This year 2012 has been a big year for the School of Education. With the deregulation of undergraduate places in higher education our intake in all sectors of early childhood, primary and high school has grown. The School met all its enrolment targets and retains its position as the second biggest School in Charles Darwin University. We have seen growth in enrolments in most states and also in the Northern Territory. This is a good achievement in a period in which there is considerable complexity in teacher education.

Some the highlights that are worth mentioning are:

- Lifted CDU’s Research ranking in education from level 1 to level 2.
- The More Early Childhood Teachers in the Northern Territory has successfully seen more students enter early childhood programs in 2012. This has been successfully managed in collaboration with the Centre for School Leadership Learning and Development.
- Grant success with the More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Teachers Initiative (MATSITI) Pathways to Teacher Training in Remote Indigenous Communities by Sue Shore in partnership with NTDET.
- Saraswathi Griffiths won a NAPCAN NT MicroGrant entitled Playing and socialising in natural places and spaces working with refugees.
- Ms Susannah Pierce, an education student won the university medal of honour.
- Successfully hosting the Australian Qualitative Research Association conference in June 2012.
- Steve Thornton and Dr Julie Clarke secured Flinders University Faculty funding for Project ATOMIC: Assessing Transfer of Mathematics in Children.

All images in the Newsletter have been supplied by the School of Education unless under wise specified.
Long service awards to Paul Black and Lorraine Connell.

Vice Chancellor’s award nominations to Amander Dimmock and the Graduate Diploma team of Steve Thornton, Debbie Prescott, Susan Smith, Peter McDowell, Lorraine Connell, Donna Robbins and June Slee.

Worked in partnership with the Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Education and Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education on the delivery of teacher education.

Continued successful outcomes with qualified graduates entering the teaching service through the Growing Our Own Remote Teacher program in partnership with the Catholic Education office.

Successful opening of the CDU learning centre at Lytente Apurte School in March 2012.

A new location for the School of Education has been identified in Orange and plans are underway for new offices and associated including a graduate school of education completed.

Nine of our academic staff are progressing through their Doctoral studies successfully

The School has hosted three visiting scholars from China Ms Chen Li, Prof Peiying Guo and Prof Shuling Yu in 2012.

Janice Crerar; Greg Smith, Pam Smith and Sue Smith worked with Alicia Boyle from the Northern Institute to develop resources for school-aged students for Museum and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory to build the Defence of Darwin Experience Education Resources. View at: http://www.defenceofdarwin.nt.gov.au/index.php?id=42

Nancy Devlin was awarded Northern Territory Joint Council of Professional Teaching Associations Award “in recognition of her outstanding contribution to teacher professionalism through her involvement in enhancing teacher quality through the professional Teaching Associations”

The School hosted a visiting delegation from Xianjiang University, China in November 2012. A/Prof Greg Shaw appointed as adjunct Professor of Xinjiang Normal University

The School of Education successfully conducted graduation ceremonies in South Australia and celebration of teaching awards in Darwin and Alice Springs.

This makes for a very impressive portfolio of achievements. Some of the forthcoming events will include hosting the Diversity conference from 26-28 June 2013 in Darwin. This will be a big event and we look forward to having many international visitors at that time. We hope to see you there.
ARC (A Really Cool) Linkage

The School of Education is always interested in teaming up with research partners and the CDU Open Day earlier this year gave Dr Sue Shore and Ms Rupa Khadka the opportunity to get out and meet people in the community. We found Dora the Explorer wandering round the campus and asked her to give us some advice about developing links with Schools. She offered some good tips on how to build research teams with children and teachers working in schools. Contact us at education@cdu.edu.au if you are interested!

Image from 2012

Professor Peter Kell, Dr Jenny Robinson and Associate Professor Sue Shore

PhD Candidates, Jenny Buckworth, Janice Crerar and Ratih Koesoemo.

Dr Junes Slee and Professor Kell with Students for Intensive Class “Productive Learning in Diverse Classrooms”

Karen Sinclair with Dr Sue Shore presenting at Celebration of Teaching Awards.
London Olympics Gives Schools a Failing Grade.

By Professor Peter Kell

The panic over Australia’s relatively poor performance in the London Olympics has seen schools, and the absence of school sports attributed as the reason for the decline in Australia’s fortunes. The President of the Australian Olympic Committee John Coates has identified the revival of school sports as essential to the re-emergence of Australia as an Olympic powerhouse.

Coates uncritically sees schools as essential in the production line of Olympic champions and fails to understand the changing realities of schooling in Australia.

Australian schools, like Australian Olympians, are subject to strong international competition ranking through international tests such as Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematical and Science Study (TIMSS). These tests, like the Olympics have 3 and 4 year cycles, and they rank the performance Australian students against those from other countries in mathematics, science and reading. In general the performance of Australia has been above average since 2000, but there is strident criticism that Australian schools are somehow failing. This is the same type of panic about Australian education that sees a silver medal in the Olympics as a “failure”.

Doing well in these tests is now a key priority for schools because results of some tests such as NAPLAN are posted on the federal government’s My School website.

Doing well in these tests is important for students as well as schools and is considered “high stakes”.

Test performance has created a new performance culture and many principals say they schedule “extra” preparation for literacy and numeracy to boost test performance and cut corners on parts of the curriculum such as sports, the arts and personal development. Many are focussed on beating other schools in these high stakes tests.

Sports and physical education, which is relatively costly to run and hard to staff with specialists, is being “crowded out” from the curriculum as schools “teach to the test” in an effort to improve their place in the testing race. A key aspect of a holistic learning growth for young people is being sacrificed in an effort to teach to the test.

The obsession with standardised testing has perverse outcomes and one of them may be reducing the opportunities to produce a new generation of champions. The question arises about developing a more productive in sport than the proposal by London’s mayor Boris Johnson to have two hours of compulsory sport each day in British schools.

Professor Peter Kell is Head School of Education, Charles Darwin University and author of “Good Sport: Australian Sport and the Myth of the Fair Go”. With Dr Marilyn Kell he is co-author of a new book entitled “Literacy and language in the East Asia”
Steps to the Future
a Big Success in East Timor.

By Professor Peter Kell

A workshop involving participants from East Timor and Australia exploring the future of education and training was successfully held in Dili last week.

The “Steps to the Future”, a two-day workshop was funded by the UNESCO Australian Mission and the School of Education, Charles Darwin University.

The workshop was opened by the Ministry of Education of Education Mr Bendito Frietas, who commended the collaboration in working on developing education in East Timor.

Ms Sarah Lendon, Director of Health and Education Programs with the Australian Embassy in East Timor, welcomed the collaboration in her opening speech.

The workshop was judged a success attracting over 120 participants. There were 12 presentations by East Timorese and 4 Australians. The topics included bilingual education, teacher education, English language teaching, literacy, language policy, and vocational education and training.

Speakers included Kirsty Sword, from the Alola Foundation, Professor Peter Kell, Head of the School of Education CDU, Ms Therese Kersten and Ms Lorraine Sushames, who are also from CDU

The participants involved a wide cross section of teachers, academics, development workers, non-government agencies and government departments represented in the workshop.

Organisations included the Alola Foundation, Dili Institute of Technology and the National University of Timor Leste (UNTIL), Palms Australia, LELI English Language School and the East Timor Ministry of Education.

The organiser Professor Peter Kell said, “The workshop was a great sharing experience and helped people share approaches to language teaching, literacy and teacher education together and explore issues and look for opportunities to improve and change practice”.

“There is strong similarities with the reintroduction of bilingual education in Indigenous education in the Northern Territory with the introduction of mother tongue education East Timor in three regions in a pilot program”, said Professor Kell

The organisers will be publishing the proceedings of the workshop and will be breaking new ground in publishing in English and Tetun, the most commonly spoken of the official languages in East Timor.

The organisers plan to have another Steps to the Future Workshop and are establishing a joint co-ordination group for the workshop in 2013 to build on the success of the 2012 project.

For further information visit the Steps to the Future website
www.stepstothefuture.cdu.edu.au
Two outstanding PhD research Presentations:

By Dr Greg Shaw

During a seminar on 24 August 201 two Ph.D. candidates with the School, Susana Akua Saffu and Katarina (Anna) Fletcher provided an update on their research. Susana’s research addresses ‘Education and Community Capacity Building: The case of African-Australian women in the Northern Territory’. Whereas Katarina’s asks the question ‘How does student-directed assessment impact on student learning?’

Susana provided an overview of her research, which gives insight into the experiences of a group of 24 Sub-Saharan African women migrants and refugees. She illuminated the impact and role of education on the women’s migration and on their post-migration experiences as they rebuild their lives in their new country. In her presentation she provided some examples of the rich and moving stories that she has collected in this research. Susana is herself a migrant from Ghana, and is currently an academic at Batchelor Institute.

Katarina is also of migrant background being born a Swede. She is a teacher at the Essington School Darwin. During her presentation she provided some fascinating contrast to the development of school based assessment in Finland and Australia, saying of Australia’s new moves into National Curriculum, NAPLAN and ‘My School’ that ‘...there is an alternative’. She stated that ‘in order for students to achieve these educational goals, it is vital that teachers reflect on their practice and engage students in the assessment process’.

Katarina demonstrates that there are multiple advantages in democratizing primary school assessment; with improved learning outcomes being just one of the outcomes. Additionally, and probably more significant is the involvement of children as active determinants and facilitators of their own learning.

Both Susana and Katarina’s research are immensely topical and their timing in respect to national debate and agendas is significant. They are poised to make a significant contribution and we are fortunate indeed to have them researching their topics with us at the School of Education ad CDU.
Postgraduate student reflections

Anne-Marie Marias is a postgraduate student with the School of Education studying Classroom Behaviour Management problems in Middle School. She recently attended the 2012 Australian Council for Educational Research Conference in Sydney. The conference promised great things: "1200 minds met on school improvement" (a quote from a recent ACER Report) and as Ann-Marie said 'It was fantastic to be one of those 1200 minds'. One of the things that stood out for Anne-Marie was the session on "School Improvement: What does the Research tell us". Here is how Anne-Marie describes her experience of the conference.

This was very important for those early stages of my research which is on Classroom Behaviour Management problems in Middle School. All my expectations and more... were met. It created the back drop to my topic. I had already engaged in extensive reading, note taking and reflective analyses, but this gave me the broad view of the latest findings in Australia and overseas. It enabled me to see 'the forest, as well as the trees'. It gave me the confidence that I am on the right track at this stage of my research and helped me to further set new paths I should follow. Perhaps even more importantly, it gave me the incredible moral support and energy that are needed to undertake this type of research work. It gave me hope that the presenters, our Australian educational leaders and policy makers, have a deep awareness of the problems we are facing in Education and speak openly about them. They have the willingness to introduce changes with clear directions and a down to earth approach and they have already devised excellent tools to facilitate the process. For me, this realisation is such a force in itself. It will always inspire me when the goings are tough: I am not fighting an impossible battle, even going against the current, I am not alone! There was also another aspect of the Conference that I found very beneficial which was the opportunity to network with experts in the field. I had emailed some of the key speakers prior to the Conference, in order to request a short meeting with them. This was very successful. Overall the conference gave me new insights that enabled me to revisit my initial Research Proposal and consider some changes. I appreciate the support from the Faculty and my supervisor Associate Professor Brian Devlin for the grant that enabled me to attend the Conference.

Book Review

Whackademia: An insider’s account of the troubled university.

By Dr June Slee

Richard Hil’s, Whackademia: An insider’s account of the troubled university, should come with a health warning on its cover, as it is likely to raise the blood pressure of any academic who began work in universities prior to this century. Students (or ‘clients’ as some universities insist) have changed, and so have universities – but where did the change begin -with the chicken or with the egg? ‘Clients’ with their sense of entitlement (meaning they must pass, and with a distinction at least, but of course with the minimum of effort), and competitive universities with the mindset of bottoms on seats (no matter where those seats are in the online world), have collided to form a perfect storm. Such a storm buries academic dissent and inquiry under the rubble of a staggering workload and its concomitant bureaucracy, until they eventually succumb to the grave new world that is the university of the 21st century.

Hil makes his point from the outset:

The notion of universities as institutions for the collective good has been largely usurped by the need to survive in an increasingly cut-throat marketplace. The once stereotypical image of an academic – a middle class, pipe-smoking patriarch with all the time in the world to contemplate lofty ideas – has been replaced by the current reality of workers immersed in the rush of corporate activity, mostly aimed at peddling their institutions’ educational wares and maintaining market share. This change has been accompanied by bureaucratic practices and
corporate jargon common to other sectors – inputs, outputs, targets, key performance indicators, performance management, unit costs, cost effectiveness, benchmarking, quality assurance and so on – that together form a system dedicated to maintaining corporate discipline, brand distinctiveness and market share (p. 10).

His argument is based on twenty-five years as an academic in British and Australian universities and his recorded experiences of other academics. I know a number of people who have read Hil’s book and they agree that much of it resonates with those of us who began working in universities at about the same time as he did.

Hil suggests that academics resist these changes and reminds his readers that the function of resistance is ‘to destabilise the existing order by engaging in various acts of dissidence and subversion’ (p.202). Among the targets for resistance are workload measurement, marking, staff meetings and performance reviews. However, many of the strategies he suggests are rather trite, and would probably attract more bureaucratic involvement than they are worth.

In a more serious and systemic manner he discusses several other ways of resisting change. The first is to escape from the university – the ‘over-the-wallism’ approach. This is demonstrated by those who take voluntary redundancy or ‘those who resign because they quite simply can’t carry on because of sheer exhaustion, boredom or existential despair’ (p.205).

The more idealistic solution of the ‘paradigm-busters’ - academics who seek a return to university education as it was from ancient Greek times until the 1960s - is discussed at length. The goal of these people is to replace the current system with ‘a passionate commitment to and interest in ideas that connect to everyday life in a thriving, equitable and just democratic society’ (p. 208). However, Hil is sceptical of their ambitions as he believes that the ‘rise of intensive student support services, designer assessment, and a pass-come-what-may ethos’ (p.214) is too well-entrenched for their realisation.

To me, the highlight of Hil’s book is the following anecdote:

I asked one senior scholar from the ANU what he might say to a troubled, questioning academic. [He replied]’I would advise most academics to try and survive as best you can, be careful what you say and try and teach the examined life as best you can.’ I thought that sounded a bit tame, tantamount to tacitly supporting the current system, but then he added: ‘I’d tell the buggers to look for another job, because being an academic in today’s university system means that the life of the mind is being utterly undermined. I think it is irresponsible to encourage anyone into academic life’ (p. 216).

Although provocative in its critique of the current university system, this book does contain ideas of how things could be. However, for the ‘troubled and questioning’ academics these ideas may be too late.


Image from INKCINCT Australia
Reflections on Learning, Life and Work:
Completing Doctoral studies in mid and later career

By Dr Sue Smith

This is a book to interest supervisors and higher degree students in the arts, humanities and education. The contributors offer personal reflections of growth and survival alongside their research projects using phenomenology, narrative and ethnography as their modes of inquiry.

My supervisor was always open to new ideas but moreover, she was present when we met; she listened, questioned, and was forever optimistic and never wavered in her belief that I would complete the study. I truly valued this conviction as I balanced work in the community, a blended family, teenagers who completed (or exited) their schooling, and care for an aged mother alongside my academic work.

Management of fieldwork data was relatively more straightforward than arriving at a justified theoretical position that academic rigour demanded. The university provided invaluable methodology workshops and forums that offered leads into various routes of inquiry and also became places to meet and share with other post-graduate students.

This phase in candidature is usually a solitary and uncertain time; hours spent reading texts that would appear obscure and abstruse to most outside academia, inquiries pursued, ruminated upon and rejected. Fellow students became priceless sounding boards because family and friends soon grew tired of my quest to establish a theoretical position.

During this phase I not only learnt about a suite of strategies used in qualitative research but I also learnt more about me and how I learn. When I was working to develop a training manual with Australian Indigenous communities some years earlier a contributor presented the panel with a picture he had drawn. It was of a pelican circling the sky and moving in, in spiralling circles, to a point in the centre. “That’s how we learn, we look at everything first then hone in on the right one,” he explained. I could see myself following a similar pattern. Written summaries, notes, draft chapters addressed each broad topic I envisaged in the final manuscript, yet I could not start and finish one topic or chapter and then move on to the next. That wasn’t my creative style nor the way in which I conceptualise theory and analyse data. I have to see the big picture with myriad connections first before addressing the specifics.

Journal Articles


Conference Papers


Conference Presentations

Two dedicated school Principles
Lose their lives in a tragic accident this month

School of Education wishes to express their sincere sympathy and support for the families and friends of Greg Crowe and Ms Kerinauia and all those affected by last week’s tragic road accident.

Greg Crowe, Ltyentye Apurte Principal and Ms Kerinauia, Murrupurtiyanuwu Principal were both wonderful and passionate educators who put so much energy into improving education for children in remote Indigenous communities.

Their support for Indigenous teacher education and the Growing our Own Program is a legacy that will live on.

The Celebration of Teaching

Charles Darwin University’s “Celebration of Teaching” is an annual event held by the School of Education to highlight the success of our local graduates.

This year the celebration was held in the recently finished ACIKE* gallery on CDU Casuarina Campus on 22 November. Indeed, the School of Education was privileged to host the first official event in these wonderful new premises. It was very pleasing to see that such a large number of graduates attended the ceremony along with their mentor teachers, families and friends.

Not only does this event acknowledge and celebrate the success of our local graduate teachers (more than 90 in 2012,) but it also acknowledges the dedication of mentor teachers, university lecturers and school staff in developing best teaching practices in our pre-service teachers. Additionally, the celebration provides the opportunity for partnership growth.

Nominations for excellence aligned to the NT Graduate Standards has resulted in a number of graduates receiving awards this year.

Recipients awarded for demonstrated excellence include:

- Nicole Lyons and Beryl Folio (Curriculum knowledge)
- Sylvia Gregory (Relationships)
- Stacey Carnegoy (Assessment practices)
- Emma O’Halloran (Professional engagement)
- Sarah Gagliardo (Planning)
- Ryoko Jones (Reflective practice)
- Sevasti Redwood (Pedagogical practice)
- Megan Norrington (Inclusive practices)

In addition the school was proud to acknowledge and give thanks to the work of a Professional Learning Leader (PLL) in a Darwin School. This award was presented to PLL Barbara Doukas of Humpty Doo School who has demonstrated consistent outstanding support, advocacy and passion towards building the profession.

Congratulations to all graduate students, mentors and award winners.
Students Graduate from Bachelor of Teaching and Learning (Inservice)

Wadeye students as part of the joint Charles Darwin University and Catholic Education program, “Growing Our Own”, were enrolled in the Bachelor of Teaching and Learning (Inservice). They passed 8 units in a one-year intensive course in their community. Debbie Prescott, their CDU lecturer, travelled to Wadeye every week for the school year to help them complete their course. The assessments were very closely aligned to their school context and they also had previous graduates and a school-based coordinator to support them throughout the year. This in-school support is a strong feature of the Growing Our Own program.

Left: Miriam Mirrkun Nemarluk. Centre: Freda Thalmukerr Bunduck is enrolled in the BTLP and is continuing in Wadeye. Right: Xaverine Daninh Bunduck.
**Staff movements**

**New Appointments**

**Dr Robyn Gregson** who joined the School of Education from the University of Western Sydney has research and teaching specialisation in Science and literacy. Originally a secondary Science teacher, Dr Gregson has wide experience in education including course accreditation, membership of examination and curriculum boards and has been a leader on a recent AITSL panel. In addition Dr Gregson has experience in international professional experience and remote professional placements.

**Dr Aue Te Ava** who specialises in health and physical education joins us from the University of Auckland, New Zealand where he has been undertaking research involving culturally responsive pedagogy in health and physical education. His research includes research on resilience in young people, Indigenous methodologies and values education. Dr Te Ava is from the Cook Islands and has a background including health education, sports administration and physical fitness.

**Ms Cris Edmonds-Wathen** to the School who will be joining us as a lecturer in education. She will be replacing Mr Steve Thornton in mathematics education. Cris is in the final stages of her PhD which she is studying through RMIT University and her thesis is entitled Frame of Reference in Iwaidja: Towards a Culturally Responsive Early Years Mathematics Program and the research site is Mamaruni School Croker island. Cris has wide experience in working in Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory as a teacher and also as a researcher. I hope you will join me in welcoming Cris to the School.

**Dr Alison Marchbank** who specialises in Early Childhood Education joins us from the University of Northhampton. Dr Marchbank has worked as a pre-school teacher of the deaf in the UK, Australia and New Zealand. In 2009 she completed a PhD at the University of Melbourne. She spent 18 months as head teacher of a unit for hearing impaired children in Brighton & Hove UK and lecturing at Oxford Brookes (Mary Hare Campus) to M.ED students (Deaf education).

Since returning to Australia she has worked for Dept. Ed. Training (NT) and Charles Sturt University.

**These appointments will assist build capabilities in the secondary programs. Further appointments will be announced as the recruitment for them is finalised.**