

Message from the Head of School

Dear colleagues,

A warm welcome to the winter issue of the BABS Quarterly. And we welcome three new BABS babies to the world. Congratulations to Anne, Laura and Jia! Like her mum, Millie Allen (Galea) showed remarkable restraint and good manners to arrive after Semester 1 teaching ended. We wish Anne and Mark all the best in the year ahead, which Anne has sensibly decided to devote to motherhood.

Well done to all for successfully surviving another teaching session. I know many of you are in the midst of exam marking, while juggling rebuttals to the NHMRC and rejoinders to the ARC. Alas, the word on the street is that grant success will be even lower than last year, at least for the NHMRC. Several of us are on NHMRC panels this year, and it is a little sobering to know that a lot of excellent science will not be funded.

Our Industry Forum was therefore very timely. I thank **Belinda Ferrari** and **Mike Manefield** for putting together an excellent event, ably assisted by **Avril, Jenny, Michele & Co.** Personally, I found the forum very educational. There are certainly stark differences between the way that businesses and academia communicate and operate, and the drivers for each are not often aligned.

And of course, it's not just about the money. As Merlin pointed out using Easter Island as an analogy, at universities we don't want to be just putting huge efforts into making big statues which in retrospect seem pretty pointless. We want to be making real-life impacts, and partnering with industry and government bodies is a great way to do that. You don't need to be a gun for hire; the ARC linkage grants provide a good framework for genuine partnerships. We are fortunate to have a number of staff who have led the way in this area, and many of us can learn from their experiences.

As a rule, scientists are a reticent bunch, suspicious of show, and uncomfortable with blowing our own trumpet. We know we're good, but we would prefer our work to speak for us. However, I'm beginning to learn that no matter how good we are, unless we show it, who knows it?

We therefore need to raise our profile, individually and collectively, and market ourselves better. For example, what has been your most impactful work and why? We need to collect and collate these messages so that we can better communicate with grant assessors, potential industry partners – and with students, both current and prospective.

So, the BABS Marketing and Outreach team, led by Belinda, will be out and about to collect eye-catching banner headlines from your research. We can then come up with “an elevator pitch” for the School – a punchy and persuasive sales pitch that could be delivered to someone in the time that it takes to ride a lift with them. (The person who coined this term has obviously never ridden the Samuels lift, where Lincoln's “Gettysburg Address” could be recited more than once in the trip from the ground floor to Level 1.)



One marketing initiative we will roll out soon is BABSfest! This will be a contest for our research students to produce a one- to two-minute video profiling the lab they're in. It should be fun, informative, easy-to-understand and suitable for posting on our website. All students will need to obtain permission from their supervisor first, and lab heads will have to approve the final entry. There will be thousands of \$\$\$ in prize money to be won. A bit later in the year, we will have an official BABSfest! screening in the BiBS space, with pizza and refreshments on offer, also open to our undergraduates. We're not sure yet if we should ask for a BABSfest! 2015 Signature Item to be included in the videos like they do in Tropfest – but no fish please (sorry Kyle!). Stay 'tuna-ed' for more details.

Best wishes,
Andrew

RAT

Research

- The annual HERDC process has been completed, with BABS recording a total of 256 publications accepted for calendar year 2014.
- **Belinda Ferrari**, Hermon Slade Foundation grant of \$80,000 for project 'Exploration and Conservation of Microbial and Chemical Diversity in Polar Deserts of Eastern Antarctica'.

Admin

- The School welcomed new Technical Assistant **Angela Guider** to the School in May, adding much-needed support to the management of the School's infrastructure.
- **Jenny Campbell**, who was filling a maternity leave replacement role in the School Office, has been appointed to the role on a continuing basis. A merit-based selection process was completed when Liz Gazzard advised she would not be returning to BABS.

- President and VC Prof Ian Jacobs will address UNSW professional staff on 15 July on their contribution to the 2015-2025 strategic plan. The event will include a presentation showcasing the role of professional staff at UNSW and include a Q&A session.

Teaching

- End of session exam deadlines:
 - BABS grade meeting Friday 3 July 2pm
 - Final exam marks due Monday 6th July 5pm
- Upcoming teaching conferences:
 - HERDSA 6-9 July, Melbourne "How do we make sure our graduates are fit for work?"
 - issotli 27-30 October, Melbourne "Leading Learning and the Scholarship of Change"
 - ACSME 30 September – 2 October, Perth "Transforming practice: Inspiring Innovation"
- Demonstrator feedback: CATEI Q10 data to be sent to Louise Lutze-Mann and John Wilson.
- Next teaching meeting: Tuesday 7 July 1-2pm

BABS Industry Engagement Forum



The School hosted its inaugural industry engagement event this month, with the dual aim of recognising the important role that industry plays with some key areas of BABS research, and exploring opportunities for new collaborations. The event commenced with a welcome and overview of BABS presented by HOS Prof Andrew Brown, followed by an address by Dean Prof Merlin Crossley. A panel discussion and

Q&A session followed, facilitated by Scientia Prof Veena Sahajwalla. Industry panel members were Prof. Ian Snape, Principal Scientist, Australian Antarctic Division; Dr Jen Harry, CEO of Ondek; Glen Cunningham, CEO of Biogas Energy Ltd; and Oliver Distler, Key Accounts Manager, Sigma Aldrich.



The formal part of the event was followed by networking opportunities over drinks and canapés, with all involved voting it a great success.



BABS iGEM Team Update



By the time the next BABSQ is due out, our iGEM team **ENDOsynBIO** will have flown out to MIT in Boston for the 2015 competition. Team members have been hard at work on their project, "up to their ears" in plasmid parts. The team is being supported financially by the School, and has gained some funding from the NSW State Government. Fellow UNSW students in SAMSoc (Students of Advanced Maths & Science) kindly held a bake sale that raised \$500. Now that's student collegiality!

The team has organised and will host an Australian iGEM team get-together at UNSW in July, with USYD, Macquarie and ANU getting to know each other, present their projects and set up collaborations.



BABS Student Achievements

BABS PhD student **Nicole Benaud**, supervised by Belinda Ferrari, had her photo of a Streptomyces featured on the American Society of Microbiology's facebook page as their "Pic of the Day".



New BioSciences Building Update

Noise, disruption and inconvenience entering and leaving the campus via Gate 11 continue to be experienced by staff and students during this phase of work on our new building. Next up will be cutting of concrete slabs and drilling to create air relief penetrations for the new substation. Generally, people are being very patient and we thank them for their understanding – we are assured it will be all very worthwhile in the end! Thanks to **Geoff Kornfeld** for keeping us informed of all the works. Here is how the site looks now.



Global Corporate Challenge



Two BABS teams comprised of academics, professional staff and HDR students are taking the Global Corporate Challenge, which commenced on 27 May. An initiative introduced by WHS Manager **Theresa Kahwati**, the aim is to improve health. The challenge is to take at least 10,000 steps every day for 100 days. Our teams join 40,000 others from around the globe – good luck to all!

Long Service Awards

During 2014 and 2015 at our monthly staff meetings, the HOS has been progressively acknowledging BABS staff who have exceptional long service to the School. To date, the following have been acknowledged – years of service in brackets: **Kim Nguyen (38)**, **Jani O'Rourke (37)**, **Sharon Murarotto (36)**, **Hazel Mitchell (31)**, **Jeff Welch (28)**, **Vincent Murray (25)**, **Ned Elkaid (25)**, **Brett Neilan (24)**, **Andrew Collins (24)** and **John Wilson (23)** – pictured receiving his award from HOS **Andrew Brown** at the June staff meeting).



BABS Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/UNSWBABS>

Our facebook site is continuing to engage lots of users – we now have 579 page likes; last quarter it was 516.



A trio of new BABS babies!

This is some sort of record – congratulations to all our new parents!



Caleb

Laura Sharpe & Tim Amos – Caleb, born 6 May

Jia Wu & Alex – a boy, born 27 May (no name or photo as yet)

Anne Galea & Mark Allen – Amelia (Millie) born 9 June



Millie

If you would like something included in the next BABS Quarterly please email Michele at m.potter@unsw.edu.au