



Message from the Head of School

Dear colleagues,

As 2015 drifts towards the sunset like a hint of smoke, it is time to reflect – but not too much. (For previous musings on the year in review, please refer to 2015 Quarterly issues 1 to 3.)

We had another very successful BABS Symposium at Randwick Racecourse, the best ever in my opinion. Thanks to Wallace and his team for all their efforts. The crisp and clear talks by our students and junior researchers were, I think, a lesson to all of us professionals in engaging content delivery.

Another occasion where I think the School came together with a resounding click, and demonstrated beautifully how we can indeed be much, much more than the sum of our parts, was BADO – BABS Annual Day Out.

It hit a sweltering 42 degrees Celsius in Coogee Life Saving Club, with no air conditioning but with the temptation of the cool Pacific just beyond the window. Chairs were arranged in a tight wedge around the airflow from each of the few fans. And still, the hothouse environment gave rise to lively yet temperate discussion, generating many great ideas, some of which we will try to implement next year.

Thanks to everyone for all your hard work throughout the year.

As 2015 drifts towards the sunset like a hint of smoke, it is time to relax – deeply – while you can...

For 2016 is already peering over the horizon with fresh challenges and opportunities – research funding to find, blended learning to learn, buildings to build and much, much more...

Happy Holidays!
Andrew

RAT

Research

Congratulations to all our grant awardees in the latest rounds:

- **Bill Ballard**, ARC Discovery Project \$313,600; **Merlin Crossley**, NHMRC Project Grant \$646,979; **Kyle Hoehn**, NHMRC Project Grant \$631,979.
- UNSW 2016 Goldstars (\$40,000) have been awarded to **Andrew Brown, Suhelen Egan, John Foster, Ruiting Lan, Brett Neilan, Vladimir Sytnyk**.
- Faculty Silverstars (\$30,000) for 2016 were awarded to **Kyle Hoehn, Paul Waters** and **Marc Wilkins**.
- **Kyle Hoehn** also has been awarded \$60,000 grant from the Diabetes Australia Research Trust.
- Recent PhD graduate **Natalia Castano-Rodriguez** (supervisor Hazel Mitchell) has been awarded a 4-year NHMRC Early Career Fellowship valued at \$314,644.
- Deputy HOS **Louise Lutze-Mann** and Future Fellow **Suhelen Egan** were sponsored by UNSW to attend the Universities Australia Executive Women AGM and Senior Executive Women's Masterclass in Melbourne in December.

Teaching

- **Belinda Ferrari** has been awarded a 2015 PGC Outstanding Supervisor award, recognising her dedication to her role as supervisor and wider activities at UNSW.
- Deputy HOS **Louise Lutze-Mann** presented S2 Titans of Teaching Awards for highest ranking CATEI scores at the November Staff Meeting to **John Wilson, Wallace Bridge, Michael Janitz** and **Andrew Brown**.



- Congratulations to **Rebecca LeBard** who won a 2015 Vice-Chancellor's Award for Teaching Excellence (General Category). BABS casual academic **Stella Sheeba** also scored an award in the Contribution to Student Learning category.

Administration

- We welcome back **Kylie Jones** part time after 12 months maternity leave. Kylie will be mainly responsible for postgrad admin, with Avril Clarkson focusing on marketing, outreach, events and HOS EA tasks.

BABS staff in the news

- **Vladimir Sytnyk** and **Iryna Leshchyns'ka** received wide media coverage for their paper on Alzheimer's Disease published in the prestigious journal *Nature Communications*. The project studied the brain protein NCAM2 and found that synaptic NCAM2 levels in the hippocampus were low in people with Alzheimer's disease.
- **Brendan Burns** received media coverage on a joint project with NASA Ames Research Center carried out on the NASA Space Shuttle Discovery to study whether microgravity inhibits the ability of embryonic stem cells to differentiate and generate cell lineages. Results of the project were published in *Stem Cells and Development*.

BABS 2015 iGEM Team Update

Representatives from our gold medal-winning iGEM team recently gave a presentation on their project to AusBiotech members at their Christmas party. The function was hosted by Davies Collison Caves, a patent firm with a specialty in biotechnology intellectual property protection. It was a great opportunity to showcase the talents of these students and the feedback was very positive.



BABSFest – video competition

Congratulations to all the inaugural #BABSFESt winners, runners up and finalists:

- **Joint winners** (undergrad): [The Students of BABS](#) and [InTravka - THChocolate](#)
- **Winner** (research): [Systems Biology Initiative](#)
- **Joint runners up** (research): [Ferrari Lab](#) and [The Brown Labradoodles](#)
- **Finalists** (undergrad): [There's lots to do at BABSOC](#) and [MAZAT Technologies](#)
- **Finalist** (research): [Theoretical Biology in the Tanaka Lab](#)



Student Achievements



Shane Ingrey, supervised by **Brett Neilan**, became the fourth Indigenous student to graduate from UNSW with a PhD in 2015, receiving his doctorate in microbiology. Shane is using modern microbiology to explore the traditional knowledge about the medicinal benefits of the local flora, something the Dharawal people of southern Sydney have passed down the generations.

Honours student **Joshua McConnell**, supervised by **John Foster**, outperformed over 160 PhD students to be awarded the best student's research award at the 10th International Conference on Physical Properties and Applications of Materials, held in Chiang Mai, Thailand in November. The conference had over 300 delegates from over 16 countries.



Peter Farrell Cup

It was another great year for the BABS3091 *Professional Issues in Biotechnology* students competing in the UNSW Business School's annual [Peter Farrell Cup](#) business planning competition, with the syn&co team coming second and taking \$7,500 in prizemoney.

BABS Facebook

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

Likes on our fb site are continuing to grow – 701 vs. 579 last quarter!

BABS fun times: Melbourne Cup/Bandanna Day/Halloween



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