



CARING: Student Paul Neerja.

Humanitarian awareness 'sparked in childhood'

By PENNY BAXTER

GROWING up in India, Paul Neeraj developed early humanitarian concerns through his exposure to the violence of poverty, hunger and corruption.

His concern that people had nowhere to turn for help prompted his move to Australia to study a Bachelor of Humanitarian and Community Studies at CDU.

The degree is the only one of its kind in Australia, and possibly the world, and trains people to become humanitarian logisticians, able to work with people affected by war, disaster or displacement.

The 21-year-old student is fulfilling his desire to work with and help Indigenous Australians by doing a 50-day work placement with the Larrakia Nation in Darwin during his final year of study.

Paul is working with the Healthy Engagement and Assistance in the Long Grass program and has come to realise poverty has many different forms. "The true expression of humanity is caring for what is around you and in what way you can help remove the violence, in its many forms," he quoted.

Earlier this year he completed a two-week practical course at Katherine / Mataranka that included four wheel drive and quad bike training, radio communications and how to deal with water and sanitation problems in areas where infrastructure is damaged or non-existent.

It was the first time Paul had been on a quad bike or ridden a horse. "For me, it was very full-on," he said.

He plans to work in the NT's remote Indigenous communities.



POWERING: Yi Fan Jiang.

IT takes Liz to US

By PENNY BAXTER

STUDYING information technology while raising children is no ordinary feat, but Charles Darwin University graduate Liz Shenton is no ordinary student.

The mother of three youngsters not only completed an honours degree in information technology (IT), she was also one of only two Australian students to win a \$5000 Google scholarship.

Liz won the prestigious scholarship ahead of more than 80 applicants from 21 Australian universities.

The scholarship took her to the Mecca for information technology –

the Google headquarters in the US.

She is now working full-time as a business analyst with Fujitsu, creating and using existing systems to help improve the way businesses work.

While her IT career began as a project to keep her mind busy while raising her children, Liz has discovered something she loves doing.

She previously worked as a surveyor at an underground mine, and started degrees in arts and mining engineering before realising

working in IT was what she wanted to do.

"I started studying mining engineering and it didn't work for me, but when I started studying computer science I really enjoyed it. I found it was a way of creating something without it necessarily being something tangible.

"It is great to be recognised on an international level for my achievements. I had also won the University Medal at CDU for achieving highest grade point average, so I was very happy," Liz said.



WINNER: CDU graduate Liz Shenton.

Community ties lead to pharmacy

By RICHIE HODGSON



FOCUS: Lisa Hopgood plans a future in pharmacy.

A SENSE of community and a family background in health care has led Lisa Hopgood to Darwin and on the road to a career in pharmacy.

Growing up in the remote South Australian town of Meningie, 200km southeast of Adelaide, Lisa moved to Darwin after a year at an SA university. She wanted to specialise her studies through the pharmacy degree at CDU.

"Pharmacy at CDU is relatively new, but it's an exciting degree that's tailored to meet the demands for pharmacy services in Australia, and it has a particular focus on rural and remote practice," Lisa said.

The 21-year-old, second-year student recently received a Rural Pharmacy Scholarship from the Pharmacy Guild of Australia. Designed to encourage and help students from rural and remote areas to undertake tertiary studies in pharmacy, the scholarship is providing financial support and helping Lisa to attend pharmacy conferences around Australia.

The recent 10th National Rural Health Conference in Cairns gave her the opportunity to listen to the experiences of country health workers, including newly trained Indigenous health professionals.

"I found these sessions particularly interesting as I believe this is going to be the most successful way of changing issues within Indigenous communities, without invasively changing their culture," she said.

Lisa said her mother's career as a nurse, along with the community-centred values of Meningie, drove her interest in pharmacy.

Career in classroom on track

By PENNY BAXTER

ALICE SPRINGS student, Sarah Nankivell knows what she wants with a career and she's studying for a Bachelor of Teaching and Learning at CDU to get it.

The third year student has taught at three local schools already. It was the promise of more supervised days in real classrooms, compared with most other education degrees, that inspired Sarah to move from Adelaide to study the Teaching and Learning degree at CDU's Alice Springs campus.

"Over the four-year degree I will have had 140 supervised training days in school classrooms," she said. "In my final year, I have a 12-week placement where I work with a class from the start of a semester and have to plan, teach, assess and report student achievement.

"Being able to teach in an actual classroom gives me confidence to do what I am doing and know I can become an effective teacher."

Sarah, 22, said her degree was not just about learning how to educate people, it was also about being able to adapt to different styles of teaching, and different types of "learners".

"I chose CDU because the degree is more student-focused, teaching theory that is relevant not only to the Northern Territory's schooling system, but to any system within Australia and many countries around the world. The degree includes more supervised training in classrooms".

Yi Fan ponders the power of the workplace

IT is not every day a university student gets to work on a project that could improve the lives of thousands of Territorians.

CDU electrical engineering student, Yi Fan Jiang did just that as part of a work placement at Power and Water in Darwin.

The third year student worked with his supervisor on a project to

build a computer model to evaluate the Territory's electricity network, assessing risk levels and the condition of the equipment, machines and transformers.

Yi Fan, 21, said the project was part of Power and Water's priority to prevent outages such as those experienced in Darwin's northern suburbs last year when the Casuarina

Substation failed. The model also aims to help prioritise maintenance for high need areas.

His six-month work placement gave Yi Fan hands on experience in what it would be like to work as an electrical engineer and is counted as a valuable practical unit, known as the Co-op Program, in his four-year engineering degree.

"It is pretty good because you find out how much you don't know in a workplace, so it motivates you to study better," Yi Fan said.

School of Engineering Senior Lecturer Dr Greg Heins said it was also a good opportunity for employers to see the calibre of CDU students.

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