

# The dKin Difference

Deakin University  
Impact of your giving in **2024**





Image: Orientation Week, Delacombe Court, Waurrn Ponds, 1980



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**Front cover image:** The triumphant return of the Deakin University Surf Club, who drove 4800 kms across the Nullabor in a rented Falcon station wagon to compete in the 1977 Australian Intervarsity Surf Championships.

Deakin University acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of all the unceded lands, skies and waterways on which Deakin students, staff and communities come together. As we learn and teach through virtually and physically constructed places across time, we pay our deep respect to the Ancestors and Elders of Wadawurrung Country, Wurundjeri and Eastern Maar Country and beyond, where our physical campuses are located. We also acknowledge the many First Nations from where students join us online and make vital contributions to our learning communities.



# Welcome from our Vice-Chancellor

On 10 December 2024 Deakin University officially marked its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and began a year of celebration.

Deakin is thriving today because of community leaders who believed in Geelong and made the case for Victoria's fourth university to be established in a regional centre.

Fittingly, this edition of *The dKin Difference* reflects this important work alongside more recent projects that amplify the impact Deakin is making here at home and overseas.

The Deakin University Art Gallery is a case in point. It holds one of the nation's finest collections of contemporary Australian art, with a focus on sculpture. The collection pre-dates the formal establishment of the University and has grown steadily in the years since. We endeavour to display as much of the artwork in our holdings as we can – a departure from the tradition of many other art galleries. Leading sculptor Andrew Rogers has trusted us with more than 100 of his works, and through these pieces we can reflect on a lifetime of diligent practice, reflection and growth (much like the evolution of Deakin itself).

Art speaks a universal language and sometimes its message is urgent. In 2024, respected Australian artist and anti-war activist George Gittoes created a powerful mural on campus as part of his *Ukraine Guernica* exhibition. This work, gifted to the University, was a collaboration between George and his Ukrainian colleague Ave.

I encourage you to visit the [Deakin University Art Gallery in 2025](#) for one of our commemorative exhibitions, including the Contemporary Small Sculpture Award showcase.

The Geelong community has always believed in Deakin, and it is heartening to read the story of the late Allison Murphy, a Deakin graduate who advocated for Geelong as a journalist and public relations professional. A scholarship in her honour was established by the Geelong Community Foundation. In 2024 that award celebrated a decade of supporting the next generation of Deakin women graduates in the fields where Allison excelled.

Another moving story is that of the late Michelle Goy. Michelle was a talented equestrian and medical student at Deakin with a promising career ahead of her. Inspired by the establishment of the Damion Drapac Centre for Equity in Health Professions Education, the Goy family has honoured Michelle with a scholarship in her name to support future rural doctors who play such an important role in communities across Australia.

As we celebrate Deakin's first 50 years, I invite you to share your own reflections and experiences of Deakin with me at an upcoming event or on our [online memory wall](#). Thank you for your belief in Deakin, and your invaluable contributions to shaping the University and the communities we serve.

Professor Iain Martin



Vice-Chancellor



As we celebrate Deakin's first 50 years, I invite you to share your own reflections and experiences of Deakin with me at an upcoming event or on our online memory wall. Thank you for your belief in Deakin, and your invaluable contributions to shaping the University and the communities we serve.

– Professor Iain Martin



# Changing the world for 50 years,

## A fourth Victorian university

In February 1974 the Federal Cabinet Welfare Committee decides that Victoria's fourth university will be based in Geelong.

1974

## First on-campus students

## Deakin Philanthropic Foundation established

1977

## First Graduation Ceremony

(First Alumni May 1978)

Graduation ceremonies are held.

1978

## Lady Vera White Centre for the Disabled

After a donation from Lady Vera White, the younger daughter of Alfred Deakin, the Vera White Centre for the Disabled is established. Grants help buy equipment specifically for students with a disability and, in the years following, student registrations with the centre markedly increase. The Centre is renamed the Vera White Disability Resource Centre in 1986, later becoming the Disability Resource Centre.

1980

1982

## Deakin GIVE program unveiled

The University launches Deakin GIVE, its first workplace giving program, and now has 134 members.



2018

## National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research Innovation Institute (NIKERI)

The Harold Mitchell Foundation partners with Deakin through a \$1 million donation towards the further development of NIKERI (formally Institute of Koorie Education).



2010

## Support for farmer's mental health in focus

A National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH) is established in Hamilton, Victoria after the Helen and Geoff Handbury Trust donates \$1 million to Deakin. The NCFH will work to improve the health and wellbeing of farmers, farm employees and their families across Australia through leadership, advocacy, service, research and education.

2008

## University of the Year Award

Deakin is named University of the Year for leadership in imaginative and innovative uses of new information and communications technology.

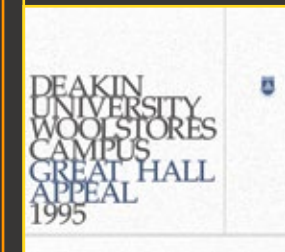


1995

## Deakin University Foundation Fund reaches \$1 million

## Deakin University Woolstores Campus Great Hall Appeal

The Great Hall Appeal is initiated by Deakin to transform the Woolstores into a modern university campus and honour their significance in Geelong. In 1998, the building is renamed Costa Hall after generous funds were donated by the family to the appeal.



## Deakin welcomes support for Food and Mood Centre

The Wilson Foundation invests \$1 million to support Deakin's Food & Mood Centre to further its cutting-edge research linking the human gut microbiome to mental and brain health.

## What is philanthropy?

In an award winning, inspiring and thought-provoking video, 'What is philanthropy?', Deakin asks some of its generous donors, talented researchers and grateful scholarship recipients the question - 'What does philanthropy mean to you?'



2019

## The Damion Drapac Centre and Scholarships

Deakin welcomes a generous gift of \$6.1 million from Melbourne businessman Michael Drapac that establishes a new centre of equity for aspiring medical students in honour of his son Damion.



2022

## Deakin in India

Deakin becomes the first university in the world to open an international branch campus in India.

2024

# 2024: the year in numbers

**\$11,434,185** in gifts and donations from 484 individuals and 79 trusts, foundations and companies.

**65**

major donors either increased their annual giving or made a subsequent gift

The largest gift was from the estate of the late Lewis and Libby Hughes, whose bequest of **\$1,649,091** will support a PhD in perpetuity

**93**

donor funded scholarships were offered and accepted, totalling **\$1,368,288**

**50%**

of scholarships granted to students in regional and remote areas and

**86%** supported students

facing social or financial disadvantage

2024





**Image:** Andrew Rogers, *I Am* 2015, 3.5m, bronze, for Flinders sesquicentenary of Flinders Town, Victoria. **Photographer:** David Easton. Image supplied by the artist.

# Unveiling a rich tapestry of Australian art

Typically, public art collections are deep, but hidden – only a fraction of the works held are on display at any given time. This is not the case at Deakin University.

‘We have around 56% of the collection on display, which is extremely high,’ explains Senior Manager Art Collection and Galleries, Leanne Willis (GDipMuseums ’92).

‘The other institutions typically on average have around 5% of their collection on display, which is on a 10-year cycle. So if a work is represented in a typical institution’s collection, or is donated to their collection, it will probably only be seen once every 10 years.’

‘However, at Deakin, we try and display as much as we can – both on the University campus and touring as well.’

When Deakin was formally established in 1974, it already boasted an impressive art collection thanks to the previous institutions that formed its foundation. In the five decades since, deep connections with Australian artists and donors have seen the collection grow to become one of the most distinctive and accessible in the country.

Deakin Alum Dr Rhett Davis (PhD ’20), winner of the Victorian Premier’s Literary Award for an Unpublished Manuscript in 2020, experienced firsthand the connection to art on campus. ‘Art creates art. It can help crystallise ideas or inspire new perspectives on old problems. In the troubled early stages of writing my novel, *Hovering*, I was struck by *Geelong Capriccio* by



**Image:** Leanne Willis pictured in the exhibition “50 Years of Collecting” at Deakin University Art Gallery in front of the work by artists (left to right): Anne Scott Wilson, Augustine Dall’Ava, Reko Rennie, Kirsten Lyttle, Queenie Kemarre, Wilma Tabacco, Michael Johnson, Kate Beynon, Helen Tyalmuty McCarthy, Elvis Richardson, Sue Anderson, Janet Dawson, Ray Thomas, Jenna Lee, Eva Ålmeberg and Brad Gunn. Full artwork details available at [collections.deakin.edu.au/explore](https://collections.deakin.edu.au/explore) Photography Fiona Hamilton.

Jan Senbergs at Deakin’s Waterfront Campus. It helped me rethink my approach and gave me the beginning that I was struggling with. I was lucky to stumble across it when I did,’ he says.

The **Deakin art collection** also focuses on contemporary Australian art – works produced in the last 50 years.

These twin philosophies encouraged celebrated sculptor Andrew Rogers (HonDoc ’20) to connect with the University through prominent art history scholar Ken Scarlett. Since 2019, Rogers has generously donated **119 of his works** to Deakin’s collection, allowing researchers, students and the general public the rare opportunity to consider an individual artist’s lifetime of practice.

‘Andrew’s very first sculpture was of his left hand, so his work began quite figuratively,’ Willis says.

‘At Deakin you can see it’s developed over time to explore the space the body occupies, or the form the body takes in a more abstracted version. He might be doing sculptures looking at the void left by dancers, or the wind, or lately he’s been doing works using AI as well.’

Shaped by Rogers’s generosity, Deakin is the only institution where you can explore the development of his career as an artist. Deakin also organises the **Contemporary Small Sculpture Award** – an annual competition that attracts entries from every state and territory in Australia.

Willis says that smaller sculptures encourage artists at any stage of their career to experiment with form and media. Entries in the award’s 16-year history include those created from human hair and recycled beach rubbish, alongside more traditional materials such as bronze.

‘Small sculpture provides a fascinating snapshot of what artists are working on, and it can provide an interesting stimulus for students to show them the possibilities,’ she says.

‘Another point of difference from many other awards is that we do not charge an entry fee. This means that we receive works by emerging artists, through to works by people who have an Order of Australia for their contribution to Australian sculpture.’

Each year, 40 finalists are displayed at the Deakin University Art Gallery, with the winning work acquired for the University’s collection. There were a staggering 646 entries received in 2024, with the prizes supported by Community Bank at Deakin University.

‘Awards like these are incredibly important in providing opportunities and recognition to both emerging and established artists,’ Deakin’s Vice-Chancellor Professor Iain Martin says.

Another recent Deakin partnership was powered by the work of Australian artist and anti-war activist George Gittoes. Gittoes and his collaborator Hellen Rose visited Ukraine in early 2022, shortly after the Russian invasion. There, they spent time interviewing Ukrainian people, documenting their experiences, and capturing the devastated urban and rural landscapes through art and film. They also tracked down an elusive Ukrainian artist who uses the pseudonym Ave Libertatemaveamor. Ave’s anonymous daily Instagram posts are a striking example of artistic resistance from the frontline.

Collaborating remotely, Gittoes and Libertatemaveamor designed a large-scale canvas that was painted on campus while the **Ukraine Guernica exhibition** was held at the Deakin University Art Gallery in 2024. Gittoes donated the piece to the University collection, serving as a momento of support and collaboration internationally despite the challenges of conflict.

As Deakin reflects on its first five decades of operation as a university, a series of special exhibitions will bring together works from the art collection, including recent gifts from the Myer Family. All are welcome to attend.

If you are interested in learning more about the Deakin Art Gallery and upcoming exhibitions, [click here](#).





# A legacy of dedication to rural health

Michelle Goy (BHealth&MedSc Hons '20) shone brightest when she was exploring the great outdoors: riding her beloved horse Jack through Victoria's High Country, carving up the slopes at Hotham or four-wheel driving on K'gari (Fraser Island) with her partner and their friends.

Michelle was a talented Deakin University medical student who was following her mother into the profession.

'She made new friends from the medicine cohort. That was lovely. We all said it was the happiest we'd ever seen her,' Dr Cindy Goy recalls.

Sadly, Michelle's life was cut short before she could explore a promising career in sports medicine.

The Goy family are based in Geelong, but are regular visitors to their family farm in Irrewillipe. They wanted to leave a gift in Michelle's memory that would honour her passions and celebrate her roots.

'We go to the farm every week,' Michelle's sister Rachael says.

'And with our horse-riding, we'd often do competitions out in different places. There was always a connection for Michelle and I with more rural areas.'

Michelle's family were moved by the story of the late Dr Damion Drapac (BMBS '18), and the decision by his father Michael to establish a new centre at Deakin in his son's memory to support the next generation of rural doctors, and help their communities thrive.

'I'm well aware of the suicide rate among young farmers,' Dr Goy says.

**'If you can get one more doctor out there, that can save a life. But if there's no one there to help, you really struggle. And that's why I love what The Damion Drapac Centre is doing – that must be making such a difference.'**

Dr Goy practised as a GP in Geelong for many years and understands how difficult it is to recruit doctors outside of capital cities.

'Most of the graduating GPs, they all want to live in the city, near good facilities. Your only hope of getting GPs into the country in decent numbers is encouraging people who already come from the country, because they're more likely when they graduate to go back and feel comfortable,' she says.

The catastrophe of the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires, which devastated many parts of Victoria, brought the lack of rural doctors into sharp focus.

'It made you realise that there's not a lot of doctors around. People struggle to get help, to get support,' Dr Goy says.

Deakin is playing its part to address this challenge through the Rural Community Clinical School (RCCS). The RCCS supports third-year Deakin medical students to spend 12 months working in a community with an experienced clinical mentor. Students are placed in one of nine regional locations: Ararat, Bacchus Marsh/Melton, Camperdown, Colac, Daylesford, Hamilton, Horsham, Portland and Stawell.

'If we can provide support and education access to people from more diverse backgrounds that more closely resemble the profile of their communities, it's no great surprise that they'll provide better service and have a real impact,' Deakin's Dean of Medicine, Professor Gary Rogers, says.

'This kind of financial support is vital for our students, especially during their placement years. We know the burden is a barrier to students and this scholarship will make a significant difference.'

**The Michelle Goy Rural Medicine Scholarship will support a rural student who is completing the Doctor of Medicine program for the four-year duration of their studies. As an endowed gift, the scholarship will be offered for many years to come.**

'It was incredible – just after we'd finalised the scholarships, I'm listening to the radio,' Dr Goy recalls.

'There was a girl studying medicine at Deakin who was having to give it up because she was a single mum and she just didn't have the money to keep studying. And I thought, "wow, that's crazy".'

'It's affirming to know that Michelle's scholarship will support future students so that they can achieve their dream of becoming a doctor and give back to their communities.'

The first scholarship in Michelle's memory will be provided in 2026.



Image: Michelle Goy skiing in Canada



# The healing force of play

Lesley Harvey (MChildPThy '20) was an experienced early childhood and special education teacher working in regional New South Wales when a new Deakin University degree caught her eye.

Image: Lesley and Josh Harvey in Broken Hill.  
Pennie Hall Photography.

It was 2014 and the **Master of Child Play Therapy** was the first program of its kind to be offered in Australia. Lesley was curious to explore this fascinating field further, but little did she know it would lead her to work with one of Australia's most respected organisations.

**'Play is the language of a child,' Lesley explains.**

'For so many formats of psychotherapy, counselling, social work, talking is relied on, so it's at that higher level of cognition, which is a really tricky space for even us adults. But to utilise play for children's mental health and to bring families into that play space as well, that was a catalyst for me, because we lose the ability to play.'

Lesley completed her postgraduate degree while juggling her full-time role with an Aboriginal health service. A former colleague, who had started working for the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS), let her know that new roles in child and mental health had been created within the organisation. Lesley was keen to advocate for her profession and incorporate play-based therapy alongside other clinical interventions.

'I made up an information pamphlet about what play therapy is, what my qualifications allowed me to do and just sent it to the manager and said, "Is it worth me even applying?" That was on a Monday. I was employed by the RFDS Wednesday night.'

No two days are the same for Lesley, who is based in Broken Hill. Some weeks might involve flights to remote communities such as Wanaaring and Ivanhoe. On other days, patients and their families visit Lesley for sessions at the RFDS base.

There are some unique occupational challenges – Lesley must closely monitor the weight of her toys and activities, given they need to be transported in a small plane. And 'roo runs' are conducted to ensure there are no kangaroos hopping around the airfield prior to landing or take off.

One memorable flight changed Lesley's life forever. It was while assisting the NSW State Emergency Service on a missing person's case that she met Josh, the man who would become her husband. The pair were volunteering alongside John Blair, a Uniting Church Minister and pilot affectionately known as 'the flying padre'. The missing person was found; Lesley and Josh started dating; and when they were ready to marry, Pastor Blair officiated the wedding. (The incredible story of how Lesley and Josh met is captured in Michelle Grattan's book *Back on the Wool Track*).



The couple share a passion for helping others and have generously decided to leave a bequest (a gift in their Will) to support the Master of Child Play Therapy program at Deakin.

In time, the scholarships will support regional and rural students to complete their degrees and, in turn, give back to their communities.

'It is just Josh and I; unfortunately we couldn't have children,' Lesley says.

**'We thought about what sort of legacy we will leave behind. We've become very passionate about giving back to the community.'**

In acknowledgement of her achievements as an educator, volunteer, academic and therapist, Lesley was named one of the 2024 Deakin University Alumni Excellence Award **winners**.



'I enjoy work. I am in a privileged role. Every day the clouds are different or the landscape below looks different, and there's all these massive opportunities. So to get an award for something that I just get up and do every day was a nice surprise,' Lesley says.

If you are considering, or have questions about leaving a gift in your Will to Deakin, **[please click here](#)**.





# Rebuilding communities, rebuilding hope

Associate Professor Mary Ana McGlasson will never forget her first day working in a refugee camp, when she met a Syrian woman who had lost everything.

**Image:** People queuing to get clean water after floods destroyed infrastructure in southern Somalia in May 2023 © Awale Koronto / Save the Children

**Image:** Associate Professor Mary Ana McGlasson

‘She literally bolted across a gravel lot full of tents as far as you can see,’ Associate Professor McGlasson explains.

‘She was speaking rapidly in Arabic and she was clearly upset. My colleague translated and he said, “She’s telling you that she doesn’t know how to survive here. Three weeks ago she had a house, she had a car, they had to flee because of the bombing. They walked all the way to Jordan. She’s got four kids. Her husband disappeared along the way and was detained by police, and she arrived here and they gave her a bag of rice and a cooking stove and a bucket. And she’s telling you that she doesn’t know how to use the stove and she doesn’t know how to find water”.’

It was a swift reality check for Associate Professor McGlasson, who had recently transitioned from a career as an emergency care nurse. She continued to lead aid projects in the Middle East and Africa for a decade, before joining Deakin University in 2020 to head the **Centre for Humanitarian Leadership (CHL)**.

The Centre was established in 2011, following a series of catastrophic events including the Tōhoku earthquake, tsunami in Japan and the 2010 Haiti earthquake. Studies following these massive disasters revealed that the sector lacked strong leadership, which hampered effective response. At the time, there were no humanitarian leadership programs across the entire sector. A meeting between Save The Children and Deakin changed that.

The partnership between an aid agency and a university was the first of its kind, and has enabled Deakin and CHL to create signature postgraduate degrees alongside flexible, non-award training opportunities for first responders. The funding approach has also been innovative.

**Image:** Dr Yuliya Sporysh during a Crisis Leadership Program course.

‘The most transformational work we’ve been able to do has been through philanthropic investment,’ Associate Professor McGlasson says.

‘Philanthropic support has allowed us to think creatively and deliver out-of-the-box solutions when it comes to our professional development programs and where they are most needed. In fact, our newest professional development courses wouldn’t have been possible without donors and their support inspired millions of dollars of additional government funding.’

Throughout 2024, CHL delivered its training courses in developing and war-torn countries in multiple languages. Associate Professor McGlasson recalls leading a recent program in Türkiye, where she met Ukrainian aid worker Dr Yuliya Sporysh who had experience running the charity NGO Girls but hadn’t been able to access formal leadership training.

‘As I came to the non-governmental sector from business in 2019, I needed knowledge of how crisis response works and how to implement projects efficiently during crises,’ Yuliya says.



'This knowledge greatly improved our interaction with partners and gave clarity on who to contact inside the response system and how to build our organisational capacity. The NGO Girls gained many advantages during project implementation because we were well-informed about the needs and requirements of partner organisations.'

'Yuliya describes our program as the thing she's needed for her whole career, even before she was working in humanitarian response,' Associate Professor McGlasson says.

Associate Professor McGlasson is proud that Yuliya is now leading CHL courses to empower her colleagues in Ukraine and elsewhere.

'These are people who have bravely said, "My country's falling apart. I'm going to do everything I can to respond and support the population". Those are the people who really inspire me.'



CHL has cemented its reputation as a global leader in the field of humanitarian aid training and demand far exceeds capacity. Watch the video [here](#).

'We have requests almost on a weekly basis, "Can you run training in this region? Can you do it in this language?". Myanmar, for example. So we are chasing our tails as fast as we can with the funding we have in hand.'

The Centre also pursues a robust research program. CHL publishes an annual bilingual journal – **The Humanitarian Leader/Leader Humanitaire** – in English and French. The publication is free to access, and provides a platform for aid sector professionals, researchers, activists and volunteers to share and test their ideas.

Associate Professor McGlasson encourages those who wished to learn more about the Centre's work and support future projects to get in touch.

'I love the way philanthropists think. There's a deep optimism that I think the world needs. It is so easy to become overwhelmed, but for every bad news story I can give you ten good news stories and hold up literally thousands of people who have come through our programs who are out there in the world doing real work. And much of that work was made possible because philanthropic foundations and philanthropists realised that it was important.'

To learn more about CHL, [click here](#).



**Image:** A woman in a UNHCR refugee camp in Cameroon, Africa © Mauritius images GmbH / Alamy Stock Photo.

# The power and promise of the sea

**Image:** Deakin Marine snorkelling excursion at Pea Soup Beach, Port Fairy

## The modern world has started to take notice of seaweed and its unique and powerful properties, but Australia's First Nations Peoples have understood its value for millennia.

'Cultural knowledge of seaweed was everyday, embedded knowledge for Wadawurrung people,' Deakin University PhD candidate Zoë Brittain (BA '19) explains.

'It's relevant to food and cooking, medicine, tool creation, creative expression, ceremony and general practices around caring for Country.'

Ms Brittain is a seaweed scientist completing her doctorate at Deakin, and in 2024 collaborated with Wadawurrung Elder Aunty Judy Dalton-Walsh to create a **special art exhibition** and series of workshops. The Wadawurrung are the traditional owners of what is today known as Geelong and Ballarat.

The program brought together Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants to explore personal, cultural and scientific dimensions of seaweed, expressed through art forms including photography, drawing, sculpture and jewellery.

Ms Brittain is a graduate researcher at DeakinSeaweed – one of the nation's leading seaweed research centres.

The Director of the **Deakin Marine Research and Innovation Centre** Professor Tim Dempster says seaweed is a 'primary producer'.

'Like plants on land, seaweeds use sunlight and nutrients to photosynthesise and grow. In doing so, they capture carbon and mop up nutrients in the water, improving water quality and producing oxygen. Without seaweeds in the right places and amounts, we lose habitat for fish and other creatures.'

**Image (from left to right, top row then bottom row):** Zaib Ullah, Benny Yang, Laney Callahan, Courtney Bourke, Billie Julien, Chethana Tissera, Emily Courtot, Sue Beeton and Paige Miles





‘There are so many instances of projects and programs in the marine conservation and restoration space that have significant benefits and are turning the tide back in the right direction.’

– Professor Tim Dempster

In addition to seaweeds’ essential role in marine ecosystems, seaweeds are the basis of pharmaceuticals and many other useful products. Different seaweeds contain a variety of gelatinous compounds in their cell walls (including agar, carrageenan and alginates), which are vital stabilising and gelling ingredients in many processed foods and other products including ice cream, ham, milk drinks, beer, paint and toothpaste. Medical grade agar comes from a group of red seaweeds.

‘This agar is used on agar plates in laboratories to grow bacteria taken from swabs so we can properly diagnose the infectious agent and work out what antibiotic we need to treat it. Without seaweeds, humans would be a lot worse off,’ Professor Dempster says.

Professor Dempster fell in love with the ocean while growing up in Queensland, where his family spent their holidays on Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) and K’gari (Fraser Island). Today, he inspires the next generation of marine scientists at Deakin’s very own marine base at Queenscliff.

Local Queenscliff resident Dr Sue Beeton is passionate about marine research and has created scholarships specially for Deakin’s postgraduate students.

‘In recent years I have had the privilege to visit Antarctica a few times, which has affected me deeply. One team travelling with us was searching for the Colossal Squid and their filming of the ocean floor and creatures was so exciting. On another trip, I joined a citizen science team studying phytoplankton, which introduced me to the wild world of microscopic creatures,’ Dr Beeton says.

‘This was a stark reminder to me of how important the oceans are, along with how little we know. Living in Queenscliff, surrounded on three sides by water and a research centre literally at my door, supporting marine science research is a way I can contribute here, now and into the future.’

The Beeton Family Fund supports PhD scholars who are based at Queenscliff and are in their final year of study. The aim is to alleviate financial stress and encourage the publication of vital research. Fifteen emerging researchers have been assisted thus far.

For Dr Beeton, supporting the outstanding PhD students at Deakin’s Marine Science and Innovation Centre has been truly inspiring and meaningful.

‘The support and wiggle-room that this funding provided brought a genuine sense of relief and empowerment,’ recipient Lucy Coals says.

Professor Dempster’s current research projects include better understanding sea urchins, which are a major pest in southern Australia because they destroy seaweeds and kelp. He has experienced first-hand the difference that a timely funding boost can make.

Image: Deakin marine scientist Dr Prue Francis exploring golden kelp forests in the Great Southern Reef. Stefan Andrews, Ocean Imaging.

‘Philanthropy has a special role to encourage new ideas and approaches that are emerging in prominence and require seed funding to demonstrate early results. There are many examples of the substantial impact philanthropy has had in this way,’ he says.

In the face of growing environmental challenges, Professor Dempster remains optimistic about the future of our oceans.

‘I can appreciate that many would view our global outlook as daunting with such rapid change before us. Yet there are so many instances of projects and programs in the marine conservation and restoration space that have significant benefits and are turning the tide back in the right direction.’

‘All have started as concepts driven by a passionate individual or small group of researchers and, with the right support, have grown into important projects with impact. The only way is to dive in.’

To learn more about the Deakin Marine Research and Innovation Centre, [click here](#).



## Interview with Ms Paige Miles, PhD candidate – Deakin NuSea.Lab

### What sparked your interest in Marine Science?

I have always been a lover of the ocean. From a young age, I was fascinated with marine life and would make every effort to immerse myself in that environment. This passion has extended to my studies where I developed a deeper appreciation for the science that underlies what we see along our coastlines and beyond.

### Tell us about your research projects?

Over the course of my candidature, I have been exploring the influence of both pellet properties and diet formulation on the gut transit rate of Atlantic salmon. The objective is to find sound dietary solutions for cultured fish, such as those farmed in Tasmania, who are susceptible to negative impacts of ongoing heat stress. Given future climate projections, it is of the utmost importance that we seek out viable solutions to secure the future of the industry and maintain animal welfare.

### What are the changes in the seafood sectors you hope to see?

Very simply, I would like to see the industry shift to more sustainable practices that are informed by research. The aquaculture industry is an essential sector to ensure food security, however this should not come at the expense of the environment. Fortunately, there is a great deal of both interesting and impactful work being conducted that is exploring ways in which we can improve all aspects of the industry.

### What does it mean to you to receive support from the Beeton Family Fund PhD Scholarship?

Initially I was very shocked! Once I came to learn who was supporting us (our local community member Sue) I was overcome with a feeling of gratitude and relief. The scholarship will alleviate the stress that comes with completing your PhD and entering the workforce, especially with the demands of full-time work and study being impossible. Sue’s support means that I can continue to focus on my writing, and subsequent thesis submission, without the overwhelming pressure of ensuring my financial security.

This is such an incredibly generous donation and I am so appreciative that I am a recipient - that someone like Sue believed in me and my work.



# A decade of impact and inspiration

When the city of Geelong had something to celebrate, Allison Murphy (BA '04) was on the front foot, using her Deakin journalism training to help spread the word.

Upon graduating, Allison, known as Alli to her family and friends, worked across a variety of sectors and roles, including as a media adviser to former

Victorian Senator The Hon Judith Troeth AM, (Hon Doc '17), before establishing her own strategic communications firm in 2004.

For a decade, Alli tirelessly promoted her beloved city as new infrastructure and developments came to fruition – among them the construction of the Geelong Ring Road, the expansion of Avalon Airport, and the opening of Deakin's Medical School. Sadly, Alli passed away in 2014 aged 42.

The Geelong community rallied behind Alli's husband and three children, and raised funds to create a scholarship in her honour. Offered each year since 2015, the Allison Murphy Memorial Scholarship supports young women studying politics, media or marketing at Deakin.

## Allison Murphy Memorial Scholarship Committee members:

Peter Dorling  
Diane James  
Justin Giddings  
Mark Osborne

Helene Bender  
Kate Betts  
Michael King  
James Baird

Image: Allison Murphy

'For the Geelong community the Alli Murphy scholarship achieves two important objectives. Firstly to honour the life and legacy of this remarkable and dynamic woman, and secondly to help scholarship recipients pursue their educational dreams in the spirit of Alli Murphy.'

– Peter Dorling, Allison Murphy Memorial Scholarship Committee Member

While a scholarship provides vital financial assistance, it also empowers the recipient to realise their potential, build important networks and become an inspiration for others.

In 2016, Coral met former Prime Minister The Hon Julia Gillard AC when Ms Gillard received an Honorary Doctorate from Deakin.

Following graduation, Coral decided to return to university to complete a Master of Arts, Writing and Literature. She has encouraged the next generation of Indigenous students as an Academic Fellow at NIKERI and Aboriginal Learning Engagement Officer through Federation University at Barwon Prison. She has also been shortlisted for writing prizes, and contributed reviews and poems as a First Nations editor of an online magazine. Her goal is to establish her own First Nations specific editing and proofreading business.

Coral Reeve (MAWritLit '24) was the inaugural recipient. A proud Gunditjmara woman from Warrnambool, Coral grew up in Melbourne prior to moving to Geelong, completing her Bachelor of Arts majoring in journalism with the support of Deakin's **NIKERI Institute**.

'It's an entirely different ballpark once you're in amongst Mob, with all of that support and building connections and things like that,' she says.

With the arrival of her son during her studies, the scholarship made a huge difference.

'I didn't realise at that point how much of an impact the scholarship would have,' Coral shares.

'It was really beneficial. I was able to get a new laptop, and get my son a new bed as he desperately needed one, and some clothes for myself that weren't from an op shop.'

The instinct to tell and share stories has always been a part of Coral's life, including as a means of therapy during challenging times.

'I'd be minding my own business, doing the dishes, going for a walk, and then these words would just come to my brain. And then as soon as I started writing, the poem would be there,' she says.

In 2024, the Allison Murphy Memorial Scholarship marked 10 years of transforming lives.

Image: Allison Murphy Memorial Scholarship inaugural recipient Coral Reeve receiving her scholarship in 2014. Photo by Glenn Ferguson / Newspix



# You don't just grow for now



## Val Johnstone is a big believer in paying it forward.

A social worker by training, Val has served on numerous boards and committees, including the Victorian Disability Advisory Council, and Women with Disabilities Victoria. Val is also a passionate philanthropist, and has supported multiple charities focused on the elderly, underprivileged, and socially disadvantaged.

A few years ago, Val decided to bring forward the already stated bequests in her Will. Education and the arts were two of her focus areas.

In 2024, Val was drawn to the **Deakin Achieving Potential Scholarship Fund**, a long standing program that helps students overcome barriers to accessing a university education. By endowing a major gift to the fund, Val has ensured her support will have a lasting impact.

She also decided to support Deakin's postgraduate programs in arts and cultural management. A new Graduate Certificate of Business (Arts and Cultural Management) is aimed at supporting emerging arts leaders, especially Indigenous Australian practitioners, with flexible study completed online.

'The need to train more Indigenous arts managers is highlighted in the National Cultural Policy and has been a discussion topic at gatherings of First Nations arts workers. With a 30-year history in training arts managers, and as a regional university, Deakin is ideally placed to meet this need,' says Dr Anne Kershaw, Discipline Head and Course Director for the Arts and Cultural Management Program.

The arts can address social issues in surprising and powerful ways, as Val discovered when watching a performance of *Translations* at Malthouse Theatre almost 20 years ago. The play is set in a 19<sup>th</sup> century Irish village where British troops are forcing English upon the local Gaelic-speaking population.

**'Understanding the role of history is important. This has happened before. The tools of conquest include the taking away of language. It's not a movie. It's actual facts.'**

**Image (left):** Deanne Gilson, *Karringalabil Bundjil Murrup, Manna Gum Tree* (The Creation Tree of Knowledge) 2020, ochre and acrylic on linen, Purchase 2021, Deakin University Art Collection, image © and courtesy of the artist.

**Image (right):** Val Johnstone

The Indigenous Arts Leaders Fund will support 10 full-fee scholarships for the Graduate Certificate program and provide additional support of accommodation and mentorship to the participants.

'Val's very generous donation lets us focus on the learning experience when designing the new Graduate Certificate. In other circumstances we would be conscious of the travel and accommodation costs associated with residential study and be aware of financial access to postgraduate study,' Dr Kershaw says.

'Thanks to the scholarships we can build residential study with an on-country experience into the new program. It also lets us offer the course to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts workers from regional and remote parts of Australia.'

In selecting the projects she supports, Val carefully considers an organisation's financial documents and strategic plans to ensure due diligence.

'By nature, I am a structures and systems person, with a working knowledge of investing in the future,' she says. Val also reflects on the causes close to her heart, and encourages others to do the same.

**'It's about being true to oneself, and it's about being bold.'**





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E [giving@deakin.edu.au](mailto:giving@deakin.edu.au)

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