

Vice-Chancellor's Report to Council

May 2024

Introduction

Career Fair 2024 concluded on 7 May after a series of events. In March we hosted the Business and Arts Careers Fairs which saw 26 businesses engage with 500 students, and the Law Recruitment Evening saw 26 businesses engage with 350 students. The series concluded with STEM which hosted 89 businesses who connected with 1,700 students.

UC announced support of the Doc Edge Festival 2024 through our Kāwā initiative and celebrated the festival's programme launch at Maui Studios in Ōtautahi Christchurch on 9 May. The festival is an Academy Awards qualifying festival that offers locals the chance to participate. The festival aligns with UC's vision to provide industry opportunities to our Bachelor of Digital Screen (Honours) students and connect them with local and international film, TV and media professionals.

Whilst I was in London on ACU business, I hosted an alumni event on 16 May at the Carlyle Gardens, the home of UC alum David Law. Event attendees included University of Canterbury NZ Trust (UK) Chair Alene Wilton, board members Jeremy Willis and James Croll. UC alum and former CNN journalist Tim Hume was the guest speaker.

UC facilitated the global announcement of the University's collaboration with Aardman Academy, the training arm of Oscar-winning Aardman Animations (of Wallace and Gromit, Shaun the Sheep, and Chicken Run fame). We achieved significant national and international media coverage, kicked off through Variety with a two-hour exclusive before the news went out to the UK, US and New Zealand.

On 11 April UBS bookshop hosted the launch of Canterbury University Press author and illustrator Lily Duval's book *Watercolours of a Canterbury Childhood*. Duval completed her Master of Arts (with Distinction) in English Literature at UC, and it was her thesis, *Watercolours of a Canterbury Childhood*, that inspired the book. Over 100 of Duval's distinctive watercolours illustrate the text.

Education – Accessible, Flexible Future Focussed

The regularly scheduled classes of Semester 1 have ended and students are busily preparing for exams. This year there are nearly 40 000 exam sittings scheduled for students.

Besides in-class learning, many students have an opportunity to engage with industry and authentic experiences that add to their education and employability. Engineering had a variety of industry engagements from field trips with companies ranging from AZWood, a producer of products from wood residue to JIX Technology Studios looking at the latest immersive experiences.

Innovation and accessibility to education were highlighted when UC staff joined Nurse Maude and the Nursing Council of New Zealand at the blessing by mana whenua of the new Nurse Maude Simulation and

People Nurturing Staff, Thriving Students

The Student Wellbeing team ran a collaboration with Orion and EnergyMate to provide an educational workshop to help students understand more about their home power bill. All attendees were supplied with LED lightbulbs, shower timers, and other resources.

Pink Shirt Day took place on Friday 17 May, but UC celebrations spanned the week. Positive message boards were set up at the start of the week in Puaka-James Hight and the Living Room (located next to the bookshop) for students and staff to leave uplifting notes. A t-shirt making workshop was run in the Te Rua Makerspace. Oranga | Wellbeing Navigators made pink smoothies and toasties at the Connect Zones. A photobooth and sweet treats were put into the Living Room for anyone donning pink on the official Pink Shirt Day.

Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora returned to campus in May to provide follow-up doses for those who received their first meningococcal B dose at the start of the year. Additional vaccine clinics are being organised with Health New Zealand for Winter Wellness and Open Day later on in the year.

A supply of free period products, funded from the student levy and administered by student volunteers, is available in Puaka-James Hight and Rehua.

During study week the Living Room is a place for relaxation for students, with handmade mocktails, pastries, and a painting session. Free snacks and fruit deliveries were made to study spaces in the Undercroft, Puaka James Hight and Rehua.

A programme of security tips for students and staff has been run throughout the year to date via digital screens, newsletters and social media. This has included information about safe walking routes, bus timetables, Security team services and the emergency communication towers.

The Recreation Centre has recorded 76,785 visits to 30 April. This is up 10,000 visits compared to the same time in 2023, and we are continuing to observe our participation levels returning to pre-COVID levels of 85,000 for this time of year. There are just under 10,000 student members registered, representing around 48% uptake of student headcount.

In April an Early Career Workshop was held for post-doctoral students and late-stage PhDs in Engineering and Science. The event was organised and run by senior female academics and aimed primarily at women, the rainbow community and other under-represented groups in the early years of their career. There were over fifty attendees, and a range of UC and external speakers.

Approximately 35 staff from the Faculty of Science participated in two Supporting Students in Distress workshops hosted by Julie Pratt, Student Care Manager. Staff feedback reported that the workshop provided them with additional tools to more confidently support students in distress.

Six professional staff from a variety of areas and at different career stages have signed up for a mentoring programme with the Association for Tertiary Management (ATEM) via UC's membership. This pilot programme runs from November 2023 to August 2024 and matches mentees with an appropriate mentor from an Australasian University. The UC participants are being managed through People and Culture and an evaluation of the programme will be undertaken. Interim feedback is extremely positive from all our participants.

Internationalisation Locally Engaged, Globally Networked

UC hosted three delegates from the Indian Institute of Technology – Delhi (IITD), Professor James Gomes (Dean International Programmes), Professor Naresh Bhatnagar (Dean Research and Development) and Dr Archana Trivedi (Research Development Coordinator), and representatives from the universities of Lincoln and Otago, on a tour of our Ilam campus on 2 May. The visit, which allowed us to showcase exemplary UC research, was reciprocal, following a successful UC-supported trip of New Zealand researchers to IITD earlier this year.

The University's National Centre for Research on Europe hosted European Ambassadors, Nicole Menzenbach (Germany), Laurence Beau (France), Jane Connolly (Ireland), Zsolt Hetesy (Hungary) and Grzegorz Kowal (Poland) on campus between 22 March and 3 May, offering in-person and online sessions during which the ambassadors highlighted their priorities and perspectives for the future direction of the European Union. Lawrence Meredith, the EU Ambassador to New Zealand, visited UC on 30 April to speak to a large gathering of EURA and EURO students and staff and will return to UC again in Semester 2.

Along with the UC International College (UCIC), the University hosted 20 international recruitment agents from Asian countries during Autumn Graduation week in mid-April, giving them an opportunity to explore the campus and tautahi Christchurch. The agents play a crucial role in advising prospective international students on the educational journey available in New Zealand. The visit is a chance for agents to witness firsthand the exceptional academic and cultural offerings of UC.

Organisational Efficacy of a sustainable scale by 2030

Digital Services continues to progress a comprehensive programme of work to enable a Cyber Secure culture at UC and enable the protection of our assets and our people. The Web experience team in partnership with our Cyber team and wider UC community of users have been progressively migrating our UC blog and WordPress websites onto a secure central platform, CampusPress. This has already had a significant impact on UC's Security Scorecard grade and will continue to improve as we consolidate the many websites onto secure, supported platforms and put in place clear patterns for new websites required for UC research and teaching.

Student First successfully rolled out v50 of ourUC on 16 May. This means that course approvals functionality is now available in ourUC for new 2024 applications. Access has been updated, with over 380 staff now able to process course approvals in ourUC. Several faculties have already been processing course approvals in ourUC which have generated Enrolment Agreements. Engagement across the university has been good with feedback from staff being very positive. This is a significant milestone in our journey to replace JadeSMS.

The Whakahaere Rangahau project is set to transform the Research project management administrative experience, a complex eco-system of multiple applications and information sources. It will also address the retention of an end-of-life Research Management System on premise with growing cyber risk in maintenance. The adoption of a new system will enable a much-improved researcher experience in the administration of projects at UC, as well as reduce enterprise risks.

The Identity Governance and Administration project is now up and running. The project will resolve operational risks and continue to improve the automation and coverage of accounts and related software provisioning and deprovisioning for staff and students.

The construction project for the new 283 bed student accommodation facility, Tupu rangi, has begun and is on target. The aim is for the building to be ready for the 2026 academic year. The Homestead Lane site for Tupu rangi has been vacated by the Grounds team, which has moved to the south west corner of Ilam Fields.

