



NCPO Alumni Addresses Graduation Ceremony



Right: NCPO graduate Rachel Imison, OAM, addresses the October Graduation Ceremony for Education and Health Sciences. Left: Rachel later caught up with 2008 graduate Penny Hendra

NCPO graduates at the ceremony on 17th October 2006 received a surprise when the occasional address was delivered by a prosthetist/orthotist and recent graduate, Ms Rachel Imison. Rachel spoke about her careers in both P&O and sport, where she has represented Australia as part of the women's hockey team. Rachel has participated in three Olympic and two Commonwealth Games, where she has won 2 gold medals, as well as several silver and bronze. She has been awarded the OAM for services to sport. Rachel reflected on the hard work required to maintain

sporting performance at an elite level, and how that has informed her attitude to delivering quality P&O services as a Paediatric Orthotist at the Children's Hospital in Perth, where she is a mentor and role model to many of the patients she treats. She also explained how La Trobe University had provided the education that had assisted her to achieve her goals. Her address was inspirational to the audience, and particularly meaningful to the P&O graduates, who could relate their achievements and possibilities to those of Ms Imison.



The graduates who attended the October Graduation Ceremony, with NCPO Head Rowan English at far right

Donations to the NCPO

The NCPO would like to acknowledge the generous support of Ossur who have continued their contributions of materials, equipment and teaching expertise to our transtibial prosthetics program.

Through their Australian distributors, Ossur Asia Pacific, they have supplied the NCPO with ICEX kits, liners and associated components for students to use in the hydrostatic suspension socket project in the second year subject Applied Transtibial Prosthetics. Ossur also provide the teaching expertise of Ms. Fiona Barnett, who provides teaching in the theoretical and practical aspects of these sockets.

The NCPO would also like to again thank our volunteers, who generously provide their time to provide our students with a clinically relevant learning experience. This year was particularly difficult, with a large second year cohort of about 36 students. This meant that volunteers had to attend for more sessions, and some had to be cast and fitted with student prostheses several times. Despite this, the volunteers were happy to accommodate our students and their contribution was acknowledged with an end of semester BBQ lunch as an expression of thanks from our staff and students.

If any newsletter readers know or are an amputee who wishes to be involved in our teaching program, please contact the NCPO on 9479 5831 and ask for information on volunteering.



Long time NCPO volunteer Alex Ellingsen made a welcome return this semester after an illness. Alex is now a bilateral transtibial amputee, but his spirits have not been dampened!

IMPORTANT NOTICE: No More Mailing of NCPO news

Due to the environmental impact, costs and staff time involved, we have decided not to continue the printed version of the NCPO newsletter.

We are going to cease mailing out the NCPO news.

This will be the last issue that will be mailed out to facilities and individuals on our mailing list.

From 2009, the NCPO News will only be available in electronic form, to be downloaded from our website:

www.latrobe.edu.au/ncpo.

If you wish to be notified by email when the latest issue has been posted, please contact the Editor on 03 9479 5747 or by email: s.hockey@latrobe.edu.au.



What's Happening in Clinical Education

2nd Year Placements

35 2nd year P&O students commenced their three week clinical placements on Monday 10th November, with the second block concluding on Friday 19th December. This is our biggest cohort allocated to date. Students completed placements all over Australia including Melbourne, Ballarat, Geelong, Bendigo, Adelaide, Perth, Darwin, Townsville, Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra, Albury and Launceston.

Thank you to all facilities that have provided this invaluable clinical experience to our students. The students reported enjoying their placements at their mid-placement reports, many experiencing a great diversity of patients, "lots of hands on" and "learning a lot".

Thank you also to the facilities that have returned the assessment forms and assignments so promptly.

Free Allied Health Multidisciplinary Supervision Skills Workshop

A free Clinical Education workshop was run by the Division of Allied Health at the end of November covering the topics of:

Supervision roles and functions

Different learning styles

Issues for new supervisors

Providing feedback.

This workshop was limited to 45 participants and was filled within a couple of days. There are plans to run more workshops such as this in 2009 and so if there are any topics that you would like covered, please let Kaisha know so they can be suggested to the Clinical and Professional Education Committee.

4th year 2009

Allocations have been completed for 27 students to complete their 4th year placements next year. It was a very "tight" process this year with the number of facility offers only just covering the number of students initially and following the cancellation of two placements we have had to make a request for another Prosthetic placement for one student.

Remote access to the La Trobe Library

Finally we are able to provide some facilities with remote access to the La Trobe University Library. The Clinical and Professional Education Committee stipulated the number of placement a facility must undertake. For Prosthetics and Orthotics facilities this is currently three placements per year and as a result 16 facilities should now have a nominated Clinical Supervisor who can access the La Trobe Library remotely.

The NCPO News would like to wish all our readers
a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy holiday season



Head of Department's News

We have almost reached the end of the year and this will be the last newsletter for 2008. This year has been a particularly busy one with many changes impacting on the NCPO. I want to say thank you to all those who have provided support to our academic program through the year. Many of you have given lectures to the undergraduate students, provided tutorials, assisted with demonstrations, supervised students on professional placements or supervised clinical examinations. Without this support from the profession it would not be possible to provide such a comprehensive, quality program.

It is an exciting time as we prepare for the new Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Clinical Prosthetics and Orthotics to start in the New Year. The NCPO and faculty staff have been working for the last three years on this program and we have had a surge in applications for the 2009 entry. I must confess that I do not know if the increased number of applicants over last year is the result of the new program or the increased exposure that the Paralympics has given to the field. Either way, an increase in applications of 57 % is significant and above the average of other clinical programs at La Trobe University.

Inevitably, there will be some staff changes for next year. Someone who has put in a huge amount of work for and has contributed to the advancement of the NCPO is Associate Professor Tim Bach. He will be moving into the School of Human Biosciences where he began his La Trobe University career. Dr Bach has been associated with the NCPO since 1980 when he taught the biomechanics program to undergraduate students. He has had a substantially increased role for the last 14 years as the Head and then as a staff member of the NCPO. Dr Bach's attention to the teaching, curriculum, the implementation of honours and post graduate programs has substantially increased the impact and standing of the educational and research programs of the NCPO in the national and international sectors. We wish Dr Bach all the best in his new role.



Associate Professor Tim Bach will be moving to the School of Human Biosciences

The NCPO has ten distance education students on campus at present. These are upgrade students who are usually based in Phnom Penh and are undertaking the practical component of their program at Bundoora. They have previously completed an ISPO category II Diploma in Prosthetics and Orthotics, have practiced as clinicians in their own countries and will be staying on campus until mid February. Sarah Anderson has very successfully coordinated this program for the last year and will be handing over duties to Anthony Francis after the students return to Cambodia for semester 1. This upgrade program has been highly successful in achieving the educational goals originally set and had a huge impact in the international recognition of educational delivery of the NCPO. All staff have given up a lot of their time above and beyond their paid hours to develop and teach into the program. Thank you to all for all the effort you have put into the program. Unfortunately, the sponsorship of this program will cease after this cohort of students finishes so we will not be running the program until further sponsorship is found.

So as we move to the end of the year I wish all of you a happy festive season and hope you enjoy it with your family and friends.

Rowan English

Head of Department



The NCPO NEWS is produced in March, June, September and December by the National Centre for Prosthetics and Orthotics, La Trobe University, 3086, Victoria, Australia.

Please contact us if you would like:

- *More information about any news item*
- *Advertising rates*
- *To be added to or removed from the email notification list*
- *Discussion about another matter*

An electronic copy is always available from our website: www.latrobe.edu.au/ncpo

Please contact the Editor on 03 9479 5747 or email: s.hockey@latrobe.edu.au

