



# 2010 Geraldton Institute Inc

Annual



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2010 Graduation



## From the Chair

June 30, 2010 marked a significant milestone in the evolution of the Geraldton Universities Centre (GUC). It was the end of an Agreement that successfully established a significant university presence in the Mid West region and the start of a bold new independent era for the GUC and its local community.

The GUC was established in 2002 under an agreement between the Geraldton University Access Group (GUAG), Central West TAFE (now the Durack Institute of Technology) and three Perth based universities (The University of Western Australia, Curtin University and Edith Cowan University).

This Agreement served the community well, seeing a range of courses provided through the GUC from Education to Arts and producing more than 100 graduates. But, as times changed, so too did the needs of the partner universities, the GUC itself and the community.

Fittingly in our 10th academic year we have finally achieved what our community had originally envisaged when the concept of the university centre was first floated. The GUC is now a fully independent, incorporated not-for-profit body with a predominantly regionally based board committed to the very best local outcomes.

This change is fundamental. It provides the flexibility necessary so that we, as a region, can determine our own future. We now face the exciting prospect of being able to source tertiary courses from anywhere throughout Australia. Indeed it is the vision of this Board to develop a broad cross section of some of the best university courses available in the land, delivered right here in Geraldton.

The transition not only affects governance but coincides with the need to develop a new and sustainable business model for the GUC. Securing long term operational funding remains a major concern and a priority of the Board. To this end we continue to lobby Governments at all levels, and our management team, the dynamic duo of Meredith Wills and Natalie Nelmes have been tireless in their efforts in this regard. They are currently scoping a major development proposal to put to both Federal and State governments that could really allow the unique GUC supported distance education model of university delivery to reach its full potential.

Along the way, we have been fortunate and grateful to secure funding under the Mid West Development Commission's Regional Grant Scheme, part of Royalties for Regions. This funding has been integral to the GUC being able to provide tutors for our students, to improve the learning experience through face to face contact, and to develop the Hollomby Foundation.

In this year of transition, there has been a tremendous amount of work involved for the GUC board, all of whom freely offer their services. Their reward is to see others in the Mid West receive the same opportunities that they have had. In particular, I would like to thank my predecessor Terry Werner whose depth of knowledge and experience in the complex world of tertiary education has been indispensable. I would also like to acknowledge the special role played by UWA, and their very enthusiastic representative Sally Sandover. To the local board members, Steve Douglas, Bruce McDowell, Steve Cooper and Susan Shaw, thanks for your tremendous support of the GUC.

The GUC is a lean ship indeed, one from which the community is deriving enormous benefit. I acknowledge the effort and commitment of Meredith and her team, always striving to fulfil the very purpose behind the formation of the GUC; to give all in the Mid West a chance to raise their aspirations, and to achieve them through tertiary education.

With such commitment, the community can feel confident that the future of university access in Geraldton and the Mid West is in safe hands.

Wayne Hosking  
Chair





## Director's Report

You may recall that the genesis of the Geraldton Universities Centre in the late 1990's came from community concern over alarming statistics revealing the Mid West rated 281 out of 290 regions in Australia in terms of university access. While 21% of Year 12 metropolitan students went on to university – the figure was only 8% for the Mid West

Today that figure is only just over 10% (of those going straight from school) while the State sits at 35%. Clearly there is still plenty of work to do.

Just as community collaboration and drive was the key to getting the GUC established in the first place, so too is this community involvement integral to us taking the next steps to expand and provide the opportunities for more in our community to access tertiary education locally.

Trading since July 2010 as an independent, not-for-profit organisation, has opened the door for the GUC to embark on a whole new set of collaborations and partnerships within our region, state and indeed nationally.

Partnerships and relationships within industry, business, government, schools, and the VET and university sectors is pivotal in informing our understanding of what our regional community needs and expects. Our Mid West partners all know we operate in a challenging environment of thin markets, and that competing for students is counter-productive for everyone. We continue to collaborate in the development of academic pathways with multiple entry, exit and re-entry points.

While we will continue to work with our WA metropolitan universities, the GUC's new found independence gives us the flexibility to seek and deliver courses that best meet our community's needs from universities throughout Australia.

In 2010 we have seen an outstanding example of this collaboration all coming together. Driven by the demand to train and retain journalists in regional WA, the local media industry, along with support from local government, politicians and education partners, established a working group and funded a feasibility study into establishing a Media Institute in Geraldton. The drive of Geraldton Newspapers led to the involvement of the West Australian, and with such strong community and State-wide support, Charles Sturt University became interested. They visited in February, citing this demonstrated cooperation as one of the key reasons in their decision to pursue running journalism courses in Geraldton. The first industry based cohort commences in July 2011.

Another collaboration involves our accounting and business community. Funding from the Media Centre Feasibility paid my way to a Dual Sector Conference in Melbourne to learn about this emerging model of tertiary delivery and to seek out new partnerships. CQ University expressed interest in providing supported distance education delivery of Bachelors of Accounting and Business. Back in Geraldton I showed a couple of accounting colleagues the proposed courses. This information was whipped off me and touted by these colleagues around businesses and agencies in Geraldton.

CQ University also visited Geraldton in February and paved the way for the introduction of these Business courses in July 2011.

Two new course commitments within eight months of achieving independence! And there's more to come as we examine areas as diverse as engineering, law, psychology, social work, Indigenous mental health and science disciplines.

It gives us faith in what our membership, the Board and GUC staff have striven for – an independent centre providing supported tertiary education in our region, not only as a critical part of our community infrastructure but a viable alternative to relocating students to Perth. And this has proven equally of value to university partners that share this vision. They see that what we provide is not a one way street. In return we can help them achieve their strategic visions, grow student numbers and help them to also achieve the outstanding retention rate which has been an important feature of the GUC.

The GUC is part of the Mid West jigsaw of collaborations and partnerships aimed at ensuring long term sustainability and successful regional growth. Time will tell whether or not we have the right formula but we are confident we have the right attitude, support and resolve.

Meredith Wills  
Director

## Objectives of the GUC

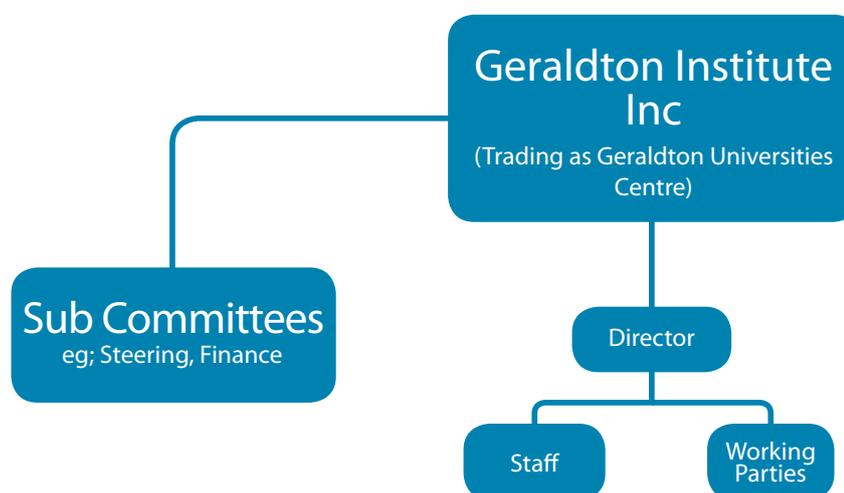
The objectives of the Geraldton Universities Centre are to facilitate, deliver, promote and provide access to university education including:

- a) To serve as the primary point of contact for the delivery of university education in the region.
- b) To facilitate and promote education and career pathways between schools, vocational education and training providers, universities and industry.
- c) To coordinate and support research and partnerships, especially those which assist in the sustainable development of the region.
- d) To advocate in the best interests of regional students.
- e) To promote and assist lifelong learning and raise community aspirations.
- f) To collect public donations to support the Association's offerings and learning experiences of students.

## Structure

### Governance

Following the transition to an independent, not for profit organisation, the structure of the GUC is now as follows:



### Inaugural Board of Management members are:

#### Regional Representatives:

Wayne Hosking – CEO, Geraldton Fishermen's Cooperative  
Susan Shaw – Principal, Geraldton Grammar School  
Bruce McDowell – Partner, Mid Coast Partners  
Steve Douglas – CEO, Mid West Development Commission

**Durack Institute of Technology Representative** - Steve Cooper, Director Training

**Administering University Representative** - Professor Sally Sandover, UWA Coordinator of Regional Programs

**Minister for Education Representative** - Terry Werner, Director of Higher Education & Legislation, Department of Educational Services.

### Staffing

#### The GUC currently employs:

- Director
- Special Projects (.8)
- Administration Officer
- Administration Assistant
- Finance Officer (.3)
- IT Support (contract as required)
- Education Tutors (casual contracts)

## Significant Milestones

### A timeline snapshot

**1999** A Mid West Development Commission youth forum uncovered the most important issue to young people was lack of access to university education in the Mid West.

**2000** A youth sub-committee was formed and organised a community workshop to discuss the university access issue. The Geraldton University Access Group (GUAG) was formed, commissioning LJ Money from the Department of Education Services to undertake a report on the issue.

**2001** GUAG gained \$135,000 from the Higher Education Innovation Fund to investigate an appropriate model for the delivery of university education.

**2001** A delegation from GUAG, hosted by The Hon Wilson Tuckey, travelled to Canberra to lobby the Federal Government. In an Australian first, the Federal Minister for Education announced 20 places specifically for Geraldton. The University of Western Australia, Curtin University of Technology and Edith Cowan University formed a consortium and successfully bid for these places.

**2002** Celebrations as the GUC began offering courses in Geraldton.

**2004** A formal agreement was signed by the three universities, GUAG and Central West TAFE (now the Durack Institute of Technology) to govern the GUC.

**2005** The first group of GUC undergraduates completed their degrees.

**2006** The GUC moved into its new-purpose built facility – an inspirational, award winning premises on Onslow Street. The new site was formally opened coinciding with the first Graduation ceremony of GUC students.

**2007** ECU Visual Arts, Kurongkurl Katitjin and the Mid West Examination Centre moved from Durack to the GUC.

**2008** The Shann Review recommended GUC adopt an independent structure.

**2009** Enrolments exceeded 200 students for the first time. Friends of the GUC commenced.

**2010** GUC becomes an independent, incorporated body under the banner of the Geraldton Institute Incorporated and elects a new, predominantly regionally based Board of Management. The Hollomby Foundation was launched to support the GUC and its students.



The Hon. Wilson Tuckey opens the GUC in 2006



"Friends" support a fundraiser at Dome

## 2010 Highlights

### Graduation

More than 500 friends, family and supporters sold out the Queens Park Theatre for the GUC graduation ceremony on February 11, 2010 celebrating the successes of 38 graduating students.

The GUC welcomed university representatives including Professor Jennifer Nichol from Curtin University, Professor Brenda Cherednichenko from Edith Cowan University and Professor Sally Sandover from the University of Western Australia.

The audience was Welcomed to Country by Yvonne Radcliffe and addressed by Chair of the then GUC Board, Terry Werner. Recipients of the GUC's 2009 School Encouragement Awards were recognised as were the recipients of scholarships presented to GUC students. Moving and personal accounts of their time as students were also conveyed by former graduates Violet Drury, Pamela Ford and Ben Knight.

As students received their testamurs, they received raucous applause as the large crowd acknowledged each individual's achievement.

### Friends of the GUC

Launched in December 2009, Friends of the GUC really gathered momentum in 2010. Some 200 people are now Friends including Geraldton Institute Inc Members, our alumni of former graduates, parents and relatives of current and former students, Hollomby Foundation supporters and other interested members of our local community.

In 2010 Friends have volunteered at GUC as 'patients' for our nursing students, as waitresses at our Business After Hours Function and ambassadors in a host of roles at the February Graduation Ceremony. They have supported fundraising activities and generally lent their support to the goals and activities of the GUC.

### Incorporation and Independence

Following an extensive research and consultative process, the Geraldton Institute Incorporated members voted at a Special General Meeting in May 2010 to alter the constitution so that it could govern the GUC as a not-for-profit incorporated body. They also agreed to changing the trading name from the Geraldton University Access Group to the Geraldton Universities Centre.

All existing members were retained under the new constitution and voted in their first Board which now governs the management and operations of the GUC.

### Business After Hours / Hollomby Foundation Launch

The GUC hosted the Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Business After Hours function in July, welcoming 200 members of the local business community.

The GUC took the opportunity to introduce the new regionally based Board members as well as launch the philanthropic Hollomby Foundation. More than \$10,000 was pledged on the night to open the Foundation account.

## 2010 Highlights

### Media Institute

Following an approach from the local media industry, the GUC formed a working group including the Durack Institute, Geraldton Newspapers, Western Indigenous Media, Radio MAMA plus the Mid West Development Commission, the City of Geraldton-Greenough and local MLA Grant Woodhams to investigate the introduction of local journalism courses. Funds were raised from this group as well as other local media and industry contributors to undertake a feasibility study.

The West Australian became an enthusiastic supporter of the project and has committed to send all their cadets from Perth and their regional newspaper network throughout the State to Geraldton starting next year.

The holistic approach developing for this course includes:

- The GUC working with Durack to identify Certificate and Diploma level courses that would provide academic pathways from school to TAFE and then to a Bachelor's degree
- Charles Sturt University delivering the Bachelors program tailored to both employed cadet journalists and a mature aged/school leaver student cohort
- Local industry facilities and expertise being used in practical components of course delivery

### Research Centre

The GUC has entered discussions with the University of Western Australia into an iconic research centre for the region. Pro Vice Chancellor (Research) Prof Alistar Robertson visited Geraldton twice in 2010, meeting with a wide variety of community leaders to progress ideas for the Centre's development.

### Community Activities

The GUC participated or initiated the following events in 2010:

**Science Forums** – the GUC was on the steering committee of both the Youth Science Forum in July and the Mid West Science Summit held in October. The GUC manned a “speed dating” table with the Durack Institute at the Youth Forum to explain Science pathways available locally.

**Community, Careers and Training Expo** - The GUC exhibiting at this Durack Institute Expo to help inform more local people about university options and pathways. Our table was situated next to Geraldton Newspapers to raise awareness about journalism and media courses.

**Big Ideas and Big Sky Writers Festival** - With the Writers' Festival in its fifth year, the GUC was once again a major sponsor of the event as well as the main venue for the weekend's activities. The GUC, in conjunction with UWA Extension and the City of Geraldton-Greenough also hosted community workshops throughout September.

**Parent/Student Information Evening** - The GUC hosted our first parent and student information evening at the end of January 2010 to promote direct enrolments and course offerings at the GUC. 30 people attended of which 19 were prospective students. The 2011 event attracted 42 people.

**Mid West Education, Training & Workforce Development Forum** – The GUC presented at this local forum on industry education partnerships.



Business After Hours



Local business people met with CQ University during their visit

## And into 2011...

### University Visits

The GUC had the pleasure of hosting visits from two new university partners in February.

- Charles Sturt University Journalism Coordinator Chris McGillion, Broadcasting Lecturer Kay Nankervis and Manager VET Agreements and Corporate Consultant Allen Gavin visited for 3 days, meeting with local media, government representatives, education institutions and potential students before heading to Perth to meet with the West Australian.
- Vice Chancellor and President Prof Scott Bowman, along with Pro Vice Chancellors Prof Kevin Tickle and Prof Graham Pegg attended the GUC graduation, before meeting with business and engineering interest groups the following day.

### Universities Australia Conference

GUC Director Meredith Wills addressed the Universities Australia Conference in Canberra on the collaboration that makes the GUC a unique model of university delivery. Her speech attracted considerable attention from the delegates representing universities throughout the country.

It led to an interview with Campus News for Meredith and GUC Board Member Prof Sally Sandover and saw the GUC raised in a Town Hall Meeting facilitated by former 7:30 Report host Kerry O'Brien, for the way in which we are embedded in our community.

### Regional Backbone launch

The GUC played host to Senator Conroy for the Commonwealth Government's launch of the Regional Backbone Blackspots Program service link from Perth to Geraldton on March 11. The Controlled Environment Vault for this link is located on the GUC site.

## Course Delivery

### Existing programs

In 2010, the GUC offered Curtin University of Technology's Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood and Primary), Graduate Diploma of Education and Bachelor of Science (Nursing) as well as Edith Cowan University's University Preparation Course.

#### Education

The majority of units offered under Curtin University's Bachelor of Education (both Early Childhood and Primary) were provided online for GUC students in 2010. The GUC applied funding awarded under the Mid West Development Commission's Regional Grant Scheme to provide a one hour face-to-face tutorial for the majority of these online units.

#### Nursing

The Bachelor of Science (Nursing) course was formally transferred from the Durack Institute to the GUC in second semester 2010. GUC facilities have been used for the theory components of this course for many years. Durack lab facilities continue to be used.

#### University Preparation Course

The GUC once again successfully ran this Edith Cowan Bridging Course to open up university pathways for 23 local students. For the first time a combined science unit was offered within the course and provided a stimulating range of activities that both engaged and inspired students.

### New programs

#### Bachelor of Accounting / Bachelor of Business

Bachelors of Accounting and Business (majoring in management and/or human resource management) will commence in July through Central Queensland University. GUC staff are developing the first cohort of students in consultation with both industry and the many people who have already expressed interest in the course.

It is expected that two hour face-to-face tutorials will be provided per unit and the course will run in a three term format rather than the traditional two semesters.

#### Journalism

A Bachelor of Communication in Journalism is planned to commence in July with Charles Sturt University. The course will commence with a "consultation phase" where cadet journalists, currently employed by Geraldton Newspapers (and possibly other organisations) will undertake two subjects. CSU staff will come to Geraldton to deliver intensive block teaching for these two units.

This consultation phase will allow both the GUC and CSU to work on delivery modes and funding models for the roll out of the course to a wider cohort in 2012. This cohort will include up to 15 cadets from The West Australian's network of regional newspapers as well as school leavers and mature aged students.

CSU will also work with the Durack Institute of Technology to open pathways for Certificate students into the Bachelor program and provide additional support to encourage Indigenous students into the program.

### Course Development

CQ University is also keen to help develop an Engineering degree program in Geraldton. Local industry and Engineering Australia members have formed a working group with the GUC and Durack to scope the course development.

The GUC is also investigating whether cohorts, industry expertise and university partners exist to run programs in areas such as law, psychology, social work, Indigenous mental health and science disciplines.

## Enrolment/Graduation statistics

### 2010 Graduates

Course	Graduates
Curtin University	
Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood)	5
Bachelor of Education (Primary)	5
Bachelor of Science (Nursing)	15
Edith Cowan University	
University Preparation Course	23

### Enrolments

	2007	2008	2009	2010
EFTSL Curtin*	90.0	95.4	89.12	77.27
EFTSL ECU#	11.75	8.75	27.25	10.625
	101.75	114.4	116.37	87.895

Enrolments (Equivalent Full Time Student Loading)

\* Education & Nursing included in these figures

# ECU taught out all degree programs at the end of 2009.

# Hollomby Foundation



The GUC launched the philanthropic Hollomby Foundation in July 2010. The Foundation is named in honour of Geraldton charity worker Joe Hollomby who was tragically killed in 2008, aged 94.

The Hollomby Foundation is an incorporated body, established for the sole charitable purpose of the advancement of education. It received deductible gift recipient status from the Australian Tax Office in January so that all donations are now tax deductible.

Already more than \$65,000 has been raised to assist Mid West students and programs at the GUC. In addition, the Rigter group of Geraldton IGA supermarkets have named the Hollomby Foundation as the beneficiaries of their 2011 Community Chest program.

Those already on the Hollomby Foundation Honour Board include:

## Hollomby Foundation Partners

Les Hollomby  
Ian Wheatland  
John & Beryl Rigter  
Geraldton Ceramics  
Regional Development Australia  
Mid West Development Commission Regional Grant Scheme  
Royalties for Regions  
LandCorp  
Greenough Lions Club

## Hollomby Foundation Supporters

The Hon. Grant Woodhams MLA  
City of Geraldton-Greenough  
Shire of Northampton  
Ben Knight  
Ray White Geraldton  
Cramer & Neill  
May Armstrong  
Market Creations  
Geraldton University Access Group  
Armanasco & Son  
St John of God Health Care Geraldton  
Ian Blayney MLA  
Water Corporation

## Scholarships

The GUC has received generous support from scholarship providers over a number of years. These contributions are now made to, and administered by, the Hollomby Foundation.

2010 scholarships were awarded to:

**Mid West Development Commission Scholarship \$3,000** – Maddison McAskil

**City of Geraldton-Greenough Scholarship \$3,000** – Suzanne Speed

**Shire of Northampton Scholarship \$1,000** – Chelsea Stanich

**The Hon. Grant Woodhams MLA Scholarship \$1,000** – shared Judith Brockwell and Emily Keys

**Ben Knight Scholarship \$500** – Ben Matthews

In 2011, these benefactors have continued their generosity with The Hon. Grant Woodhams providing a second \$1000 scholarship to encourage students to commence studies at the GUC and the Shire of Northampton increasing the value of their scholarship to \$2,000.

The GUC has also been able to offer new scholarships from:

**The Hollomby Foundation** – two \$5,000 scholarships for nursing students, one for students entering the course and the other for enrolled nurses upskilling to the registered nursing qualification.

**Ian Blayney** - \$1,000 open to all full-time students

**St John of God Hospital Geraldton** - \$1,000 to encourage students to continue in nursing.



## Geraldton Universities Centre

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GOVERNMENT OF  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



ROYALTIES  
FOR REGIONS



Photo courtesy of Andrew Pritchard

