

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Valedictory speech to be delivered by brothers

Two medically-minded brothers will deliver the valedictory speech in tandem at their 3pm graduation ceremony today (**Wednesday 18 December 2013**).

The speech is an honour bestowed on exceptional students.

Graeme Wertheimer, 22, will graduate with a Bachelor of Pharmacy with First Class Honours. His elder brother Adam Wertheimer, 25, will receive his Bachelor of Medicine at the same ceremony. He is also a world champion rower.

The brothers have achieved excellent results during their studies despite significant personal hardship, with Graeme being diagnosed with a brain tumour at 21.

“It was quite rough at the time- the worst part was getting to the diagnosis,” Graeme said.

“Once we knew it was treatable, I just worked through it, like you have to. I’m still here, so it’s pretty good.”

Graeme and Adam’s father, who was a surgeon, died of Parkinson’s Disease eight years ago. It was during his father’s illness that Graeme became interested in pharmacy.

“It fascinated me that when doctors couldn’t really help my father, medication could,” he said.

Graeme’s Honours project was inspired by his father’s illness and may potentially be used for research into Parkinson’s and other neurologic degenerative diseases.

After two operations, Graeme is now healthy and working full-time at a pharmacy.

Adam said after six and a half years of study, it was great to be graduating, especially with his brother. He said he has always been interested in medicine.

“I’ve always liked the idea of working with people and medicine is a people-oriented profession,” Adam said.

“Both of our parents were doctors so that gave me an insight into the life of a doctor; maybe that has influenced my choice.”

Throughout his studies, Adam still managed to compete in multiple international rowing regattas, winning a commonwealth championship.

“We’re grateful to the University for supporting students, academically but also personally.”

Adam and Graeme also have an older brother, who recently graduated with a Law degree and will be visiting from Brisbane to attend their graduation ceremony. Their mother will also attend.

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