

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

DATE: THURSDAY, 6 AUGUST 2009

ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Cancer research to continue after graduation

A University of Tasmania student has channelled the tragedy of cancer that touched her family into a determination to help find a cure for the disease.

Heather McGee is graduating tomorrow with a PhD having spent three years of her doctorate unravelling the relationship between exposure to sunlight during childhood and diseases such as skin cancer and autoimmune disease in adult life.

Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, a type of blood cancer, tragically took her father's life a few years ago and Ms McGee will spend her graduation morning in Hobart's CBD collecting donations for the David Collins Leukaemia Foundation's annual button day.

Ms McGee will continue research into skin cancer at the UTAS Menzies Research Institute. She recently won a research grant to investigate the potential therapeutic use of a naturally occurring protein, metallothionein, in ultraviolet radiation-induced skin cancers such as melanoma.

Ms McGee is one of 786 University of Tasmania students who will have awards conferred at graduation ceremonies at the UTAS Sandy Bay campus this Friday and Saturday.

The first ceremony will be held on Friday night and is for graduates from the Faculty of Education, Faculty of Health Science and Faculty of Law.

Awards for students from the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Technology, Faculty of Business and Faculty of Arts will be conferred at three ceremonies on Saturday.

Guest speakers at the ceremonies will be His Honour Judge Richard Cogswell, Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry managing director Andrew Scobie, Professor Susan Dodds and Dr Ian Allison.

Photo and interview opportunity

WHEN: 11am on Thursday, 6 August, 2009

WHERE: Foyer of the Clinical School, Collins Street (rear of Royal Hobart Hospital near the intersection with Collins and Argyle Sts), Hobart

WHO: Menzies Research Institute cancer researcher Heather McGee investigating a potential therapy for skin cancers.

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