Vice Chancellor’s remarks for Professional Staff Excellence Awards

Time: 10:00am – 11:30am
Date: Friday 10 February, 2017
Place: Council Room
Ngangkirna, Miyurna! Naa marni Ngai nari David

Ngai yarta-nungku yaku, ngai kunturrkinthi taakanthi ngaityu wardli

Ngai pudlunthi naa-itya, ngai wangkanthi warra Kaurna meyurna, miipudlunthi ngaityu kuinyuntapinhti

What I just said, for those of you who have yet to come across Irish-accented Kaurna, is that my name is David and while I am not originally from this country, I am proud to call it my home and I do so in the language of the Kaurna people as a mark of my respect.

We meet this morning on Kaurna land.

The Kaurna people have performed ceremonies on this land for many centuries, and we pay respect to their living culture and the unique role they continue to play in the Adelaide region.
• Good morning.

• One of the promises we made in *Crossing the Horizon* and one which we reinforce to new people every time we have a corporate induction was to develop a high performing, sustainable workforce,

• one that is dedicated to the provision of excellence in all its forms.

• Action Set 3 in the *Crossing The Horizon* strategic plan was to only ever hire great staff.

• It was a great idea then, and it remains so as new people are measured against a list of criteria to make sure that we get the absolute best of the best.

• We search for great new staff because the ones we already have deserve the best colleagues it’s possible to attract.
• Some of the very best of our professional staff are here in this room ready to receive the Vice Chancellor’s awards for Professional Staff Excellence.

• It is the nature of a university to make heroes of its teachers and researchers.

• They are what attracts other great academics, new students, research grants and other opportunities.

• This is the core business of a University and our reason for being.

• But it’s the professional staff who help keep the ship afloat and map its progress
  
  o who set up systems
  o implement projects
  o who organise us
  o and manage some of the business
• that makes sure we have an institution that is ready to connect with those we partner.

• We provide high calibre professionals for all sectors of our community and economy.

• It is only reasonable that we should reflect the highest standards of professional services within our own campuses.

• This morning we’re going to meet some of the very best of those professionals.

• This year all the winners fall into the category of Service Excellence Culture and

• I am thrilled that the work we did in creating a cultural change that supported and sustained an end-user aware service excellence culture
• – Action Set 7 for those of you who can recite from the

*Crossing The Horizon brochure* –

• has been so widely accepted and ingrained into our institution’s ethos.

**ANNOUNCE AWARDS**

• The first award for excellence in providing outstanding service goes to the **Campus Central Quality Management Team**, 

• The team from Campus Central

  o Paul Williams; 
  o Matt Golotta; 
  o Aste Corbridge; 
  o Jamie Ryan; 
  o Renee Perchard; 
  o Prabjit Sandhu; 
  o Steve Anderson; and
• Campus Central is UniSA’s first point of contact for all student enquiries,

• and is a vital contributor to one of the other promises we made in Crossing The Horizon, which was to deliver an outstanding student experience.

• Until the work done by this team we were unable to properly measure the quality of work done.

• The Campus Central Quality management Framework that this team developed enables cross-campus collaboration and ongoing skills development to make sure that students consistently receive a quality service experience.

• It is unique in the Australian higher education sector and other universities are taking a close look.

• Vanessa Matthews from SAS
• It also saves us a lot of money so it’s an all around win.

• Well done Paul, Matt, Aste, Jamie, Renee, Prabjit, Steve and Vanessa.

NEXT AWARD

• Another team that’s done exemplary work in building a service excellence culture is the International Admissions Transformation Project: StudyLink and the team of
  o Alecia Shekhar;
  o Mark Williams;
  o Girish Chauhan;
  o James Imgraben;
  o Matt Barton;
  o Laura King;
  o Brian Pike;
  o Tony Palatianos; and
  o Kelly Haby.
• This is the team that has revolutionised UniSA’s international applications and admissions process.

• By implementing the project StudyLink they automated the prioritisation of international applications which used to be done manually and often took enough time that prospective students accepted other offers.

• The team inaugurated an online admissions system, again cutting the waiting time for prospective international students and better serving the needs of UI, the Divisions and our international agents;

• they created a positive cultural shift which also delivers a more efficient process that supports all internal and external stakeholders from application through to acceptance;
• they began a direct communication campaign using international student ambassadors to engage with prospective students; and

• they pulled it all off three months ahead of schedule and $207,000 under budget.

• Congratulations Aleicia, Mark, Girish, James, Matt, Laura, Brian, Tony and Kelly.

NEXT AWARD

• The third team who showed outstanding commitment to their service excellence culture was the project team behind the implementation of the Oral Defence of the PhD, the team of.
  o Jenni Critcher;
  o Katy Dolman;
  o Ryan McEachen;
  o Stella Tabor;
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- Le Bui;
- Marek Pokorny;
- Morris Ewings;
- Daniel Caruana;
- Michelle Brereton;
- Rachel Bageas;
- Emma Hughes;
- Dr Jennifer Carter; and
- Sharon Scott and Sarah Armour (who have taken their talents elsewhere).

- Again, harking back to *Crossing The Horizon*, we made a commitment to transform the PhD and this is the team which made it all happen.

- Key to the changes was the oral defence of the PhD which gives students an opportunity to discuss their research directly with the internationally recognised experts who have been appointed as their examiners.
• It also helps students establish stronger ties and networks across their field of study.

• The project team worked collaboratively across university areas to deliver a fully developed process for conducting oral defence examinations for PhD students.

• To make the process work, they collected feedback from key stakeholders and used it to refine the final process and to develop a suite of supporting materials for students, supervisors, examiner and defence Chairs.

• UniSA is the first Australian university to introduce a mandatory oral defence of the PhD and the team’s success in delivering the project was achieved with existing staff resources despite the challenges posed by Australia’s geographic distance from many PhD thesis examiners.

• Well done Jenni, Katy, Ryan, Stella, Le, Marek, Morris, Daniel, Michelle, Rachel, Emma and Jennifer. And Sharon and Sarah wherever they went.
• This concludes the official awards but I want to make one more, unofficial award,

• an acknowledgement of a superb effort performed by the staff of UniSA both professional and academic, on the memorable afternoon and evening of last September 28th.

• The blackout.

• Despite an extraordinary loss of power that shut down the whole state, the people who work for this institution performed to the absolute best of their abilities, clearing buildings, pulling people out of stalled elevators, ensuring the personal safety of their colleagues and friends.
• I make special note of CMK, FMU and ISTS who calmly and methodically went to work to make sure that communications ran smoothly and that not only were there no injuries to people but that the university infrastructure sustained no damage.

• I’ve heard of that great spirit of mateship that Australians so proudly identify with and that night I saw it in action.

• It was a wonderful experience, despite being able to see it only by candlelight.

• It proved to me, as if I needed proof, that the people who work for the university do so for the benefit of all of us.

• It goes beyond *Crossing The Horizon* which asks just that we give our best to shaping the future of the university.

• It adds humanity.
• That we can build a great university while looking out for each other is what makes this place so special.

• For that you have my personal thanks and the thanks of your colleagues and the university as a whole.

• And while you can look back with satisfaction on the work you did in 2016,

• next year is going to present new challenges and

• new opportunities for the demonstration of professional excellence.

• I look forward to working through the year with you.

• Thankyou.