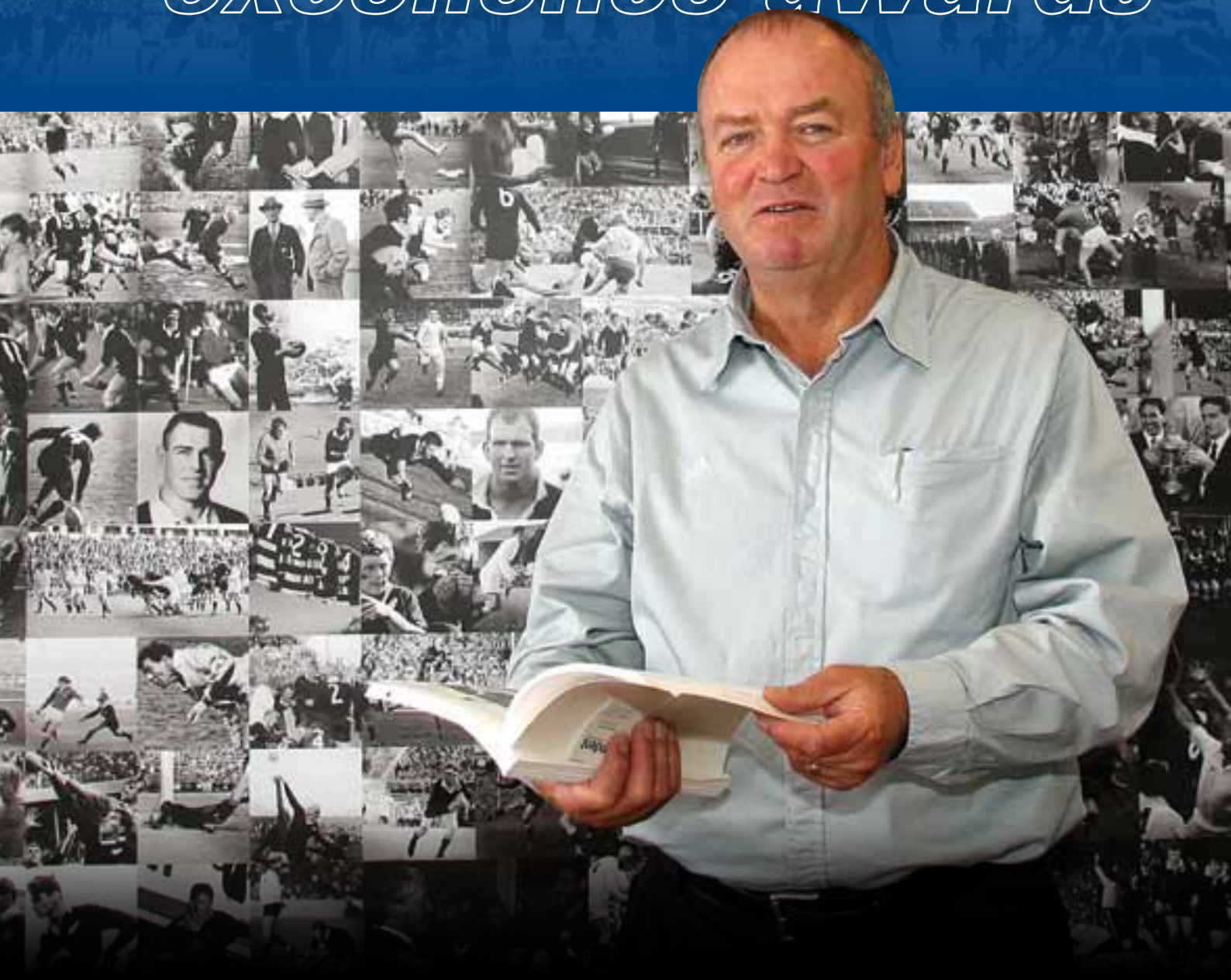
defining excellence awards

2012 MASSEY UNIVERSITY FLOREAT SCIENTIA

DEFINING EXCELLENCE AWARDS



RESEARCH MEDALS

TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

THE ENGINE OF THE NEW NEW ZEALAND

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

TELLING OUR STORIES, CELEBRATING SUCCESS

This year Massey again marks the success of its alumni and staff by bringing them together for one gala night of celebration.

Massey is New Zealand's defining university. Our goal is to make a contribution to the shape of our nation's future and take what is special about New Zealand to the rest of the world. Of course we can only do that if our staff and students are making a defining mark on the world – and they are.

Through our Defining Excellence Awards, we are telling the stories of their success and celebrating their achievements.

In this special edition of *Defining NZ*, Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International) Professor Ingrid Day will talk about the importance of the outstanding teachers we have at Massey. I believe Massey is the best teaching university in the country. This conviction comes not only from the recognition our teachers receive but also from Massey's history of teaching a unique mix of internal, distance and international students. Such a diverse study body has ensured Massey staff members have had to think more than most about how to ensure every learner has the best possible experience.

Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Brigid Heywood will introduce some of our outstanding researchers, whose achievements have been recognised with Massey Research Medals. We are a research-led university with a reputation for creative and innovative solutions to real world problems. It is this record of excellence and innovation that led to the University hosting two of the six New Zealand Centres of Research Excellence – the Riddet Institute and the Alan Wilson Centre – and participating in all of the other centres.

My job is to tell you about our alumni. This year we are recognising a stunning group of alumni, former students whose achievements have touched many lives – Sir Graham Henry, Stephen Jennings, Dennis Oliver and Sue Suckling.

My thanks go to the judges – Sharron Cole, Professor Gregor Reid, Lesley Whyte, and Bruce Ullrich. I was also privileged to join the judging panel.

Congratulations to all the winners. I know you will continue to make us proud.

Over the past two years, we have been actively connecting with all of the people who have been a student or teacher at Massey University. We value our heritage and want to ensure that we are in touch with the Massey family so we can keep them up to date with the University of which they are so proud. But we are also aware that the size, location and achievements of our alumni represent a formidable and important network. We live in the age of networks and Massey has one of the most extensive. Over out history, literally hundreds of thousands of people have been associated with Massey. They now live all over New Zealand and throughout the world. We want to ensure everyone is in contact with the University and with each other.

The importance and power of our network continues to resonate. In New Zealand, Australia, the Pacific, Asia, the United States, Europe - wherever we go, we have consistently been told of how proud people are of Massey and how much they want to be part of our effort to help define the future. They understand why Massey exists and they want to be a part of the story.

As Massey's Vice-Chancellor I take very seriously the need to live up to the expectations of our alumni. They have made this University. We are grateful for their achievements and look forward to their continued support.

Enjoy the celebrations, tell the stories and stay in touch.

Hon Steve Maharey

SIR GRAHAM HENRY

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI
SIR GEOFFREY PEREN MEDAL

Sir Graham Henry, a Massey University extramural graduate, displayed leadership qualities and ambitions early.

As a teacher at Auckland Grammar, with a diploma in physical education from Otago University, he aspired to be a principal.

"I was ambitious, but I knew I didn't have sufficient qualifications to go the next step," he says. "I needed a degree and the extramural degree through Massey was ideal."

But it wasn't easy with a young family, full-time teaching, coaching the first fifteen, running the school hostel and studying part-time.

"It was, in a word, demanding. But the structure of the course made it possible."

Six years later in 1982 he gained a Bachelor of Education from Massey.

He was appointed deputy headmaster of Kelston Boys High and was later the school's headmaster for nine years.

He became a full-time rugby coach in 1996 when the sport turned professional, ending his 25-year career in education. But there were similarities; he says in both educating and coaching you learn how to get the best out of people.

Sir Graham has coached rugby teams for 37 years including secondary school teams, the Auckland Blues, Wales, the British and Irish Lions and in December 2003 he was appointed New Zealand's head rugby coach.

He fulfilled his ultimate coaching goal when the All Blacks won the William Webb Ellis trophy last October 23 at Eden Park, Auckland. His knighthood was awarded soon after for services to rugby.

"It was a group of people achieving something special," he says. "We were ranked number one in the world, but it's a different thing to be world champions."

He stood down as All Black head coach after the World Cup and will now mentor high performance coaches in New Zealand and Argentina. He says leadership is about inspiring and giving direction. "Being a leader is about making a difference to a group of people. It's about a team improving and individuals improving, whether it's a sports team, business or education."

STEPHEN JENNINGS

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Stephen Jennings says his "kiwi mindset" helped him to pioneer foreign investment in Russia when others were yet to see the potential or lacked the nerve.

The Massey business graduate co-founded investment bank Renaissance Capital in Moscow in 1995, which helped to define and refine merchant banking in Russia.

It remains a major player in Russian finance and is now investing in emerging markets in Africa and Asia.

Mr Jennings discovered his passion for business during his Bachelor of Business Studies degree at Massey University, which he says kick-started his career.

His first job was for New Zealand Treasury in 1984, advising the New Zealand and Australian governments on privatisation and restructuring state-owned enterprises.

He later worked for Credit Suisse First Boston in New Zealand and London and, in 1992, was posted to Russia.

Mr Jennings led the State Property Committee's pilot voucher auctions, a project that established the foundation for Russia's capital markets. He saw the opportunities and potential in Russia in the post-communist era, set up Renaissance Capital and made his mark on modern merchant banking in Russia and globally.

During the challenging Russian default in 1998 and the international credit crunch a decade later, his determined leadership was credited for Renaissance's survival when others buckled.

Mr Jennings, who also holds a Master of Philosophy in Economics with first-class honours from the University of Auckland, says his university studies nurtured new ways of thinking.

"My professional life and professional career really kicked off at Massey University way back in 1979 and that has opened doors and opportunities and ways of thinking to me that would have been quite unimaginable to me at the time.

"The economics I began to learn during those years, together with having an open kiwi mind-set, has helped me on many occasion to look objectively at opportunities and to persevere with opportunities in these countries that many other people at that time were just too scared to take."

SUE SUCKLING

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Sue Suckling is drawn to roles that add value to New Zealand.

She has more than 25 years experience in corporate governance and is respected for her drive and contribution to science and innovation and business success.

Ms Suckling completed a Bachelor of Technology in Food Technology at Massey University in 1978 and added a Master of Technology in Biotechnology two years later - both with Honours.

She says the degrees were about "finding solutions" and project management, and they gave her the ability to translate science into business success. "Science is a huge enabler to innovation because it helps you understand how things work and helps find new solutions and breakthroughs to problems."

She worked as a lecturer at Lincoln University and, at 23, was younger than many students. After two years teaching she decided to go into business, quickly rising through the ranks to be appointed chief executive of Pacific Foods. In 1985, aged just 27, she was named New Zealand Business Woman of the Year.

Ms Suckling later turned to consultancy and governance, where science and innovation underpinned many of her roles.

In 1996 she was awarded an OBE for her contribution to New Zealand business. The mother of four is also a Companion of the Royal Society of New Zealand for her work in the science arena.

She currently chairs Barker Fruit Processors Ltd, ECL Group Ltd and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority. She is a director of Restaurant Brands Ltd, Skycity Entertainment Group, and a member of the NZ Takeovers Panel.

"I select roles where I think I can make a difference and see who it adds value for, so for NZQA it's every learner and their families."

Previous governance roles include chairing the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA), AgriQuality Ltd and the Oxford Clinic, and director of the New Zealand Dairy Board, Farmlands Ltd, Westpac Investments, Antarctica NZ, Institute of Geological Nuclear Sciences and MAF Quality Management Advisory board.

Ms Suckling says she shares the award with her family and in particular her four children, whose support has enabled her to contribute in governance roles and she said she also hopes she "has done her former Massey lecturer, Dr Mary Earle [now Professor Emeritus] proud".

DENNIS OLIVER
DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI SERVICE AWARD

Dennis Oliver has devoted his life to helping young people develop their potential. The Massey University extramural graduate is a YMCA stalwart, helped start a Samoan kindergarten and initiated the first community patrols in Hawke's Bay.

Mr Oliver reinvented the Young Men's Christian Association in New Plymouth, founded YMCA in Fiji and Samoa, and turned a debt-laden Hasting arm into a profit-turning branch. He built community development programmes in the Pacific and was the driving force behind a suicide awareness campaign that led to a decrease in suicides in Western Samoa.

He tackled youth unemployment, designing new courses to help people up-skill and reach their potential, and also wrote four books.

"We kept reinventing new programmes – not staying in the box," he says of his 42-year YMCA career. During his stint in Fiji, where YMCA reached 100 villages and had 10,000 members, Mr Oliver began a rural development diploma via distance learning with the University of the South Pacific (USP).

He later turned to Massey University for extramural courses to "fill the gaps" in knowledge and "got into the habit of studying".

"I did two papers a year for 30 years – till I was 70," he says. "I found it useful and quite challenging. I had new tools to see things in different ways. Every paper you do gives a new thinking tool."

He graduated with a Master of Philosophy in development studies and a Master of Business Studies in human resource management, along with diplomas in training and development, business administration, social services and psychology – all from Massey. He also has a Bachelor of Arts from USP.

Today, at 79, he is chairman of the Havelock North community patrols group that he started in 2005. The patrols were the first in Hawke's Bay and led to others in Hastings, Flaxmere and Napier involving about 300 people.

He continues to take part in the midnight to 4am patrols that are the "ears and eyes" for police. He also helped establish the Punavai o le Gagana Samoa preschool in Flaxmere, and remains its secretary, as he is committed to keeping language and culture alive for Samoan children.

LUKE DI SOMMA
DISTINGUISHED YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD

Luke Di Somma plans to bring the magic of New York's musical theatre to New Zealand.

The 27-year-old is a talented writer, director, composer and conductor, who earned first-class honours from the New Zealand School of Music in 2006.

He says his NZSM experience gave him direction. "It was challenging, invigorating and really interesting. It was very helpful and shaped the next stage of my career."

In 2010 the Fullbright scholar graduated from New York University's prestigious Tisch School of the Arts with a Master of Fine Arts from the Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Programme.

Studying his craft in New York, the heart of musical theatre, was life changing.

Guest speakers included Elton John and the city and its characters were inspiring for the musical story teller.

Back in New Zealand, Mr Di Somma is in demand.

He is conductor of the Christchurch Youth Orchestra, is starting a new choir and writing a new musical.

He has also worked with the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, was the musical director for CCMT Emerging Talent School in Auckland and a vocal coach for ASB Classical Sparks in Hagley Park, which drew an audience of 120,000.

He has over a dozen musical direction credits to his name and has worked with the Court Theatre, the New Zealand Army Band and Showbiz Christchurch among others.

Mr Di Somma hopes to write and direct theatre in New Zealand and overseas.

The award was an unexpected honour, he says. "It's odd hearing the word distinguished next to my name, when I'm only 27. It's nice for the arts to get recognition."

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

PROTECTING NEW ZEALAND'S WILDLIFE FROM DISASTER

KERRI MORGAN. AVIAN AND WILDLIFE VETERINARIAN. MASSEY GRADUATE 2002.

When Rena threatened New Zealand with potentially our worst environmental disaster, Kerri Morgan and her response team from Massey's Wildlife Health Centre sprung into action.

Kerri's love for animals may have started early but her expertise was gained at Massey University's Veterinary School.

Taught by world renowned lecturers and armed with practical knowledge to take into the world, Kerri is just one of thousands of trail-blazing Massey graduates who are defining a new future for New Zealand.

Read more about Kerri and our other graduates who are the engine of the new New Zealand by visiting engine.ac.nz

MASSEY.AC.NZ

THE ENGINE
OF THE NEW
NEW ZEALAND

FROM THE ASSISTANT VICE-CHANCELLOR (RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE)

RESEARCH: SOLVING THE BIG PROBLEMS OF THIS AGE

Massey University is defined in part by the research which we support and develop, by the researchers we recruit and nurture and by the contributions of the research teams which are forged out of a common interest in the big problems of the age. The annual Research Medals of Massey University recognise the performance of all who participate in, and support our research strategy but distinguish especially those who have provided leadership and exemplified excellence within our diverse community. The Research Medals also acknowledge contributions to academic research through international partnership with organisations drawn from the public and private sectors within New Zealand and across the world.

The 2011 winners are noted especially for the way in which they have made connections between their research and the various groups who might benefit from their intellectual endeavours both within academe and across wider communities. They are truly a reflection of the traditions and aspiration of Massey University as an institution that seeks to make a difference for, and to New Zealand. Their work is marked by contributions to food security, human safety, health and well-being, biodiversity, and the management of natural resources.

The 2011 Individual Research Medal has been awarded to Professor Paul Moughan for his signature contributions in food and agriculture research that lead from understanding the digestion of animals and humans to the intersection between food and human health. His research leadership provided the vision for the development of a major food innovation hub at Massey University which places this university on the world stage.

Research success is rarely drawn from the activity of one individual and, in awarding the 2011 Research Team Medal to the Sleep/Wake Research Centre the University was reflecting both the quality of their research, and the success of their engagement with such a diverse community of research partners ranging from global corporate to local iwi, as well as their demonstrable passion for engaging with science across boundaries.

Next generation research leaders are an important part of the community dynamic for established centres of excellence. Professor Michael McManus is recognised this year for the contribution that he has made to the developing early career researchers who are the life blood of our research community Doctoral students are one of the hall marks of research excellence for any active research community as they represent a significant investment in the future of a discipline and field of research. Prof McManus is honoured for the contributions he has made to student supervision in his own area and more widely across this University and beyond. Another important group are the career young researchers who join us to launch their own independent research programmes. This year we are acknowledging the progress of Dr Lara Shephard and the ground-breaking research that has allowed her to bring the very best of modern science to bear on the key issues which inform our understanding of New Zealand's biota and their contribution to evolutionary theory. Her research brings a new dimension to our knowledge of this country's unique indigenous species and will provide for their long term viability.

Professor Brigid Heywood

MASSEY UNIVERSITY RESEARCH MEDALS

PROFESSOR PAUL MOUGHAN

RESEARCH MEDAL AWARD – INDIVIDUAL

For 30 years Distinguished Professor Paul Moughan has undertaken the types of research that have enabled food and agriculture to not only remain the backbone of the New Zealand economy, but to flourish internationally.

His work, developing the first computer models of animal growth, followed by seminal work into animal and human digestive processes, and more latterly, the intersection between food and human health, have all underpinned New Zealand's position as a world leader in food production.

Professor Moughan was awarded the Individual Research Medal, recognising a career that has migrated the scientific landscape from agricultural science to his current focus on human health.

He started with a PhD in mammalian metabolism, culminating in the development of causal computerised mathematical models embodying theoretical concepts of control of growth in simple stomached animals such as pigs and chickens.

What he learnt was turned into a model for pork production that was licensed to United States-based Ralston Purina International, in what was one of the biggest local intellectual property deals of the time and resulted in a decade of substantial funding for the University.

More importantly, he says, the work done at Massey influenced a generation of researchers around the world and established New Zealand as a leader in animal growth biology. An example of this leadership was the relationship established with the world's leading agricultural university, the University of Wageningen in the Netherlands.

"Research is about the intersection between science and art," Professor Moughan says. "Great scientists have to be able to view the world in a new way – that's how they can come up with hypotheses. A great scientist can see things differently and that requires an element of art."

Alongside his numerous research roles, Professor Moughan has held many administrative positions within the University. He led the Monogastric Research Centre, that put Massey on the world map in that field, developed the Milk and Health Research Centre, funded by Fonterra, was foundation head of the Institute of Food, Nutrition and Human Health and now co-directs (with Professor Harjinder Singh) the Riddet Institute, the Massey-hosted national centre of research excellence.

As well as working with stunning teams of clever individuals, which he is quick to credit, Professor Moughan says he still loves the challenge of teaching.

"There is nothing more satisfying to me than imparting that curiosity-driven process to young people and seeing them develop."

PROFESSOR MICHAEL McMANUS

RESEARCH MEDAL AWARD – SUPERVISOR

Although awarded this year's Research Medal – Supervisor, Professor Michael McManus sees himself more as an adviser than a supervisor.

"It's a progression," he says. "In the first year of their PhD I give more advice; by their third year they should be advising me. My job is to facilitate that process."

While a PhD typically takes about three years to complete, Professor McManus brings 30 years' experience researching plant physiology and molecular biology to each relationship with a student.

"I use my own experience to assist the student to make the right choices, so they don't waste time going down the wrong path, with the aim of helping them emerge as independent research thinkers."

Professor McManus says he tries to instil two concepts in the minds of students: "The first is not to believe all that they read – or hear – from me. They must be critical thinkers from the outset, test all that they read and hear and keep an open mind." The second is to have in their mind what their experiment or results should look like.

A disproved thesis is just as valuable, if not more, than a proven one, he says. "If the research is done correctly, and there are no technical issues, then the results must be telling something.

He says supervisors must be mindful of the enormous imbalance in the relationship with their students. "Their ultimate success depends on you."

SLEEP/WAKE RESEARCH CENTRE

RESEARCH MEDAL AWARD – TEAM

When Professor Philippa Gander established the Sleep/Wake Research Centre as part of the Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences in 1998, she had a CV that included working at Harvard and NASA.

The centre's mission statement is "to improve health performance, safety and well-being through a programme of basic and applied research with an integrated approach to sleep and waking function".

The centre's research seeks to increase knowledge about: the relationships between sleep and waking function; the role of the circadian biological clock in the regulation of sleep and waking function; the effects of shift-work on sleep, health, productivity, safety and social participation; scientifically-based management strategies to deal with those effects; and the epidemiology of sleep disorders, their consequences for individuals, families and communities, and development of health services for diagnosis and treatment.

Sleep/Wake became a foundation centre of Massey's School of Public Health Research in 2003. Its associate directors are Dr Leigh Signal and Dr Sarah-Jane Paine. It has five research staff, two current doctoral candidates and four support staff.

The centre collaborates widely and has successfully sought funding from a diverse range of national and international sources. Unique in New Zealand, it has a commitment to providing world-class research training opportunities and teaching for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

DR LARA SHEPHERD

RESEARCH MEDAL AWARD – EARLY CAREER

Playing detective to uncover the family tree of New Zealand's birds is not work for Dr Lara Shepherd, it is a passion.

Now the 34-year-old's passion for her topic – the evolution of New Zealand's biota and testing evolutionary theory – has been recognised in the awarding of the Early Career Research Medal.

Dr Shepherd, from the Institute of Fundamental Sciences, has just taken up a role with the avian group at Te Papa, sequencing the DNA from New Zealand birds, including those that are now extinct, to build a family tree showing which species are related. "Te Papa has world-class experts in New Zealand birds but had no expertise in genetics. I'm on the team to answer the questions about the birds' genetic history."

Dr Shepherd did her PhD on ancient DNA in kiwi to see where the species used to occur in New Zealand, as they have become extinct from many of their original habitats. She says just one of her findings was that the Little Spotted Kiwi, thought to be extinct on the mainland since the 1930s, was still there in the 1970s.

"Specimens from the mainland that had been in Te Papa since the 1970s were thought to be baby Great Spotted Kiwi, because Little Spotted Kiwi were supposed to be gone by then. But when we sequenced their DNA we found they were Little Spotted Kiwi, proving they were there for many more years than thought."

Her most recent work used DNA analyses to investigate the domestication by Māori of four endemic plant species. "Most crop species were domesticated thousands of years ago, so the recent settlement of New Zealand offers a unique opportunity to investigate the early phase of crop domestication."

Dr Shepherd says part of her research success is taking a pragmatic, almost commercial approach, to her research. She has already received three Marsden research grants.

Her advice to other young researchers is to publish everything. "You might be doing great research but no one will know if you don't tell."

FROM THE ASSISTANT VICE-CHANCELLOR (ACADEMIC AND INTERNATIONAL)

SHAPING LIVES AND PEOPLE

For more than 125 years, Massey University has helped shape the lives and communities of people in New Zealand and around the world. Its distinctive mix of disciplines, forward-thinking spirit, research-led teaching, and cutting-edge discoveries make Massey New Zealand's defining university. Massey embraces diversity, talent, and performance, and provides staff and students with an extensive range of opportunities to develop intellectually, professionally, and personally.

For these reasons Massey has a longstanding history of excellence in teaching. From awards allocated within the University's colleges to the Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Teaching Excellence and the National Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards, Massey staff members demonstrate their ability to perform at an exceptional level. The excellence and innovation of our staff with their students is at the forefront of what we do – and makes Massey University a world-class centre of tertiary learning.

The 2011 Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Teaching Excellence showcased the commitment of Massey staff to providing an exceptional and distinctive learning experience for students. Dr Mark Henrickson, Dr Nigel Parsons and Dr Gina Salapata received awards for sustained commitment to teaching excellence. All three were the University's nominees for the National Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards. Professor Tony Signal was recognised for his excellence in teaching first-year students, Dr Brennon Wood received the Darrylin O'Dea Award for excellence in e-learning, and Neil Ward was recognised for excellence in teaching support, having assisted several generations of academic staff in the College of Sciences.

While the awards are due recognition of the outstanding achievements of Massey staff, these stories are just a few of many. I am continually finding new examples from across the University of teachers who are engaging creatively to assist students achieve their full potential. A number of college-based awards have been developed over the past year along with a new suite of new teaching grants to support innovative projects which provide a future platform for celebrating and sharing the achievements of teaching staff and those who support them. Providing excellent support for our staff and students is the key to assuring that new innovations prosper.

This year we are continuing to embed our new Teaching and Learning Framework, which is the outcome of two years' extensive analysis of what we teach, how we teach and where we teach. The Massey Model of Teaching and Learning identifies key points of difference in our orientation and operation that are found in our applied and research-led approach, our comprehensive portfolio enhanced by distance education and the innovative use of digital media, and our international and life-long learning focus.

Massey's excellence in teaching will, most importantly, serve the community with graduates who contribute to New Zealand and the world through their creative thinking, their innovative approaches, and their connectedness with industry, the professions, and their disciplines. Indeed, while our history of excellence is unchallenged, we remain focused on the present and future of teaching excellence.

Professor Ingrid Day

DR BRENNON WOOD

DARRYLIN O'DEA AWARD IN THE FIELD OF E-LEARNING

The 50-minute lecture will be a thing of the past, students will interact with lecturers and tutors via digital media and those interactions will be more personal and personalised if Dr Brennon Wood, the recipient of this year's Darrylin O'Dea award in the Field of e-Learning, has his way.

Massey is already a world leader in the use of digital technology to enhance the student learning experience and Dr Wood is helping lead the revolution. His smartphone means he is nearly always available to respond to by email, text or the online class chat-room.

All the different digital media available enables him to interact with students in different and more personal ways, he says. It also offers new ways for the students to interact with each other, though printed materials still have a place. "There is the opportunity for blended learning. We still send out printed readings because they are highly portable, you can go backwards and forwards easily and people are used to working with print."

But the online world is where the next generation of scholars is used to living. "In this new digital environment the role of the teacher changes too. Interaction is short and often, versus long and rare. In the old world you might have one lecture with a class per week – now I have questions coming in constantly. It's quite a challenge, but think of the gains. The personal interaction with the student is a lot more intense because the opportunity for interaction is increased."

Dr Brennon says the digital technology revolution is presenting opportunities to reduce the traditional gap between internal and distance students.

"This has many benefits. It streamlines resources because we can create learning materials used by both types of student. It also facilitates staff-to-staff collaboration. You can use the online environment to jointly build courses that are portable and can be delivered simultaneously in multiple locations and on the web."

NEIL WARD

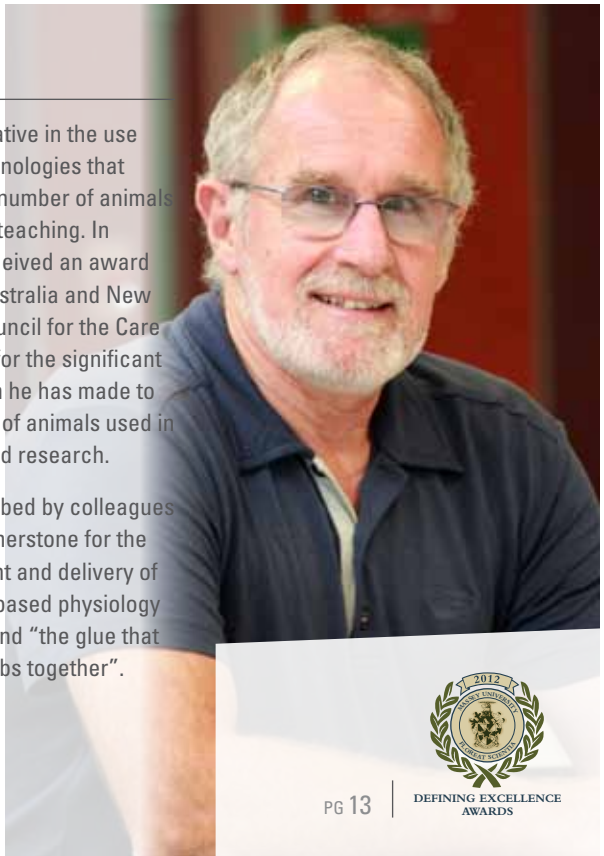
EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING SUPPORT

From the Institute of Veterinary, Animal and Biomedical Sciences in the College of Sciences, Neil Ward has a portfolio that documents a career of more than 40 years, in which he has provided support to several generations of academic staff in the college.

His initiatives are extensive. He has been involved in developing and improving student practical work for a wide range of courses, and designed and developed new equipment for exercise science practical work. He led a group of technicians, who were early adopters of technology in teaching and research laboratories, and has overseen and managed the development of virtual experiments. He developed an anatomy museum, and has recently initiated the development of a website which shares computer-assisted learning resources with other teaching institutions.

A primary concern for Mr Ward has been the care and welfare of animals in laboratory work, and he has been innovative in the use of new technologies that reduce the number of animals needed for teaching. In 2007, he received an award from the Australia and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals for the significant contribution he has made to the welfare of animals used in teaching and research.

He is described by colleagues as "the cornerstone for the development and delivery of laboratory-based physiology teaching" and "the glue that holds our labs together".



DR MARK HENRICKSON

SUSTAINED COMMITMENT TO TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Dr Mark Henrickson, from the School of Health and Social Services in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, has a portfolio that documents a commitment to social work education based on 20 years' experience as a clinician and manager in health and mental health social work, and a passion to develop students as authentic practitioners.

The awards judging panel says authenticity, integrity and respect are core values for Dr Henrickson, and he models these values in the classroom to inspire his students to achieve and be more than they thought possible. Students recognise Dr Henrickson's passionate commitment to their learning, welfare, and development. He has been nominated as Albany lecturer of the year every year since 2006, and his students express their deepest admiration for his teaching through formal feedback channels, unsolicited emails, and other recommendations. One student writes: "Your treatment of the subject of change, loss, grief and death was stunning. Stunning in its content, its sensitivity, and most of all in the way you made yourself transparent in your sharing of your personal times of grief."

Perhaps the most moving testimonies came from international students who describe Dr Henrickson's support for their learning as a lifeline: "During those darkest periods, it was Mark Henrickson who lit a candle for me to escape, one wrote. "Because of his teaching, I learnt how I could transfer my distressful experiences as an Asian immigrant to use as my unique strengths."

DR NIGEL PARSONS

SUSTAINED COMMITMENT TO TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Equipping students with a tool kit that they can draw on to analyse political situations for the rest of their lives is Dr Nigel Parsons' aim.

The Middle East expert, from the College of Humanities and Socials Sciences' School of People, Environment and Planning, received the Sustained Commitment to Teaching Excellence award for his practical and passionate teaching philosophy.

He says he sees himself as a "mechanic", bearing a conceptual tool kit of ideas that enables students to analyse, explain and understand international politics.

"Content can be found anywhere – what I can give students that is less obvious but more useful, are tools."

Dr Parsons says he uses current issues to give context and illustrate the concepts so "they can read and think about politics in a conceptual way for themselves. I like to think that, in a modest way, I am empowering people to think for themselves".

Other tools in the tool kit include capital – what is it, who has it, and how do you get it? "Capital leads naturally to social class which then raises questions concerning the distribution of wealth. Tools in the draw labelled political socialisation can then explain where we get our understandings from and suggest ways to transcend them."

Dr Parsons says he wants his students to enjoy learning about politics, to yearn to learn more, and to have the confidence and tools for life-long learning outside of university.

DR GINA SALAPATA
SUSTAINED COMMITMENT TO TEACHING

Even when Dr Gina Salapata is only *describing* how she interacts with her students, the passion and enthusiasm make it evident why she was one of the recipients of the 2011 teaching excellence award.

Dr Salapata grew up in Greece, surrounded by antiquities. Through classical studies she is able to combine her love of her homeland and the ancient world, and instil that excitement to her students.

"I love antiquities but I don't live in the past. My teaching is highly innovative, using new technology to make the past relevant to the Facebook generation, expand their intellectual horizons and enrich their lives."

The Greek art specialist says she has embraced an interactive way of teaching. "I try to find new ways to connect with my students as demographics and cultures change. I make an effort to draw shy students out of their shells. I try to break the lecturer/audience boundary and make both lectures and tutorials lively and interactive."

Her classes are literally hands-on. Faithful reproductions of sculptures, figurines and vases are passed around so students can hold, turn and handle them. Even distance students can view them in 3D through a specially developed iPad application.

"I've also constructed some interactive exercises online. It's something that hasn't been done before, especially in humanities." Students are guided through exercises of scaffolded questions that cause them to assert their opinions and thoughts but also provide the rationale for their choices."

Dr Salapata encourages students to approach Greek and Roman culture through ancient eyes. "I want my students to be aware of and sensitive to human diversity over time and space, and to avoid applying our society's ideas and values to the ancient world.

"I also try and make the connection between the ancient world and today. So students can see that the culture is not really dead and that a lot of our modern world – literature, art, philosophy, politics, etc — has its roots in the classical world. I try to bring the past alive."

PROFESSOR TONY SIGNAL
EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

Vsitors to Professor Tony Signal's first-year physics class could be forgiven for thinking they were watching the audience at a participatory game show, with students 'voting' for the right multi-choice answer on the screen at the front of the room using digital clickers that transmit the answers.

But in reality, the clickers are all part of Professor Signal's innovative student-centric teaching methods that have seen him awarded with the Excellence in Teaching First-Year Students award.

Multi-choice questions are put up on the screen and students are asked to answer them. Typically, 50 to 80 per cent of the students respond to the questions asked. Based on the responses, Professor Signal can give immediate feedback to the students, who then spend time discussing their answers with their neighbours in small groups.

"Often they get it wrong the first time, but after discussion with each other, they'll get it right."

It is the discussion time, which forces the students to explain and justify what they think the answer is to their colleagues in their own language, that attracted Professor Signal about five years ago to adopt the teaching method introduced by Eric Mazur to his Harvard classes in the 1990s.

As he has improved his technique he finds students are responding more. "It breaks down barriers in class and breaks up the lecture so the focus is not just on the lecturer all the time."

At 100-level, teaching physics is more about understanding the big picture and putting physics in context, he says. The conversational approach is ideal for at this level. With classes often up to 200 students, it enables a more intimate learning style.

"I try to look at learning from their point of view. When you do that, you tend to teach totally differently. Having to communicate their understanding of these concepts to others takes their learning to another level. It can be very challenging for students and I have high expectations. If they are going to answer questions, I expect them to have done the reading."

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