

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

DATE: TUESDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2012

ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



UTAS recognised as one of nation's top learning and teaching institutions

Two University of Tasmania student learning programs have been recognised for excellence in education by the Commonwealth Government's Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT). UTAS has also featured prominently in the OLT's second round of grants for 2012.

The Patient Partner Program (P3) run by the UTAS School of Medicine's Launceston Clinical School and the Maths Education Team from the School of Education are recipients of two Programs that Enhance Learning Awards, each worth \$25,000, announced by the Tertiary Education Minister, Senator Chris Evans.

Associate Professor Greg Dicoski, Dr Andrew Seen and Associate Professor Justin Walls have received Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning, which are awarded to those who have made a significant contribution to the quality of student learning in a specific area of responsibility over a sustained period.

The OLT grants round further enhances UTAS' leadership in teaching and learning in Australia.

Professor Sue Kilpatrick leads a team which has secured a prestigious Innovation and Development Grant of \$219,000 for 'Development of mathematics pathways for VET students to articulate to related higher education courses'.

Other UTAS staff members to benefit from the grants round include:

- Peter Dixon, Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) in the Faculty of Business, who is part of a multi-institutional successful OLT seed project on the subject of 'Practice to academy transition'.
- Professors Brian Yates and Susan Jones, who have been successful in receiving an extension grant titled LTAS Project for Science - Good Practice Guides.
- Assoc Prof Pam Allen, Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) in the Faculty of Arts, part of a multi-institutional project on the subject of 'Renewing first year curricula for social sciences and humanities in the context of discipline threshold standards'.

UTAS Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and Education) Professor David Sadler said: “This is a comprehensive performance across all the main categories of OLT awards and grants. These awards clearly underscore the commitment of our staff to providing engaging and inspiring courses to help our students achieve their full potential.”

“The P3 and Maths Education teams have been responsible for the University of Tasmania out-performing 32 other nominations from 47 eligible institutions – demonstrating that the very best tertiary education is available right here in Tasmania.”

The 17-strong Patient Partners Program (P3) team led by Mrs Jenny Barr won the Innovation in Curricula, Learning and Teaching category.

Since 2005, the P3 program has provided a learning platform for senior medical students to acquire and develop patient-centred consulting skills by engaging with more than 370 volunteer patients (Patient Partners) who regularly visit the Launceston Clinical School.

“This is a fantastic achievement by the P3 team, recognising many years of determined and innovative work, as well as highly productive outcomes in learning and teaching,” said Associate Professor James Vickers, Head of the School of Medicine.

The Maths Education Team, consisting of 10 academics led by Associate Professor Kim Beswick, won the Social Science category of the Teaching Excellence Awards.

Assoc Prof Beswick said that the maths team has been working together to find better ways to helping education students overcome their fear of maths, build their knowledge and confidence and ensure they are more than capable of teaching maths by the time they graduate.

One initiative of the maths team has been to send groups of three or four education students to a school for six consecutive weeks where they work intensively with small groups of children in the classroom.

Information Released by:

The Media Office, University of Tasmania

Phone: Lana Best (03) 6324 5019; Mobile: 0417 978 025

Email: Lana.Best@utas.edu.au