

Ms Deborah McMurtrie

*Honorary Fellow of the University
Conferring ceremony: 4pm, 12 December 2014*

Citation

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Deborah McMurtrie to you for the award of the title Honorary Fellow of the University for her exceptional contributions to the University of Sydney and, in particular the Faculty of Veterinary Science.

For 10 years, Deborah has been the Chair of the Veterinary Science Foundation, which supports animal health and welfare, the education of future veterinarians, and excellence in research. Prior to this, Deborah was a Director of the Foundation.

The Foundation aims to raise awareness of the critical importance of veterinary science to the Australian community - through fostering of the human-animal bond, addressing the need to ensure our rural livestock production industries remain viable, working to conserve our unique native wildlife, and breaking new ground in research.

Under Deborah's leadership the Foundation has contributed significantly to the University's Veterinary Teaching Hospital's ability to provide excellent research and teaching facilities to students, academics and professional staff. The engagement of final year students at the University Veterinary Teaching Hospital helps them to fully appreciate the benefits of working in a substantially upgraded Hospital. This ensures that the next generation of young veterinarians will inherit the wealth of an enriched veterinary training experience, as well as the values of community service that underpin the profession.

The Foundation, under Deborah's leadership, has developed substantial recognition as an arm for promoting the Faculty of Veterinary Science and the University as a whole, connecting with the community and fundraising. This is particularly evident through the annual ANIMALIA event, which has grown year on year since its inception in 2003. Deborah has been instrumental in this fundraising event.

Funds raised from ANIMALIA, along with other financial support, have seen achievements such as the completion of the Liz Kernohan Lecture Theatre, the 24 hour opening of emergency care and facilities at the Teaching Hospitals and Clinics, research initiatives such as that to help save the Tasmanian Devil, the recruitment of a specialist Oncologist and cardiology equipment.

Deborah's dedication and tireless contribution to the organisation of such a major event has been pivotal to its success. Her negotiation skills have seen the event partner with a number of sponsors, linking the University and Faculty to organisations in the community.

These achievements shine a light on the extraordinary commitment of the Foundation's members, and, in particular, it speaks to the strong leadership of Deborah who has given a large part of her life to improving the welfare of animals and providing leadership for the Foundation, supporting the Veterinary Faculty and the University as a whole.

The Foundation has done exceptional work over the last decade in raising the profile of the University itself. During her time as a director and then as Chair of the Foundation, Deborah, together with her team, has consistently worked to help improve faculty facilities and provide support for important research and teaching work.

Chancellor, I present Deborah McMurtrie to you for the award of the title Honorary Fellow of the University of Sydney and I invite you to confer the award upon her.