own artistic representations. Both Monet and Mansfield grew up in port cities and had a love of water and climactic light effects. That affinity shaped and influenced the landscapes they later produced," she said.

Melissa said that in her paper she also considered the idea that Mansfield was more susceptible to the ideas of Impressionism because of the unique light and landscape she experienced while growing up in New Zealand, suggesting that she was a "colonial Impressionist" before she even went to Europe.

While the symposium gave her an opportunity to showcase her work, Melissa said it was also a chance to meet established Mansfield scholars and former fellows who "live, eat and breathe Katherine Mansfield".

"And being made to feel that what you have to say is valuable and that you're bringing something new to a field that is quite well worn means a lot."

## Ukulele group debuts on campus

**The University's first uke-centric ensemble debuted on campus recently.**

Performing a free lunchtime concert outside the University Bookshop, just a hop, step and jump away from the stream which lends its name to the group, the Okeover Ukulele Orchestra (OUO) drew a sizeable and appreciative crowd. The audience was treated to a 40-minute set which included covers of Ben Harper, The Killers and The Violent Femmes, plus some impressive solos on harmonica, kazoo and cardboard box.

The group, which was formed in March, currently has eight members but a growing fan base keep in touch with its happenings through its Facebook site: [www.facebook.com/pages/The-Okeover-Ukulele-Orchestra/213521145312](http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Okeover-Ukulele-Orchestra/213521145312).

Hot on the heels of its successful first outing, the group's next public appearance is on Monday 16 November at Lyttelton's Wunderbar, opening for Australian songwriter and "electric ukulele lady" Rose Turtle Ertler.



Okeover Ukulele Orchestra members (from left) Alison Grant, Samu Tanielu Meni, Rosa Hughes-Currie, David Carradine, Mike Dickison, Maria De Cort, Rose Turnbull and Josh Blackstock.

# Hi-tech teaching space launched

The classroom of the future has opened at the University of Canterbury's College of Education, giving students access to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning technology.

Accommodating 81 students, the interactive teaching space is arranged into nine pods each with three circular tables in a cloverleaf pattern. Each table seats three students with the ability to access a networked computer.

Work created in groups of three can be shared quickly with the whole group via three high-definition projectors.

The teacher wears a wireless microphone so that no matter where in the room the student is seated they can clearly hear the teacher's voice thanks to ceiling speakers. A touch screen control at the lectern allows the teacher to control the projectors and Smartboard (interactive whiteboard).

Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) Professor Gail Gillon said the new space was at the leading edge of innovation in teaching technology.

"It provides an excellent learning environment for students. The space facilitates lecturers' abilities and integrates a range of technologies to support and excite students' learning."

Senior lecturer Lawrence Walker (Educational Studies and Human Development) said the space allowed small group interactions within a large group environment.

Mr Walker worked closely with audiovisual experts when developing the room to ensure the teaching space reached its maximum potential. He said every detail of the room had been closely examined to ensure the optimum learning environment was obtained.



Senior lecturer Lawrence Walker (standing) teaches students in the College of Education's new interactive classroom.

"Students sit on office-type adjustable seats. The chairs are on wheels allowing easy movement of students around the pods for discussion purposes.

"The screens from the 27 computers can be shared with the whole class via the teaching station and projected in high definition, one at a time. The table surface is large enough so students can write or draw on paper and this output can be shared with the whole class via the document camera."

Professor Niki Davis (Literacies and Arts in Education) said the ability to connect with remote participants was particularly useful.

The computer system has full Internet access and Skype facilities allowing distance students to participate in lectures, overseas academics to lecture classes, and remote staff to sit in at staff meetings.

"For our professional development meeting in November, we're aiming for someone from Rotorua, and maybe elsewhere, to join in virtually with the 50 or 60 staff who will physically be in the room. Then I can put those people up on the big screen and they can tell us what they have been investigating. So you can hear, see and engage with people who are off campus," Professor Davis said.

## Spur of the moment entry a resounding success for engineering student

A last-minute decision to enter an engineering competition has paid off for UC student Sam Langdon-Arms.

The third professional year mechanical engineering student is one of three winners of the ACENZ Award for Best Practical Report 2009. He receives a certificate and \$1500 for his account of work carried out last summer at Mighty River Power.

ACENZ (Association of Consulting Engineers of New Zealand) believes that communication skills are crucial for professional engineers when dealing with clients. To encourage students to express themselves clearly, the association offers three awards to New Zealand university students. The judges' focus is not on the content of the report or the range of technical skills learned, but the presentation and ability of the writer to explain what they observed in the workplace, to describe what they did and comment on what they got out of the experience.



Sam Langdon-Arms receives the ACENZ Award for Best Practical Report from Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Engineering) Professor Jan Evans-Freeman.

Sam agreed that good communication skills were essential for a successful career in engineering.

"Writing the report definitely aided in improving my communication skills," he said.

Sam said he was surprised to receive the award

having entered the competition "on a last-minute, might-as-well impulse". He is waiting until after his exams to decide what to do with the prize money but said he would probably consider paying off some of his student loan.

Sam worked in the Hamilton office of Mighty River Power between November 2008 and February 2009.

"I was a member of the geothermal engineering team and worked on three main projects: thermodynamic modelling of secondary generation assets at the Mokai Power Station; a risk-based inspection plan for the Mokai Power Station; and reproducing control-room displays for the Kawerau power station. I was also involved with the Kawerau Power Station opening function and the Mokai Power Station maintenance shutdown."

After completing his degree Sam plans to undertake postgraduate study before pursuing a career in the energy sector.

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## Emeritus Professor S. A. M Adshead – 1932 - 2009

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Emeritus Professor Sam Adshead, who died on 2 October 2009 at his home in Berkshire, England, was the outstanding scholar in Canterbury's History Department during its expansive phase from the 1960s to the 1990s. He introduced Chinese history at Canterbury, but the range, span, clarity of expression, and inter-connectedness of his writings was truly astonishing.

Born in 1932, Professor Adshead was educated at Stowe School and Christ Church, Oxford, where he was taught by Hugh Trevor-Roper (Lord Dacre), with whom he later collaborated in a biography that debunked Sir Edmund Backhouse, the big fraud of China scholarship. After gaining a First in history and the Gladstone Memorial Exhibition, he did two years National Service and then joined the Inland Revenue, which was not a success.

He came to Canterbury in 1960 to teach Asian history. Promoted senior lecturer in 1966, he went on leave to Harvard to learn Mandarin and work on his doctorate that was awarded in 1968. Becoming a reader in 1970, he was appointed to a rare personal chair in 1993, which he held until he retired in 1998.

In the rapidly changing university of the later 20<sup>th</sup> century, Professor Adshead was what might be termed an "old-fashioned don". He wore suit and tie and eschewed overhead projectors and PowerPoint. His highly packed and carefully crafted lectures were delivered at breakneck speed and wise students listened carefully and did not try to get it all down. He was a loyal colleague and whenever called on to do a task he was amazingly expeditious with his contributions. A colleague who asked him to peruse the draft of a large book received illuminating comment and



Emeritus Professor Sam Adshead.

suggestions for improvement within a day. He had a wicked sense of humour that came out in seminars and departmental meetings.

As the son of the last British naval surgeon at the Weihaiwei naval base and godson of a former tutor of the last Emperor, his interest in China stemmed from the home. Having started his career as a tax official, it was appropriate that his first book was on the Chinese salt tax. *The Modernization of the Chinese Salt Administration 1900-1920* (1970) shows how an Irishman, a former Indian civil servant, advised on the reorganisation of the world's first salt administration. But he placed the subject in a global context as a case study of synarchy (joint rule). A continuing interest in salt led him into the huge field of commodity history, which involves reflecting on the dichotomy between nature and culture. *Salt and Civilization* (1992) dealt with salt in society and the state from earliest times to the present.

Commodity history led on to the rise of consumerism which, he said, "like science and democracy, has been part of the modern world order, and shares with them an intellectual dimension". *Material Culture in Europe and China 1400-1800* (1997) looks at food, dress, shelter, heat, light and water, considered as essentials, accessories and extras, and he takes them from being mere consumption into the realm of symbolism. His work on China has a similar global perspective. *China in World History* (1988) compares the Chinese and Roman empires and looks at China's connections with Western Eurasia, Black Africa, and Meso-America. *Central Asia in World History* (1993) goes wider and subscribes to a "big bang" theory of the beginnings of global history stemming from the "Mongolian explosion" under Genghis Khan and his successors.

His last book reflects his own intellectual odyssey. As a religious man, a Catholic convert of 40 years, Professor Adshead often illuminated his discourse with references to religious writers. *Philosophy of Religion in Nineteenth Century England and Beyond* (2000) looks at religious thinkers from Newman to Ratzinger and argues that there was a change in the philosophy of religion that he calls "the critical implosion". These are all extremely wide-ranging and illuminating works of synthesis, based on stupendous reading by a historian who once told an honours seminar that "there were no sources, only questions".

Professor Adshead is survived by his wife, Katherine, who was a senior lecturer in the Classics Department, three children and four grandchildren.

W. David McIntyre

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## UC student wins investment company scholarship



Scholarship winner Julian Bennett-Longley (left) is congratulated by Murray & Company's Managing Director Justin Murray.

**Finance student Julian Bennett-Longley has been awarded the Murray & Company Investment Banking Scholarship for 2009.**

Julian, a BCom and BSc student, competed

against applicants from Otago and Lincoln universities for the scholarship valued at \$1500. Selection is based on academic achievement and the student's potential contribution to the investment banking and finance sector in New Zealand.

"I've been interested in the finance sector for a long time and follow it pretty closely so I always look for any opportunities to further my ambitions in that area," Julian said.

"The Murray & Company Scholarship is hugely helpful – not just from a financial perspective but from being able to tap into their knowledge. I'm grateful for the time they took to answer my questions and their obvious commitment to encouraging finance students."

Murray & Company is a Christchurch-based investment banking and wealth management firm. It is a joint lead manager on the University's philanthropic bond issue.

Murray & Company Managing Director Justin

Murray said the scholarship was intended to reward academic excellence in the area of finance.

"The recent global financial crisis highlights both the complexity of the global financial system and the responsibility of the financial profession in ensuring economic stability and prosperity. Through our scholarship, we are very pleased to be able to recognise outstanding finance students and to encourage them to seek a career in the challenging world of finance."

Murray & Company also offers an internship and work experience placement in alternate years and this summer Josh Powell, a UC finance student, will spend two weeks working with the company where he will be exposed to the work of both the investment banking and wealth management divisions. As with the scholarship, the work placement is also offered on a competitive basis to students from Otago and Lincoln universities.

# Research trip identifies marketing opportunities for furniture in China



Wendy Xian.

## A UC master's student has identified an increasing demand for DIY furniture among the emerging middle class in China.

Wendy Xian has recently returned from a 10-day study tour to China as part of her research for her Master of Forestry Science degree.

With home ownership in China increasing by 30 per cent a year, the demand for interior home furnishings is also increasing, especially for wood products such as flooring, mouldings, interior doors and staircases.

Wendy said the housing boom was creating flow-on opportunities for furniture makers.

"In many Western countries, do-it-yourself furniture is quite popular because of its lower price and some consumers actually enjoy assembling the furniture or decorating the house by themselves. However, in mainstream Chinese culture, self-service is something that only the most discount-minded Chinese will accept," said Wendy.

"Chinese consumers are more likely to ask for assembly services from the retailer or other professional workers. Therefore, the do-it-yourself furniture in China is more like do-it-for-us furniture."

Wendy said that China's special cultural and economic environment had created a new type of DIY market.

"How to deal with them and achieve a competitive advantage over rivals is the main challenge for both domestic and foreign furniture companies and retailers."

Wendy has identified key strategies which could be successfully used by companies wanting to break into the Chinese DIY market: product branding, price strategy, design strategy and customer service strategy.

"In addition, building interior decoration teams can also be seen as a helpful strategy based on the particulars of the Chinese situation."

During her visit to China, Wendy held talks with the Shanghai and Beijing furniture associations.

"I also visited several big furniture markets to see what kind of furniture design and price may attract Chinese customers."

She said the next step would be to focus on beech timber to see if products would be accepted by the Chinese furniture market.

Wendy's trip to China was funded by UC's School of Forestry and a Sustainable Farming Fund project devoted to expanding the viability of the beech industry co-sponsored by the SILNA group and the Indigenous Forestry Section of the Farm Foresters.

Wendy's supervisor, Adjunct Professor Robert Donnelly, said China was attracting great interest from the wood products industry with the major British DIY group, B&Q, already having more than 500 factories in China.

"Development economists have also postulated that a developing world consortium of BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) operating outside of the G7 would lead the way for economic development in the Third World over the next 25-35 years, supplying resources and low-cost production.

"Our interest has been for the southern beech industry, a resource ranking among some of the best quality woods of the world," Professor Donnelly said.

"Wooden furniture, as in New Zealand and other global markets, is selling at a significant discount. But higher quality items retain value, as homeowners buy to show off their affluence.

"Wendy's fine research paper outlines the growing demand for higher quality wooden furniture which could benefit New Zealand at the upper end of the quality spectrum."

## Event a chance to jump start an electricity sector career

### Students looking for a career in the electricity sector had the chance to network with industry leaders at the EPECentre Convention 2009: Energise Your Future.

Held on campus in October, the event is the only careers-focused event for the electricity industry in Australasia.

Students from engineering and commerce were invited to listen to presentations about the wide variety of careers available in the energy sector. Keynote speakers included Tim Lusk, CEO of Meridian Energy, and Dr Patrick Strange, CEO of Transpower NZ. Other industry presentations were given by guest speakers from various companies working in the energy sector, including Simon Rudd from Vector Ltd, Dave Hirst from Transfield Services, and

Chris Collie-Holmes from PSC (Power Systems Consultants).

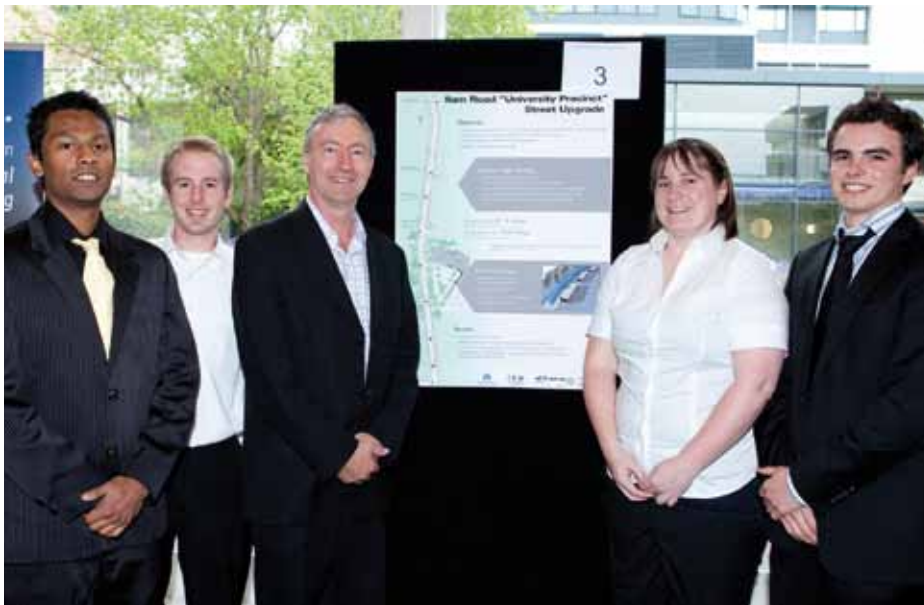
Presentations focused on renewable electricity generation and high-voltage transmission, through to management of infrastructure and consultancy services to the electricity industry. Students were invited to drop off their CVs for summer and graduate work opportunities and to network with industry representatives.

"Careers in the electricity sector are going to be very exciting given the huge energy challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This event is all about showing UC students a vision of what they could be doing in this industry after they graduate," said EPECentre Manager Joseph Lawrence.



(From left) Joseph Lawrence (EPECentre), Tim Lusk (Meridian Energy), Chris Collie-Holmes (Power Systems Consultants), Dave Hirst (Transfield Services), Dr Patrick Strange (Transpower NZ) and Simon Rudd (Vector Ltd).

# Engineering students tackle Ilam Road design issues



The winning team "Efficacy" (from left) Tharindu Hapugaskumbura, Ian Robertson, team mentor Murray Fletcher from Aurecon, Pamela Wilson and Matthew McAlpine with their winning poster.

**The ideas that have come out of a fourth-year transport engineering project will be used in an actual upgrade of Ilam Road by Christchurch City Council (CCC) traffic planners.**

Six groups of four students recently presented their "real world" solutions to the problems of Ilam Road to an audience that included members of industry and the "clients" of the city council and the University.

The student team comprising Matthew McAlpine, Pamela Wilson, Ian Robertson and Tharindu Hapugaskumbura won the best poster prize, which was sponsored by the Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand (IPENZ). Their design suggested reverse-in angle parking with a meandering roadway, pedestrian crossings with signals and an off-street bus interchange.

"We have been so impressed with results that we have decided to incorporate a lot of what the students designed into our Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP)," said Mr Simon Ginn, CCC Network Planning Team Leader – Transport.

"Transport improvements for Ilam Road are in our LTCCP. We'll take concepts from each project and build on them. I said to the students that they'll see elements of their work in our Ilam Road improvements, that is how impressed we were."

The course is designed to give fourth-year ENCI498 students a "real world application" of transport problems and an insight into client relationships, said Dr Glen Koorey (Civil and Natural Resources Engineering).

"Ilam Road is a road with problems. In the past it had been put in the too-hard basket," he said. "It is not a friendly road for pedestrians or cyclists. It's difficult to get across. There are nearly 9000 pedestrians crossing each day, coupled with being on four bus routes. It's chaotic and rather scary.

"It was serendipitous in that Ilam Road was recently added to the LTCCP, so many of the ideas that the students have come up with may be put in place. It's a great example of industry working with the University," Dr Koorey said.

The groups replicated typical tasks undertaken by professional engineers to develop a

viable solution for the site, such as traffic data analysis, intersection modelling, geometric design, cost estimation and public consultation. They also had to take into account a CCC plan to create a suburban bus interchange at the University.

The student groups each had an industry mentor whom they met with once a week to review the tasks completed the week before. The next hour included a lecture, with the rest of the day left clear for the students to complete the next weekly task that had to be handed in the following day.

The resulting designs were submitted with technical reports complete with cost and benefit analysis and posters explaining the proposals to a general audience. The final assessments involved 20-minute presentations to the clients, followed by a poster display session to an audience of staff members, friends and family, members of industry and IPENZ.

Dr Koorey said the projects differed widely.

"There were quite a variety of street treatments, roundabouts, traffic signals. How they treated pedestrians, crossings and parking was all quite different – there were some very nice concepts," he said.

"I'm very pleased with the outcome."

## UC welcomes new staff



**Tom Norcliffe** has been appointed UC's Information and Records Manager. He heads the Information and Records Management project which will support the University's goal of creating, capturing

and disseminating knowledge through the development and implementation of new information systems. Mr Norcliffe has a BA (Hons) and MA in political science from UC. He also holds a Certificate of Recordkeeping Competency from Archives New Zealand. Since 2003 he has worked for Archives New Zealand, most recently as Manager, Appraisal, advising the Chief Archivist on the disposal of public records.



**Dr Neil Rodgers** has joined the Health Sciences Centre as a senior lecturer in counselling. Dr Rodgers has a BA (Hons) and Higher Diploma in Education (University of Natal, South Africa), MEd (University of Ottawa, Canada) and

a PhD (Macquarie University, Sydney). As a

psychologist, counsellor and psychotherapist he has been involved in teaching tertiary courses, primarily in Australia, but also in South Africa, Canada, New Zealand and Switzerland. His research interests include the use of mindfulness in counselling and psychotherapy, identity and health-related behaviours, and investigating the efficacy of therapeutic practices.



**Dr Allan Scott** has been appointed a lecturer in structural engineering and materials in the Department of Civil and Natural Resources Engineering. He has a Bachelor of Engineering and Management from

McMaster University, Canada, and an MSc and PhD from the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Since 2005, Dr Scott has worked as a corrosion specialist in the area of flow-assisted corrosion and stress-corrosion cracking at the Centre for Nuclear Energy Research in New Brunswick, Canada. His research focuses on the influence of material properties and environmental conditions on the durability of reinforced concrete structures.

# Literacy Research Symposium showcases world leading researchers

**A visiting US academic believes New Zealand has a history of reacting quickly to better aid those with literacy difficulties.**

Professor Hugh Catts from the University of Kansas told a recent College of Education Literacy Research Symposium that New Zealand had demonstrated a strong interest in early intervention.

He said that historically the North American approach to difficulties with literacy was to give children time in the hope that they would eventually adjust.

“The traditional way to identify a child who has a reading problem, at least in North America, is to wait several years until that reading problem becomes very apparent. I explain it as a ‘wait and see’ approach. The notion was that some kids would do fine if given a little more time, which turns out to generally not be the case. There are quite a few kids for whom ‘wait and see’ becomes ‘wait and fail’.

“I’m interested in trying to identify those children right at the beginning stages of reading so they don’t have an opportunity to fail,” said Professor Catts.

“New Zealand hasn’t been handicapped by the procedures we’ve used in North America. In New Zealand, it’s my understanding that there is a strong interest in catching these children early.”

More than 180 attended the two-day symposium, which featured world-leading researchers from New Zealand, Australia, USA and the United Kingdom. The symposium boasted a strong international field of presenters along with Professor Catts, including Emeritus Professor Peter Bryant (Oxford Brookes University, UK) and Professor Laura Justice (Ohio State University, USA). Some of New Zealand’s literacy leaders also made presentations, including Professor Bill Tunmer and Professor James Chapman (Massey University), and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) Professor Gail Gillon, Professor Angus Macfarlane (Māori, Social and Cultural Studies), Professor John Everatt and Faye Parkhill (Literacies and Arts in Education).

Professor Gillon said she was delighted at the way the symposium came together.

“It’s been an exciting two-day symposium. Many of the presenters we had are world renowned for their research and each presentation carried common themes around enhancing literacy achievement for all learners. Symposium attendees were buzzing with enthusiasm and interest and left the symposium keen to put research into practice.”

Professor Tunmer said the symposium provided a unique opportunity to provide inter-industry interactions.

“I think it has been an outstanding event. Usually, for many of the people here, it’s



(From left) Professor James Chapman, Professor Laura Justice, Dr Suze Leitao, Professor Hugh Catts, Professor Isla Schwarz, Professor Gail Gillon, Professor Bill Tunmer, Professor Peter Bryant and Professor John Everatt at the College of Education Literacy Research Symposium.

researcher to researcher or practitioner to practitioner but this event engages researchers with those who are interested in how research informs practice. So it’s that researcher-to-practitioner link and I think that’s extremely important. And also the fact that there are researchers from other places, like Australia, North America and the UK. To have that

international perspective has, I think, been very beneficial.”

Professor Justice said the event had been well organised with top-of-the-line presenters.

“Professor Gillon has put together an amazing programme. It was really nice to be invited and this event is certainly a credit to the University of Canterbury.”

## New campus art space to make art more accessible

**A far-from-traditional art exhibition space has opened on campus.**

Called Objectified, the space is contained within a large, hollow, weather-tight plastic tube and was created by fourth-year design student Kylie Williams. It is located in the area of high foot traffic between Registry and the Science lecture theatres.

Kylie said the aim of Objectified was to provide a flexible exhibition space for artists and broaden the exposure of art to those who would not normally go to a gallery or museum.

“It’s suggesting a different venue for exhibiting art,” she said.

Kylie said the idea for Objectified came from her fourth-year research project in which she looked at exhibition design and how objects existed and were viewed within such spaces.

She said through her research she became “dissatisfied” with traditional spaces as viewers were asked to look at art in a specific way.

“So I decided to put art in spaces that lack those traditional display contexts and are familiar to people, giving them a chance to view the work however they like, whenever they want and without as many constraints guiding how they view and think about the work. Anyone can simply wander past or pause for a look.”

Objectified will stay in place until the end of 2010 and was made with help from Award Plastics and Displays, Steelplus, and UC’s Facilities Management.

Exhibitions will run for a fortnight and after the initial opening period all exhibition submissions will go through a curatorial panel.

For more information on the project go to [www.objectifiedexhibitions.co.nz](http://www.objectifiedexhibitions.co.nz).



UC design student Kylie Williams and the Objectified art space.

# PM's scholarships a boost for sporting students



Georgina Richards.

## Twenty-two University of Canterbury students have received Prime Minister's Scholarships this year to help them juggle tertiary study and sport commitments.

Sprinter David Ambler, basketballer Georgina Richards and engineering doctoral student Lindsey Underwood were among those acknowledged at a recent ceremony at QEII Stadium, Christchurch, for Prime Minister Athlete, Coach and Team Scholarship recipients from the upper South Island.

The scholarships were established by the Government in 2000 to ensure athletes were provided with educational opportunities to better support their careers after sport and to encourage the professional development of the coaches, officials and support crew assisting New Zealand's elite sportspeople.

Athletes can receive up to \$10,000 for study fees along with a living allowance of up to \$6000 an academic year, while coaches, officials and support team members can receive up to \$50,000 each year for up to three years.

David, who began study for a Bachelor of Sport Coaching at UC this year, has just had his most successful season to date.

In March he set a New Zealand men's under 19 record, running the 100 metres in 10.35 seconds, which also broke the 35-year-old stadium record previously set at QEII during the 1974 Commonwealth Games by Jamaican Don Quarrie. In July he finished seventh in the 100m final of the World University Games and he was named 2009 Canterbury Athletics Sprinter of the Year.

David, who runs for Old Boys United Athletic Club, said he was really pleased to receive the scholarship.



Lindsey Underwood.

"I wasn't looking forward to getting out a massive student loan. Now I'll be able to finish sport and end up with a degree as well."

David recently had his first race of the 2009/2010 season in New Caledonia and said the country had had a big impact on him and inspired him to take a French paper during the upcoming UC Summer Programme.

He said it could be hard juggling training with study, particularly because of all the travel time involved getting to competitions, so he has had to get very proficient at studying at altitude and completing assignments in transit.

David said his future goals were to qualify for every major championship coming up, including the 2010 Commonwealth Games, World Championships in 2011 and the 2012 Olympics, but first he has his sights set on breaking 10.25 seconds and would love to add an Australasian title to his CV this season.

For third-year BSc student Georgina it is the second time she has received a PM Scholarship, having received one in her first year of study when she was captain of the Under 19 NZ basketball team. Georgina, who this year captained the Canterbury Wildcats, has been member of the Tall Ferns squad for 18 months and was named in the team this year, playing three games against Japan and in the recent Oceania series against Australia.

The geology major, who plans to go on to masters next year, said playing for the Tall Ferns in the 2012 Olympic campaign was her big sporting goal and she has been spending plenty of time shooting hoops in the University's Recreation Centre to work on her individual game.

PhD student Lindsey is the recipient of a Prime

Minister's Support Team Scholarship along with BikeNZ sport scientist Craig Palmer.

Lindsey started a PhD in track cycling aerodynamics at UC in October 2008, having moved here from the UK where she completed her Masters in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Birmingham.

She is working with BikeNZ on its 2012 Olympic Games campaign. The main aims of her PhD research are to determine the optimal position of athletes in the individual and team pursuit events, and to create a mathematical model to predict the finishing time and optimal pacing strategy for the athletes involved.

"We're basically changing the position of cyclists to reduce drag so they go faster. We bring in NZ's elite athletes for testing in our wind tunnel and change their head position, arm position, seat height and handlebar position, and we record their drag. The lower the number, the better."

Lindsey has also been involved in equipment testing of bicycles, helmets and skinsuits.

Lindsey used the scholarship to visit the wind tunnel at the San Diego Air and Space Technology Centre in the US with BikeNZ in August. During the visit the riding position of Kiwi cyclists Alison Shanks and Jesse Sergent were tested in the wind tunnel, as well as a number of different combinations of track frames and wheels to identify the most aerodynamic bike set-up for individual riders.

"It was brilliant to be able to see what other people do, how they work and compare data," said Lindsey.

She is currently developing the cycle rig and testing process back at UC using the information she gained from San Diego to improve the accuracy and efficiency for future athlete testing.

While results have varied between athletes the engineering-sport science team has seen improvements across the board. Lindsey said she was really enjoying her research work and was not bothered at all by helping to give Kiwi cyclists the edge.

"It's just really good to be involved and meet the athletes and be part of a small team helping them," she said.

Other PM Scholarships awarded to UC students went to: Annabelle Coates, Timothy McKee, Sarah McSweeney, Rebecca Wardell (athletics); Catherine Jordan, Adam Stewart (cycling); Sophie Devine, Peter Younghusband (cricket); Simon Gordon (equestrian); Nick Haig, Elizabeth Perry (hockey); Charlotte Kight (netball); Kerri Bonner, Theresa Griffin (paralympics); William Meates (rowing); Olivia Coady, Benjamin Funnell (rugby); Annabelle Carey (swimming) and Andrea Hewitt (triathlon).