

# A new year, a fresh start

English author G.K. Chesterton once said the object of New Year is not that we should have a new year: "It is that we should have a new soul and a new nose; new feet, a new backbone, new ears, and new eyes. Unless a particular man made new year resolutions, he would make no resolutions. Unless a man starts afresh about things, he will certainly do nothing effective."

SHARON WEBB asks ten UTAS staff and students about their goals and inspirations for 2013....



## Dr John Parish

Deloraine sculptor and artist who graduated with a PhD in 2012 aged 70 years, and whose donated Tasmanian devil sculpture raised \$10,000 for the Save the Devil Appeal.

My goals for 2013 are to continue on the work I presented for my PHD exhibition so that it can become available for a commercial gallery to exhibit – and to stay viable as a full-time artist!

I'm inspired by my ideas to take my mark-making art by native animals such as the Tasmanian devil to a new level. I still have my cameras in the caves at Golden Valley so that I can film them actually making the marks.



## Professor Rob White

Professor of Criminology whose book, Transnational environmental crime – toward an eco-global criminology, was voted best sociology book by the Sociological Association of Australia.

My major goal in 2013 is to do new socio-legal research on non-human environmental victims such as rivers, animals and plants. This builds on work in my forthcoming book, *Environmental harm: an eco-justice perspective*.

I'm inspired by those fighting for ecocide, the current government (in)action and corporate vandalism pertaining to climate change, to be recognised as the fifth 'crime against humanity'.



## Leah Armand

Lead singer in progressive death metal band Infernal Outcry, one of two Conservatorium of Music bands chosen to perform at the 2013 Marion Bay Falls Festival.

In 2013 my goal is to play some shows on the mainland with my band.

I'm inspired by great music, especially live music like the Mariah Carey concert I went to over summer, because when I hear it I think: I wish I could be part of something that amazing!



## Dr Tracey Muir

Senior lecturer in mathematics education and member of the UTAS Maths Education Team which won a 2012 award from the Office of Learning and Teaching.

This year I'm looking for ways to involve pre-service teachers more in the community – in research projects and after-school maths clubs. I want to involve them in the wider mathematical community and the mathematics profession.

I'm inspired when I see these students engaging in maths and enjoying it, even though maths hasn't necessarily been a positive experience for them in the past.



## Dr James Hills

Research fellow in the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture's Dairy Research Centre at the Cradle Coast campus and developer of fertiliser sensor technology detecting cow urine in pastures.

I want to increase our network of learning in the dairy industry and establish our research direction using the Elliott Research Station here – as well as achieving a work/family balance.

I'm inspired by the idea of applying research to interact with farmers and grow the dairy industry. Also by providing an environment where my new baby and three boys can thrive!



## Erin Michaels

UTAS alumna who graduated with a Bachelor of Nursing degree in August 2012, carrying nine week-old baby Miah as she received her testimonial from Chancellor Damian Bugg.

This year my goals are to complete my graduate certificate in nursing, enjoy family life and work full-time as a nurse at John Hunter Hospital in Newcastle – all at the same time!

My husband Evan inspires me; we got our nursing degrees together and now we'll get our grad certs together. It's nice having a partner!



## Anne Elliott

Finance officer on the Newnham campus and organiser of UTAS' role in the Operation Christmas Child charity.

This year I aim to look at the 'big picture' and not stress about trivial things so I can live life to the fullest.

I'm inspired by positive, organised people who manage to do everything, always remain calm and have time to enjoy life – people who can say no without feeling guilty!



## Associate Professor Natasha Cica

Director of the Inglis Clark Centre for Civil Society and associate editor of the most recent Griffith Review – Tasmania – The Tipping Point?

My big goal for 2013 is to ensure the Inglis Clark Centre continues to enhance vibrant and provocative discussion about the direction of Tasmania – across Tasmania and on the national stage.

I'm inspired by risk-takers who also understand responsibility and value beauty.



## Hamish Chapman

Bachelor of Physical Activity student who volunteered in Cambodia with Reach Out for a month over summer with fellow student Adam McDermott, teaching in schools and building houses.

This is the final year of my health science degree so my aim is to do well – and raise funds for another trip to Asia because this year's experience gave me a new perspective on life, especially to appreciate what I have.

I'm inspired by helping other people who aren't as fortunate, helping them to enjoy things we take for granted in our lives.



## Dr Andrew Bowie

Marine biogeochemist at the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems Cooperative Research Centre and 2012 Scopus Young Researcher of the Year in physical sciences.

In the last couple of years I've led oceanographic research expeditions – 2013 is dedicated to publishing our findings in journals. And I'm off to France mid-year to work on that with my French colleagues.

I'm inspired by the idea of getting this work into the public domain because we discovered a number of exciting factors controlling the drawing of CO<sub>2</sub> into the oceans.

## In conversation



## Professor Peter Rathjen

VICE-CHANCELLOR

## Times of change

2013 sees UTAS in good space, highly ranked for teaching and research, investing significantly in the student experience and community relationships, and with clear aspirations articulated in *Open to Talent*. Our immediate future though must be charted through uncertainty; unpredictable shifts in policy, tightened budgets and technological advances with far reaching impacts on pedagogy and the student experience will demand much of our leaders.

The impact of forthcoming elections is already evident. Federally we expect to go to the polls in September with a new Minister for Tertiary Education, Chris Bowen, followed by state elections in 2014. To provide an effective voice for the sector, and guidance to our legislators, Universities Australia (UA) launched its first policy statement, *The Development of A Smarter Australia - An Agenda for Australian Higher Education 2013-2016*; <http://www.smartestinvestment.com.au>

The campaign takes place against a backdrop of significant recent change. Since 2008, universities have been working towards ambitious targets for participation and social inclusion articulated in the Bradley Review. While the uncapping of undergraduate places has increased student numbers, the unexpected introduction last year of restrictions on enrolments into pre-degree and postgraduate courses has proven problematic for our attempts to create pathways for disadvantaged and regional students into UTAS. So too, the decision not to increase base funding to universities, in conflict with the recommendations of the *Higher Education Base Funding Review*, has particular impact for students with special needs. A disappointed UA calculates that student funding is now 11.4 per cent below that recommended by Bradley.

The mid-year Commonwealth financial statement also saw significant cuts to support for research infrastructure, of particular consequence for universities such as UTAS that house specialist research programs aligning local opportunity with global impact. An environment of fiscal tightening provides a backdrop to determination of a new Enterprise Bargain that supports UTAS staff to achieve the goals of *Open to Talent*.

Outside the domain of policy and politics we confront challenges and opportunities associated with technological advance. 2012 saw fierce international debate around the impact of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), triggered by the entry of several of the world's finest universities into this space, often in partnership.

Skill will be required to progress our long term ambitions in the context of technological, policy and financial change. Reassurance has been provided by recent statements from all sides of politics that are supportive of higher education, recognising the important social, cultural and economic benefits that accompany investment in the sector; we can be confident of a stable platform on which to build.

While finding the right balance may require some delicacy of judgement, we can be confident that, as ever, clear focus on our core missions of teaching, research, care for our students and community engagement will secure a prosperous future.

Peter Rathjen

Vice-Chancellor

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