



Alchemy

College magazine issue 14, Autumn 2008

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Monash Institute
of Pharmaceutical
Sciences: better
medicines by design

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From the dean

This year marks a major step forward for the college with the establishment of the Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences (MIPS), which will comprise the largest and most experienced group of pharmaceutical scientists in Australia. MIPS will enable our talented staff and researchers to work in a new way and enhance the impact of our work in the fields of drug discovery and development, pharmaceutical research and training. Some of the activities currently undertaken at MIPS are highlighted on pages 4 and 5 of this edition of *Alchemy*.

In addition, the college will strategically expand its activities in pharmacy practice research during 2008 to focus on the fundamental role of medication use and safety. Our new initiative will encompass research in hospital, community and

institutional settings and will be described in the next edition of *Alchemy*. Our goal is that this initiative will have direct impact on the more effective use of medicines in the community.

To support the development and expansion of activities within the college, I was thrilled to announce the appointment of Professor Peter Stewart as deputy dean in February. The newly created role of deputy dean will provide specific academic leadership in education, student engagement, and staff and policy development. A snapshot of Peter's highly successful career and his many contributions are described on page 7.

Exciting new developments are occurring in our educational activities. The Postgraduate Studies and Professional Development Unit,

incorporating our postgraduate offerings in wound care, pharmacy practice and clinical pharmacy, has been established and we have developed a relationship with Chifley Business School to provide an enhanced offering for postgraduate courses in pharmacy management commencing in 2009.

The Bachelor of Pharmacy curriculum is currently being redeveloped to provide a contemporary course that will be supported by the latest innovations in curriculum design and education facilities. Our aim is to ensure that our pharmacy graduates (who will be tomorrow's professional leaders) have the best education and training we can provide.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of *Alchemy* and learning about these activities – and that you share the



excitement of the staff and students as we go about our critically important education and research activities.

William N. Charman

Professor William N. Charman
(BPharm 1981), PhD

Research and teaching awards – congratulations



Associate
Professor
Chris Porter

Victorian College of Pharmacy 2007 Biennial Research award – recognising outstanding, high impact research in the pharmaceutical sciences

Chris has a well recognised and respected profile within the international pharmaceutical science research community. His research, which has been widely publicised and has attracted significant national and international funding, encompasses several of the key research areas of drug delivery, drug absorption and pharmacokinetics/pharmacodynamics. His research record includes significant achievements and outcomes and the number of his international research publications is exceptional.



Dr. Jian Li

Victorian College of Pharmacy 2007 Annual Early Career Research award – recognising research excellence in an early career pharmaceutical research scientist

Jian is continuing to make a unique contribution to research relating to the development and innovative use of anti-infective agents. He has published 42 research papers (21 of these on colistin research) that have attracted significant international recognition. Jian was awarded the R. Douglas Wright Research Fellowship in 2006 (a nationally competitive award for early career researchers) and he has secured significant grant funding to focus on optimising antibiotic use and development of novel therapeutic approaches against multi-drug resistant gram-negative bacteria.



Dr. Jennifer
Short

Victorian College of Pharmacy 2007 Biennial Young Investigator award – awarded to young researchers up to five years post-PhD

Jennifer currently supervises three PhD candidates and her research activities have a promising future in neuroscience and drug discovery research, particularly the function of neuromodulatory systems that influence addictive behaviours. She successfully combines her teaching commitments within the undergraduate program and other collaborative research projects, while publishing her work in high quality journals.



Dr. Elizabeth
Yuriev

Victorian College of Pharmacy 2007 Annual Teaching Excellence award – recognising excellence in all aspects of teaching

Elizabeth has demonstrated through her teaching methodologies a variety of strategies and approaches to improving the delivery of lecture material. She consistently uses exciting content, planning, feedback and evaluation as themes to remain relevant, resourceful and appealing to the student body, and has gained extremely positive feedback from students through MonQUEST and unit evaluations. Elizabeth's teaching excellence exemplifies the manner in which contemporary academics are both excellent and inspiring educators as well as active and successful researchers.

Introducing the Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences: *better medicines by design*



The newly-established Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences (MIPS), comprising the largest and most experienced group of pharmaceutical scientists in Australia, is taking a leading role in drug discovery and development, pharmaceutical research and training.

MIPS focuses on cutting-edge research and the training of Australia's next generation of pharmaceutical scientists. It is a natural progression for the college, building on its international reputation for innovation and collaboration, particularly in the areas of medicinal chemistry, pharmaceutical biology, lead optimisation and drug delivery.

"The MIPS vision, research focus and activities have been carefully designed to leverage existing capabilities and resources and aggregate Australia's leading pharmaceutical scientists to provide the critical mass to undertake new, high impact basic research and enable the translation of drug discoveries through the early stages of pre-clinical development. Our focus in MIPS is about collaboration, innovation and impact," said Professor Bill Charman, director of MIPS and dean of the college.

"At the same time, MIPS is both an incubator of basic skills and knowledge and a vehicle for supporting broad-based collaborative research. Our programs and structure provide outstanding opportunities for postgraduate and postdoctoral pharmaceutical scientists, which are unmatched elsewhere in Australia."

A structure to aggregate capabilities and resources

This significant initiative will integrate the college's pharmaceutical science research activities into three key discipline-based themes – Medicinal Chemistry and Drug Action, Drug Candidate Optimisation, and Drug Delivery, Disposition and Dynamics. An important fourth theme, Drug Discovery Biology, will be introduced in early 2009 when a leading research group of biologists will join MIPS from the faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences. The

Drug Discovery Biology theme will operate as a joint initiative of the faculties of Pharmacy and Medicine and will focus on diseases amenable to treatment through a better understanding of G-protein coupled receptor biology.

MIPS has adopted this discipline-based, thematic approach to its research to integrate the expertise and skills existing within the four major, distinct disciplines. It has also embraced a concurrent therapeutic focus in the following major areas: infectious diseases (anti-bacterial, anti-viral and anti-parasitic), cancer (aligned with the research activities of the recently established Cooperative Research Centre for Cancer Therapeutics) and central nervous system diseases (various diseases according to their pharmacology, drug action and delivery).

Translational drug development and partnerships

The importance of translational research is well recognised internationally, as evidenced by the USA Food and Drug Administration's observation that applied sciences required to 'translate' drug discoveries into effective medicines have not kept pace with the tremendous advances in the basic sciences. Drug developers are frequently using outdated and ineffective tools and practices. As a result, the majority of candidate drugs fail during development and many development programs are abandoned after enormous investment of time and resources.

To address this national and international need, a specific focus of the activities of MIPS is to incubate skills, technology platforms and resources in translational drug development. In contrast to historical approaches, which have typically screened large numbers of compounds to identify new drug candidates, the expertise within MIPS

informs the drug discovery/development process through specific, customised, rational and deliberate programs that 'design-in' superior properties to enable the translation of new drug candidates into better medicines (by design).

Ideally located within the Bio21 cluster that comprises the Parkville medical research precinct, and organisationally embedded with the leading medical research strengths across Monash University, MIPS drives development of the basic sciences that underpin translational research and provide skills to collaborative partners to reduce attrition rates, create value, increase the likelihood of success, reduce costs and compress timelines associated with drug discovery and development.

MIPS represents a new research model, providing multidisciplinary linkages to build a vibrant and innovative basic research capacity and a mechanism by which partner organisations can engage with leading pharmaceutical scientists to develop better medicines, moving development beyond just the identification of new drug discoveries.

The MIPS vision: better medicines by design

MIPS will be a leading centre of pharmaceutical science that will drive both basic and applied research. Knowledge, understanding and innovation will be fostered and incubated and this expertise will be leveraged through collaborative translational research programs with academic and commercial partners.

CDCO works with local biotech companies

Along with its international research projects on neglected diseases, the Centre for Drug Candidate Optimisation (CDCO) collaborates with Australian biotechnology companies and not-for-profit research organisations to identify and optimise drug candidates, and move them towards more advanced stages of development.

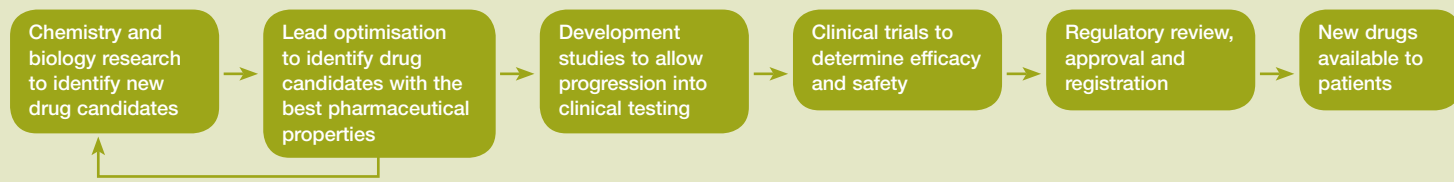
The CDCO, established at the college in 2003, is a research centre that undertakes collaborative drug candidate optimisation to accelerate and enhance drug discovery and development. In doing so, it provides a significant benefit to Australian drug research.

Prior to the establishment of the CDCO, the only option available to small biotech companies and research institutes was to conduct studies overseas with contract research organisations that charge a fee to test compounds and provide

data. Often these organisations do not provide the necessary data interpretation to allow companies to get full benefit from the data provided. The CDCO model provides decision-quality data, with interpretation, in a timely and cost-effective manner.

The importance of the research conducted by the CDCO is evidenced by the significant number of collaborative programs undertaken (96 programs since 2003), the substantial research revenue (approximately \$3.5million per year)

and the number of reports that have been associated with this work (more than 1100 since 2003). Research conducted by the CDCO has provided preclinical data to support the submission of four investigational new drug applications to regulatory agencies by collaborative partners for the drug candidates to progress into human clinical trial, four significant international commercial licence agreements and numerous commercial ready grants.



Inhalation research: from powder to plasma

The efficiency of delivering drugs through inhalers could be dramatically improved by new research underway at the college.

Professor Peter Stewart and Drs Ian Larson, David Morton and Michelle McIntosh (BPharm [Hons] 1996, PhD 2000) are working together to improve the effectiveness and reproducibility of dry-powder inhalers, most commonly used in the treatment of asthma, and to understand the deposition of drugs delivered to the lungs.

"In most of the asthma dry powder inhalers, about 80% of the drug in a dose is lost; that 80% either stays in the device or stays in the mouth and only 20% gets right down into the inner part of the lungs where it counts," Professor Stewart says. "We're trying to understand how powders disperse and how to improve their efficiency and reproducibility. In addition, while deposition of drugs from the gastrointestinal tract is well

characterised, much less is known about the absorption, deposition and metabolic processes in the lungs."

In the future, the inhalation route is likely to be used more frequently to deliver drugs into the systemic circulation. Despite being used for around 40 years, inhalers currently on the market are generally unsuitable for use in delivering drugs for systemic absorption. The focus of the research at the Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences (MIPS – see page 4) is centred on understanding powder behaviour, developing novel strategies to improve drug powder dispersion and in-vivo deliverability.

While some companies have developed sophisticated and expensive systems to better deliver drugs into the lungs, the college researchers want to understand existing, simpler systems, using applied physical chemistry to learn how powders disperse. If they succeed, their work will make inhaled drugs cheaper, reliable and far more efficient.

The research program brings together a unique blend of expertise. Professor Stewart has been

researching the mechanism of interaction of powders for many years. Dr. Larson has a colloidal chemistry background and brings to the team a great deal of expertise in both the theoretical background and state-of-the-art techniques to measure particle interactions using techniques such as atomic force microscopy. Dr. Morton recently joined MIPS from a specialist inhalation company, Vectura in the United Kingdom, and has extensive industry expertise in inhalation formulation design, product development and powder characterisation. Dr. McIntosh is a former college PhD graduate who spent seven years as assistant director of the Centre for Drug Delivery Research at the University of Kansas. She has established animal models to evaluate formulation performance.

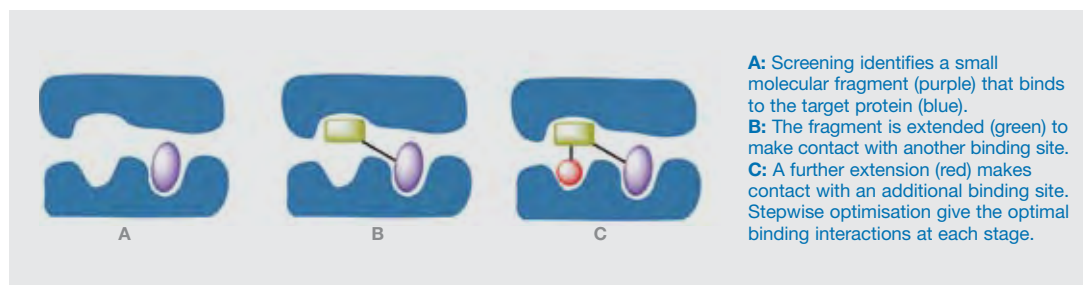
The group is exploring the cutting edge technologies of particle surface and structure modification, utilising, for example, mechanofusion or spray drying to improve the dispersion characteristics of powders. State-of-the-art analytical techniques such as atomic force microscopy and ultra-high speed photography at a million

frames per second are used to understand dispersion behaviour. These novel formulations are subsequently evaluated for bioavailability and pharmacokinetic parameters in in-vivo models. This unique combination of skills allows the group to examine how formulation design translates to in-vivo performance – that is, from powder to plasma.



Fragment-based drug discovery

Fragment-based drug discovery (FBDD) is a relatively new approach to small molecule drug discovery which has emerged over the past decade.



The FBDD group within Medicinal Chemistry and Drug Action, MIPS, consists of academic staff, postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows searching for small molecules active against protein targets that have anti-microbial, anti-viral and anti-cancer potential.

Fragment-based methods rely on the idea of identifying small molecular fragments that bind efficiently (although frequently weakly) to the target protein, and then enlarging, evolving or linking them to make larger, high affinity molecules that are more drug-like. The small molecular fragments used are about half the size of typical drug molecules, and

much smaller compound libraries can be used as a result of the reduced complexity of the molecules. In comparison to high-throughput screening where libraries of millions of compounds of drug-like size are screened, fragment screening performs well with smaller libraries (thousands of compounds) of lower molecular weight.

From a small fragment hit, the process of growing into a drug-like molecule relies on optimising binding interactions at each step, as the molecular weight increases, to ensure the resulting molecule has the best possible binding to the target.

Within Medicinal Chemistry and Drug Action, MIPS, the approach is to screen the library of fragments (~1500 compounds) by nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectroscopy to identify those that bind to a target. The affinity, mode and position of binding for the fragments are determined by NMR spectroscopy or X-ray crystallography. The process of converting these small fragment hits to larger molecules then begins, using synthetic chemistry to make variations and enlarge the molecules to create higher affinity lead compounds.

Postgraduate Studies and Professional Development Unit

In February, the college formally established the Postgraduate Studies and Professional Development Unit (PSPDU) in the Department of Pharmacy Practice.

Over recent years, the department has developed and delivered the following postgraduate programs:

- Master of Clinical Pharmacy
- Pre-registration Training Program and Graduate Certificate in Pharmacy Practice
- Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma and Master of Wound Care.

All these activities will now be under the PSPDU umbrella, with Associate Professor Kay Stewart as director of the unit.

“Consolidation of these post-graduate programs by formal establishment of the PSPDU is a very logical and important step,” said Professor Roger Nation, head of the Department of Pharmacy Practice.

“It underpins the college’s commitment to provide high quality and relevant postgraduate award courses and professional development opportunities for pharmacists in particular and allied health professionals generally.”

The edge of ADME space

The college was fortunate to have recently hosted a public lecture, presented by Dr Dennis Smith, entitled ‘The edge of ADME space’.

Dr Smith has worked in the pharmaceutical industry for 30 years since gaining his PhD from the University of Manchester. For the last 20 years he has been at Pfizer Global Research and Development, Sandwich, where he was vice president – pharmacokinetics, dynamics and metabolism. He is now a Pfizer Academic Research Fellow. His research interests and publications span many aspects of drug discovery and development, in particular the importance of drug

metabolism in the design of more efficacious and safer drugs.

During his career, Dr Smith has had a significant involvement in the development of eight marketed new chemical entities. His lecture described the importance of designing new drugs with properties that make them amenable to effective delivery – that is, drugs with appropriate absorption (A), distribution (D), metabolism (M) and excretion (E) properties.



Peter Stewart – deputy dean



Congratulations to Professor Peter Stewart, who was appointed deputy dean of the college in February this year. The newly created role of deputy dean will provide specific academic leadership in education, student engagement and staff and policy development for the college.

"Peter has a distinguished record of achievement within academic pharmacy research and education," said Professor Bill Charman. "He is a major asset to the college and I am personally very happy, and thankful, that he will assume this important role."

Professor Stewart graduated with a Bachelor of Pharmacy (Honours) in 1968 and gained a PhD from the University of Queensland in 1976. He was head of the Department of Pharmacy at the University of Queensland from 1987 to 1991 and was appointed Professor of Pharmaceutics and head of the Department of Pharmaceutics at the college in 1992. He was awarded a Fellowship of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia in 1990.

"I am extremely happy to be taking on this new role and to be able to extend my current associate dean teaching role to support the dean in student engagement and staff and policy development," said Professor Stewart.

He served on the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (Queensland branch) council from 1976 to 1985 and has been a member of the Pharmaceutical Subcommittee of the Australian Drug Evaluation Committee. He is a member of the Health and Medicine Peer Review Panel established under the Performance-Based Research Fund in New Zealand and a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of the *Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research*. He is also on the board of the Victorian College of Pharmacy Foundation.

Professor Stewart was chair of the Management Committee of the Australian Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association during the period 1996 to 1999. This was a high quality innovative distance learning program for the training of medical representatives working for pharmaceutical companies. He was chair of the site evaluation team appointed by the New Zealand and Australian Pharmacy Schools Accreditation Committee to review the School of Pharmacy at Curtin University in 2002 and was chair of the Learning and Teaching Plan Working Party of the Academic Board for Non-award Offerings/Quality Assurance during 1998–1999. He has been involved in the development and implementation of the new undergraduate course in formulation science, which began in 2000. He currently chairs the Curriculum Planning Group for the redevelopment of the Bachelor of Pharmacy course for implementation in 2009.

He has an international reputation in the field of drug particulate interaction, in particular in relation to the dissolution and respiratory delivery of micronised drugs. He has published in high quality international peer reviewed journals with more than 80 scientific journal papers, 120 conference abstracts and 13 commissioned scientific reports. He has supervised 20 postgraduate students, mostly PhD, and is currently supervising one Masters and three PhD students. His research has been well supported by government (ARC), industry funding (Sigma Pharmaceuticals, Glaxo Australia and GSK, UK), and Monash University Research Fund, exceeding \$1.1million since 2002.

Improving learning 'virtually'



New teaching initiatives, including a virtual teaching space and virtual patients, are being introduced to improve the learning experience for Bachelor of Pharmacy students in 2008.

Virtual practice environment

Two new virtual practice environment spaces will provide a variety of virtual settings where students can practise and develop their counselling and communication skills. Unlike a traditional model pharmacy, which could only represent a traditional community pharmacy, these flexible spaces can be configured to create a variety of healthcare and practice settings.

The rooms will expose students to the processes they will find in practical placements, within a safe and supervised environment. This will not replace first hand practical experience, but will allow students to become familiar with the workplace structure.

Each space contains screens that create an area 10m wide by 3m high for projecting high-resolution images. Here students can interact with patients, health professionals and others – face-to-face and through video conferencing, online software and avatars. Projected images represent the current range of practice settings, including community pharmacy, hospital ward, rural pharmacy depot and remote community health service. The 'virtual' nature of the environment will be complemented by props and resources such as specific medicines, references and self-care cards to enhance the experience.

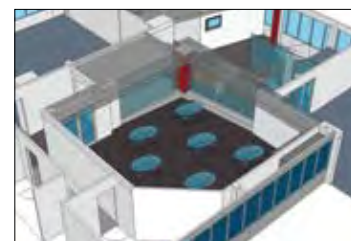
Virtual patients

The 'Virtual Patient' is an eLearning system where verbal commands from a student to a 'patient' result in an immediate verbal or non-verbal response from an animated computer graphic. A virtual patient case is developed to demonstrate the effects of the student's decision

on the patient, both visually and aurally. Inter-professional patient cases allow examination of the impact of a decision from multiple professions, such as how the pharmacist's decision may affect others in the healthcare team.

The concept, which will be demonstrated through a variety of media, has been developed so that the virtual patients are expressed as part of virtual families. These will later become part of a virtual neighbourhood. The families cover a variety of social backgrounds, some healthy, some with chronic disease, and include a variety of ages, social supports and financial security, giving students the opportunity to practise their skills across a range of areas.

These new initiatives will be monitored and continually evaluated to ensure their suitability for students and alignment with educational objectives.



Postgraduate Pharmacy Management moves to Chifley



Neil Edwards, Chief Executive, Chifley Business School.

Following a recent review of the college's postgraduate courses, it was decided to explore partnership options for the pharmacy management program to give students better access to broad-based business and management expertise and greater support in development of postgraduate management qualifications.

From July 2008, Chifley Business School will offer units in pharmacy that can be credited towards postgraduate management qualifications. Chifley has been chosen by the college to deliver these units as it has an industry focus and a history of delivering quality distance education.

"This new relationship with Chifley offers a terrific opportunity for pharmacists to access a range of high quality postgraduate management courses," said Professor Bill Charman.

The new alliance has created articulation pathways for pharmacists and those holding Bachelor of Pharmacy degrees to complete contemporary postgraduate qualifications in management via this flexible model.

The Chifley program will offer multiple exit points leading to the following qualifications:

- Graduate Certificate in Management
- Graduate Diploma in Management
- MBA.

Monash students currently enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in Pharmacy Practice will be given the opportunity to select the Chifley subjects as electives. Past students who have completed the Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma in Pharmacy Management may also receive credits towards the completion of an MBA as delivered by Chifley.

Chifley Business School is Australia's largest independent provider of business and management education, delivering short courses, nationally accredited certificate and diploma level courses, and the MBA program.

For more information contact Bill Suen, email bill.suen@vcp.monash.edu.au or Chifley Business School, tel: 1300 CHIFLEY, 1300 244 353 or visit www.chifley.edu.au

Thank you John Ware OAM

The college community would like to thank John Ware OAM (PhC 1970), who recently stepped down from the Victorian College of Pharmacy board after 26 years of outstanding service.



John has been a community pharmacist for over 40 years. He served as president of the college board for a period of eight years leading up to the amalgamation with Monash University. Apart from his service to the college board, he has served as a councillor, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (Victorian branch) since 1981 and as president of both the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (Victorian branch) and the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia. He has also served as the regional director for Continuing Pharmacy Education for the society. He currently serves as the president of the International Pharmaceutical Federation World

Health Organization's Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum and has also served on the board of the National Asthma Council.

John received a Rural Health Week Award for outstanding contribution to the public health of the community of the Hume Region of Victoria and is a Life Governor of the Seymour District Memorial Hospital. In 2002 he received the Medal of the Order of Australia in recognition of his contribution to pharmacy, pharmaceutical sciences and to the healthcare of the community of Seymour. In 2006 he was awarded a Fellowship of the International Pharmaceutical Federation.

John joined the society council and college council to ensure that pharmacists were taught how to communicate properly with their customers and within the profession. He was particularly driven by this concept and gave a paper on the topic in Helsinki in 1986.

"We would like to thank John for his significant contributions to the college, which included over 26 years of outstanding service and a period as president," said Professor Bill Charman.

John will continue to serve on the board of the Victorian College of Pharmacy Foundation.

Mentoring Student Ambassadors

When the Student Ambassador Program was introduced, alumni were invited to become mentors to some of the college's brightest students.

One of these mentors is Zehava Samuel (BPharm 2002). Since starting with Slade Pharmacy in her pre-registration year, Zehava has progressed through the company and is now a hospital pharmacy manager. Mainly involved in hospital pharmacy within the private sector, she has also had exposure to community pharmacy, the public hospital system and sterile compounding.

"I hope that my mentoring complements formal learning to develop a more well-rounded pharmacist who can gain ideas on developing her own career and be a role model for others," said Zehava. "From my perspective, it's refreshing to be in touch with younger colleagues who are so full of

enthusiasm and ideas. It also enables me to reflect on how far I've come."

So what has it been like for Julia to have a mentor?

"I've thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated the mentor program, which has provided me with invaluable insight into the application of my studies in the workplace," said Julia. "I feel privileged and honoured to have the support, encouragement and guidance of an experienced and highly respected member of our pharmacy fraternity."

We need you!

If you would like to be a mentor to our 2008 Student Ambassadors contact:

Jessica Dobbie
email: jessica.dobbie@vcp.monash.edu.au
tel: 613 9903 9119

Vanessa Williams
email: vanessa.williams@vcp.monash.edu.au
tel: 613 9903 9087

www.vcp.monash.edu.au/alumni/mentor.html

The college thanks 2007 mentors:

Anthony Agnew (BFormSc[Hons] 2004)
Olga Dudinski (BPharm 1970, MPharm 1977, PhD Pharmacy 1987)
Alison Duncan (BPharm 1990, GradDipClinPharm 1999)
Andrew Elnatan (BPharm 1989, MPharm 1994)
Bronwyn Flanagan (BPharm 2003)
Michael Gray (BPharm 1994)
Ennio La Guardia
Amyna Helou (BPharm[Hons] 2004, GradCertPharmPrac 2006)
Rebecca Kanati (BFormSc 2006)
Fabian Kong
Christine Kwan (BPharm 2005, GradCertPharmPrac 2006)
Maria Larizza (MClinPharm 2005)
Kate Mackie
Jenny Marty (BPharm 1970, MPharm 1975)
Jen Nguy (BPharm 1999)
Andrew Robertson
Zehava Samuel (BPharm 2002)
Divesh Sanghvi (BPharm 2003)

Announcing 2008 Ambassadors:

Jenny Chan	Dhruv Pal	Catherine Downie
Deepak Prakash	Galahad	Jeane Tee
Tracey Hong	Rohan Volfe	Karen Hsieh
Vivian Keong Teng Wai	Lusi Jiang	Bessie Wong
Samantha Mathews		

Senior Ambassadors:

Ranelle Anderson	Gemma Lay	Yi (Peter) Cheng
Frances Ng	Souhiela Fakih	Tra-My Nguyen
Julia Gilmartin	Suyi Ooi	Adam Hardi
Marene Ter	Ruth Harris	Tracey Williams
Boon Phiaw Kho		

Retired Pharmacists' Group

2008 meetings

Date	Time	Presenter	Topic
4 March	11.00am – 1.00pm	Professor Bill Charman	Find out about the newly established Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Science and the impact it will have on research and research outcomes.
1 April	11.00am – 1.00pm	Major General David J McLachlan AO, State President, RSL (Victoria)	Hear about the activities of the RSL in the modern day context.
27 May	11.00am – 1.00pm	Professor John Murtagh AM	Hear the author of <i>Murtagh's General Practice</i> talk about how his guide has aided GPs in diagnosing and prescribing.
24 June	11.00am – 1.00pm	Ms Adriana Tiziani	Learn about the very latest methods used in wound care management.
29 July	11.00am – 1.00pm	Ms Kathy Bell, CEO, National Heart Foundation of Australia (Victorian Division)	Discover how the National Heart Foundation of Australia (Victorian division) supports medical research.
26 August	11.00am – 1.00pm	The college's Student Ambassadors	Meet the college's Student Ambassadors and find out about current student life.
30 September	11.00am – 1.00pm	Professor Roger Nation	Experience the latest technology for teaching pharmacy practice – the Virtual Practice Environment.
28 October	11.00am – 1.00pm	Mr Brian Cossar	Enjoy a personal tour of the MCG conducted by fellow graduate Brian Cossar.
25 November	11.00am – 1.00pm	Professor Louis Roller	Celebrate the end of year and hear Associate Professor Louis Roller describe how some drugs behave badly.

Come along ...

Group meetings are open to all college alumni and pharmacists who are now retired or semi-retired. Each meeting takes place at the college, 381 Royal Parade Parkville, and is followed by a light lunch.

The group is the perfect opportunity to catch up with old classmates and colleagues, and to make new friends. **New members are always welcome.**

To join the group or for more information contact Vanessa Williams, email vanessa.williams@vcp.monash.edu.au or tel: 613 9903 9087.

Cossar Club launch



Graduates, past and present staff and Foundation Board members lent their support to the launch of the Victorian College of Pharmacy Foundation's Cossar Club, the college's bequest program.

At the launch, keynote speaker Professor Geoffrey Blainey AC spoke about the rich history of pharmacy in Victoria – how the profession was established and the college developed through the initiative and drive of early Victorian pharmacists and their continued efforts to support education.

The launch of the Cossar Club has seen that support continue, with over 20 college graduates confirming or

intending to leave a bequest to the college.

The first event for members was held in March, when bequestors were invited to have lunch with the dean, Professor Bill Charman, and learn about new initiatives taking place at the college.

Throughout the year, events will be held to allow Cossar Club members to become familiar with new programs and activities at the college and learn how their support will have a lasting impact on the future of pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences.

"Through initiatives such as the Cossar Club, we will be able to position the college as the leading pharmacy and pharmaceutical science institution in Australia," said Professor Bill Charman.

For information on joining the Cossar Club, contact the Foundation, tel 613 9903 9507 or email foundation@vcp.monash.edu.au

Reunions 2007–08

1982 For some it was genuinely 25 years since we'd been in touch, while others had maintained contact with what was a great bunch of students.

The highlight of the night was a speech and trip down memory lane ably conducted by Donna McKinnis. Armed with a PowerPoint presentation containing old photos of us as students, she took us through key moments of our student life. Fond memories of past lecturers were supplied and we reflected on members of the group who had passed away. Donna's remarkable memory of people and events capped off a fantastic event. We were left wanting more and, in 2008, there are tentative plans to meet up at Naughton's to swap more stories or even create some new ones.

David Manallack (BPharm 1982)

1997 The class of 1997 will be organising a reunion this year. If you would like further information contact Gedal Basman, email Gedal.Basman@wh.org.au

1958 – 50th anniversary

It's been 50 years since the class of 1958 graduated from the college. To celebrate the golden jubilee, a reunion is being organised for this graduating class. If you would like further information contact the Alumni Office, email alumni@vcp.monash.edu.au or tel: 613 9903 9087.

1983 – 25th anniversary

If anyone from the class of 1983 would like to celebrate the 25th anniversary of their graduation, contact the Alumni Office, email alumni@vcp.monash.edu.au or tel: 613 9903 9087.

Young pharmacists in the Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands have 500,000 people, 94,000 cases of malaria per year and six pharmacists, two of whom are college graduates Michael Nunan (BPharm 2006) and Erin Mitchell (BPharm 2006).



Reporting to the director of pharmacy in the Solomon Islands, Michael's role is to develop and strengthen pharmacy services for the country's public health system.

"I learn something new every day working here – it's an incredibly different environment to work in for all sorts of reasons," said Michael. "I'm learning about malaria treatments protocols one minute and supply issues the next."

"The locals here are such nice, gentle people and they're emerging from a pretty dark period in their history. It's a good time to be here and as long as we go about it in the right way, they really appreciate it and pay us back in spades."

Erin runs the country's pharmacy education programs. Her role includes training pharmacy officers (a two year intensive course, the country's standard pharmacy qualification) and redeveloping the curriculum for the pharmacist trainee year. She also runs a continuing education course for current staff.

"Working here has given me the opportunity to do something out of

the ordinary, but still in my field – which feels like a good career move at this age!" said Erin. "We are combining work and travel, and living somewhere we wouldn't otherwise have gone. It is a really exciting job, as we are given so much responsibility and there are challenges every day."

Both Erin and Michael found their positions with the Ministry of Health in the Solomon Islands through Australian Volunteers International.

Michael was the inaugural recipient of the Mathew Peck Scholarship. This enabled him to travel to Vanuatu in the summer of 2004–2005, where he spent two months working in Port Vila and some of the surrounding provinces.

Last year's recipient of the Mathew Peck Scholarship was Jaya Soma, who will be travelling to Fiji later in the year. Her story will be published in the next edition of *Alchemy*.

For more information on the scholarship or to make a donation, visit www.vcp.monash.edu.au/students/mpeckscholar/index.html or tel: 613 9903 9507.



Setting records for cancer research

Swimming for a cause and the words 'never give up' spurred on college alumnus Dougal Hunt (BPharm 2002) as he successfully swam both the English Channel and the Gibraltar Strait, two of the world's most challenging marathon swims.

Dougal's inspiring efforts have raised \$63,000 for cancer research and set an Australian marathon swimming record. Having never belonged to a swimming club or undertaken anything of this nature before, his motivation to commit to these challenges was prompted by cancer affecting several people close to him.

His first swim, the English Channel, is regarded as the 'holy grail' of long distance swimming, as only 10% of swimmers actually complete it. It was remarkable that a novice swimmer (whose longest swim was only ever 1.4km) completed the swim in 13 hours and 34 minutes.

For some, successfully swimming the notorious English Channel would be enough to bin the goggles. Yet Dougal was determined to conquer another infamous swim, the Gibraltar Strait.

He completed that swim in three hours and 41 minutes, the fastest Australian time and sixteenth fastest time to date.

"The pain and discomfort I had to go through was nothing compared to what my brother and anybody else

who has faced cancer had to go through," said Dougal. "I hope my fundraising efforts will help ease the discomfort of Victorians facing cancer in some way and maybe even take society one step closer to a cure for cancer."

Dougal is currently residing in Ireland and plans to return to Australia in October, where he looks forward to working again in the Australian pharmacy system. He would like to give a special thanks to the John Anderson Pharmacy in Shepparton for all their fundraising efforts.

For information on making a donation towards Dougal's efforts, visit www.mycase.com.au, search for Dougal Hunt and follow the links.



John Pringle AM

For most people, graduating with a degree in pharmacy means a career interlinked with science. However John Pringle AM, who graduated in 1962, will retire in October this year after 40 years on the opera stage.

After graduation, John worked at Darken and Nicolson's pharmacy in Albert Park. At the same time, he took up singing as a hobby.

"I served my apprenticeship with a great boss, Noel Butler, and stayed on after graduation for some time," said John. "He and I were able to juggle my hours so that I was able to pursue my musical interests."

The hobby grew into a passion and, at 28, John left pharmacy to join what was then Opera Australia. As a baritone, he was a principal singer for most of his time with the company. A long and distinguished career saw him on stage with performers such as Joan Sutherland in *Hoffman* and Italy's great baritone, Tito Gobbi, in Verdi's *Falstaff*.

One of John's most memorable moments on stage was his Paris debut in 1980 when he sang in *The Rake's Progress* by Stravinsky.

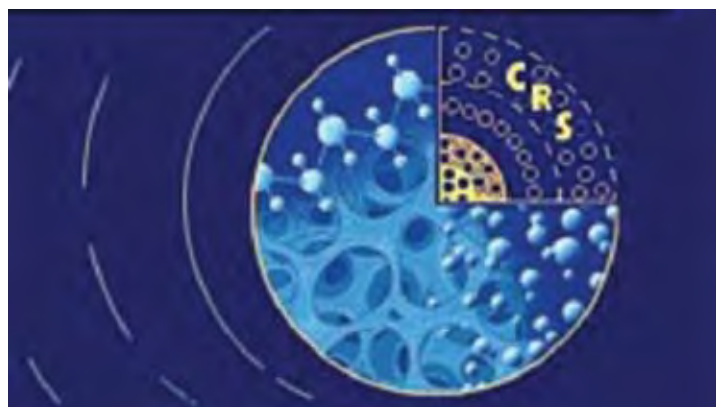
"We didn't know what to expect from the volatile Parisian audience, who could easily have booed us off the stage, but it was a huge triumph and we got a standing ovation. I was so excited I had goose bumps," said John of the night.

In 1988, John was recognised for his service to opera and was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday honours.

"Opera has provided me with stimulation, challenges and a pretty rewarding life," John added. "Hopefully, in the process, I've been able to entertain people and help in the making of some total theatrical experiences."



College sponsors first annual CRS meeting



The Controlled Release Society (CRS) is an international organisation that serves 3000 members, primarily pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists from industry, academia and government, dedicated to promoting the science, technology and innovation of delivery of bioactives.

The First Annual Meeting of the Australian Chapter of the Controlled Release Society (AUS-CRS), sponsored in part by the college, was held in conjunction with the Australasian Pharmaceutical Science Association (APSA) conference on 9 December in Sydney.

Over 100 national and international participants attended the symposium, indicating the high level of support for the formation of the Chapter and the need for a forum for controlled release science in Australia. The strong representation by college scientists at the symposium reflected college research into controlled release systems, with contributions to the symposium from college staff in the fields of dendrimers as drug delivery systems, lipid-based oral drug delivery, delivery across the blood-brain barrier and buccal mucosa, and in pulmonary delivery of anti-infectives.

Shalini Yapa, a PhD student in the Department of Pharmaceutics, won

second prize for her excellent poster presentation entitled 'Systemic bioavailability of colistin following pulmonary delivery'.

The symposium was also used as a forum to elect the inaugural AUS-CRS committee, with Dr. Ben Boyd from the college elected as vice-president. The Chapter is particularly interested in attracting alumni working in industry to become involved in this new professional society.

For more information contact Ben Boyd, email ben.boyd@vcvp.monash.edu.au



Where are they now?

**What are you doing now?
We'd love to hear your story.**

If you would like to receive regular updates of what is taking place at the college and Monash University, update your details online and provide us with your email address.

Visit www.monash.edu.au/alumni/faq/address.html to have news sent directly to your inbox!

60s

After completing his final year, Roger James (PhC 1961) worked in community pharmacy, where he became proprietor of the Templestowe Pharmacy until 1976. He then joined Rocke Tasuprett and Co Ltd as marketing manager before becoming state manager. In 1988, he became CEO of the Victorian Hospital Association (Trading Division) and in 1998 CEO of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (Victorian branch). Following retirement in 2002, Roger was appointed chairman of the Western Port Seagrass Partnership Ltd, a research organisation concerned with the degradation of the bay, and adviser to the Member for Kew in the Parliament of Victoria.

Professor Alexander Bobik (BPharm 1969) worked in retail pharmacy before completing his Masters and PhD and taking up a research position at The Alfred. During 34 years of a joint appointment between the hospital and the Baker Heart Research Institute, he has published more than 200 research papers on hypertension, atherosclerosis and vascular biology. He runs an internationally renowned laboratory and is on the editorial boards of many journals including the American Heart Association's journal, *Arteriosclerosis Thrombosis and Vascular Biology*, and the European Society of Cardiology journal, *Cardiovascular Research*. Currently associate director of the Alfred Baker Medical Unit at The Alfred and Baker Heart Research Institute, he is also a professor in the Department of Medicine and the Department of Immunology at Monash University.

Joy Burman (nee Silvester) (PhC1964, GradDipCommPharm 1985), one of the last pharmacy apprentices, spent her first year studying at the old Swanston Street campus. She worked for various employers, with a career highlight being supervising extra training seminars for trainees of the Terry White Group in 1997 and 1998. She spent five years working for the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (Victorian branch), managing the Pharmavision Continuing Education Library, and many years assisting on the continuing education committee. After retiring from pharmacy in 2001, Joy completed a Bachelor of Arts with Monash.

70s

Shirley Proctor (nee Kirby) (BPharm 1974) moved to Canada and completed a Master of Science majoring in biopharmaceutics and pharmacokinetics at the University of Manitoba. Returning to Australia, she worked with the Poisons Information Centre at the Royal Children's Hospital, cycled around Europe and completed a Graduate Diploma of Education before teaching chemistry and science. After having three children, Shirley returned to rural hospital pharmacy part time and is now also a NPS facilitator with the Central Highlands General Practice Network.

80s

Elizabeth Manias (BPharm 1982, MPharm 1984) is Associate Professor in the School of Nursing and Social Work at the University of Melbourne. After undertaking pharmacy studies, she completed nursing qualifications including a Certificate of Critical Care and a Master of Nursing. In her PhD work, she examined how health professionals communicate with each other in the critical care environment, and determined enablers and barriers for effective collaboration. In her current role, she undertakes multidisciplinary research in patient safety and risk management, medication adherence, and links between complex communication processes and medication incidents.

90s

Since 2005, Katerina Karanikolopoulos (BPharm 1994) has been working for Phosphagenics, where she is involved in both corporate development and the development of pharmaceutical partnering opportunities. Previous to this, she worked as a consultant in the finance team of PricewaterhouseCoopers, where she advised on corporate transactions including initial public offerings, mergers and divestments. Katerina has also served a term as an elected councillor with Manningham City Council.

00s

After graduation, Steve Baraz (BPharm 2007) decided to continue working with the My Chemist group, progressing to a trainee pharmacist position on rotation between Doncaster, Chirnsdale Park and Lilydale pharmacies. After completing his trainee year in 2007, he continued to do a rotation all over Melbourne and even ventured to Traralgon. Recently, he commenced in a permanent position as pharmacist manager at My Chemist in Greensborough.

Bronwyn Flanagan (BPharm 2002) practised in Gippsland for a number of years after graduating and now works as a pharmacy manager in Kensington. Heavily involved with the Pharmaceutical Society of Victoria (Victorian branch), she is an active member of the Young Pharmacists Committee and was its chair until she was elected to the role of councillor of the society. Bronwyn was recently selected by Rotary International District 9800 to take part in a vocational group study exchange to Nebraska in March 2008. She hopes to visit the Pharmaceutical Society of Nebraska and establish links between pharmacy professionals in Nebraska and Victoria.

Rural Scholarship winners

Zachary Timpano and Louise Johnston discuss moving to Melbourne, the role of a rural pharmacist and their Monash University Pharmacy Scholarship.



Zachary Timpano

"Coming from the country town of Warragul, I saw how important pharmacists are and how they become active members of a rural community."

A love for chemistry and biology influenced my decision to enrol in pharmacy. I've always wanted a profession where I can make a difference to people's lives, so pharmacy was really a natural choice. A need for rural pharmacists also provided reassurance that I'd chosen the right course.

After finishing the pharmacy course, I'm studying commerce as part of a pharmacy/commerce double degree. For this reason, the scholarship is incredibly useful and appreciated, as I will have six years of fees to pay off as well as the costs of moving and living in the city.

Relocating to the city is quite a big step. I'm really looking forward to seeing how the 'big smoke' works and making heaps of new friends and contacts along the way."



Louise Johnston

"As a rural student from a small country town, Tatura in the Goulburn Valley, moving to the city was a big move for me. However, I've always wanted to do it and I'm enjoying the

advantages of living in central Melbourne enormously.

The scholarship has relieved financial pressure on my family and means I'm in a better position to concentrate on my studies during the year.

I chose to study pharmacy because it combines my interests in science with the opportunity to provide healthcare and support to a local community. Practising pharmacy in a rural area enables you to build strong and trusting relationships with your patients and become a valued member of the community."

For more information on the Monash University Pharmacy Scholarship, visit www.adm.monash.edu.au/scholarships/opportunities/faculty/pharmacy

Swish 07

On 15 November, staff, industry partners and family joined the Victorian College of Pharmacy Foundation in congratulating final year students on their achievement at Swish 07.

Swish is the official college farewell for final year students and is hosted annually by the Victorian College of Pharmacy Foundation. For the 2007 event, Cossar Hall was transformed into a little piece of ancient Egypt. As guests made their way through the sandy desert at the front door and into the hall, they were welcomed by lotus flowers, mummies and plenty of palm trees.

"It was a good opportunity to finish off the year and celebrate our achievement with lecturers," said Andrew Lee, final year pharmacy student.

Swish 07 was an important part of the Student Enhancement Program and was made possible by the generous support of sponsors, who also joined in the festivities.

For more pictures of Swish 07, visit www.vcp.monash.edu.au/alumni/swish07/swish07-images.html



Going for gold

On 23 January, hundreds of pharmacy students from across the country headed to Sydney University for the annual National Australian Pharmacy Students Association (NAPSA) Congress.

"NAPSA Sydney Congress was an amazing experience," said pharmacy student Matthew Loft. "A combination of inspirational pharmacy speakers and monumental social events made for an unforgettable week."



YAA Company of the Year award



Congratulations to third year pharmacy student Zhen Peng Galahad Gu, who joined 12 other bioscience undergraduate students in setting up a private enterprise, Medyalia, as part of the Young Achievers Australia (YAA) program.

The team beat over 60 other teams to win the Company of the Year award for the most outstanding performance and the Community Value Award in recognition of its community wellbeing focus.

For more information on this year's YAA program, visit www.yaa.org.au

Academic prize winners

On 10 March, prize winners, sponsors, lecturers, friends and family gathered in Cossar Hall to recognise the success of the 2007 academic prize winners. The college is grateful to all the companies and organisations that supported the 2007 academic prizes.

Exhibitions and awards for academic merit during 2007

Bachelor of Pharmacy	Recipient	Sponsor	Prize
First year exhibition	Duong Thuy Pham	Pharmaceutical Defence Ltd	\$500
Second year exhibition	Anonymous by request	The Pharmacy Guild of Australia	\$500
Third year exhibition	Clare Walsh	Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (Victorian branch)	\$500
Fourth year exhibition	Jade Eyles	The Guild Group	\$500
Bachelor of Medicinal Chemistry			
First year exhibition	Joshua Hayward	GlaxoSmithKline	\$500
Second year exhibition	Anna Truong	Biota Holdings Limited	\$500
Third year exhibition	Bradley Doak	AMGEN Australia Pty Ltd	\$500
Bachelor of Pharmaceutical Science			
First year exhibition	Jacques Jie Shan Liu	CSL Ltd	\$500
Second year exhibition	Leanne Capewell	Australian Society of Cosmetic Chemists	\$500
Third year exhibition	Carl White	Hospira	\$500
Overall excellence			
Bachelor of Pharmacy Gold Medal and the Neil Naismith Award	Jade Eyles	Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (Victorian branch) and Therapeutic Guidelines	Gold medal and subscription
Bachelor of Medicinal Chemistry Gold Medal	Bradley Doak	Starpharma Pty Ltd	Gold medal and book prize
Bachelor of Pharmaceutical Science Gold Medal	Carl White	ACCORD	Gold medal and book prize
Pharmacy Management Program Prize	Karolina Golebiewski	Pharmacy Guild of Australia	\$500
Monash Pharmacy Pre-Registrants' Prize	Susan Eddy	Pharmaceutical Defence Ltd	\$500
Master of Wound Care Prize	Priscilla Taylor	ConvaTec	\$500
Faculty Honours Prize	Yanni Chin	Symbion Pharmacy Services	\$500
Monash University Jubilee Scholarship	Bradley Doak	Monash University	Certificate
Monash University Jubilee Scholarship	Carl White	Monash University	Certificate
Vice-Chancellor's Undergraduate Research Scholarship	Natalie Vinh	Monash University	Certificate
Vice-Chancellor's Undergraduate Research Scholarship	Marsewi Ngatimin	Monash University	Certificate
Dean's Commendation for Doctoral Thesis Excellence	Navinisha Chetty	Victorian College of Pharmacy	Certificate
Mollie Holman Doctoral Medal	Lauren Boak	Monash University	Medal

Gold Medal winners



Carl White
Bachelor of
Pharmaceutical
Science Gold Medal

Recipient of the 2007
Bachelor of Pharma-
ceutical Science Gold

Medal, the Bachelor of Pharmaceutical Science third year exhibition and a Monash University Jubilee Scholarship is Carl White.

This year, he is completing an honours project in the Department of Pharmaceutical Biology under the supervision of Dr Sab Ventura and Dr Jennifer Short. His thesis is titled 'Investigations of the mechanisms involved in contraction of the mouse prostate'.

"I chose to study formulation science because of its emphasis on industry based learning and work placement," said Carl. "I'd like to thank the college, Hospira and ACCORD for their continuing support of students such as myself."



Bradley Doak
Bachelor of Medicinal
Chemistry Gold Medal

Over the course of his
degree, Bradley Doak
has consistently received
solid academic results

and was awarded the 2007 Bachelor of Medicinal Chemistry third year exhibition and a Monash University Jubilee Scholarship.

Bradley showed an interest in research during his undergraduate degree and completed two Summer Vacation Scholarships. He will continue his research in 2008 with an honours project on fragment based drug design of inhibitors for DsbA (a target for antibacterials), under Dr Jamie Simpson and Dr Martin Scanlon, and hopes to complete a PhD in the future.

"I'm very thankful to everyone who has helped me discover medicinal chemistry," said Bradley.



Jade Eyles
Bachelor of Pharmacy
Gold Medal

Jade Eyles, recipient
of the 2007 Bachelor
of Pharmacy Gold Medal,
fourth year exhibition and

Neil Naismith Award, is currently undertaking her pre-registration year at the Austin Hospital. While she has a strong interest in pursuing a career in hospital pharmacy, Jade is also keeping up her community pharmacy skills by working part time at Terry White Chemists Balwyn. She is currently considering further postgraduate study.

"It's great to have the opportunity to apply the knowledge I've gained over my four years at university and to see the difference that pharmacists can make to patient outcomes," said Jade. "And it's a tremendous honour to receive the Bachelor of Pharmacy Gold Medal."

2007 year in review



Professor Geoffrey Blainey speaks at the Cossar Club launch in October.



CDCO labs in building 404 operational from July.



Open Day at Parkville in August.



Construction commenced for the virtual practice environment spaces.



Refurbishment of the Manning building underway and to be completed in July 2008.



Swish 2007.



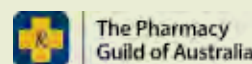
Retired Pharmacists' Group launch in July.

Student Enhancement program sponsors 2008

Principal partners:



Supporting partners:



Invitation:
Postgraduate information evening
Tuesday 7 October
7pm to 8pm

Victorian College of Pharmacy,
381 Royal Parade, Parkville
Victoria 3052 Australia.

Registration:
info@vcp.monash.edu.au
or phone 61 3 9903 9509

To contact *Alchemy*, telephone:
613 9903 9504, email alumni@vcp.monash.edu.au or write to
Alchemy, Victorian College of
Pharmacy, 381 Royal Parade,
Parkville, Victoria 3052, Australia.

Erratum

Apologies for the incorrect spelling
of the name of Hon Geoffrey
Connard AM on page 17 of the
previous edition of *Alchemy*.