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SWINBURNE  
UNIVERSITY OF  
TECHNOLOGY



# Donor Impact Report

2017



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**AS 2016 CAME TO A CLOSE, WE EAGERLY LOOKED TOWARDS OUR 25<sup>TH</sup> YEAR AS A UNIVERSITY. IT IS A MILESTONE WE COULD NOT HAVE REACHED WITHOUT THE SUPPORT AND GENEROSITY OF OUR VALUED FRIENDS, DONORS AND ALUMNI.**

Swinburne has continued to maintain its position on the international stage. In 2017, more than 450 donors gave close to \$2 million to support

our high impact research programs and innovation agenda as well as develop future ready learners.

We are especially grateful to welcome 130 new donors who contributed to Swinburne's significant achievements last year and helped us to be ranked in the top three percent of universities worldwide (Academic Ranking of World Universities 2017).

Through your generosity, the lives and futures of our students are transformed and this is no more evident than in the donor funded Welcome Scholarships and Awards for asylum seekers.

## Thank you for your support in 2017

At Swinburne, we recognise the significant barriers to education experienced by many asylum seekers arriving in Australia. These scholarships not only help in practical ways but also help study aspirations, increase self-esteem and create an immediate social and community network for these deserving students. One of our 2017 Welcome Achievement Award recipients, Fatime, has described how honoured and grateful she was to receive the scholarship. Fatime and her family fled war-torn Iran and faced significant barriers when arriving in Australia as asylum seekers. Fatime might never have been able to realise her dream of studying without this scholarship.

We also thank our donors for their support for our Women in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) programs. Currently, women comprise less than one

quarter of the STEM workforce and Swinburne is proudly committed to providing gender balance and meaningful pathways for girls and women into STEM careers.

In 2017, we were saddened with news of the passing of a much respected friend of the Swinburne community, Claire Sorati. Claire will be remembered for her love of family, successful IT career as well as her tenacity and fearless commitment to changing the future of women and girls. Her significant bequest will help many young women reach their full potential through the Claire Sorati Scholarship Foundation.

Throughout 2018 we will continue to build upon our successes and to implement our 2025 strategic vision to be a world class university delivering social and economic impact through science, technology and innovation.

Inside these pages are stories highlighting remarkable achievements which are a direct result of your donations. Our accomplishments would not be possible without the support of our donors and we thank each and every one of you for contributing to the success of the Swinburne community.

Professor Linda Kristjanson AO, FAICD, FTSE, PhD  
Vice-Chancellor and President

Mr Graham Goldsmith  
Chancellor

# Message from the Executive Director



Michelle Macgregor Owen

**FOR SWINBURNE, 2017 WAS A YEAR MARKED BY CELEBRATIONS OF BOTH OUR PAST AND OUR FUTURE. WHILE THE BUILDINGS AND PROGRAMS MAY HAVE CHANGED OVER TIME, THE ESSENCE OF SWINBURNE – OUR CREATIVE AND OPTIMISTIC SPIRIT - HAS REMAINED THE SAME.**

In the midst of expanding our educational offerings, research programs, and community engagement, we have stayed true to our founders' values – to transform education and serve our wider community.

It is always a great privilege to thank donors and friends like you; without your support Swinburne would not be the world-class institution it is today, and without your generosity we would not be making such tremendous impact through science, technology and innovation.

I thank you for helping to create an institution built around giving life changing opportunities across both higher education and the vocational sectors. It is your generosity, above all, that opens critical doors to possibility and enables us to tackle the challenges of our time.

Last year we were extremely busy in the research space with the official launch of five new research institutes focussing on data science, health, social innovation, smart cities, and the future of manufacturing. These institutes will form the pillars of our research strategy going forward. In particular, we are honoured to host the Australian Research Council's \$31.3m Centre for Gravitational Wave Research (OzGrav) as well as Swinburne's new Innovation Precinct which will unlock a new era of interdisciplinary research collaboration and deep engagement with industry, business and society.

I am proud that Swinburne is a place for everyone. A place where, regardless of background, students from all walks of life have an equal opportunity to succeed.

Swinburne is doing big things on the global stage, and while these are interesting times for the Australian tertiary sector, we look forward to the next 25 years with great excitement.

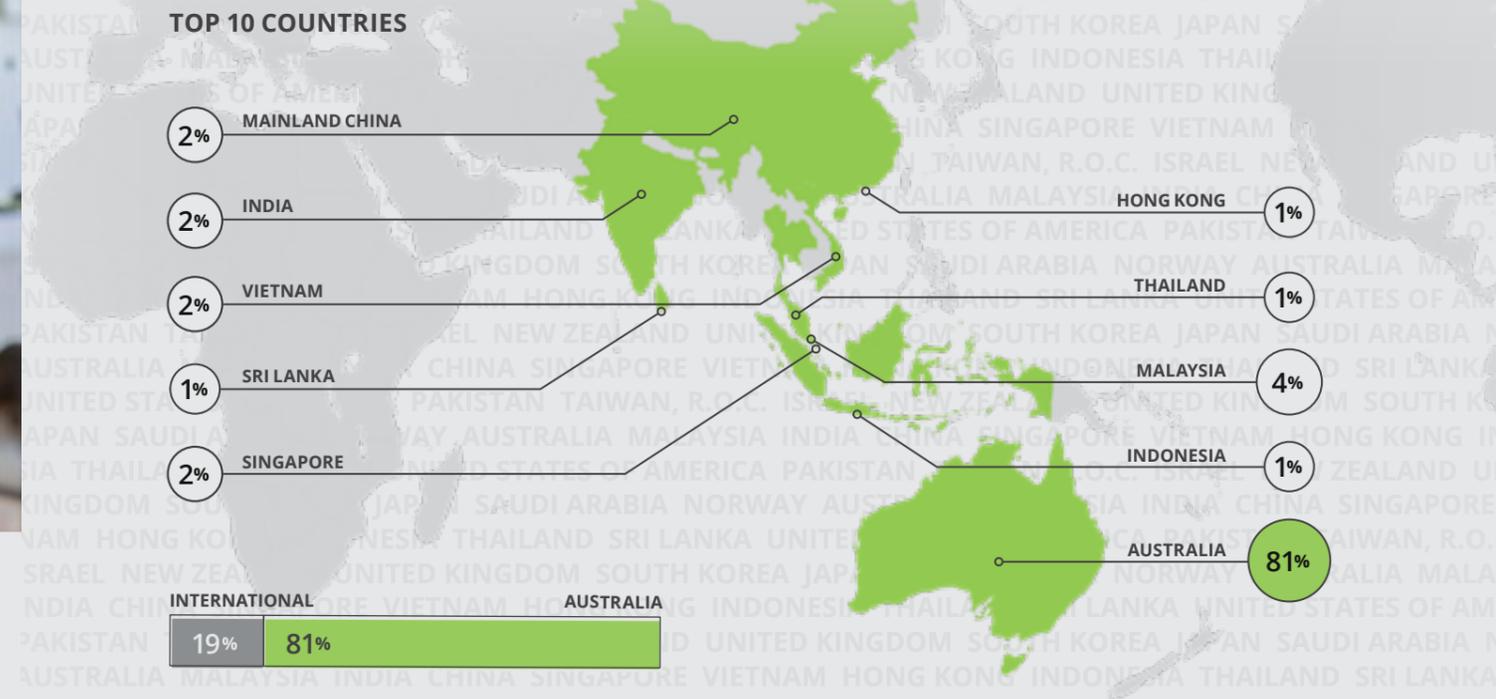
More than ever, we will see the impact of philanthropy being truly transformative. Creating social and economic impact isn't just important, it's critical to our future and the futures of our children – and it's your generosity that will get us there.

As you will see throughout this Report, philanthropy has played an important role in Swinburne's history. It is the generosity of individuals, families, organisations, companies and foundations that has enabled life changing education and research opportunities.

So thank you – our visionaries, trailblazers, connectors and challengers have helped us to defy the status quo to transform education and serve our community in truly unprecedented ways.

Michelle Macgregor Owen  
Executive Director, Advancement

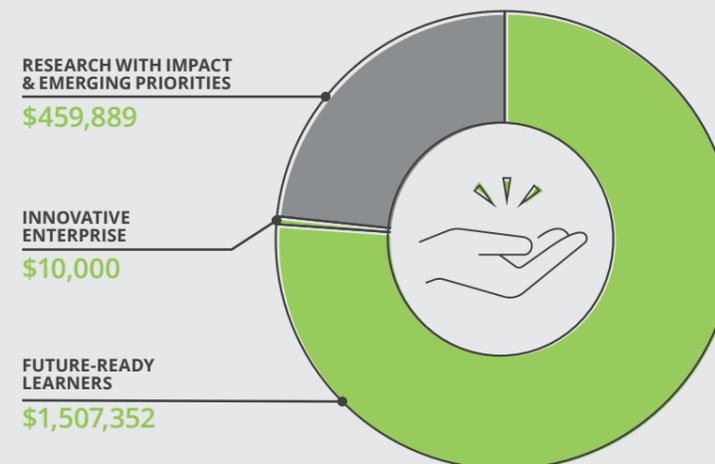
## Swinburne alumni around the world



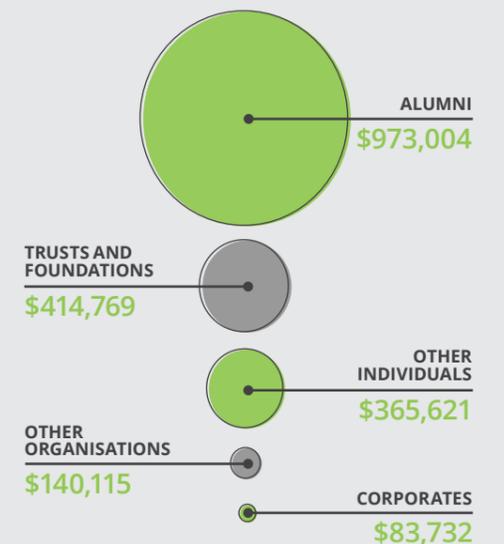
### 2017 IN REVIEW



### WHAT YOU SUPPORTED IN 2017



### SUPPORTERS BY CATEGORY





**SINCE BECOMING HAWTHORN LOCALS 25 YEARS AGO, INTEGRATED APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT (INTEGRADEV) AND SWINBURNE HAVE SHARED A SPECIAL BOND.**

But it goes deeper than that. General Manager Alison Marquardt knew that developing a relationship with Swinburne would prove valuable.

With a desire to harness the brightest minds while role modelling the success women can have in the IT sector, IntegraDev has been busy cultivating the next generation of software professionals.

'We understand that learning doesn't end when you complete your degree. That's why we have developed a strong mentoring process to ensure there are opportunities to continue to learn and improve on the job, every day you work with us,' says Alison.

IntegraDev currently has four Swinburne students on Professional Placement. It has more than 20 staff who have graduated from Swinburne including three who have completed their professional placement with IntegraDev and returned full time upon completion of their degrees.

'The relationship between industry and educational institutions is critical. Early on we saw that developing a relationship with Swinburne would be beneficial, and the value that Professional Placement students provide just continues to grow.'

Knowing that there were more ways they could support Swinburne students in addition to their industry partnership, IntegraDev has funded three student awards for excellence.

One of these prizes, the James Wauchope Award, was created in memory of an IntegraDev staff member who lost his fight with cancer in December 2000. James was an IT student at Swinburne before joining IntegraDev as a software developer. 'It feels good to know you are acknowledging someone who has achieved excellence in their studies, and as we grow the business, Swinburne graduates are a very important part of our success.'

IntegraDev prizes are awarded to the best final year student in the Bachelor of Computer Science (Professional), the highest achieving student in the subject Introduction to Programming, and the highest overall achieving student in the Bachelor of Computer Science (Professional) with a major in Software Development.

'As a part of the IT industry, we recognise the role we can play in developing our industry. Supporting the awards is a way we can visibly show our commitment, but I hope my own personal involvement provides an example of the kinds of roles women can play in IT.'

Find out more about our prizes for academic excellence at [swi.nu/prizes](http://swi.nu/prizes)



**NIKITA KULKARNI**

**Bachelor of Engineering (Robotics and Mechatronics)**

Growing up with brothers, most of my spare time was spent building things out of Lego, wood, even mud! I always loved Transformers and Iron Man and helped with motorbike and car repairs.

I chose Robotics and Mechatronics because it's a constantly changing field. There are so many aspects to it and the technology can be used in a number of different fields. It's so flexible as to what you can do as an engineer.

After I graduate, I'm thinking about joining the Defence Force - I'd have the opportunity to interact with the very latest technology and that's what I'm interested in.



**SABINE BELLSTEDT**

**PhD Candidate (Astronomy)**

I always loved science and physics quickly became my favourite as I had a good grasp of physical concepts. In year 11 I was selected to represent Australia at the International Space Camp in the USA which fuelled a love of space.

Throughout my physics degree, I was often one of the few, in some cases the only, girls in my class. After a successful honours project with the Australian Astronomical Observatory, I am doing my PhD in Astronomy at Swinburne's Centre for Astrophysics and Supercomputing. The last few years have taught me a huge amount not only about physics and mathematics but also about computing and coding. While challenging, this opened my world entirely.

Find out more about supporting Women in STEM at [swi.nu/wis](http://swi.nu/wis)

# Driving innovation through generosity

# Fatime's story

**WHEN FATIME AND HER FAMILY MOVED TO AUSTRALIA AS ASYLUM SEEKERS, SHE KNEW IT WASN'T GOING TO BE EASY.**

'We came from Iran to try and build a better future for our children,' says Fatime.

After her husband was diagnosed with an ongoing illness, he had to give up his job as a truck driver. For full time student Fatime, this meant the pressure was on.

While completing her Certificate IV in Laboratory Techniques, Fatime was awarded a donor funded Swinburne Welcome Achievement Award. The Award has eased some of the pressure of Fatime's living expenses and made it easier for her to prioritise her studies.

'It has been hard having nobody to support us. This award can help me to pay for a part of my expenses now. I am going to pay for my son's uniform for grade 6 next year and pay rent for this month.'

Fatime gave the keynote address at her Swinburne Achievement Awards prize ceremony. Despite her nerves, Fatime delivered a moving speech expressing her gratitude to everyone who helped and supported her throughout her journey.

'This award will make a big difference for me. Thank you once again for the support that Swinburne provides to me and other students like me.'

In spite of the hardship the family has faced, the Welcome Achievement Award strengthened Fatime's determination to complete her Certificate IV. It also gave her the confidence to further her education and she is now studying for a Diploma of Nursing.

Fatime's story really demonstrates the far reaching impact that donor funded awards can have on students, their families, and the community around them.

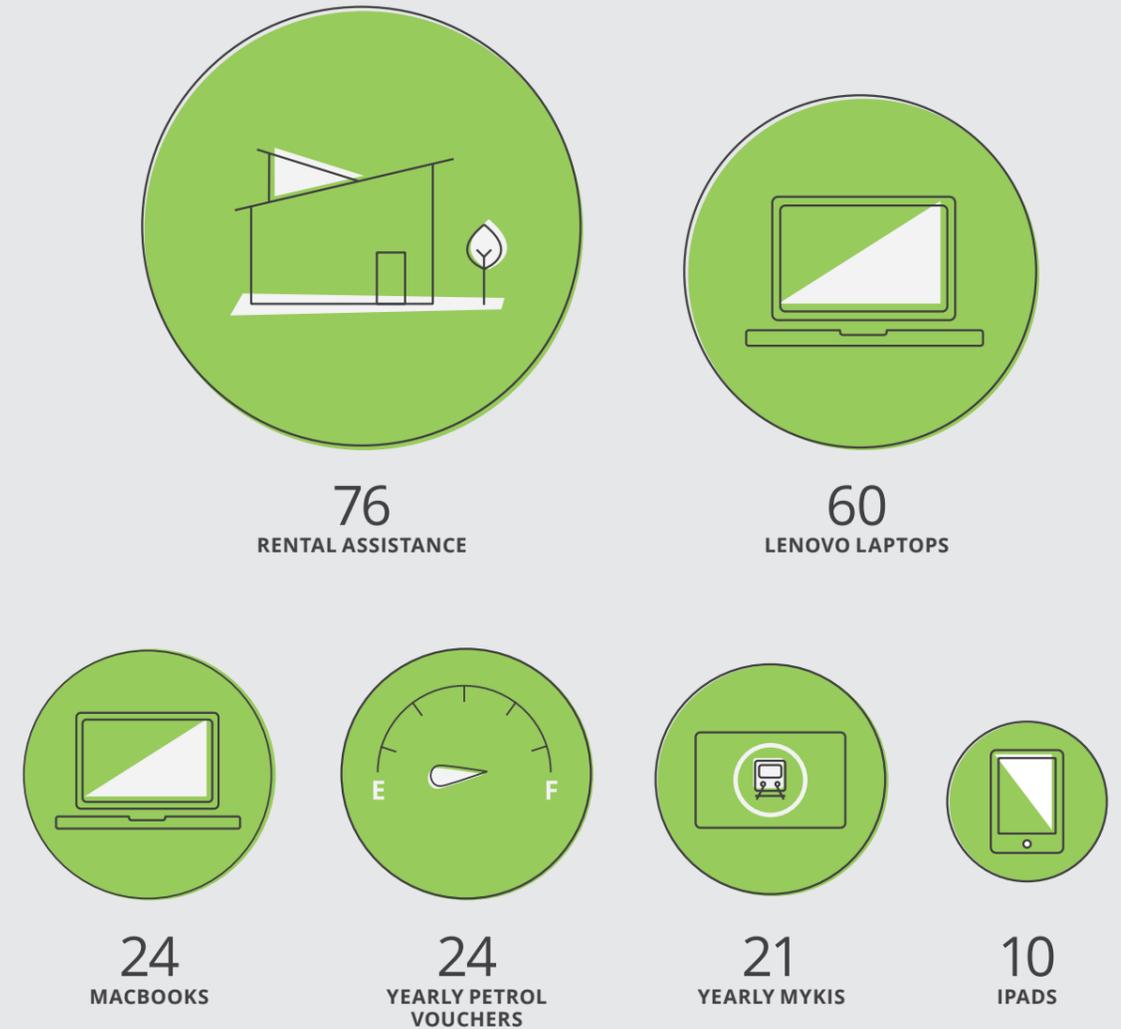
The final word must go to Fatime; 'I wish to be a useful person in Australian society. I hope more people hold refugees' hands and help them to find their life in Australia. I wish to be one of the people who will support asylum seekers and refugees in the future.'

Help asylum seekers transform their lives with a Swinburne Welcome Scholarship. Learn more at [swi.nu/welcomeschol](http://swi.nu/welcomeschol)

NUMBER OF DONOR FUNDED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS



## HERE'S HOW YOU SUPPORTED SWINBURNE STUDENTS IN 2017:



Thanks to the generosity of donors, each year hundreds of students receive grants, scholarships and awards that aim to relieve financial burden. Across all levels of our vocational and higher education offerings, students are empowered to fulfil their goals and reach their full potential.



\*Fatime's full name and image have been excluded for privacy reasons.

# Designing her own way to success

**FOR PIP WHEATON, A CAREER IN DESIGN WAS NO COINCIDENCE. A KEEN SCRAPBOOKER WHEN SHE WAS YOUNG, HER LOVE OF DESIGN CARRIED ON INTO HIGH SCHOOL WHERE A DEDICATED PRODUCT DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY TEACHER RECOGNISED HER RAW TALENT.**

In year 10, Pip took a big leap, deciding to move to a boarding school that would nurture her progress in design studies. Here, she felt welcomed and at home, despite being away from her family. When it came to choosing where to go to university, Pip used the same criteria.

'I knew I wanted to study a Bachelor of Design and Swinburne had a great reputation. It seemed like a perfect fit with opportunities like professional placements, not to mention the at-ease feeling I experienced when on campus for the first time,' says Pip.

But despite her talent and design skills, Pip had to acknowledge the reality of the financial strain a tertiary education would create. A friend encouraged Pip to consider the George Alexander Foundation Scholarship; a perfect scholarship for her situation, consisting of a holistic approach to academic studies, community service and leadership.

The George Alexander Foundation was established in 1972 offering talented

students the opportunity to fulfil their potential. It is the largest donor funded scholarship program at Swinburne and is an important investment in the future of young Australians and their ongoing contribution to the broader community.

For Pip, receiving a George Alexander Foundation Scholarship meant she could support her studies by taking up volunteering and interning opportunities in the design field and use these experiences to build her portfolio. It even led to an internship with the Ian Potter Foundation to produce an infographic for the George Alexander Foundation annual report.

Aside from the career development breaks facilitated through Swinburne, the opportunities that have enhanced Pip's personal development have proven to be the most rewarding. These have included an international study tour, volunteering as a Student Ambassador, and participating in design workshops and presentations for local high school students.

'I've been able to support myself through living on campus, travelling overseas with uni and working with some pretty cool startups and organisations. It's the little things like being able to choose to take up these opportunities that have meant the most to me,' says Pip.

Pip also plans to undertake a 12 month Professional Placement, where she will be working full time in the design industry.

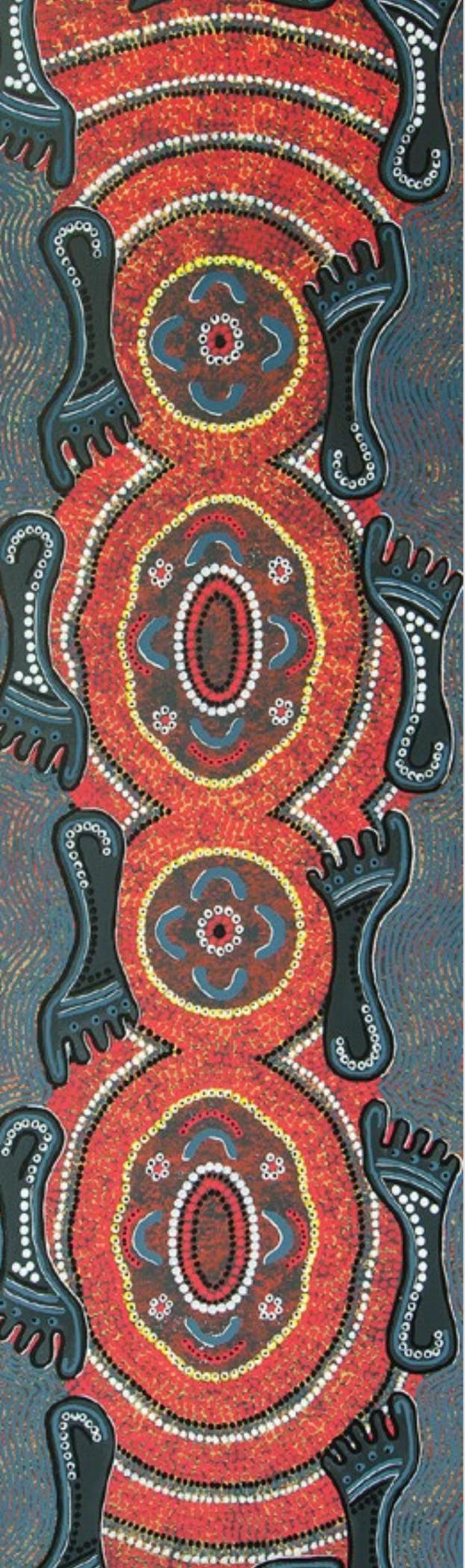
'I'm really excited to work full time in the design industry and grateful for the donors who have taken the opportunity to make a huge difference in my life and are helping me reach my potential.'

Can you host a student at your workplace through our Professional Placements program? Contact the team to find out more at [swi.nu/placements](http://swi.nu/placements)

'I think donors are building the next generation of successful professionals who will, in turn, continue to invest in scholarships in the future.'



Pip Wheaton



# Making reconciliation our business

In 2017, Swinburne's second Reconciliation Action Plan (2017-2019) achieved 'Elevate' status – the highest level endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. Swinburne is the only university in the country to achieve this endorsement. The Moondani Toombadool Centre is leading the university's work in Reconciliation and all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander initiatives.

In this 2017-2019 RAP, we commit to:

- + Providing national leadership on Reconciliation in higher and vocational education
- + Extending our online and face-to-face cultural competency training
- + Increasing the number and retention rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students
- + Continuing to develop partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations
- + Engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges in our teaching and research activities

You can read more about Swinburne's commitment to Reconciliation at [swi.nu/rap](http://swi.nu/rap)



# Jon and Jasper's Diary

**IN NOVEMBER 2017, SWINBURNE STUDENT JASPER WANYBARRNGA WAS SELECTED TO REPRESENT HIS COMMUNITY IN THE PLUMBING INDUSTRY CLIMATE ACTION CENTRE (PICAC) TEAM AT THE 2017 COMMUNITY PLUMBING CHALLENGE IN INDONESIA.**

Hailing from the remote Indigenous community of Ramingining in East Arnhem Land about 500km east of Darwin, Jasper is a multi-skilled builder and maintenance worker in his local community. In 2016, he earned a Swinburne Learning and Training Leadership Award in recognition of his hard work and dedication to trade training within his community.

With the cost of the trip from Arnhem Land to Indonesia adding up, Swinburne donors generously provided funding through Swinburne's Indigenous Education Success Fund to enable Jasper to extend his skills in Indonesia.



Jasper was accompanied by Swinburne Pathways and Vocational Education (PAVE) teacher Jon Wallace who has worked closely with Jasper and his community.

This is their travel diary, captured by Jon. →

## At the airport

We're on the way to the school, located in Cicau Village in West Java - about two hours east of Jakarta by car.

The team has members from Australia, Indonesia, India, Ireland, Singapore and the US. We're planning to construct new handwashing and toilet facilities, install new elevated water tanks to improve water supply to the school and construct new wastewater facilities.

## Day Two

In Arnhem Land, ceremony is extremely important for the whole community so to have a welcome ceremony in the [Cicau] village with traditional dance is one of the biggest highlights of the trip. We really liked being involved in another culture's welcome ceremony.

Jasper and I get to work on formwork for a concrete basin. It's always a challenge working in a different place, as back home you would have a tool for every job. Here, there is a lot of improvisation.

It was a big first day on site. Sitting with new friends from all over the world for dinner, talking about the work we are doing is an amazing thing about a trip like this.

## Day Four

Today Jasper and I cut the timber battens for the top of the tank stand and formed up for the concrete in two of the toilets. Other members of the team were holding a health clinic in the village so we walked down to have a look and see what they had been doing.

## Day Six

Eat, sleep, repeat.

Today we started to pitch the roof. We're one rafter short so we walked to the hardware store. This wasn't our first trip to this store so they knew to follow us with the calculator while we pointed at what we wanted and the assistant would type the price on the calculator.

## Day Eight

A van that's been converted into a mobile library shows up and all the kids race out to get a book. The top shelf is quite high and the boys boost each other on their shoulders to reach it.

There is no doubt the things we have done are going to have a huge impact on the children in this school as well as the village and hopefully it inspires the local people to build on what we've done.

We head back to go to the presentation at the IAPMO office. We each receive our certificate and a piece of angle from the water tank stand with the CPC 2017 logo. Mitch can play digeridoo so a piece of PVC is found and Jasper performs a traditional dance to get the party started.

Jasper says to me, 'home is going to be a little bit boring'.



Jasper and Jon



Read the rest of Jon and Jasper's diary entries at [swi.nu/cpc2017](http://swi.nu/cpc2017).

# A century of opportunity





## 1910s

George and Ethel Swinburne establish the Eastern Suburbs Technical College (later Swinburne Technical College) in Hawthorn. Contributing £2000, the Swinburnes were determined to create an institution that would empower and inspire a new generation to achieve their full potential, regardless of background or circumstance.

In 1916, The Girls' School, the first of its kind in Victoria, is established with the purchase of a two storey house to be converted for use as an experiment in girls' technical education.

## 1920s

Together and individually, George and Ethel Swinburne continue to donate significant funds enabling Swinburne to acquire further real estate, furniture and fittings, fund student prizes, support staff travel, and meet the requisite salary for the College Chaplain. In 1928, after his passing, students wrote of George Swinburne that 'this College... owes its establishment and progress to his foresight, boundless energy and generosity.' – The Open Door (magazine of Swinburne Technical College)

## 1930s

The original engineering building is renovated for £3,100, part of which was met by a donation from the family of Sir William McPherson following his death in 1932. Sir William was a member of the original College council and one of its early presidents. The engineering building was later named the McPherson Engineering School in recognition of his service and support.

## 1940s

World War II touches the Swinburne community and students donate close to £200 for the Central War Relief Fund. Over 300 War Savings Certificates are bought by staff and students along with items such as cabinets, chairs and tables being manufactured for donation to the war effort. In 1949, the Swinburne Chemistry School opens after science streams are added to the curriculum.

## 1950s

In 1956, The Students' Representative Council is established. Shortly after, the Swinburne Technical College commissions the Ethel Swinburne Centre in celebration of its 50<sup>th</sup> year. The community is encouraged to get involved by purchasing certificates representing the individual bricks being used in the build. Following the passing of Ethel Swinburne in 1960, the Swinburne community continues to benefit from the generosity of her substantial bequest.

## 1960s

Swinburne enters into the international education market with the first courses catering to overseas students. Swinburne's Industry-Based Learning programs also commence – combining academic study with practical industrial experience.

In 1966, the Swinburne Film and Television School is launched, followed by the purchase of the College's first computer with a £240,000 donation from the Victoria Institute of Colleges.

## 1970s

Swinburne offers degrees in mechanical, civil and production engineering, an applied science degree in chemistry, a business degree in accounting, and an arts degree in graphic design and humanities.

In 1978, Australian Paper Manufacturers donate a 900 Perkin-Elmer Gas Chromatograph to Swinburne. The instrument separated liquid mixtures and was used for the identification and qualitative analysis of components.

## 1980s

The first Study in Japan scholarship is awarded to Barbara Collins. The fund was started by the Swinburne Council, with many leading firms of the day making contributions.

In 1983, IBM Australia donates hardware and software valued at \$1.7m to help set up the Swinburne Centre for Computer Aided Design and Manufacture, at the time the largest single corporate grant of its kind to any Australian higher education institution.

## 1990s

In 1992, Swinburne opens its Eastern campus in Mooroolbark and gains university status, becoming Victoria's sixth university. Soon after, businessman and philanthropist Richard Pratt is appointed as inaugural Chancellor and makes significant donations towards buildings and research during his tenure.

Later in 1998 – Alumni donate over \$180,000 to the Library Appeal in celebration of Swinburne's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and Wantirna and Croydon campuses merge with the university.

## 2000s

The international branch campus opens in Kuching, the capital city of the Malaysian state of Sarawak. Jointly owned by Swinburne University of Technology Australia and the Sarawak Government, today it hosts 4,000 students from Malaysia and 60 other countries.

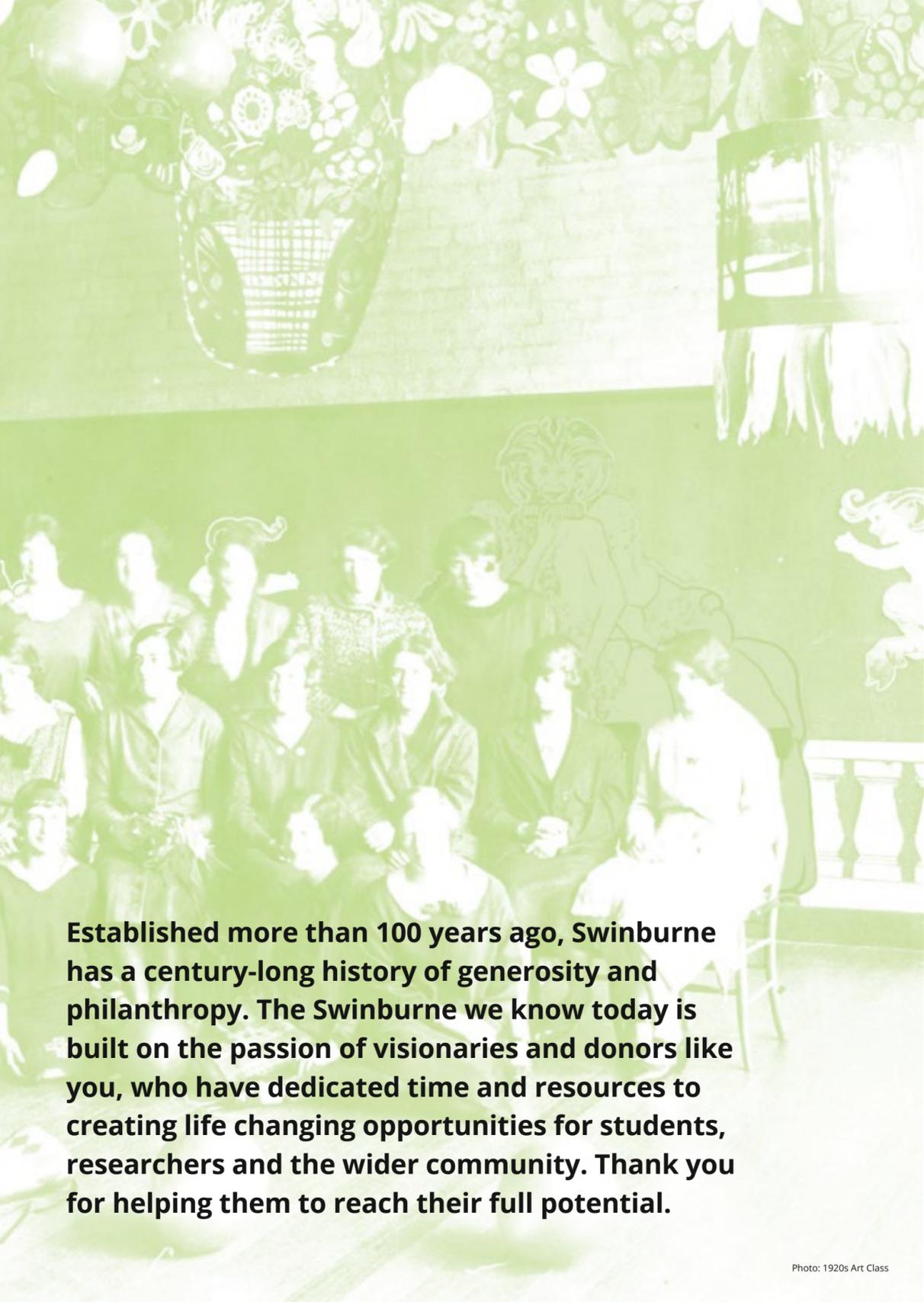
In 2001, the first National Institute of Circus Arts (NICA) students graduate with a Swinburne qualification.

## 2010s

In 2011, the \$140 million Advanced Technologies Centre opens, followed closely by the launch of Swinburne Online, a new provider of online degrees and the establishment of the Swinburne Law School.

In 2017, Swinburne receives two of its largest bequests from alumni Claire Sorati and Jean Barry.

- Images left to right:
- 1913 / First pupils of the Swinburne Technical College Boys - Junior Technical School
  - 1915 / Junior School Science Students
  - 1920s / Art Students
  - 1934 / Engineering Building and Plumbing and Gasfitting workshop
  - 1938 / Tennis Team
  - 1940s / Chemistry School
  - 1947 / Swinburne Campus
  - 1959 / Foundation Stone Ceremony, Ethel Swinburne Centre
  - 1966 / Launch of the Swinburne Film and Television School
  - 1972 / Business Arts Building Construction
  - 1978 / Australian Paper Manufacturers donate equipment
  - 1981 / Barbara Collins
  - 1990 / Circa Mr Ellis and Mr Thompson
  - 1994 / Richard Pratt Scholarship Winners
  - 2004 / Celebrations, Sarawak Achieves University Status
  - 2007 / Sarawak Graduation Ceremony
  - 2011 / Advanced Technologies Centre



Established more than 100 years ago, Swinburne has a century-long history of generosity and philanthropy. The Swinburne we know today is built on the passion of visionaries and donors like you, who have dedicated time and resources to creating life changing opportunities for students, researchers and the wider community. Thank you for helping them to reach their full potential.

Photo: 1920s Art Class



# When Matt met Keith



**IT'S THE TALE OF TWO COUNTRY KIDS. ONE AN ASPIRING OLYMPIAN, THE OTHER A CHAMPION IN BUSINESS. WHILE THEY'VE TRAVELLED VERY DIFFERENT PATHS, IT WAS SWINBURNE THAT BROUGHT THEM TOGETHER.**

Matt Ward (Fish to his friends, for obvious reasons) is no stranger to a full schedule. He's been a swimmer for over a decade and quickly moved into competition not long after first taking to the water, soon breaking national records. Not bad for the kid who was born missing 90% of his left hip and only took up the sport because others caused him pain.

Offered a place in the Victorian nationals squad after finishing high school in 2015, Matt made the move from his home town of Albury, NSW to Melbourne where he decided to pursue a Bachelor of Computer Science at Swinburne, in between daily 5am training sessions and working as a swim instructor and piano teacher.

Around the time Matt was learning to swim, Keith Irvine OAM was finishing up as President of the Epworth Board of Management, another milestone in a distinguished career characterised through ongoing service to community health and social welfare.

Holding a Swinburne Graduate Diploma of Accounting, Keith has been a long time supporter of the university with his first gift coming in 2005. His focus quickly turned to assisting students from the country. 'I was born in the country. I left at the age of 15 and a half and didn't have the opportunity to go on to tertiary study.'

Since moving to Melbourne, Matt's swimming career has made great strides; he made a qualifying time for the 2016 Paralympics that placed him within the top 10 in the world, and in 2017 broke his long course

50m breaststroke record. But with this success comes the constant pressure of staying at the top. For Matt, receiving one of the three Keith Irvine Student Achievement Awards came at just the right time.

'[The award] came around exam time when I had just travelled to Brisbane for a meet and then short course nationals shortly after. It alleviated a lot of the stress about expenses so I was able to focus on the exams and swimming and not have to worry about the stuff in between. I didn't have to choose one or the other.'

But it didn't just mean money. 'One of the best things was the recognition it provided. My dad got to come down and watch the big award ceremony and it was really special. Hearing the speakers there, the history of Swinburne and realising that I was a part of that.'

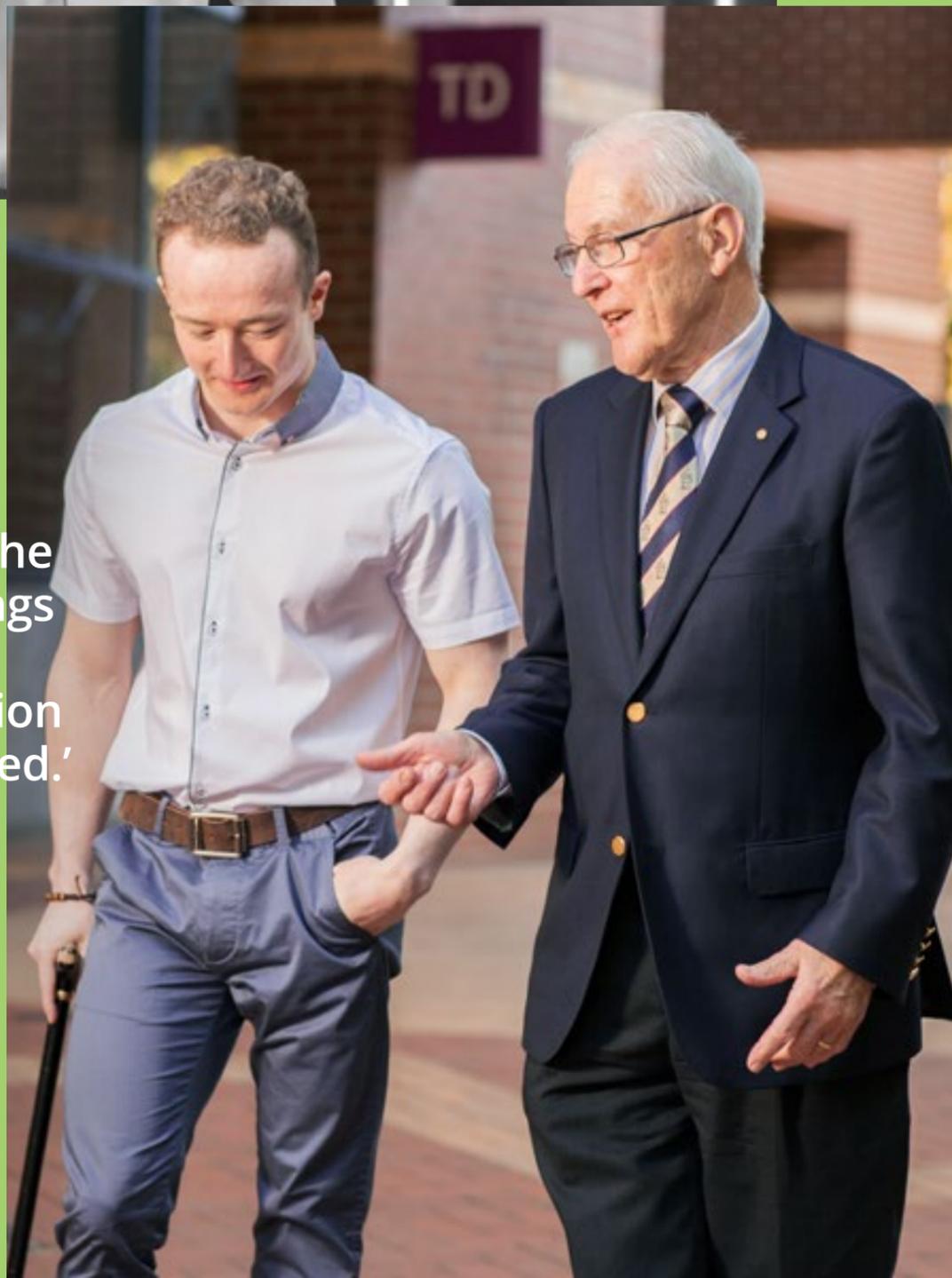
It means a lot to Keith, too. 'I had the privilege of personally handing my awards to the recipients. I came away with a greater understanding of what it means to these students - the look of excitement and the words of gratitude was a joy to behold.'

'I have no hesitation in recommending all alumni members to consider supporting the Student Achievement Awards program.'

**You can help change the life of a student like Matt. Learn more about the Student Achievement Awards at [swi.nu/prizes](http://swi.nu/prizes)**

**'One of the best things was the recognition it provided.'**

*Matt Ward*



# In Memoriam - Claire Sorati

**'COMPETENT, CARING, COURAGEOUS, FAIR, LOYAL, DETERMINED AND VERY PASSIONATE ABOUT HER WORK.'**



This was Claire Sorati, a fiercely generous woman, whose legacy will provide life changing opportunities for women to study engineering, science and technology for many years to come.

From a young age, there was little chance that Claire was going to waste a moment. Her mother, Alba, ensured that Claire went to a school that taught mathematics and science to girls, rather than domestic skills.

'The boys at Scotch College don't do cooking, so why should you?' Alba would say.

As an adult, Claire adopted the same sentiments and held strong views on equal opportunity for women. She was tremendously passionate about making education accessible for girls and women from disadvantaged backgrounds who, as Claire would say, 'have everything stacked against them.'

In fact, Claire felt so strongly about this that following the death of her mother, she established the Alba Sorati Scholarship for Women to honour her legacy and help support and inspire women studying in the sciences. 'It will hopefully make a difference to somebody, and knowing that people will benefit from the scholarship makes me happy, and I know it would make Mum happy,' Claire said.

Alba Sorati Scholarship Recipient Thi Nguyen is studying a double degree in Civil Engineering and Business Management at Swinburne and attributes much of her academic success to Claire's generosity.

'My academic progress was possible because of the benefits of receiving the Alba Sorati Scholarship for Women,' she says.

'As a female pursuing a male dominated course, the Scholarship encourages students like me in completing their course and broadening their opportunities. I am thankful to be given an opportunity to follow my passion in engineering and I will continue to work hard to achieve my goals,' Thi says.

No stranger to hard work, Claire worked for 11 years as a beloved teacher and later as a corporate trainer after achieving her Bachelor of Science and Diploma of Education from Monash University. Later in 1992 she completed a Graduate Diploma

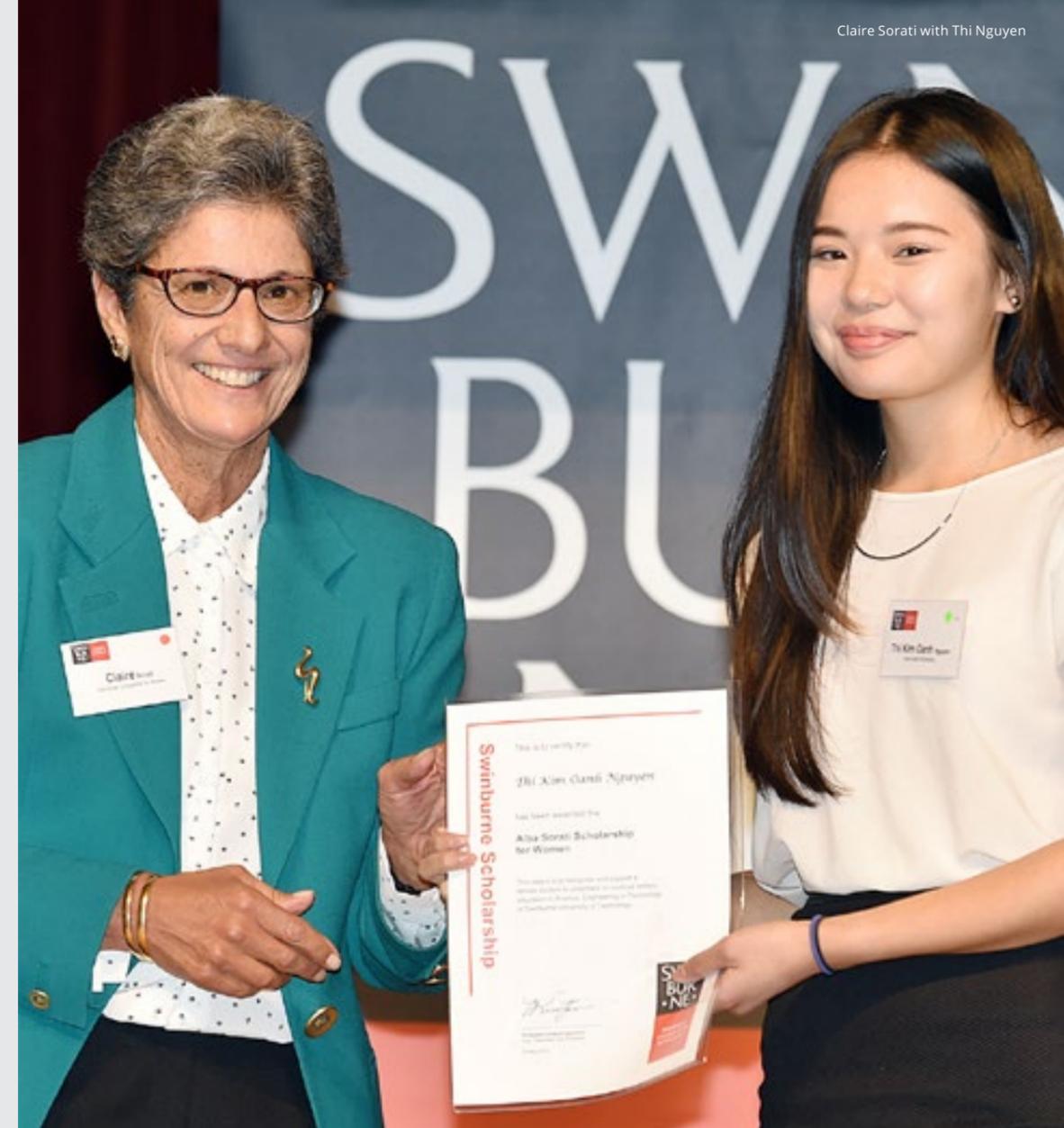
in Business (Information Technology) from Swinburne. Shortly after, Claire was awarded an MBA in Information Technology from RMIT, which catapulted her into an extremely successful career as a senior IT executive.

Claire will certainly be remembered for the way she believed in equality and valued opportunity.

Even in the later stages of her life, Claire's commitment to equal opportunity for women and passion for learning did not waiver. Claire's more than \$500,000 bequest has established the Claire Sorati Scholarship Foundation which will fulfil a powerful vision - that women, who may otherwise miss out, would have the opportunity to receive a world-class tertiary education.

The Claire Sorati Scholarship for Women supports female students from disadvantaged backgrounds or regional areas undertaking studies in disciplines such as engineering, information and communication technologies or science. These scholarships will prove life changing for many women, who, given the chance, will become our future leaders.

**Learn how you can leave a lasting legacy at [swi.nu/bequests](http://swi.nu/bequests)**



**'I believe Claire's life has a very clear message to us: that we should take risks, be prepared to change tacks, and be fearless of failure.'**

Claire was certainly courageous. She had the good fortune of being scared of nothing. She was not afraid of hard work and invariably if there was a hard job to do, Claire would end up the one who was tapped on the shoulder for it.

I didn't know what a wonderful teacher Claire was until after her death. I was sorting out her paperwork and found the most wonderful letters and comments from students and parents.

I've found lots of letters saying 'you are the best maths teacher I've ever had!' but also comments about how 'you have changed my life.'

Claire never stopped learning, doing new things, embracing change and improving. She had tireless enthusiasm and endless confidence. She was an inspiration to her students, to her colleagues, to her friends, and she was certainly an inspiration to me.

*Words from Claire's husband Joe Loci at her memorial*

# Grace Lawrence



Grace Lawrence

**THERE'S A SAYING GRACE LAWRENCE WOULD COME TO LEARN FROM ONE OF HER SWINBURNE ASTROPHYSICS LECTURERS, 'THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SIMPLE AND EASY. PHYSICS IS SIMPLE BUT IT'S NOT EASY.'**

Growing up in a small regional town in Far North Queensland, Grace always had an unusual combination of passions – ballet and physics – excelling in both until she broke her ankle at the age of 17. Although ballet was only a hobby, Grace competed in regional and national level competitions, completed her examinations and gained a ballet teaching qualification. You can see where this is going; even Grace's hobbies are performed at their highest levels.

Physics has always been Grace's 'first love' and she performed so well in her year 12 exams that a number of universities offered her scholarships. Grace says it was an easy choice to accept Swinburne's merit-based Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Scholarship because, 'Swinburne has an excellent physics program.' Having graduated from her Bachelor of Science (Physics), Grace is now on her way to completing her Honours year.

Her sheer love of physics has propelled her toward some amazing opportunities, especially for someone whose career is just beginning. Associate Professor Alan Duffy and Professor Jeremy Mould introduced her to the world of dark matter and the Sodium-iodide with Active Background Rejection (SABRE) program. Working through the complex mathematics turned into the basis for her first year research and discovery project.

'What's the importance of knowing about dark matter? Dark matter and dark energy make up about 90-95 percent of our universe. Baryonic and other components are about five percent so the fact that we don't understand most of our universe has such large effects,' explains Grace.

Swinburne is a member of an international consortium of universities, research agencies and industry constructing the Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory, a kilometre underground at a gold mine in Stawell, Victoria. The lab will house one of only two dark matter detectors in the world (SABRE) - the other is in Italy.

Through a recommendation from Professor Duffy, Grace found herself interning with the SABRE team at Princeton University. For seven weeks, she worked on producing high purity crystals – the defining feature of the SABRE detector. It was life changing in more than one way.

'Being at an Ivy League school as a second year student was a mind blowing experience,' Grace says. 'The team were incredible. They were so inspired by the work that it really passed down.' She came back with a head full of new practical skills and a galvanised passion for the project.

Shortly after her return, Grace and her love of physics caught the eye of Swinburne supporters who generously decided to fund a research internship to the Italian lab, the Laboratori Nazionali del Gran Sasso.

'Someone came forward and said they wanted to help out. I'm very lucky. It's very humbling to know that someone thinks you're worth investing in.'

Grace spent two months working with Italy's SABRE team on the testing, design and installation of this dark matter detector. Thanks to Swinburne donors, Grace had the opportunity to go deep underground into the cavernous laboratories of Gran Sasso, working alongside a dedicated, dynamic and diverse team noting what a real research career could look like. Her work there provided a detailed and hands on view of the project that she brought back to the Australian branch of SABRE.

'It was a fantastic feeling to know that outside of my class work I was contributing to a real current project that is helping to shine the spotlight onto this missing element of our universe,' says Grace.

Grace has almost been part of SABRE since day one, from the foundational work to the proof of principle. She knows the system and the software inside out and is now working on the Australian part of the experiment.

While Grace is still to complete her third year of studies she is contemplating the next step towards a career in dark matter.

'I love the mystery as I don't know what it is and there are so many ways people are searching for it. I'm particularly interested in the simulations, making predictions and testing it. That would be the dream job.'

Learn more about research at Swinburne at [swi.nu/bigideas](http://swi.nu/bigideas)



Swinburne volunteers Nikki and Atoosa

# Atoosa's story

## FOR ATOOSA, WHO MIGRATED TO AUSTRALIA JUST OVER EIGHT YEARS AGO, IT WASN'T A QUICK JOURNEY TO GET TO WHERE SHE WANTED TO BE.

While completing a Bachelor of Civil Engineering (Honours) at Swinburne, Atoosa completed her Industry Based Learning component at Melbourne Water. It went so well that she now works there full time as an Investigations Engineer.

Despite the responsibility of her day job, Atoosa still finds time to volunteer at the university that helped her to follow her dream. Spurred by her past and inspired by her future, Atoosa's motivation is to harness her 'happy place' and help others to chase their dreams, too.

Here, Atoosa tells us about her Swinburne experience in her own words and why she keeps coming back.

'I learned a lot at Swinburne, things that I can use in my professional and personal life. There were many people (students and staff) who helped me a lot throughout my studies, especially when I first started when it was most challenging.

The person I am today is partly because of what I learned at Swinburne. I volunteer because I know what it means to have nothing and not know what lies ahead. I volunteer because Swinburne made me happy.

When I volunteer I remember the way I felt when I was at Swinburne, the way I belonged and how Swinburne helped me to achieve my goals. Since university is one of the huge steps towards adulthood, I want to share my knowledge and help other students get through the challenging times and feel positive for the future - no matter how difficult the past.

Studying was an amazing experience and Swinburne was such a great opportunity to grow and learn new things. I volunteer because I like helping students but the best thing about volunteering is seeing them smile. There is so much I receive when I volunteer; I am learning other cultures and new things from others.

I think all Swinburne alumni should give their time and volunteer to support a student. It is the best experience and they will enjoy every moment of it. They will learn things and find good friends along the way. For me, it's like experiencing university life all over again - remembering some of the best times of my life. Swinburne is like my home and volunteering at Swinburne makes me feel happy - there's nothing better than being at home.'

**Learn more about Swinburne's volunteering and mentoring program at [swi.nu/getinvolved](http://swi.nu/getinvolved)**



**'When I volunteer I remember the way I felt when I was at Swinburne, the way I belonged and how Swinburne helped me to achieve my goals.'**

# A culture of giving

## IF \$3 A WEEK MAKES A DIFFERENCE, THEN \$10 WILL MAKE AN IMPACT.

Swinburne's Workplace Giving Program gives staff the opportunity to make regular donations through the payroll system to support causes that they care about. This support helps us to continue building on our strong foundations of success and to make a global impact on industries, lives and communities.

In 2017, Swinburne's annual Workplace Giving Appeal significantly funded student scholarships, awards and prizes so students were able to give their focus fully to their studies. These funds do more than just alleviate day to day stress; the awards give public recognition to their efforts and hard work. In this way, our students feel the Swinburne community behind them as they continue to make leaps and bounds.



Alexander Kaiser and Professor Linda Kristjanson AO

**'I'm honoured and grateful to be part of a larger story.'**

*Director of the Australian Graduate School of Entrepreneurship and staff donor, Alexander Kaiser*



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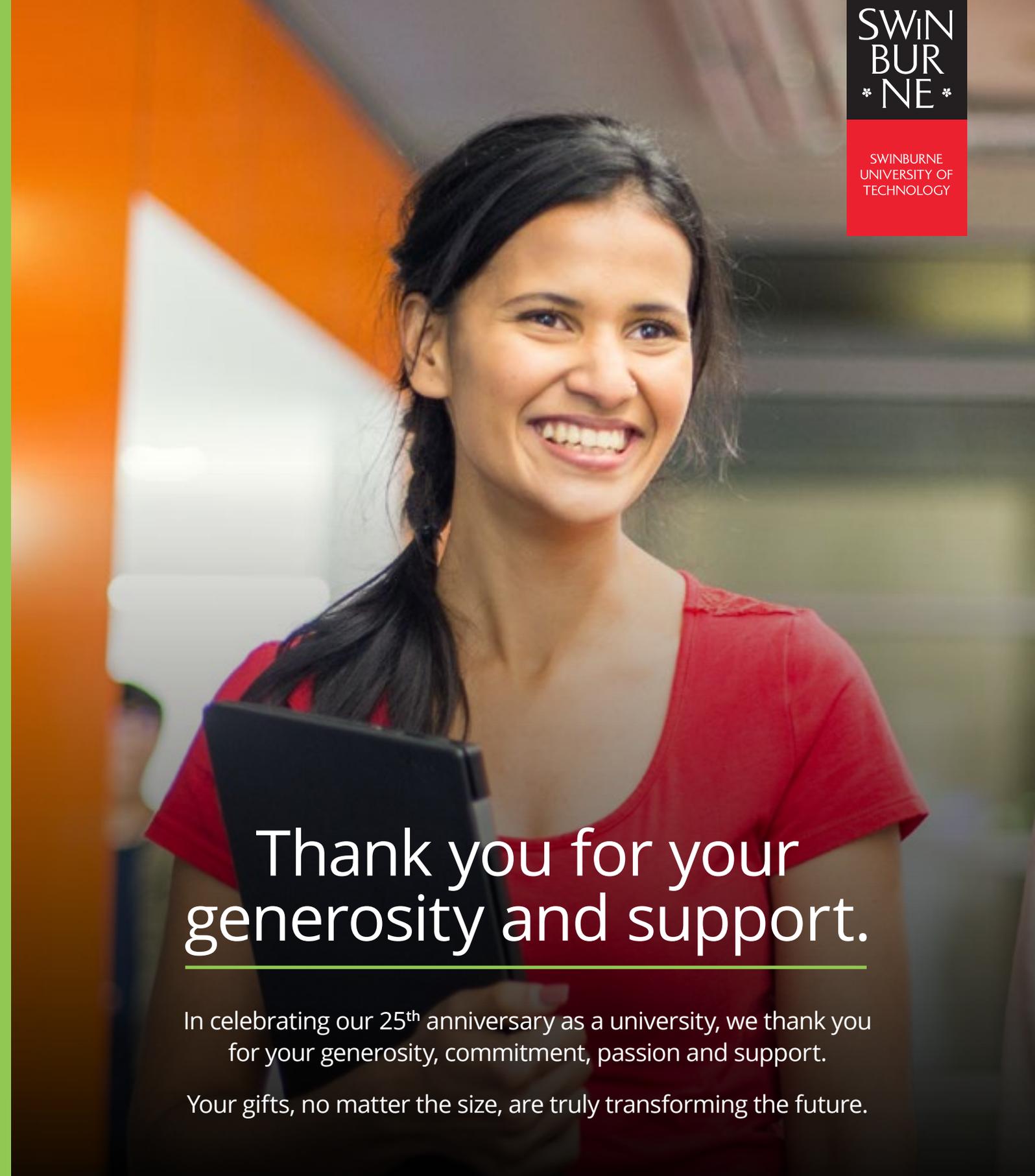
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