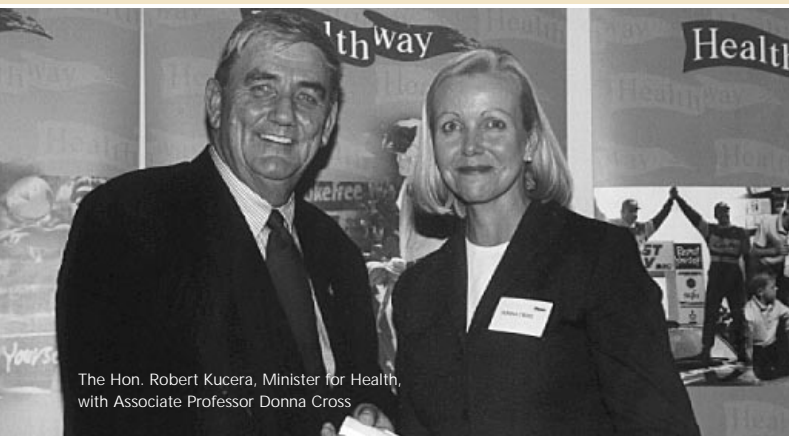


## HEALTH PROMOTION CENTRE WINS HEALTHWAY AWARD

Associate Professor Donna Cross and the WA Centre for Health Promotion Research (WACHPR) at Curtin recently won Healthway's 2002 Excellence in Health Promotion Award in the category of Health Promotion Research Grants.

WACHPR won the award for its Smoking Cessation Project, a harm minimisation trial targeting tobacco

use by high school students. The trial was successful in encouraging students who were occasional or regular smokers to quit or reduce smoking. A nursing resource, based on the findings, is now widely used throughout schools in WA. National and international groups have expressed interest in the program.



The Hon. Robert Kucera, Minister for Health, with Associate Professor Donna Cross

## OFFICE OF R&D NEWS

### Small Discovery and Linkage Grants 2003

Applications are being accepted for Curtin Small Discovery and Linkage Grants for 2003. The scheme supports high-quality research projects of modest cost. The research should have the potential to attract future funding from government or industry sources. Closing date is 6 September 2002.

### ARC Linkage Projects 2003

Applications are also being accepted for ARC Linkage Projects for 2003, which support collaborative research between university researchers and industry. Research must benefit regional and rural communities and proposals must contain an industry contribution, in cash and/or in kind. Closing date is 15 November 2002.

### SMEC nominated for teaching awards

SMEC has been selected as one of Curtin's nominees for the 2002 Australian Awards for University Teaching. SMEC is a nominee in the Institutional Award - Category for Postgraduate Research Supervision.

### Inaugural Premier's Science Prizes

Nominations are invited for two inaugural WA Premier's Prizes:

Achievement in Science and Early Career Achievement in Science. To obtain guidelines and forms, visit [www.dpc.wa.gov.au](http://www.dpc.wa.gov.au) or call 9222 8885.

### Curtin participates in Australia-India program

Curtin will participate in the new Australia-India Council Fellowships in Australian Studies scheme. Through the South Asia Research Unit and the Centre for Australian Studies, Curtin will assume primary responsibility, with La Trobe University, for the administration of the scheme. Curtin will also be one of the universities to host visiting academics. In 2003, up to six fellowships will be made available to Indian scholars.

### Vale

Office of R&D staff were greatly saddened by the tragic passing of former staff member Pat Downes, recently killed in a car accident in Exmouth. Pat worked in the Office of R&D and the Office of the Executive General Manager during 2000 and 2001. Pat's professionalism and friendly nature made her a well-loved personality. Condolences go to Pat's family.

## DVC ACTIVITIES

One of the leading thinkers on competitive strategy, Michael Porter, recently gave an impressive and thought-provoking seminar in Sydney. Around 2000 people attended and Porter presented for nearly five hours.

Some of his key points:

- Thinking about competitive strategy is essential for any enterprise providing a product or a service. The ultimate goal is always to create value, whether this is measured in dollar terms as (price - full cost), or more intangible terms as (social impact/benefit - full cost of delivery). He argues that they are all susceptible to measurement.
- Entering the same race as your competitors is not likely to be a successful strategy - there will only be one winner and the losers will strive endlessly to become the winner. A far better competitive strategy is to invent your own race. This will inevitably involve a unique value proposition and hard decisions about what is not done.

- Operational excellence is not an effective competitive strategy in itself, but rather a given, whatever the strategy.
- Strategy needs to be set at the corporate level, not at the level of units within a corporation. This is a key factor in 95 per cent of successful cases. Effective competitive strategy does not come as a result of negotiation and compromise. It has to be driven, and totally supported, by the CEO.
- A competitive strategy has to be given around three to five years to 'bite' and should then be reviewed.
- Performance measures need to be related directly to the ultimate goal. Other goals and metrics (for example, return on sales, market share, operating cash flow, customer or shareholder satisfaction) carry grave risks for strategy. Use relative measures in the short term (how are we doing against the field?) but absolute measures in the long term (how are we doing in absolute terms?).

- Over-reliance on analysts leads to imitating and following the herd, not inventing a new race.
- Competitiveness needs to be sheeted right back to underlying activities (activity-based costing is essential for effective management right along the value chain).
- The only sustainable reason for forming a cluster is to increase productivity collectively at the top of the value chain. All others (for example, CRCs?) are doomed to a short-term existence.
- The balanced scorecard is the basis for facilitating implementation of the strategy, but Porter would probably give the financial perspective the dominant role, supported by the other three (clients/customers, core business and learning/culture).

It is interesting to reflect upon Curtin's competitive strategy in light of the above. Are we putting enough effort into determining the value and

cost of our programs? Have we got a clear view of what race we are running: is it the same one as our competitors or have we managed to define our own unique race? How can we build a really unique value proposition to enhance our success in attracting external R&D support?

I think we have made an excellent start with the new Curtin planning framework but probably still need to work on some of these simple basics. What do you think?



PAUL ROSSITER  
DVC, R&D

## GRADUATE STUDIES NEWS

- » Beth Kingsley is the first Curtin academic staff member to be awarded a PhD by submission of published work. This scheme gives staff the opportunity to submit their published work for a research degree without needing to enrol for several years as a research student. Kingsley submitted her thesis in June and was awarded a PhD in August.
- » Professor Léonie Rennie, Dean, Graduate Studies, recently presented a seminar, Preparing the Candidacy Application, as part of the Enriching Postgraduate Teaching and Learning Seminar Series. The seminar was attended by approximately 65 postgraduate students and academic staff.
- » The Curtin University Postgraduate Student Association (CUPSA) held its Annual General Meeting in August, which included elections for the executive positions in 2003. Congratulations go to Jennifer Lowe, Engineering and Science, who was appointed as President; Patricia Thomson, Curtin Business School, elected as Vice-President; Hannah Williams, Health Sciences, re-elected as Secretary; and the nine general committee members.
- » The Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA) President, Leisa Ridges, from Melbourne, visited various WA universities, including Curtin, and met with CUPSA representatives and Office of R&D executive staff. CAPA is the national body that represents the 155,272 postgraduate students in Australia.
- » Divisions recently mailed the Annual Progress Report forms to research higher degree students and supervisors. Students and supervisors are reminded to return their forms by 30 September.
- » Application forms are now available for the 2003 round of the Australian Postgraduate Awards and Curtin University Postgraduate Scholarships. Visit [www.scholarships.curtin.edu.au](http://www.scholarships.curtin.edu.au) for more information.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The Office of R&D has published a new Marine Science prospectus. The prospectus profiles areas across the University doing research in marine science and technology. Contact the Office of R&D for copies.



## IN THE NEWS

- » Curtin's Centre for Developmental Health study on specific language impairment – funded by a \$6 million grant from the National Institutes of Health – received wide coverage in *The Australian*, *The West Australian*, *The Sunday Times* and *Business News*.
- » Several local newspapers featured stories on a new Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) database, linking the Curtin-run Australian Twin ADHD database with others in the world. The database project, led by Curtin's Professor David Hay, is set to become the largest in the world for genetic studies of ADHD.
- » In August, Dr George Christos, Lecturer in the School of Mathematics and Statistics, was a guest on *Today Tonight*. Christos discussed his theory for a fairer way to organise the AFL finals rounds.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS: STRESS MANAGEMENT & TIME MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Presented by the Curtin Women's Program

12 September 2002

Curtin on the Park, Meeting Room 1

Call Janice Burmaz on ext 3980 for details.

### INNOVATION LECTURE SERIES

Public Lecture

10 October 2002

Call Martin Cebis on ext 4053 for details.

### LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

Sixth Annual Humanities Postgraduate Research Conference

7-8 November 2002

Call the Humanities Graduate Studies Office on ext 2593 for details.

### ENRICHING POSTGRADUATE TEACHING AND LEARNING SEMINAR SERIES

Semester 2 Seminars

Book through the Learning Support Network website at

[lsn.curtin.edu.au/seminars](http://lsn.curtin.edu.au/seminars).

### INNOVISIONS CONFERENCE

12-15 November 2002

Hosted by Curtin at the Burswood International Convention Centre

Visit [www.innovisions.org](http://www.innovisions.org) for more information.

## RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

- » Professor Robert Amin was awarded the 2002 Institution of Engineers Australia Eureka Prize for Engineering Innovation in August. Curtin's Emeritus Professor John de Laeter and Dr Alex Bevan, of the WA Museum, were finalists in the Eureka Science Book Prize. They were nominated for *Meteorites: a journey through space and time*.
- » Curtin and UWA have signed a joint agreement to establish the Western Australian Telecommunications Research Institute (WATRI). WATRI brings together, under one roof, the main groups doing telecommunications teaching and research activities at the two universities.
- » A unique alliance between Curtin and Fremantle Arts Centre Press (FACP) has put Curtin amongst a handful of Australian universities that have their own university or university-affiliated presses. Curtin's Centre for Australian Studies will take responsibility for the intellectual side of the work, while FACP will see to pre-press and printing.
- » Curtin Professor Gary Madden, Director of the Communication Economics and Electronic Markets Research Centre, has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the International Telecommunications Society.

Professor Gary Madden



For more information on the activities of the Office of R&D call ext 7863. <http://research.curtin.edu.au>