



## President's Report Annual General Meeting Brisbane, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2017

University Colleges Australia is well positioned as “leaders and partners in changing the course”, to work collaboratively and together in progressing best practice for the students in our care.

Built around our four pillars of national identity, collegiality, leadership and advocacy, UCA has the capacity to further shape public policy development and a range of other areas within the University Sector. UCA has already demonstrated its capacity to address key issues through its ARC grant and more recently through research grants from Vic Health and the Burnet Institute. Further opportunities exist following the Respect. Now. Always campaign in leading and further developing ‘respectful communities’.

Universities Australia’s Ten Point Plan, the work of the Australian Human Rights Commission and the University of New South Wales Centre for Human Rights, provides us with an opportunity to reframe our thinking not just about sexual assault and sexual harassment, but on a range of issues that affect the wellbeing of our students, and our role as educators of young people in their adult formative years.

There is no doubt that with the increase in the number of commercial providers entering the “student accommodation market”, it is now more important than ever that we distinguish ourselves as collegiate communities, not just providers of accommodation. With this in mind, I encourage you all to bring your ideas, your experience and your leadership to work together for our sector in providing “*better colleges and better collegiate life*”.

### Joint UCA and CWI conference

The 2016 year culminated in the joint UCA and 2<sup>nd</sup> Collegiate Way International Conference, the success of which was due in no small part to the ANU contingent, led by Dr Ian Walker, together with our Conference Organiser, Alicia Watson OAM and UCA Executive Officer, Deborah Pugh. Our appreciation must also go to our major sponsors. Feedback sought through the online survey was overwhelmingly positive with some suggestions for improvement that will be taken into consideration for future joint conferences. We look forward to further developing our partnership with CWI.

### New and Retiring Members

We were sorry to hear that St Mark’s College (James Cook University) closed at the end of the first semester with hopes to expand the College with postgraduates frustrated. St Mark’s has been home to hundreds of students over its 55 years and been served by dedicated staff and we extend our best wishes to Paula Anderson for the future.

The following heads will retire at the end of the year: Ms Linda Bastick, Lincoln College (Universities of Adelaide); Mrs Thérèse Eddy, Duchesne College (University of Queensland); Mr Tom Tartellin, Saints Catholic College (James Cook University); Dr Rochelle Wilkins-Tate, Bruce Hall (Australian National University) and the Rev. Jenny Willsher, St Martin's College (Charles Sturt University).

Some of our longer serving members will also retire at the end of this year and it is impossible to acknowledge their extensive contributions both in their own Colleges as well as members, through an AGM report. The contribution that these six leaders have made to their institutions and our association is significant and I extend our very best wishes and thanks to Dr Edwina Ridgeway OAM (Life member of UCA), The Rev'd Dr Ivan Head, Mrs Barbara Green, Dr Marie Leech, Mr Bruce Pollard and Ms Margie Welsford.

After 17 years as the Principal of St Hilda's College (University of Melbourne), and eight years on the UCA Executive including a term as President, playing a lead role in the ICW conference and establishing links with the NZTEAP, Mrs Barbara Green retires. Dr Marie Leech will retire after ten years as Principal of Sancta Sophia College and seven years on the UCA executive committee taking on the often thankless and important role as Treasurer. I look forward to acknowledging their collective contributions to UCA and their achievements at an appropriate time in the not too distant future.

Mrs Edwina Ridgeway OAM, Principal of Duval College (University of New England) retires after 44 years of service and leadership of heads of colleges, The Rev'd Dr Ivan Head has served 23 years as the Warden of St Paul's College, prior to that, for four years at Christ College, and has been a keen supporter of UCA. With the imminent closure of Whitley College and after ten years leading Whitley College, Ms Margie Welsford will conclude her time at the end of the year.

Mr Bruce Pollard will retire after five years as head of Robert Menzies College, Macquarie University. Prior to this, he was Principal of Dunmore Lang College, Head of Bruce Hall and Head of Bruce, Burton & Garran Halls. We appreciate his service to UCA as our Public Officer for the past year.

Congratulations to new appointments and members: Mr Richard Niessl, Raymont Residential College (Universities of Queensland); Ms Trisha Prpich, Monash Residential Services (Monash University); Ms Joanna Rosewell, Jane Franklin Hall (UTAS),) and The Rev. Professor Rodney Wolff St John's College (UQ).

We also welcome as members fifteen new associate members: Ms Liza Allen, Dunmore Lang College (Macquarie); Ms Susan Bazzana, New College Village (UNSW); Mr Arend Boog, New College (UNSW); Dr Sergio Fabris, St Hilda's College (University of Melbourne); Ms Emma Fletcher, Monash Residential Services (Monash University); Mr Robert Freeth, Graduate House (ANU); Dr Guglielmo Gottoli, Newman College (University of Melbourne); Mrs Clare Goodwin, Duchesne College (UQ); Ms Michelle Kubie, Shalom College (UNSW); Mr Geoff Lovell, St Paul's College (USyd); Ms Carolyn Mee, Aquinas College (Adelaide), Mr Mark Sampson, University Hall (UWA); Mr Michael Stipis, The John Flynn College (JCU); Mr Peter Walker, King's College (UQ) and Mrs Bec Wood, St Thomas More College (UWA).

## National Executive Committee

Following on from the change in the Association Rules allowing for two general committee members to be elected to the Executive Committee, Mr David Segal, Ursula Hall (ANU) was elected to the Committee at last year's AGM.

At this year's AGM, there exists two vacancies as well as the position of Public Officer and I look forward to the opportunities of working with a new team.

## Executive Meetings

The Executive continues to actively support and represent its members and to take the lead in areas of advocacy and policy for our sector. Meetings by teleconference occur each month, however, we have not had the opportunity to meet face to face since January this year as part of the strategic planning meeting, after which the executive were hosted by The Women's College at a networking dinner for Sydney College heads and the UCA executive.

Additional teleconferences were held prior to and after the release of the AHRC's Change the Course Report with the Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Ms Kate Jenkins; Universities Australia Policy Director, Dr Renee Hamilton and Dr Damian Powell, Principal of Janet Clarke Hall. I am most appreciative of the expertise, advice and time that these professionals have given me, and our Executive. In particular, I wish to thank Dr Damian Powell for the work that he has put into this area over the last few years as an expert panellist for the Broderick Review into the treatment of Women at the Australian Defence Force (2011-12); for his contribution at the local level with the University of Melbourne's Residential Halls and Colleges Fair Treatment Policy and Procedures and at a national level, for his role in the UNSW HRC On Safe Ground Report and the AHRC's Report.

## Incidental Visits

Incidental visits to members are also planned when travelling interstate for another purpose. I have been able to meet with colleagues in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne and Federation University's Ballarat Campus – whether for a brief coffee or lunch, your time was certainly valued. Whilst on other business, I was also able to attend the David Williams Annual Lecture by Elizabeth Broderick at King's College and was warmly hosted by Greg and Therese Eddy. Dr Rufus Black's lecture as part of St Andrew's College (USyd) sesquicentenary celebrations, "The role of the College in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Australian University" was visionary and important in the context of Australia's Higher Education sector and it challenged the audience's thinking.

## Strategic Planning Day

UCA executive members immersed themselves in a strategic planning day on 25<sup>th</sup> January. Drawing on member feedback I received through emails and phone calls, and a SWOT analysis, the Executive identified four key strategic areas for further development: Collegiality, Advocacy, Knowledge Engagement and Communication.

UCA seeks to further initiate best practice from key issues affecting our sector and to share best practice ideas. Moreover, initiatives in research are welcomed and we have enjoyed success in partnering with the ARC in addition to a recent partnership with Vic Health, Victoria University and the Burnet Institute. We welcome further ideas from our members and thank those who have

progressed ideas into fruition, in particular the work undertaken by Mr David Segal and Ms Deborah Pugh in regard to our social media presence. Dr Carla Tromans has also worked on setting up a mentoring program for new heads which we are really excited about.

## Engagement with Universities and Affiliate Organisations

Dr Ian Walker and I were appreciative of the opportunity to meet with the Chair of Universities Australia and Vice-Chancellor of Monash University, Professor Margaret Gardner AO regarding UCA's commitment to working with UA across a range of matters, in particular, the release of the AHRC report. This was a demonstrable indication that the peak universities association is looking to consult and collaborate with UCA as representative of the leadership of university collegiate residential communities.

I attended the AACUHO Conference in Hobart in May during which a productive meeting was held with the AACUHO President, Mr Vince Wilson and newly elected members. I have also provided AACUHO's Industry Development Officer with regular communication and updates from UCA regarding the Respect. Now. Always Campaign and information in the lead up to and release of the AHRC and UNSW HRC reports in the spirit of collaboration, consistent with our MOU. I am looking forward to continuing a partnership with AACUHO which retains an operational and practical focus, whilst UCA continues its leadership and policy focus.

The AACUHO conference presented an opportunity for UCA to meet the new AACUHO-I President, Dr Beth McCuskey (Purdue University) and to re-sign our partnership agreement on home soil prior to their international conference in Rhode Island in June. Following on from that AACUHO-I's newly appointed Executive Officer Mary De Niro, and AACUHO-I Executive Board Member Colin Marshall (Fed U) have offered their support of UCA and sharing their experience from the Hunting Ground Project.

Earlier in the year I met with the 2016/17 President of NAAUC, Lachlan Power when he was in Adelaide. Subsequent to that, NAAUC supported Dr Ian Walker's and my conference registration and accommodation at the NAAUC conference "Stand Up, Step Forward" from 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> July, which was held at Mannix College. The NAAUC conference organisers went to a great deal of effort to ensure the program was relevant and informative and incorporated student and administrative perspectives. Guest speakers included former Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police, Christine Nixon, and Australian Adventurer of the Year, Tim Cope. Dr Sue Dyson facilitated a very good session focusing on sexual violence and other notable speakers were Dr Tim Corney, Professor David Copolov AO (PVC Monash), Andrew Swan and Emma Dunn from AIME. Both Ian and I also gave a presentation on leadership to NAAUC members.

I also chaired a full day of the Student Development World Conference which was held at Rydges on Swanston, Melbourne from 15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> August with delegates drawn mainly from the commercial accommodation industry and various planning authorities in Queensland and Melbourne.

In terms of the commercial providers of accommodation, the industry group that was founded in South Australia (South Australian Student Accommodation Association) has been working with the Department of Industry at Study NSW to set up a National Organisation. Whilst in its early stages, it is important that UCA is part of these future developments.

## National Working Group on Alcohol Harm Minimisation

We are delighted that Associate Professor Tim Corney has taken on the role of Chair of UCA's Alcohol Harm Minimisation Committee and that researchers from the ARC project, Dr Rose Leontini and Associate Professor Toni Schofield have continued their interest in our future work in this space.

Tim has been active in creating further opportunities for UCA in alcohol harm minimisation through his successful grant application resulting in significant funding from Vic Health, in partnership with UCA and the Burnet Institute for a two-year project aimed at reducing the high risk drinking of students living in residential colleges in Victoria. The project was initiated following the ARC research regarding drinking practices and alcohol policies within university residential colleges and will incorporate use of innovative technology through an app, known as the MIDY (Mobile Intervention Device for Young People) which is a preventative tool in alcohol management and has already seen success in controlling drinking in other groups of young people. Tim will lead a team of researchers who will use focus groups to ascertain the effectiveness of this app in reducing over consumption of alcohol by sending tailored SMS to participants. The second part of the project involves using narrative pedagogy to co-review processes regarding administrations and students around reviewing and rewriting policy. The aim of the project is to provide practical and innovative intervention strategies for our residences. Four sites have been selected in both Melbourne and rural Victoria covering colleges/halls of residence and the commercial providers.

## Grants

UCA continues to provide opportunities for heads and deputies through the provision of Future Leaders Grants, Conference Grants and Research Grants and more information is available on our website.

This year, Samantha Schofield and David Segal (Ursula Hall, ANU) were awarded a \$1,000 conference grant to assist in their travel to the USA to present their paper "*Mitigating institutional risk and empowering students for success*" at the ACUHO-I conference in Rhode Island held in June. Congratulations also to Samantha who was awarded the 'UCA New Professional' Award" which was a US \$1500 prize. David's and Samantha's joint presentation incorporated residential life programming with elements of positive mental health and wellbeing, empowering students to deliver programs which promote mental health advocacy, literacy and support.

## Respect. Now. Always Campaign

In referring to UCA's statement in regard to the AHRC's Report, UCA affirms its commitment and support of Universities Australia R.N.A campaign and our belief that all university students in our care have the right to enjoy an environment which is safe, secure, free from all forms of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

UCA supports collaboration with host universities in sharing the duty of eliminating and minimising the risk of sexual violence and we support Universities Australia's 10-point Action Plan. We look forward to working collaboratively with UA as we affirm our commitment to learn and continuously improve as part of this evolving process.

UCA also looks forward to establishing a working party to consider and address the issues raised in Recommendation 9 of *Change the Course*, to best support our members in terms of 'best practice', policy, procedures, standards, resources, professional development, the role of RAs, the nature of culture and to seek independent expert advice and guidance.

## Awards and Honours

UCA congratulates Dr Amanda Bell, Principal of The Women's College (within the University of Sydney) on being made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to education, particularly to young women as a leader and academic, and to the visual arts in the 2017 Queen's Birthday Honours.

## Vale

We were all saddened by the sudden passing of two of our colleagues in January and February this year, the Rev'd Dr James Rigney and Ms Helen Fletcher; both in the prime of life.

James was as a scholar, teacher and priest and had returned to Australia from Cambridge where he spent five years as the Dean of Newcastle before becoming the Principal of St John's College, UQ where he showed a commitment to the intellectual and spiritual growth of his students. Helen spent twenty-two years as a college head, sixteen of which were as the Dean of Flinders Living where she retired in 2015. Helen was passionate about her students and a keen advocate of the positive value of a residential collegiate experience for rural Australian and International students.

## Thanks

The success of UCA is the result of the collective efforts of a team of volunteers who work together in the organisation's interests, and I would like to acknowledge and thank all of them: Dr Carla Tromans, Mr Michael Bongers, Dr Marie Leech, Dr Ian Walker, Mrs Barbara Green and Mr David Segal. I have appreciated the ready assistance of members of the executive who have all given freely of their time. Deborah Pugh deserves special thanks for the incredible support, thoughtfulness and efficiency as Executive Officer in the limited time that we make available for her.

Thank you also to all members, for your support and contribution to UCA and wishing you all the best for the remainder of 2017.

Rose Alwyn  
President