2006 Highlights

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

• The Prime Minister opened the second stage of the Brain and Mind Research Institute, which received a total of $15 million funding from the federal and state governments.
• A team of surgeons, led by the University of Sydney’s Professor of Transplant Surgery, Richard Allen, achieved a world first with a successful kidney, liver and pancreas transplant at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.
• The University of Sydney was third in the Business Review Weekly (BRW) list of top contributors to research and development in Australia. The University spent $262.7 million on research and development.
• The University’s Woolcock Institute – one of the world’s leading respiratory and sleep research centres – received a $5 million State Government grant to help build new laboratories. The new building will include a chronobiology lab to measure breathing and brain activity during sleep.
• Sydney researchers learnt in 2006 that they had been awarded more than $49 million by the Australian Research Council (ARC) for 120 research projects commencing in 2007 – the largest amount awarded to any university in Australia.

INTERNATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

• The Times Higher Education Supplement ranked the University 35th in the world, up from 38th in 2005. Sydney’s arts and humanities was ranked the fifth best in the world, behind only Cambridge, Oxford, Harvard and the University of California, Berkeley.
• In the Newsweek global 100 for 2006, the University of Sydney was one of two Australian universities placed in the top 50 in the world.
• Following the 2005 history-making graduation ceremony in Beijing’s Great Hall of the People, the University returned to China for ceremonies in Shanghai and Hong Kong.
• The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Gavin Brown, took up the Presidency of the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU), which met in Sydney in June.
• US Secretary of State Dr Condoleezza Rice visited the University of Sydney to speak on foreign policy before an audience of more than 300 students from different universities across the state.
• The University’s Faculty of Economics and Business became the only Australian business school to be admitted into the prestigious Community of European Management Schools group (CEMS).
• The University of Sydney became the first Australian university to join the Worldwide Universities Network (WUN), an international alliance of 16 leading research universities.
2006 Highlights

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY TO HOST US STUDIES CENTRE

The University of Sydney has been selected to host Australia’s new US Studies Centre. The think tank, which will be a leading centre for research into American political, economic and cultural issues, will be based both at the University’s main campus and in the heart of Sydney’s central business district.

“We are very excited to be working with the University of Sydney,” said Mr Binks. “The centre will make a vital contribution to the enhancement of the already outstanding relationship between our two countries.”

The new centre, which will have its own Governing Board of Directors, has been established with the specific purpose of deepening the appreciation and understanding of American culture, its political climate and government, and with strengthening the relationship between the two countries.

Professor Gavin Brown, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Sydney, said: “This is a centre for all of Australia. The University of Sydney is honoured to host it.”

As well as a strong academic program including postgraduate research studies at Masters and PhD level, the University of Sydney will run an active executive education and public outreach program which will include short courses, debates, public lectures and forums.

The announcement was made by Mr Malcolm Binks, chairman of the American Australian Association (pictured above with Vice-Chancellor, Professor Gavin Brown and the chairman and chief executive of News Corporation, Mr Rupert Murdoch). Prime Minister John Howard and other business, political and academic leaders also attended the association’s inaugural dinner to hear the announcement.

The University of Sydney was chosen after a rigorous selection process run by the board of the American Australian Association. Submissions from the University of Melbourne and the Australian National University were also considered. All Australian universities were invited to make submissions to host the centre.

The Commonwealth Government has pledged $25 million in funding as an endowment for the establishment of the new centre and the NSW government has also committed a significant financial contribution. Additional funds have been raised from business and private individuals in Australia and the United States.

Among the highlights planned in the first year will be a national opinion survey measuring what Australians think about the United States, a national summit on US studies, and a classic American film festival run in cooperation with UCLA’s School of Theatre, Film and Television.

The University’s submission was made after consultation with academic and business advisers in the United States and Australia. Many of Australia’s key scholars in American studies are currently at the University of Sydney. Australian expertise at the Centre will be complemented by regular international visiting fellows.
2006 HIGHLIGHTS

OUR STUDENTS

• Three Sydney Arts/Law students won all of the 2006 Rhodes scholarships available to students from this state. Kate Brennan won the New South Wales Rhodes Scholarship, while Angela Cummine and Eric Knight won the two Australia-at-Large Rhodes Scholarships.

• Two Sydney Law students won the Intervarsity Debating World Championship in Vancouver, Canada. The pair – Julia Bowles and Anna Garsia – were only the second all-women team to win the championship in 26 years.

• A robust program of merit scholarships and financial support for undergraduate students in need provided over $6.5 million in 2006, which is by far the most comprehensive and generous scheme of any university in New South Wales.

• Sydney University Sport continued to produce Australian representatives and win major competitions. Six athletes won medals at the 2006 Commonwealth Games and two were in the World Championship-winning Australian Women’s Water Polo team. The University Rugby Club retained the Sydney premiership and the Men’s VIII rowers won the Oxford and Cambridge Cup for the third time.

OUR STAFF

• University of Sydney graduate and Honorary Associate in English, Kate Grenville, won the 2006 Commonwealth Writer’s Prize and was short-listed for the 2006 Man Booker Prize for Fiction for her novel, The Secret River.

• Federation Fellowships were awarded to Professor Benedict Kiernan and Dr Toni Shippenberg. In this important federal government scheme to keep top Australian researchers in Australia, Sydney is the most successful university in the country.

• The University won 30 Australian Research Council (ARC) Fellowships, including seven new Professorial Fellowships.

• Six academics were made fellows of the learned academies, bringing the total number of University of Sydney fellows to over 90.

SYDNEY STUDENT SCORES

LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

Jeremy Bell, a University of Sydney philosophy student, has won a prestigious postgraduate scholarship awarded to exceptional young Australians with the potential to become leaders in their fields.

The Monash Award winners, announced by General Peter Cosgrove, receive up to $150,000 each over three years to further their education at a leading overseas university.

Jeremy is currently completing a Masters of Philosophy and will use this award to study for a PhD at the University of Chicago.

He specialised in philosophy and Jewish civilisation, thought and culture in his undergraduate degree, and was University Medal winner. He plans to become a leading philosophy scholar at an Australian university, participating in public debate on the major social and ethical issues facing the nation.

Jeremy believes contemporary public debates about such issues as euthanasia, gay marriage and the so-called ‘clash of civilisations’ demand not only accurate information but sustained and careful reflection on the philosophical questions they raise.

Jeremy has also been an active community member, working with the Red Cross Community Visitor’s Scheme, World Vision and as a visitor to children in the Villawood Detention Centre.

General Cosgrove, Chairman of The General Sir John Monash Foundation (GSJM) and former head of the Australian Defence Forces, said Australia would be well served in future by Jeremy and his fellow Monash Award winners.

The GSJM Awards are the nation’s most prestigious postgraduate scholarships, Australia’s equivalent to the British Rhodes Scholarships and the American Fulbright Awards. The awards are named after General Sir John Monash, an original ANZAC.
2006 Highlights

LEARNING AND TEACHING

• In the influential Good Universities Guide for 2007 (published in late 2006), Sydney was again ranked very highly, scoring the maximum five stars possible in nine different categories including staff/student ratio and positive graduate outcomes.

• The University of Sydney has led the way in Australia with its performance-based funding of excellence in learning and teaching. A new learning and teaching plan, implemented in 2006, has the following five goals:
  - ensure the distinctiveness of the Sydney graduate
  - support quality and innovative teaching
  - promote internationalisation, cultural diversity and equity
  - embed research-enhanced learning and teaching, and
  - enhance learning in an information rich environment.

• Eight nominees from the University won Carrick Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning.

OUR COMMUNITY

• The Faculty of Medicine celebrated its 150th anniversary with a series of special events, symposia, recitals and tours. The faculty’s graduates lead the country in medicine and health care.

• The first Muslim and first woman to head Amnesty International, Irene Khan, was presented with the Sydney Peace Prize at a gala dinner and delivered the annual Sydney Peace Prize Lecture.

• More people than ever before visited the University for personal or professional benefit, using services and facilities or attending lectures and events. The number of visitors to the University’s museums increased by 45 per cent, and 30 per cent more people visited the University’s website. There was also a 39 per cent increase in the number of presentations to students by employers.

OUR CAMPUSES

• The School of Information Technologies relocated to a purpose-built home featuring state-of-the-art labs and teaching facilities. The building, designed by the architects Francis-Jones Morehen Thorp, includes four floors dedicated to the teaching and research functions of the School. It has innovative ‘chilled beam’ air-conditioning and a modern glass and stainless steel exterior.