

New Centre for Eye Health appoints inaugural director

Prominent vision researcher Professor Michael Kalloniatis has been appointed the inaugural director of Sydney's new Centre for Eye Health (CfEH). An initiative of Guide Dogs NSW/ACT and The University of New South Wales (UNSW), the centre will provide state-of-the-art eye and visual system diagnostic services to the general community at no charge.



Professor Kalloniatis was the Robert G Leitch Chair and Head of the Department of Optometry and Vision Science (DOVS) at the University of Auckland. During his seven years with the university, he saw the department double its student numbers, introduce undergraduate and post-graduate therapeutic training and estab-

lish a strong research base through the attraction of competitive research grants.

In collaboration with the Department of Ophthalmology, Professor Kalloniatis was

also instrumental in setting up the New Zealand National Eye Centre, which opened during 2008. Like that facility, Centre for Eye Health will undertake research and aims to

eliminate preventable blindness and reduce vision impairment.

"Centre for Eye Health is an exciting initiative that will transform the provision of ocular imaging services in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory," says Professor Kalloniatis.

"Vision impairment comes at an enormous cost to the Australian community (1), yet half of vision impairment is correctable and one quarter is preventable if diagnosed and managed early. It is therefore vital that the broader community has access to advanced eye-testing equipment with the ability to identify many conditions - such as glaucoma, macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy - before they make their impact."

Announcing Professor Kalloniatis' appointment, CfEH and Guide Dogs NSW/ACT Chairman, Mr Barry Stephen said, "We are pleased to have attracted such a high-quality candidate for

this new position. Michael's work in ophthalmic academia, practice and research means he has the necessary experience to direct this world-class centre, which will provide an enormous service to the community in reducing preventable blindness.

"Guide Dogs NSW/ACT chose to take this unique approach after consulting with its clients. They indicated their support for the expansion of our services into the area of prevention, as well as the mobility and orientation services we have traditionally offered."

Targeting people who already have impaired vision and those with eye conditions that could lead to vision impairment, CfEH expects to service thousands of patients annually. From July 2009, these people can be referred to the centre by their general practitioner or eye-care practitioner.

(1) In 2004, the total cost of vision disorder in Australia was estimated at A\$9.85 billion. Clear Insight - The Economic Impact and Cost of Vision Loss in Australia, prepared by Access Economics Pty Ltd for Eye Research Australia (2004)

HEART-STARTERS TO SAVE LIVES ON CITYRAIL NETWORK

Premier Nathan Rees today announced that the NSW Government would invest over \$900,000 to rollout 100 life saving defibrillators across CityRail's busiest stations. Premier Rees said research shows that the chances of surviving a cardiac arrest improve dramatically when Automated External Defibrillators can be used quickly.

"Defibrillators are common on commercial aircraft and in airports but this is the first major rollout by a public transport operator in Australia," Mr Rees said.

"More than 100 of the devices are being rolled out to the busiest points on the rail network and include the latest technology in emergency cardiac treatment.

"Around 500,000 people use CityRail services every working day and I have no doubt that the defibrillators will save lives."

The current survival rate from a sudden cardiac arrest outside a hospital is less than 5%. However, if someone receives defibrillation within the first 3 minutes, their chance of survival improves to well over 50% - these units really can save lives.

Once the unit is activated a signal confirming this is sent to the supplier and an ambulance summoned to the site automatically.

The units also contain a GPS signalling device that will help guide the ambulance to the location of the emergency.

Sydney University Modern Greek Prizes

The School of Languages and Cultures of the University of Sydney recently held its Annual Prize-Giving Ceremony, with three students of Modern Greek being amongst the recipients. The prizes are presented by the various departments and are sponsored by individuals, cultural organisations and corporations.

The 2009 G.S. Caird Scholarship in second year Modern Greek went to KARLY PANTOULIS. This prize is for the student who has shown the greatest proficiency in second year studies and proceeds to third year Modern Greek.

The 2009 G.S. Caird Scholarship in second year Modern Greek went to MARCUS RAYMOND HARVEY. This prize is for the student who has shown the greatest proficiency in third year studies and proceeds to Honours in Modern Greek.

The 2009 Robert William Henderson Memorial Prize went to ELENI MARIA MARKETOS. The prize is awarded to the student who has displayed proficiency in second year Modern Greek as well as a genuine interest in Modern Hellenic culture.

Such recognition of endeavours in Modern Greek Studies at the tertiary level is an essential part of maintaining these programmes. They are a practical way for Australian Hellenic



associations (especially the regional brotherhoods) to show their support for Hellenic Studies in a practical way. Let us hope that in 2010, there will be a plethora of prizes for students of Hellenic civilisation at The University of Sydney.

The prizes were presented by Dr Anthony Dracopoulos, Senior Lecturer with the Department of Modern Greek at The University of Sydney. Also in attendance were his colleague Dr Panayota Nazou, the Modern Greek Studies lecturer at Macquarie University, Dr Elisavet Kefallinou, as well as friends and family of the prize recipients. The

Australian Hellenic Educators' Association was represented by Dr Panayiotis Diamadis (President) and Mr Dimitrios Kametopoulos (Vice-President), both Modern Greek Studies graduates of The University of Sydney.

If your brotherhood is interested in establishing a prize for Modern Greek Studies at The University of Sydney, please contact Associate Professor Vrasidas Karalis (vrasidas.karalis@usyd.edu.au), Dr Anthony Dracopoulos (anthony.dracopoulos@usyd.edu.au) or Dr Panayota Nazou (panayota.nazou@usyd.edu.au).