Since its opening two years ago, Atmosphere Health and Fitness Club has been helping a growing number of clients realise their health and fitness goals. Now the five-star Penrith facility has undergone an impressive makeover and will mark the occasion with an exciting launch event and open weekend on October 14 and 15.

Staff will unveil two new fitness areas and brand new sauna in the grand club that has proven to be far more than a traditional gym. “The day is a great opportunity for people who haven’t been to the club before to come down and see what we’re all about,” said assistant manager Rebecca Browne.

Festivities will kick off at 7am with a wholesome breakfast served up by the people behind the club’s Nutrition Station which dishes up nutritionist-approved and tasty meals from its breakfast, lunch and dinner menus.

A range of classes will get underway from 6am to give visitors the chance to see what Atmosphere has to offer.

A DJ will entertain the crowd and the day will also include competitions, prizes and giveaways.

And the first 50 people that join Atmosphere on the day will receive a complimentary one-hour treatment at Revive Health Retreat, the club’s luxury day spa – the ideal place to relax and be pampered. (T & Cs apply).

Atmosphere Health and Fitness Club has continued to grow and evolve from its humble roots as a multi-sport studio. Today the club boasts 10 separate training studios run by specially trained staff and features state-of-the-art equipment.

Atmosphere is much more than a traditional gym. Owners Kristelle and Peter started the club with a vision to cater for everyone - whether you’re an elite athlete preparing for a competition, a fitness enthusiast looking to achieve a health goal or you just simply want to work out in a welcoming, non-intimidating environment.

“The re-launch is all about introducing our new spaces which were built to cater for the growth we’ve experienced,” Rebecca said.

More and more people have discovered our club and our membership base has continued to grow.”

Check out the new Atmosphere Health and Fitness Club training zones at 16-19 Lambridge Place, Penrith on Saturday, October 14 from 7.30am.

Details: 4760 0700 or www.atmospherefitness.com.au.
AWAKEN SLEEPING GIANT

Meet the team behind the new Sydney Zoo: P10

Bank of mum & dad grows: P3

Harry’s Cafe de Wheels closes: P4

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**Bank of Mum and Dad among the biggest lenders**

**DALLAS SHERRINGHAM**

The “Bank of Mum and Dad” is now Western Sydney’s fifth largest mortgage lender. It means Western “oldies” who own their own home are also turning out to be “goodies” in the truest sense of the word.

You see, parents sit just behind the big four banks according to new research from financial comparison website Mozo.com.au, as reported in the Urban Designer newsletter.

Sitting behind the big four banks – ANZ, Commonwealth Bank, NAB and Westpac – the rate of parents lending reveals that many first-home buyers are unable to independently take their first step on to the property ladder.

Around 29 per cent of Australian families in financial assistance to their children, equating to a national figure of around 1.02 million families. On average, first-home buyers have borrowed $64,306 – a national total of $65.3 billion.

Mozo Director Kirsty Lamont said for many first-home buyers, it could take years to scrimp and save for a home deposit, all the while house prices continue to skyrocket, becoming increasingly inaccessible.

“We’re seeing the Bank of Mum and Dad playing a huge part in helping children take their first step towards acquiring a home,” she said.

With Australian property prices rising by 61.8 per cent over the past 30 years and national incomes failing to keep up, the Bank of Mum and Dad is proof of families’ generosity but also points to a broken property market for younger generations.

NSW is the most generous state for parental lending with an average lend of $88,250 per family, totaling $32.7 billion. VIC and SA rank second, lending around $63,000 per family, while ACT and NT are the least generous, lending $20,083 and $15,000 per family respectively.

Mozo’s Bank of Mum and Dad survey found that the most popular ways for parents to help their kids get a foot on the property ladder are allowing their child to live at home rent free while saving for a deposit and contributing money towards a deposit. Other options included acting as a guarantor, assisting with repayments, or buying property on behalf of or as a partner of the child.

Lamont said the sheer lack of family assistance can be a deal breaker as to whether or not the younger generations have the opportunity to purchase their own property.

“While it may be cause for despair there are ways for first home buyers to save for a deposit without the help of Mum and Dad,” she said.

“From ditching credit card debt to looking at first home owner grants in your state, there are ways to make your first home purchase a possibility.”

To help their kids onto the property ladder, 66 per cent of parental lenders have chipped into their own savings while 26 per cent have cut back on expenses and 13 per cent have pulled equity from their own home.

The majority (67%) did not expect repayment for their contribution while 29% expected payment in part or full, without interest.

The most expensive methods of helping children are buying property on behalf of the child (costing parental lenders an average $231,760) and buying the property as a partner ($155,762).

Assisting with repayments is costs an average $31,711 while allowing kids to live at home rent-free costs an average $25,441.

**Unemployment at a nine-year low**

Unemployment in Western Sydney is at its lowest level since September 2008, said NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrottet and Minister for Western Sydney Stuart Ayres.

The unemployment rate of 5.5 per cent is the lowest in almost a decade and highlights the outcomes in the government’s infrastructure delivery and economic reforms, Minister Ayres said.

“The five largest employing industries in Western Sydney are Healthcare (10.8 per cent), Construction (10.8 per cent), Retail (10.7 per cent), Manufacturing (9.6 per cent) and Professional services (8.1 per cent).”

Western Sydney is the powerhouse of the NSW economy and it is charging ahead with our construction and business activity,” Mr Perrottet said.

Minister Ayres said with business confidence climbing in Western Sydney it would lead to more jobs, sustained growth and an improved standard of living for everyone across the state.
Golf course for sale
THE nine-hole Rum Corp Barracks golf course, at Windsor, is for sale. The price tag on the 20-hectare property overlooking the Hawkesbury River is $3.99 million. Chinese buyers reportedly have expressed interest.

Night time economy focus
PARRAMATTA’S Booming Night Time Economy discussion paper identifies The Parramatta CBD, Harris Park and Epping as locations which should be the focus of growth in the night time economy.

Office sold for $3.3M
A PRIVATE occupier has bought a 950-square-metre office and warehouse, at 31 Lennox Place, Villawood, from Wallace and Margarita Rowdal for $3.2 million. The building is leased to Boeing Traders.

Value to economy
ECOMONIC benefits of Parramatta’s night time economy was valued at $908.7 million in 2015, having grown 13 per cent since 2009. This growth has largely been in cafes and restaurants which has grown 43 per cent during 2009-2015.

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NORTH WEST

$35M investment in city
PENRITH City Council has approved five six-storey apartment buildings totalling a $35M investment. The number of apartments totals 180.

Contract awards contract
PENRITH City Council has awarded co-ordinated Landscapes Pty Ltd a contract worth $1.3M for the Erskine Business Park Improvement Project.

Khushboo Foods signs
KHUSHBOO Foods has signed a two-year agreement for a 146-square-metre warehouse, at 4/25 Amax Avenue, Girraween, for an annual rental of $16,950.

$26M car park
NSW hospital builders Health Infrastructure proposes the construction of a new six-level car park for 627 vehicles and a helipad atop the building, at Blacktown Hospital, valued at $26 million. This will be the first stage of the government’s $576 million hospital upgrade.

SOUTH WEST

Bought for $1.75M
SASHA Group has bought a 710-square-metre warehouse, at 19 Memorial Avenue, Ingleburn, for $1.75M, from Rodney Hemaridis and Darryl White.

Daikin leases new space
DAIKIN Australia has leased 33,278 square metres of office and warehouse space, at Stocklands 11-hectare Warrick Farm industrial business park for 10 years. It will be an expansion of its nearby facility, at 200 Governor Macquarie Drive.

New headquarters
READY-meal business, My Muscle Chef Pty Ltd, at Condell Park, has signed a five-year lease on a new headquarters, at 29 Yennora Avenue, Yennora, from a private investor, at $115 a square metre gross.

CENTRAL WEST

NAN Cables leases
NAN Cables has leased a 4372-square-metre industrial building, on a 8135-square-metre site at 6 Carter Street, Homebush, from a private investor for $135 a square metre on a five-year lease.

$2.2B housing estate
A CONSORTIUM consisting of community housing provider Mission Australia Housing, developers Frasers Property Australia and Citta Property Group has been appointed by the NSW government to redevelop a $2.2B social housing estate in Macquarie Park.

Value to economy
ECOMONIC benefits of Parramatta’s night time economy was valued at $908.7 million in 2015, having grown 13 per cent since 2009. This growth has largely been in cafes and restaurants which has grown 43 per cent during 2009-2015.

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Regional Roundup

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Costco joins other big hitters

RED DWYER

US bulk discount retailer Costco has opened its latest bricks-and-mortar store in Western Sydney with plans for an online presence within the next 12-18 months.

The store in the fast-growing Sydney Business Park, in Marsden Park, represents the company’s third outlet in Sydney – others being at Casula and Lidcombe – and ninth in Australia.

The once underdeveloped suburb has been “completely transformed” in the past five years with major retailers locating in the 256-hectare Sydney Business Park precinct.

“The construction of the Costco Marsden Park store, spanning 13,575 square metres, was in the order of $40 million.

The outlet includes a Costco fuel station, tyre centre, food court, optometrist, hearing aid services and fresh food production, plus parking for 719 vehicles.

The new store expects to create an estimated 280 new full-time equivalent jobs for the North West Sydney community.

“The Sydney Business Park, is fast becoming a major shopping and warehouse distribution and logistics destination for the region,” according to the park’s project manager, Owen Walsh.

“The next five years will see even more dramatic transformation with major commercial towers to be built as well as a major town centre,” he said.

By 2025, the surrounding North West Growth Centre is expected to support 177,000 new residents and 61,900 new homes.”

Sydney Business Park’s future plans include a 6000 square-metre pub and craft brewery and a set of four 32,000 square metre office tower buildings.

Costco joins other retailers including Aldi, Baby & Toddler Town, Beacon Lighting, Bunnings Warehouse, Carpet Call, Coles Express, Home Consortium Marsden Park, Home Hub Marsden Park, Ikea, JB Hi-Fi Home, Knotts Pine, Lindt Factory Outlet, Repco, Shell, Snooze, and The Good Guys, among others.

BRIEFS

Penrith tourism boost

MORE domestic and international tourists are visiting Penrith and staying for longer to experience the region’s attractions and experiences. New visitor research reveals the number of overnight international visitors in Penrith has increased by 26 per cent and domestic overnight visitors by 52.4 per cent over the 2015/16 period.

So far, Sydney Business Park has secured approximately $600 million in investment to date, on track as part of the broader $3 billion project in one of Australia’s largest large format retail centres, spanning 155,000 square metres of floor space.

Club at Gregory Hills

THE well-known Moorebank Sports Club has permission from Camden Council to build the Gregory Hills Sporties, along Rodeo Road, Gregory Hills.

Moorebank Sports Club purchased 14,000 square metres of land in order to build the 3063-square-metre club, which will have a service capacity for 1712 patrons. It is anticipated construction of the club will be completed within three years.

The homes will be delivered under the NSW Government’s Social and Affordable Housing Fund.

For more information or to register your interest contact Compass’ Group Chief Corporate Services Officer Lyndall Robertshaw on 4920 2600 or email developments@compasshousing.org
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Tunnelling on NorthConnex hits halfway

MOTORISTS are one step closer to skipping 21 sets of lights on Pennant Hills Road, with construction of the NorthConnex twin tunnels reaching the halfway point today.

NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian, Minister for Urban Infrastructure Paul Fletcher and Minister for Transport Andrew Constance marked the major project milestone which will change transport in NorthWest Sydney for a generation.

“It is great to see the project powering towards the finish line,” Ms Berejiklian said.

“Once complete, motorists will be able to travel from Newcastle to Melbourne without stopping at a single set of lights. “NorthConnex will save up to 15 minutes of travel time compared to using Pennant Hills Road, letting people spend more time with their families and less time in traffic.”

Mr Fletcher said there are 20 road headerers working 24 hours a day, seven days a week to deliver this long overdue piece of vital infrastructure which will form part of the National Highway route.

“So far almost 11 out of 21 kilometres of future road has been excavated with the project on schedule to deliver congestion relief to the thousands of motorists currently stuck in traffic on Pennant Hills Road each day,” Mr Fletcher said.

Mr Constance said the project was progressing at a cracking pace.

“Tunnelling is progressing at around 400 metres per week with light at the end of the tunnel for motorists,” Mr Constance said.

State Hornsby MP Matt Kean said more than 1.3 million cubic metres of spoil had been removed from the project so far.

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State Hornsby MP Matt Kean said more than 1.3 million cubic metres of spoil had been removed from the project so far.

Federal Berowra MP Julian Leeser said local motorists were counting down until the project’s opening.

“The Australian and NSW governments have each committed $412.33M towards the $3B project.

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Awaken the sleeping giant

Cage-free zoo to show attractions from around the world and drive tourism

A

PROVAL for the controversial $36 million cage-free Sydney Zoo in Blacktown is set to stir the visitor market – “a sleeping giant” – in Western Sydney.

Western Sydney currently delivers $4.2B in visitor spending but needed to overcome key challenges to leverage the potential expenditure, according to Destination NSW.

“Western Sydney” already has a strong [visitor] appeal … but we know there is still more we can do to grow visitation even further,” said the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Adam Marshall, when launching the Western Sydney Tourism Economy Strategy.

The Western Sydney Business Chamber and the Western Sydney Business Connection will receive $200,000 from the government to deliver several activities which will help the government to determine the most effective model to deliver future visitor economy initiatives for Western Sydney,” he said.

Sydney Zoo Pty Ltd would build the attraction on a 16.5-hectare site, at Bungarribee, within the Western Sydney Parklands.

Sydney Zoo would showcase attractions from around the world and native Australian wildlife, with the animals in a similar, but significantly smaller, open-range setting to that at the 300-hectare Taronga Western Plains Zoo, in Dubbo.

The proposal attracted scores of submissions for and against the project.

Featherdale Wildlife Park, on 3.1 hectares at Doonside, six kilometres from the proposed zoo, feared the competitive nature of the zoo would create a “tourism cluster”.

Concerns expressed by the Taronga Conservation Society Australia included the size of the zoo to cater to the range of animals to be displayed and the welfare, quarantine and veterinary care of the animals.

Two significant organisations in Western Sydney, namely, Western Sydney University and the Western Sydney Business Connection, noted the potential attraction of the zoo and the overall economic development of the region.

The NSW Planning Assessment Commission approved the project, first proposed in 2015, on September 8, 2017, subject to conditions.

Following the approval the Minister for Western Sydney, Stuart Ayres, said the zoo would offer an “unparalleled” tourism experience and boost the economy.

“The Construction of Sydney Zoo will mean a $61M shot in the arm for the NSW economy and create 160 full-time jobs during construction with 120 full-time jobs in place during operation,” he said.

Margy Osmond, CEO, Tourism & Transport Forum, said the Western Sydney visitor economy was a “sleeping giant [with] the potential to become the engine room of the NSW economy”.

Sydney Zoo is scheduled to open before the 2018 summer school holidays, expecting around 745,000 visitors a year.

Burgess boys bring zoo to the west

A

IMALS and nature conservation have long been passions for John and Jake Burgess, the father and son team behind the proposed Sydney Zoo.

The Burgess family’s love of nature and wildlife has been honed with avid bushwalking and wildlife experiences around the world in places such as South America, India, Africa and Papua New Guinea.

The two businessmen got their idea of putting their passion into a business while living in New Zealand.

“A neighbour was involved in the construction of Kelly Tarbotton’s Underwater World in Auckland in 1985,” John Burgess told WSBA.

“We captured our imagination and by 1986, we had secured the site for Sydney Aquarium at Darling Harbour. It was the largest aquarium in the world at the time it opened in 1988.”

Sydney Wildlife Park, also in Darling Harbour, opened in 2006.

Jake Burgess grew up around the Aquarium and understands the fascination, excitement and joy that zoos and aquaria bring to children and families.

So, when the bid for Sydney Zoo came up, father and son jumped at the chance.

Facing up to criticism that zoos are cruel to animals, Mr Burgess Sr said the animals in his zoo would be “rockstars”, uncaged and roaming, to give visitors a safari experience.

John Burgess has emphasised that the facility, while called a zoo, will be a “custodial and native animal conservation sanctuary.”

He said the zoo would run an animal breeding program for threatened and endangered species including Asian elephants, lowland gorillas and tigers.

Mr Burgess said safari animals would be supplied from breeding programs in other Australian zoos.

After nearby Featherdale complained about perceived damage to their business by the recently approved $36 null zoo, the State Government imposed restrictions on hands-on contact with koalas, which is Featherdale’s main attraction.

Mr Burgess Sr is working with Ken Allen’s Allen Partners and Stuart Capital Partners to raise the equity.

It is understood that the trio has found support for 80 per cent of the deal from the investor market.

The sanctuary is estimated to bring $61 million to Western Sydney, mostly through jobs during construction and in the running of the facility.

Mr Burgess wants the zoo to be affordable for families, with free parking and picnic areas.

He said his zoo would not be harming Taronga Zoo’s business as most visitors would come from Western Sydney.

John Burgess.

Jake Burgess.
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Apprentice numbers on the increase

T’s one of the biggest hurdles facing business training in Western Sydney, but there now seems to be a light at the end of the apprenticeship tunnel.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Skills John Barilaro said new data showed the number of people taking up apprenticeships or traineeships in NSW continued to climb in positive signs for the state’s vocational education and training (VET) sector.

Mr Barilaro said the latest report from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) showed a 2.3 per cent increase in NSW apprenticeship and traineeship starts in the year to March 2017 compared to the year to March 2016.

“The latest research is great news for the NSW and shows 47,100 people started an apprenticeship or traineeship in NSW in the year to March 2017, a 2.3 per cent gain on the previous year,” Mr Barilaro said.

These latest NCVER results also show growth of 1.5 percent in the number of NSW people taking up trades like plumbing, carpentry and electro-technology which will support our industry sectors which are facing skills shortages.

This research comes on the back of an NCVER report released in July which showed government funded VET student numbers in NSW grew by 38 per cent in 2016 under the Smart and Skilled system – significantly higher than a national increase of 3.3 per cent.

In August the NSW Government launched the “Doors to Opportunity” VET campaign to change perceptions around the industry and encourage people to consider VET as a credible alternative to university.

For more information on the “Doors to Opportunity” campaign, visit: www.vet.nsw.gov.au

BRIEFS

$22M centre for Arnott’s

ARNOTT’S is now operating from a $22 million “multi-pack” centre, at its Huntingwood factory, to become more environmentally friendly. The Huntingwood factory employs 529 people.

$930,000 rowing centre

A $930,000 centre to be known as the Hancock Prospecting Women’s National Training Centre, on the Nepean River, at Penrith, will be home to 25 elite women rowers, who with coaching and operational staff will relocate to the city.

Vivin Imports leases

NSW-based furniture manufacturer and importer Vivin Imports has signed a seven-year agreement with Frasers Property Australia to lease a purpose-built 26,055 square metre office-warehouse facility, within the 21.4-hectare Horley Drive Business Park, Vivin Imports is one of Australia’s largest furniture importers and wholesalers.

Homeowners sell for $80M

FIFTY-five homeowners in Macquarie Park, overlooking Macquarie Centre, have sold four apartment blocks to a private developer for $80M. Ninety-one per cent of the neighbours agreed to combine their properties in a bid to further evolve the master planned community of Macquarie Park.

 Buy a slice of the Sydney Motorway

T HE NSW Government has called for qualified parties to register their interest in the sale of 51 per cent of Sydney Motorway Corporation (SMC), the company delivering WestConnex.

WestConnex is a critical missing link in the Sydney road network and will transform the way motorists, freight and tradies move through the city, boosting economic growth.

Treasurer Dominic Perrottet and Minister for WestConnex Stuart Ayres said unlocking value in the SMC to help fund Stage 3 – the M4-M5 Link – is in line with the Government’s highly successful asset recycling strategy.

“This is a unique opportunity to invest in the most significant road infrastructure project in the nation, in Australia’s most populous state and strongest economy,” Mr Perrottet said.

“Partnering with the private sector allows us to fast-track delivery and crack on with building the crucial final stage so motorists feel the full benefits of the link between the M4 and M5 as soon as possible,”

Mr Ayres said the project would do for Western Sydney what the Sydney Harbour Bridge did for the North Shore 85 years ago, creating around 10,000 jobs, reducing travel times and keeping Sydney moving.

WestConnex is projected to cut 40 minutes from an average peak journey between Parramatta and Sydney Airport. Once the M4 tunnels are complete in 2019, motorists will be able to travel from Penrith to the western edge of the CBD without stopping at a single traffic light.

Qualified parties have until 10.00am on Monday, November 13 2017 (Australian Eastern Daylight Time) to register their interest. Bidders will also be provided with an opportunity to submit proposals for the trip processing platform associated with WestConnex and the E-Toll account management platform.

The State will retain 49% of the SMC and its assets.
News

Greg to mend Cumberland’s disconnect

EWLY elected Cumberland councillor Greg Cummings is keen to get back to work serving his local community.

The former Holroyd mayor was ousted from the council last year after the State Government’s amalgamation plan saw the councillors sacked and the area merge with parts of Auburn and Parramatta.

Mr Cummings vowed to make a return and he did with a triumphant result at the September local government election. He then toppled that after being elected Mayor at the council’s first meeting following the election.

Cr Cummings is one of eight Labor councillors who will join five Liberal councillors and two Our Local Community members to form council.

The result was bitter sweet, he said, after a recount saw the number two candidate on his Labor ticket, Glen Richardson, miss out to Our Local Community’s Eddie Sarkis.

“I am disturbed at the way these decisions are made by a computer and an algorithm,” Cr Cummings said of the NSW Electoral Commission’s “outdated” system to distribute preferences.

So where to start after a year of council being run by an administrator?

“I’m keen to start out but there is a lot of work to do,” Cr Cummings said.

Morale among council staff is low. There has been a total disconnect between the council and the community. Unfortunately it will take time to fix that.

The first step, Cr Cummings said, would be to reinstate advisory committees that had previously been disbanded “so different community groups have a conduit to council”.

Cr Cummings said the poll taken at the election – whether residents support the council operating the five public swimming pools in the local government area – was a “no-brainer”. More than 78 per cent voted in favour of the council subsidising the running of the pools.

“I think it was a waste of money because it was always going to be the case,” he said.

Our Local Community party founder and former Parramatta Lord Mayor Paul Garrard was elected to the South Granville ward.

Cr Sarkis was elected deputy mayor.

The Hills Shire Liberal councillor Michelle Byrne was popularly elected mayor by public vote.

Our Community leads in Parramatta

TWO Our Local Community party members have been elected to the helm of Parramatta Council.

Andrew Wilson is Lord Mayor for the next two years while colleague Michelle Garrard was elected Deputy Lord Mayor for the next 12 months.

The party has carved an impressive path, securing a total of four spots at two councils (Parramatta and Cumberland) at its first election since the party was registered.

Party founder Paul Garrard, who served for almost 40 years on Parramatta Council and was recently elected to neighbouring Cumberland Council, said the result surpassed “all our expectations”.

“To have two people from our party elected to Cumberland and two in Parramatta in our first activity in local government is a great result,” he said.

Cr Garrard’s daughter, Michelle Garrard, said she was pleased to be able to continue her father’s legacy in Parramatta after being elected to the Dundas ward and said she was delighted with her appointment as Deputy Lord Mayor.

However, she conceded it had been overshadowed by reports that Cr Wilson spoiled a secret deal that would have seen Labor’s Pierre Esber elected to the top job.

“There may have been some miscommunication between our parties,” a reserved Cr Garrard said.

Regardless of which team we chose to deal with, I always had support from the deputy Lord Mayor and that’s very exciting for me. It’s a major achievement.”

Cr Wilson thanked the councillors for “the faith they have shown in me.”

“We have a strong team and I look forward to working collaboratively with all of the councillors to serve the people of Parramatta,” he said.

“This is an important time for Parramatta and as Lord Mayor I will be committed to ensuring Council is focused on the day-to-day issues that matter to our residents, as well as the major projects that are changing the face of our city.”

Asked if he had any advice for Cr Wilson, Cr Garrard, a former Lord Mayor of Parramatta, quipped: “Yeah, to read our party policy. It’s important now that we stick to our values.”

Parramatta Council is led by six Liberals, five Labor, two Our Local Community, Lorraine Wearne of Lorraine Wearne Independents and one Greens.

Let’s guard against the phoenix

■ EMMA MCBRIDE

LAST year I met a local family with a small plastering business.

A building company they were contracting to became insolvent and, as was the case with many other local businesses, the plastering company was left with unpaid invoices of around $30,000.

A debt of this size is incredibly difficult for a family owned, small business to absorb. For many, it will take years to overcome the setback; some never recover.

This family, expecting their first child, told me of their distress when they discovered the proprietor of the failed company was once again operating a business in the residential construction industry, shortly after the former venture had failed.

Their story is far too common.

There is an issue plaguing the construction industry and hurting small businesses, including those in Western Sydney.

Phoenixing – named after the myth of a phoenix, the bird that is reborn from its ashes – is where assets are stripped from a company, bankruptcy is declared, creditors (including the ATO) are left with debts, only for the company director to start up again, debt-free.

In 2015 the Productivity Commission estimated that some 2,000 companies were engaged in phoenix activity each year. This behavior is particularly rife in the building and construction sector.

Current laws are too weak to deter phoenixing. A Senate Inquiry into insolvency in the Australian construction industry found that, over the past decade, up to a quarter of all insolvencies in Australia were in construction.

In Western Sydney there are many thousands of businesses in operation. Of these, a significant proportion are in the construction industry.

This is reflected nationally. The latest data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows construction has the highest number of businesses operating in Australia, with a count of 146,499 businesses in June 2016.

There is a culture problem plaguing the sector, made up largely of sole trader and small business contractors in the industry.

There have been numerous enquiries spanning decades, but every year there are still subcontractors not getting paid for the work they have done.

The construction industry is reported to have around $3B in unpaid debts each year, including subcontractor payments, employee entitlements and tax debts.

The Labor Opposition has proposed a series of measures, supported by the Parliamentary Budget Office, including a requirement for all company directors to have a unique director identification number with a 100 point identification check; increasing the penalties associated with phoenix activity; introducing an objective test for transactions depriving employees of their entitlements; and clarifying the compensation orders against accessories.

The Productivity Commission, the Australian Institute of Company Directors, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Master Builders Australia, the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the Australian Restructuring Insolvency and Turnaround Association and the Tax Justice Network have all supported the proposal for a director identification number.

The director identification number with a 100 point ID check is important – currently it is tougher to open a bank account than to become a director. This would enable government agencies and other bodies to track company directors for their relationships to other companies and other people.

Recently, the Government announced its support for the Directors Identity Number project and we look forward to seeing further details about this measure.

Small businesses and sub-contractors in the construction industry need certainty that they will be paid for the work they do. We know that most small businesses are micro operators; hardworking, family businesses where working in the business generally takes priority to working on the business.

We need to ensure small businesses are protected from incurring large losses through unethical business practices of lead contractors and operators.

Emma McBride MP is the Federal Member for Dobell.
Business Information Session

Parramatta Light Rail has made an additional commitment to understand the needs of local businesses along the alignment as part of planning for construction and operation of Stage 1. By doing this, the project aims to improve access, and create great public spaces to attract customers to the region's growing retail and business centres.

Parramatta Light Rail Program Director Tim Poole said that understanding and supporting local businesses is a priority and the project team will be working alongside Transport for NSW's Sydney Co-ordination Office, City of Parramatta and a number of other organisations and agencies to assist with business activation and targeted initiatives to ensure Parramatta remains open for business.

"Businesses will have already been door-knocked by one of the four Place Managers who have been specifically engaged as part of the project to ensure businesses have the information they need," Mr Poole said.

"We now have clear and effective channels of communication between local businesses and the project team."

The Parramatta Light Rail Advisory Group is another way the project is bringing together key stakeholders, the community and businesses on the journey.

The Advisory Group met for the first time in late August with the purpose of tapping into local expertise and viewpoints to guide the efforts of the Parramatta Light Rail team in delivering the project and to ensure the needs of stakeholders, community and businesses along the alignment are represented.

Transport for NSW Sydney Co-ordination Office Coordinator General Marg Prendergast presented an overview of the activities that her team will implement in Parramatta, in collaboration with local businesses and the City of Parramatta Council.

"Part of keeping Sydney moving means supporting local businesses as the pipeline of record infrastructure investment rolls out across the Sydney CBD and Parramatta," she said.

"We work with hundreds of small businesses and stakeholders like local chambers of commerce to design local level activations that promote businesses and foot traffic throughout busy construction periods."

"This includes local area marketing for shops and cafes on social media, customer focussed signage and wayfinding as well as pop-up events to attract new comers to local shopping districts."

Parramatta Chamber of Commerce President David Hill said that he was looking forward to working with the project team on this exciting development in Parramatta.

"We need to call on Parramatta businesses to contribute their thoughts on what they want to see happen and bring them on the light rail journey," he said.

A dedicated Environmental Impact Statement information session just for businesses has been organised by the project team.

The Parramatta Light Rail Business Information Session will be held on Thursday October 12 from 7am to 11am at Novotel Parramatta on 350 Church Street in Parramatta.

The drop-in session will provide an opportunity for businesses to learn about:

- Parramatta Light Rail and speak directly with the project team to answer any questions about the Environmental Impact Statement.
- How Parramatta Light Rail will work with the Sydney Co-ordination Office to manage impacts on businesses during construction and operation including business activation and support with targeted initiatives such as Travel Choices.
- Identifying measures to maintain pedestrian activity during construction.
- Identifying opportunities through construction contracts to provide respite for businesses through quiet-work or no-work periods at specific times of the day.
- The Business Connect Program, linking businesses directly with Advisors to access advice to support and enhance their business before, during and after construction of the light rail.

Environmental Impact Statement Update

Transport for NSW has prepared an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 to address design options and the associated potential environmental and social impacts arising during construction and operation of the proposed project.

The project must undergo an environmental impact assessment under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act).

Approval from the NSW Minister for Planning is required following public exhibition before Transport for NSW can proceed with construction of the project.

The Parramatta Light Rail project team has been holding community information sessions during the exhibition period.

The community has been able to drop in at any time and ask questions about the project.

During August and September, around 250 people attended six sessions along the preferred Parramatta Light Rail route.

As part of the environmental assessment process, you are encouraged to make a formal submission to the Department of Planning and Environment.

Making a submission through the EIS process is your chance to 'Have your say' on the Parramatta Light Rail proposal.

Submissions can be made in writing and can be lodged either electronically or via mail. The full EIS and its accompanying documents may be viewed on the Department of Planning and Environment's website: www.majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au.

For more information about the project, visit the Parramatta Light Rail website at www.parramattalighttrail.nsw.gov.au or call the Project Information Line on 1800 684 490.
Western Sydney’s latest major infrastructure project is one step closer with the Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 Environmental Impact Statement now on public exhibition to enable the community to have its say.

Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 will connect Westmead to Carlingford via Parramatta CBD and Camellia with a 12 kilometre route, and is expected to open in 2023.

The Parramatta Light Rail project team is committed to keeping local businesses along the route informed on details in the Environmental Impact Statement for Stage 1 including key benefits, urban design, and the impacts of construction and operation.

Businesses along the light rail route are invited to attend an Information Session where the project team will be available to answer questions about the Environmental Impact Statement for Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1. Drop in anytime during the session time below:

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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>7am – 11am</td>
<td>Novotel Sydney</td>
<td>350 Church Street Parramatta NSW 2150</td>
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<td>12 October 2017</td>
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The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Parramatta Light Rail Stage 1 will be exhibited by the Department of Planning and Environment from August 23 to October 23 2017.

To make a submission, visit the Department of Planning and Environment at http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au

Alternatively, you can find out more about Parramatta Light Rail at www.parramattalightrail.nsw.gov.au or by calling the project information line on 1800 684 490.
LANCING for future ownership and succession is one of the most pressing concerns for every family business. So what type of help is effective?

Whilst some families implement succession effectively and with a minimum of fuss, others are reluctant to embrace change. Such families often accept compromises ‘for now’ so that business and family life can continue ‘at a tolerable level of anxiety’ — a practical description of a situation where everyone knows that key decisions about the future are being put off. Unfortunately, this can expose the family to the risk of unplanned events, such as the death or illness of a key family member or a business crisis. Everyone knows that delay is worrisome and risky, but it is also human and understandable.

Succession planning often feels threatening to families. This is hardly surprising, when one considers that a network of harmonious family relationships, family members’ careers, status, family reputation and money are all at stake.

Also, as human beings, we have a biological reaction to perceived threats.

• Confront the threat (fight)

• Run away (flight)

• Do nothing (freeze) — pretending the threat is not there, hoping it passes without damage being suffered

Families often prefer to take evasive action — flight or freeze rather than suffering further stress by trying to deal with — or fight — the issues that are causing anxiety.

The good news is that there is a growing body of knowledge and practice about how business families can cope effectively with succession planning and change.

This is not just about providing technical information or a tax solution, although these are always part of the economic equation.

Rather, it is about providing practical help with the process of making crucial decisions about creating and transferring wealth, power, roles and titles, while being fair, loving and considerate with the family and their business interests.

The effective and helpful family business adviser should have plenty of information about how other families have navigated succession, but they also must know how to facilitate discussions on sensitive matters between generations of the same family and sometimes other stakeholders, like non-family directors and trustees.

This requires hard knowledge about how to balance the competing priorities.

It is particularly important that change is led from the top, by the senior family members. For example, only the seniors can address the affordability of retirement and contemplate life outside the family business.

For example, only the seniors can address the affordability of retirement and contemplate life outside the family business.

— Ken McCracken.

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MYTH: No one knows the market better than you

REALITY: Most businesses believe they know from experience what their market wants, but new data and analytics technologies can provide hard facts on what customers really expect, requiring a rethink in approach.

Following gut instinct has been an extremely successful strategy for some enterprises, with many long-standing businesses built off the back of an accurately perceived ‘gap in the market’, and catering to a ready supply of customers in need of that service.

But feelings and intuition won’t necessarily be enough to handle the rapid transformation the market is experiencing in the technology age, says Michel Alf, Director, KPMG Enterprise.

“Trends, tastes and functionalities are changing so quickly that it’s hard to keep up,” Alf says. “The greatest challenge is the rate of change. Even 10 or 20 years of experience won’t help much when something completely new and different comes along.

Many enterprises are biased towards supporting the instincts and beliefs that served them well in the past, making them less open to exploring new ideas or practices, says Brad Miller, Partner, KPMG Enterprise.

However, he says those that rely on this approach will soon be outpaced by competitors who use data and analytics technology to understand their customers, and are equipped to meet shifting customer demands and market circumstances.

“Companies that were previously not competitors may become so through disruption or expansion,” he says. “If they can generate the insights to meet customer behaviours – that creates a big risk to you.”

Getting closer to customers

Some enterprises don’t have a method for tracking how the demands of their customers are changing, Miller says, putting them at a clear disadvantage.

The key is customer centrivity: using customers as an agent for change, finding out what you can about them, and letting them tell you what is required, he explains.

“It starts with much stronger collaboration with your customers. It involves using data, but it can be in all forms and shapes, including customer roundtables and surveys.”

Use the data you have

While getting data savvy on your customers is vital, it doesn’t need to be a major financial investment, Miller says. Instead, look deeper into what you are already collecting.

“Get another perspective on your existing data. What can you learn from what you have already, opposed to your own intuition or gut feel?” Miller says that in addition to internal data, there is a raft of external information to draw upon, which could provide insights into consumer trends, demographic shifts, new developments, and other issues that could impact your business.

“What is becoming more prevalent is the amount of information you can source from other companies or public domain sources,” he says.

Data to back up your decisions

With a wealth of information available at your fingertips, the next step is to use it to support your decision making.

Alf suggests asking one question before deciding: What data backs it up?

“Just looking at the different angles, challenging the information and the sources of data drives a shift in mindset. People will become accustomed to gathering and analysing data, as well as thinking outside the box to discover what information they can draw upon to bring into their decision process,” he says.

It’s important to foster a culture of curiosity throughout the enterprise, Miller says.

“If you can create that culture, it starts an easier process of thinking about, what data do I have already, what data would I like to have, and how am I going to get it?”

Shifting from gut feel to facts not only makes your enterprise more insightful and competitive, but can help with profitability, Alf adds.

“You can use data to segment the profitability of products in certain areas. You can invest more into one area and make an impact. Having that deeper understanding, and not just looking at the information on an aggregated level, is a relatively easy first step.”

Franchises: are they right for you?

FEELINGS AND INTUITION WON’T NECESSARILY BE ENOUGH TO HANDLE THE RAPID TRANSFORMATION THE MARKET IS EXPERIENCING IN THE TECHNOLOGY AGE.”

– Michael Alf, Director, KPMG Enterprise.

LEANNE HEGARTY

Espitethe fact that some franchiseshave made the headlines for all the wrong reasons this year, many people still believe that owning a franchise is the ideal way to go into business. Franchising contributes more than $144 billion to Australia’s economy and the sector employs almost half a million people.

There’s every reason to believe in the dream. After all, you’re buying into a pre-existing and well-established model; there’s a head office that makes or builds the product and where you can go if you need advice; plus, you’re able to share in their marketing collateral to promote your franchise. What could possibly go wrong?

The answer, unfortunately, is plenty. According to research conducted by Griffith University and the University of NSW, not only do 10 percent of new businesses close at the end of their first year, but a large proportion of franchisees never seek independent financial advice before purchasing their franchise.

However, due diligence pays dividends.

Ask yourself how much you know about the product you are investing in. Do you like it and do you really want to work with it? Is it sustainable – you do not want to take charge of a business that will work in one State, but not another, for example, or will be supplanted by a brighter, better version within a few years. Similarly, how easy is delivery of the product – can you buy it locally, online? Many franchisees have lost out because of supply chain problems.

Be honest: are you confident that you will be able to take charge of the business from A to Z? As a small business owner, you are ultimately responsible for HR, IT, sales, marketing, financials and more. Do you have sufficient business experience to take on this enormous task, or access to advice and resources that will support you?

You may be a good salaried executive but that does not mean you will necessarily make a good business owner. And you must like the people who will become your customers and staff. If you’re not a people person, a franchise may not be for you.

Get to know the franchisor. The best franchisees originate from good franchisors. Not only do they want to bring in the best people into the business, they understand that if their franchisees make money, so will they. So they willingly reinvest in staff, equipment, marketing, because that is part of the franchise’s growing success.

Read the Franchise Agreement closely, and if possible, enlist legal help to scrutinise the fine print. It’s important to understand your ongoing obligations. What fees must you pay and what do you get in return? How often will equipment be maintained and upgraded? What will motivate the franchisor to assist you?

Before you sign your agreement, make sure you understand what you are signing up for. If necessary, enlist the help of the Franchise Council of Australia – www.franchise.org.au. Their website contains a great deal of relevant and important information to help you keep on track. As an FCA member, you will be able to access courses, events, publications and other opportunities that will help you get the most out of your franchise.

If this all sounds daunting, don’t be put off. Franchising remains a great way to build a business. But like all businesses, look before you leap and do your homework first.
Growth looks different for every business.

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kpmg.com/au/enterprise
How the redundancy of a pregnant worker was deemed adverse action

MANAGING redundancies is never easy, but if an employee is pregnant or on parental leave when the redundancy arises, it can become a legal minefield.

One very important consideration will be timing, as highlighted by a recent case.

An employer took unlawful adverse action when it dismissed a pregnant employee (Ms P) on grounds of redundancy two days before she was due to commence parental leave.

Interestingly, the dismissal itself was justified, but the timing of the dismissal made it unlawful.

The Federal Circuit Court found that while there was a genuine business case for the redundancy, the company’s decision to bring Ms P’s redundancy forward to just two days prior to the start of her parental leave amounted to unlawful adverse action taken because Ms P was pregnant and due to exercise her workplace right to take parental leave.

Ms P’s redundancy was one of eight redundancies arising from a business restructure. The other seven employees were to be made redundant on 12 November 2015.

Because Ms P was due to commence parental leave on 6 November 2015, her termination date was brought forward to 4 November 2015 rather than have her come in during parental leave to be told.

The employer failed to convince the Court that it brought the date forward with Ms P’s best interests in mind.

In fact, as a result of the decision to bring forward the termination date, Ms P lost her right to parental leave (including a portion of company paid parental leave) and the return to work guarantee.

In a warning for all employers contemplating making an employee redundant while on parental leave, the Court said it would also have been unlawful for the employer to terminate Ms P on 12 November 2015 after she had commenced parental leave as the company would have been in breach of the return to work guarantee in the Fair Work Act 2009.

Lesson for employers

Whilst it is not unlawful to make a pregnant employee redundant, an employer should seek advice to minimise the risks and ensure an employee is not disadvantaged as a result of being pregnant or exercising a workplace right to take parental leave.

Although management may consider that a certain approach would be in the best interests of an employee, this does not negate the requirement to ensure due process is followed. The timing of any decision will be crucial.

Kerryn Tredwell is a partner and Amanda Syme is a lawyer with the Employment and workplace relations team at Hall & Wilcox.

www.hallandwilcox.com.au
News

World polo heads west

The XI FIP World Polo Championship is coming to Australia, or more specifically Western Sydney. Richmond, to be exact.

This exciting festival of entertainment, competition and networking will take place from October 21-29, 2017. The event promises to be a multifaceted festival attracting more than 60,000 people from throughout the region and the world!

The build out of the event goes beyond creating a world-class sporting event. While the on-field competition will be fierce, the all-encompassing Polo Championship will include a show stopping equine festival tailoring to the likes of all ages. Elements such as a rodeo, jousting, show jumping, vaulting, art exhibitions and world class dining experiences are just a few of the many entertainment elements to complement the competitive games.

To round out the program, the World Polo Championship will host a variety of child friendly events – including the likes of face painting, rides and a petting zoo – to create a special experience for the whole family.

See www.wpcsydney.com

Aboriginal Centre of Excellence to open

The Western Sydney Aboriginal Centre of Excellence will become a hub for young Aboriginal people to harness their aspirations and talents to create a rewarding future with the Centre to open its doors next year.

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Sarah Mitchell and Minister for Western Sydney Stuart Ayres announced the old Whalan High School site in Mount Druitt has been confirmed as the new home for the $20M project.

“The Western Sydney Aboriginal Centre of Excellence will encourage Aboriginal young people to dream big, while providing the tools and networks needed to make those dreams a reality,” Mrs Mitchell said.

“This project is a community partnership and the next stage of development will rely on the strengths of Western Sydney’s Aboriginal community, thanks to an Aboriginal-led advisory committee, who will guide the project. “Valuing and celebrating Aboriginal identity is at the heart of this project, because excellence can only be built on a solid foundation of respect.” Aboriginal Affairs NSW will coordinate establishment of the Aboriginal Centre of Excellence, while working with the local Aboriginal community to investigate long-term partnerships with the private and not-for-profit sector for the Aboriginal Centre for Excellence’s operation.

Stuart Ayres said the Aboriginal Centre of Excellence will seek input from young people and their families to identify current gaps in local services and partner with local enterprises and big business to meet those.

“By partnering with the private sector, Aboriginal people will be front and centre as opportunities arise in the fast-developing Western Sydney economy,” Mr Ayres said.

Minister for Western Sydney Stuart Ayres, Plumpton High School Students Tamika Rex, Taliah Hunter, Shylah Fanner, Minister Mitchell, Blacktown Chamber of Commerce Trevor Oldfield

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News

AECOM opens first GWS office

AECOM, a premier, fully integrated global infrastructure firm, has opened a new office in Western Sydney.

Elected to the region’s rapid population growth and increasing economic importance, opening a new office in Parramatta is a key part of AECOM’s strategy to better support its clients.

The Western Sydney office is spearheaded by newly appointed Western Sydney Director Justine Kinch, who has been with AECOM for five years and previously led the Design + Planning team.

About AECOM

AECOM is built to deliver a better world. The firm designs, builds, finances and operates infrastructure assets for governments, businesses and organizations in more than 150 countries. As a fully integrated firm, AECOM connects knowledge and experience across our global network of experts to help clients solve their most complex challenges. A Fortune 500 firm, AECOM had revenue of approximately $17.4B during fiscal year 2016. Visit www.aecom.com

Fantastic Furniture to launch concept store

LEADING furniture retailer and manufacturer, Fantastic Furniture, will launch its first ever interactive concept store at Prospect.

“We’re thrilled to launch our new interactive concept store in the Prospect Homemaker Centre. Eleven years ago, we chose Prospect to launch our first large format store and now our first interactive concept store, in the heart of Sydney’s West, to provide customers with a truly unique shopping experience,” said Debra Singh, Chief Executive Officer, Fantastic Furniture.

Ms Singh said that the store fit-out represented a significant investment for Fantastic Furniture and that it was fitting that this investment was made in Western Sydney.

“By choosing Prospect to launch our first interactive concept store, we are reaffirming our commitment to Western Sydney – the heart and home of Fantastic Furniture, which grew from humble beginnings back in 1989 selling outdoor furniture at the Parklea Markets,” she said.

The two level 3658sqm showroom will feature free Wi-Fi, scannable QR codes and easy look-up codes on product tickets, with everything customers need to know at their fingertips, including price, availability, dimensions, delivery details, colour choices and fabric options.

16 large in-store digital screens will provide customers with ‘real’ inspiration, showcasing photos of other customers’ homes chosen by Fantastic Furniture which have been shared across social media, in addition to custom-made sofa options, tips on how to choose a mattress and warranty information.

“We’ve enhanced the in-store shopping experience to make it easier for customers to make purchasing decisions,” commented Ms Singh.

The new store will also feature four mini house display areas showcasing complete rooms, allowing customers to be inspired to re-create the look in their own home.

Fantastic Furniture is Australia’s leading value furniture retailer and manufacturer with 77 stores Australia-wide. The company manufactures 130,000 sofas and 160,000 mattresses each year in Western Sydney. Visit: www.fantasticfurniture.com.au

Barry to lead UrbanGrowth

BARRY Mann has been announced as the new Chief Executive Officer of the UrbanGrowth NSW Development Corporation.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian said Mr Mann’s 30 years of experience in the property industry made him well qualified to lead UrbanGrowth at this exciting time in the State’s development.

“With the NSW Government making record investment in infrastructure, Mr Mann’s experience in construction, project management and strategy on major revitalisation projects will be crucial,” Ms Berejiklian said.

Mr Mann started his career in the private sector, including 14 years with Lendlease in Sydney, Indonesia and Singapore. He will commence his role on September 25.

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Make 2017 Your Time To Shine!

Make 2017 Your Time To Shine!
The Access News Australia Regional Roundtable is an invitation-only forum of influential people that have an interest in developing business excellence, exchanging ideas and networking. The ANARR meets in a private board room setting. Following is an edited transcript of the latest Round Table session which was held at KPMG offices at Parramatta.
Export Council of Australia partners with Blacktown City Council

Blacktown City Council is committed to supporting its local businesses explore international trade. This commitment led to a partnership with the Export Council of Australia (ECA).

For 60 years, the ECA have encouraged, educated, and assisted Australian companies to take on the export world. With this experience behind them, they delivered for the Council specific export readiness workshops for business delegates participating in its inaugural trade mission to South Korea.

Two workshops were held prior to the trade mission and two more workshops are scheduled post trade mission during October.

The pre-mission workshops covered specific issues about:

• How to grow a business so it becomes global.
• Selecting your market place within a country.
• Formulating a practical market entry strategy for South Korea, and
• Cultural awareness education on doing business there.

The objective of the workshops pre-trade mission was to help delegates prepare a market entry strategy and a sales pitch that summarised the strategy when in South Korea.

Mr Nanan Tanoto, owner of Sweet Inspirations, a cake decorating manufacturer and supplier based in Arndell Park participated in the trade mission with Blacktown.

“The ECA’s and Council’s customer focused efforts in one to one education and support was tailored to my business. This helped me prepare well for the trade mission, said Mr Tanoto. It became invaluable especially during my one-on-one business meetings when there,” he added.

South Korea is Australia’s fourth largest trade partner. It is now a leading economic power in the north Asian region. Its growth trajectory presents potential lucrative export opportunities for many organisations across Western Sydney who want to grow their businesses; especially small and medium enterprises.

These enterprises aren’t always well positioned to pursue markets directly or the needed education to support such efforts.

“The critical competencies and approaches to solving real world concerns in international business are emphasised and fostered in this program and in supporting companies from Western Sydney to fully understand how to develop their strategy for looking at entering the South Korean markets. It is important that all companies looking to engage in global trade invest upfront to build the experience, knowledge and confidence to be successful in the extremely competitive international business environment."

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The workshops in action.

The workshops in action.
Peter Shergold: Good morning everyone. I'm Peter Shergold. I'm the Chancellor out at Western Sydney University. And, on behalf of Michael Walls, welcome indeed to what is the September meeting of the Access News Australia Round Table. This is the first occasion which I have had the opportunity to chair this. I'm very much looking forward to it. Thank you in particular to our hosts/sponsors for today – KPMG. A great office. Thank you, Paul – Paul Van Bergen, Leonie Ferrett; Lloyd Gilbert. It is appropriate, as I look down to the river here to start by acknowledging that the Darug people have actually been here for centuries on these plains and river banks. I acknowledge the long time they looked after the country on which the offices of KPMG are now built. Our theme today is a great one, which is: Exporting – What is the Real Opportunity? There's a great deal of expertise around this table and at all sorts of different levels. I think that should make the discussion great. And the key is to use all the knowledge and all the experience around this table. What sort of questions should we be asking? I'm going to be led by you. But I'm starting from the premise that what we want to talk about this morning is:

- What makes a successful exporting arm for businesses – whether the export is goods or services?
- What sort of investment is necessary if you're thinking of exporting?
- How does one go about identifying what the potential markets are? And then, having done that, how do you actually go and pursue those markets?
- How can one leverage one's domestic strengths and experience?
- And what are the risks in that – the risks in fact of sort of diverting attention away from the domestic business as usual, while you go and pursue an export opportunity?
- How does one seize the opportunities that are emerging – and they clearly are emerging?
- What are the sorts of challenges that are faced along that process?
- And where can one look to assistance?

The assistance, of course, might come from other businesses, it might come from industry associations, it might come from government. Michael and I are very keen that this is a wide ranging discussion. The aim is to open up a real discussion. We want you to feel free to put your views – a variety of perspectives. We welcome, in fact, we positively encourage, disagreements. We do want entertaining banter and we do want to create networks of interest.

So, let's get the show on the road. So, I'm Peter Shergold. I've been the Chair of Western Sydney University since 2011. And obviously, I have an interest in the topic here a great deal. Let's remember that we have 11% of our students from overseas, and we're putting a lot of effort into increasing that. In fact, education is Australia's most successful export right now. And Nigel and I know because we've just been to Ho Chi Minh City and to Hong Kong, where we are actually delivering our education services. I'm also the Chair of the Forum on Western Sydney Airport. I'm sure that next year we'll be having a number of sessions around that topic. I am very much encouraged by the whole idea of an Aeropolis. Airports really are 5th generation cities. We used to build cities on the coast and then on the rivers, and then on railway hubs and car hubs. It's become clear that airports are becoming hubs for export industries. So, that's my interest. Lloyd if we could start with you.

Lloyd Gilbert: I was one of the founding people for the Parramatta office, which is very exciting. There's just so much scope out in Western Sydney. I've got a particular interest in export. We ran 3 export sessions for Blacktown City Council. Local Government is getting very used to this. They want to, I guess, respond to the jobs deficit in Western Sydney. Export is one of the key drivers to make that happen. You know: increased revenue means more jobs.

Peter Shergold: Thank you very much.

Dean Kuch: My name is Dean Kuch. I own a business called Thinking Ergonomix, and we design and manufacture office furniture. We export. We started off exporting into Asia and Germany. And, from Germany, through Europe. And we have a showroom in London. So, the London market is growing for us. And we've just started to export to the US. So, we're really keen to grow our export business. We've got some great products, and we see exporting as a way to ... rather than throw lots of money at developing more products, we can put some money into developing other markets.

Peter Shergold: Dean, it will be great to have that practical experience.

Leonie Ferrett: So, I'm Leonie Ferrett and I lead KPMG's Trade and Customs practice. And I've been with KPMG for 13 or 14 years now. My job is part of the dealmaking team for a service line that we have called Access Asia. KPMG traditionally invests a lot of time for clients coming into Australia. What we wanted to do was really take a look at what Australian businesses are doing and leverage the free trade agreements we have for Australian businesses to access other markets. So, that's a relatively new service line. It pulls together quite a lot of different skill sets, like supply chain and trade and grants and R&D, etc etc. And we try and help our clients get into the Asian markets, primarily.

Lisa McAuley: My name is Lisa McAuley and I am the CEO of the Export Council of Australia. Our role at the Export Council of Australia is really actually to build the capacity and capability of more Australian companies to engage in international trade, so trying to grow and support SMEs as much as possible. And we mainly do that through programs that build capacity through our skills development arm, business coaching. But we're heavily involved in research, but research that has a very practical outcome to help exporters and also policy work. So I spend a lot of time going back and forth to Canberra on issues that effect you, the exporters. And so, today is really interesting for me to hear where your barriers are, domestically and internationally, to help frame what we do to help represent you to government. So, I'm really delighted to participate.

Amando Camacho: Good morning. My name is Amando Camacho. I've invented and designed a whole lot of branding products. So, I'm having them made in various countries. For example, we've got a factory in South Africa printing and doing a product. And we've sent product from South Africa directly to the US. So, it's not really exporting out of Australia. But, it's exporting from various countries to other countries. Now I believe that the technology is based in Australia. So, the IP and all the knowledge is based in Australia. And we don't really need to be exporting out of Australia to make money for Australia. And, if the knowledge is here and the royalties come into the country, I think that's the way to go. And that's how I've built my business and that's how I'm going ahead with it.

Peter Shergold: That's great, Amando. I'm very impressed that you have built the factory in South Africa.

Linda Suttie: My name is Linda Suttie. We, at the moment, do chocolate. Have for quite a few years. We've just recently expanded into sugar-free. We were at one stage 95% export. The dollar killed us. There's zero support. We're up against the big guys. We do home brand and all that. We used to do home brand and everything overseas. Our main markets were – and we're now going back into, are America, Japan and Singapore.

Peter Shergold: So, you were 95% export?

Linda Suttie: Export. My name is Linda Suttie. My name is Michael Walls. My background is in media, journalism specifically. I worked for Newscorp and Fairfax collectively for about 10 years. I've worked at universities, managing their media and publications - UNSW, AGSM. I've launched a number of magazines for investors and nowadays I publish Western Sydney Business Access and Central Coast Business Access. We've also got an interest in several online businesses. So it's mainly media. It's a rapidly changing industry with plenty of disruption happening worldwide. Newspapers are pretty much in decline, but I think there's always space for quality niche products. If they're well done well and you know your product, I think you can succeed. So, thank you everyone for coming today. It's great to have you. And welcome to Peter.

Paul Van Bergen: Paul Van Bergen, tax partner within KPMG, looking at R&D Tax Incentives and Grants for companies. One of the founding partners here when we reopened Parramatta. And, one of my favourite relationshipships is actually with the LaunchPad of West- ern Sydney University. That's evolved from being focussed around start-up to working with small and medium enterprises to help their businesses become globally focussed. This involves working with the engineering school around internet of things so that their product moves from just being delivery of a manufac- tured good to a whole of life approach. We're finding that's crucial to getting export markets, because somebody buying something from
out. So, we’ve just gone from nothing to almost
Japanese import, this excavator that I import-
some land. I’m a carpenter and builder by
purely because no-one would help me when
and Sumitomo and Kubota are brand specifi-
c tor has fi xed pins. So, there was a struggle to
the world adjustable excavator att achment.

So, I’m here to learn.

David Mumford: My name is David
Mumford. I’m the sales and marketing
director for RBK Nutriceuticals. I’ve been
exporting health supplements for 20 years
now – currently up to 16 markets, throughout
Asia, up into Saudi Arabia and the Middle
East as well recently. We’ve got a range of
health supplements similar to what every-
body’s familiar with. But, we’ve always been
focussed on the export markets moreso than
the domestic market since we started. That
was always the strategy; we’re continuing to
enter new markets and developing markets.
But, the products aren’t anything unusual – it’s
only fish oil capsules, Omega 3s- badic things.

However, we tend to make our formulas just
slightly stronger than the competition, which
is our point of difference.

Peter Shergold: Great. Thank you, Nigel.
Nigel Garrow: Nigel Garrow. I am at
Western Sydney University. I’m the Deputy
Dean at the School of Business. I’m a lat-
ter day academic. I was been working, fast moving, consumer goods companies in
different parts of the world. Part of my focus is
LaunchPad, which Paul’s talked about, but
also international. And as Peter said, we are
relatively small in terms of the share of our stu-
dents who come from international. It’s about
11%. We’re looking to try and almost double that.
Our focus is China, India and Vietnam. I’ve just completed a trip to all 3. And I have to
say I feel very optimistic about the opportuni-
ties for us to expand that.

Peter Shergold: You might talk about
LaunchPad very briefly, only because you
don’t think of Universities as export busi-
nesses.

Nigel Garrow: LaunchPad is only 2 or 3
years old. Its origins was to do with helping
start-ups. So, people in the region as well as
students – giving them skills, and giving them
the infrastructure. We’ve got a number of part-
ers in that process, including KPMG. So, the


something to look at.
- Lisa McAuley.

“Now, 20 years ago you
wouldn’t have had a rail-
way from South Australia
to Darwin. So, if you could

we’re moving about 40 foot contain-
ers now; every 6 weeks. So we’re ordering a container – that’s just in the Australian market
– that’s without dropshipping. So, we’re doing
about $250,000 a month now in sales and it’s
just growing and growing and growing each
week.

David Mumford: I’m the owner of
Blacktown. Two decades ago Australia became
a big special nationalised displays. You know
tional exhibition, every country’s got very
big special nationalised displays. You know
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overseas wants to be comfortable that there’s
somebody to support the product through
it’s whole life. The internet of things enables
real time monitoring of sophisticated equip-
ment which enables Australian companies
to provide that comfort, So, it’s really quite
exciting to actually not only help clients with
their R&D claims, but take them on a journey
where they actually go to enthusiasm really
smart people located close to their business
to help them come up with even better products
with affiliated service offerings that gives
Western Sydney manufacturers something
unique and sustainable in an export market.

Peter Shergold: Paul, I’ll give you a
heads-up. At the end of the meeting, I’m going
to ask you if you would like to give a few sum-
mary remarks.
Darin Leatherbury: Hi, I’m Darin Leath-
erby, the owner of Holy Smoke Alarms. I’m
the owner and inventor of this product. And
it’s a product that can be installed without lad-
er, screws or even a chair. All you really need
is a 6 year old and a vacuum cleaner, and you
can mount and dismount your smoke alarms.

Peter Shergold: And, do you already
export any of them?

Darin Leatherbury: No. I’m in my first year.
So, I’m here to learn.

Anthony Attardy: My name is Anthony
Attardy. I am the inventor and exporter, if you
like, of Adjustablebucket which is the first in
the world adjustable excavator attachment.
Predominantly, an attachment for an excav-
a or has fixed pins. So, there was a struggle to
find an attachment for some of the imported
machines because a lot of brands like Hitachi
and Sumitomo and Kubota are brand specific.
So, basically what I did was got Samsung and
iPhone to have a relationship and I joined the
dots. And we came up with Adjustablebucket
purely because no-one would help me when
I imported. I bought a property at Dural. I
bought 5 acres there and I needed to clear
some land. I’m a carpenter and builder by
trade. And no-one would help me with this
Japanese import, this excavator that I import-
cd. So, we’ve just gone from nothing to almost
80% sales in a matter of 3 years. And currently,

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when you’re in USA. You know when you’re in South Korea.

Peter Shergold: Well, I think there is one area we’ve done well in, which is wine. I’ve been very impressed with the way Australia, for a generation now, has marketed its wine and it’s marketed it from Vin Ordinaire through to Penfold’s Grange, but all under an Australian brand. Amando?

Amando Camacho: I’m an inventor. I think the whole problem is that we all sit here and talk, and we look at it from the same angle. And nobody ever looks at it from a completely different angle.

Peter Shergold: And that is?

Amando Camacho: In Europe, in many countries – and one is Turkey – I lived in Turkey for one; another one is Portugal – they have tax free ports. We don’t look at tax free ports. Tax free ports will change everything with the way we do it. Now, in my opinion, a place like Darwin should be a tax free port.

Peter Shergold: We’ve tried.

Amando Camacho: Have we really?

Peter Shergold: Well, we tried 20 years ago. There was going to be – remind me – an Export Development Zone in Darwin.

Amando Camacho: Now, 20 years ago you wouldn’t have had a railway from South Australia to Darwin. So, if you could visualise Darwin being almost like a Hong Kong – Hong Kong to China – Darwin would be a Darwin to Australia. And that area – instead of me going to South Africa to manufacture products, or instead of Anthony going to China to manufacture products, we should be manufacturing in Darwin in a tax free port, and exporting out of Darwin and going over and doing that. The whole thing is being looked at in a completely different way in my opinion. And we should somehow find a new way of doing things.

Anthony Attard: I think the natural progression of China is changing. I think we will end up in Africa because they’re just getting greedy now. And once upon a time, well, we could make 3 times the amount. But we’re only making half of that because China is just getting so greedy with everything. They want to charge 3 times the amount. I set up in Expos over in Beijing. I’ve thought of getting supplies in India now. But I don’t know enough. The Philippines is another area that I’ve been looking at. But I don’t know actually where to go to find the correct suppliers for me to be able to bring it into the country and then export it.

Peter Shergold: That’s interesting. Let me stop you with a thought there. Too often, we look at immigration through a sort of social deprivation lens – it’s difficult for all these migrants coming, the barriers they face and welfare problems. But they speak Arabic or speak Indian languages, or Mandarin or Korean and they have cross-cultural understanding. This is a resource that Western Sydney has which is quite extraordinary. There are Australians, there are Western Sydney graduates in business, who have that particular background. And it’s a resource. I don’t think...
“Australia seems to turn out box-tickers. And, as long as all the paperwork is beautiful, you get flying colours. But it’s impractical on the floor, or it’s idiotic, or one half is actually contradicting the other half, is irrelevant.”

- Linda Suttie.

“We’re not using it. One of the assets we’ve got is actually our ethnic diversity. One of the assets that Western Sydney has, is it’s got it more than most. And they have been educated in Australia.”

- Peter Shergold.

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we recognise enough the productive diversity that we’ve got.

Lisa McAuley: This is something we’ve been looking at. And what we don’t quite understand actually is why exporters don’t actually take advantage of international students while they are studying here – because we’ve seen it successfully in other companies where you might be working on a new market entry strategy for the first time. Embed that knowledge within and get an intern. They’re pretty smart. They’ve got connections back home.

Peter Shergold: You’ve got international students or domestic students. We’re living right here on the edge of Little India.

Linda Suttie: Australia seems to turn out box tickers. And, as long as all the paperwork is beautiful, you get flying colours. But it’s impractical on the floor, or it’s idiotic, or one half is actually contradicting the other half, is irrelevant. So we do get out of France, the same University, the same these people. They’re phenomenal. I would hire every single one of them. But, they are supported by their government. It’s a whole thing. We’ve looked. And Universities have asked us. But the red tape and the nightmare behind it, has meant we’ve just sort of thought: Too hard.

Nigel Garrow: OK. I’m going to pick up the point. I mean I found that each of the 3 countries that I’ve been to of late, actually what’s really helped us is where we’ve got people who have come from that country. So, we’ve got Chinese people; we’ve got – I mean these are members of our staff – Chinese people, Indian people, Vietnamese people. They talk to their kindreds in those countries. That’s made a massive difference. Alright? And then, in turn, we could have follow-ups with students and so on. But actually, in this region, because we’re so diverse, we need to find out: OK. So where are these clusters? Who are the lead people in those areas? What relationships have they got? And really, in the short time I’ve been there, that’s what in effect I’m doing. I’m leveraging the relationships that we’ve already got with these organisations. And back to people like KPMG. You know KPMG has a fantastic network. You know. So, a number of organisations have got those.

Leonie Ferrett: They do. Yes. Nigel Garrow: And, you know, when I go overseas, that’s what I do. I want to try and meet other organisations, you know, that can help within this region – whether it’s a university or not. But actually, we’ve got lots of people from different countries who have lived there or understand the culture, speak the language, can relate to people. That’s a massive head start when you want to try and develop something in those countries.

Peter Shergold: We’re not using it. One of the assets we’ve got is actually our ethnic diversity. One of the assets that Western Sydney has, it’s got it more than most. And they have been educated in Australia. I understand what you’re saying. But, can we actually use this, Leonie?

Leonie Ferrett: I was just reflecting on some of the experiences we’ve seen with clients testing markets. They pick a market based on size: Let’s go to China. We’ve got a Free Trade Agreement. Let’s just go to China. China is huge. So, there’s no research on whether or not their product would even fly in China. We’ve got such a huge – you know, reflecting on your comments around the diversity of our population: why wouldn’t we be speaking with the Chinese community in Australia first? Does this product suit your cultural preferences? Do you like this product? You could start here without even going overseas to test whether or not it works for the cultural mismatch that we often have. One of the people who works with me on Access Asia is a supply chain expert working in Shanghai for many years. And he worked with clients who would go into a market. They’d come to him and then they’d say to him: This is not working. You know. We’ve just launched this fabulous food category brand in Shanghai. And he said: Well, there are 47 other international food category brands in Shanghai. Why did you pick Shanghai? Oh well. It’s the biggest. It’s the biggest market in China. He said: Well, what about if you go into all of these B Cities or C Cities where your food category have yet to invest.

Peter Shergold: Which each have over a million people.

Leonie Ferrett: Exactly, which are crying out for quality international product, but everyone ignores them.

Lisa McAuley: They do.

David Mumford: You have to have a relationship with the people on the ground. Lisa McAuley: And once you work them right, and you have a – it’s the B2M network that they have.

David Mumford: Exactly right.

Lisa McAuley: Because they’re local.

David Mumford: Exactly.

Lisa McAuley: Austrade has a large network of contacts that companies can access but the company has to be prepared when looking at how to leverage the Austrade network. The more homework you have done the easier it will be for you to be able to work with the Austrade network.

David Mumford: You have to go there. You have to spend time getting to know the people and the culture.

Leonie Ferrett: And you need to recognise that Austrade is a finite group of people, which is funded by government, and they can’t do everything.

Lisa McAuley: No. They can’t.

Peter Shergold: I’m interested. How did you find your market? I mean how did you find, for example, Walmart. How did you work out where, at least initially, you could sell your chocolate?

Linda Suttie: Initially used Austrade. They were absolutely useless. And they basically blackmailed us saying: You have to come into these shows. We have pre-existing contacts. And they then took all our successes and put them as their own. This was a while ago.

Peter Shergold: That’s a pretty powerful story.

Linda Suttie: In fact, I think you’d see that the people, except on the plane over and the plane back. I know it’s improved since then. We still talk to Austrade. And they’re really lovely. But, what I find – it’s not their fault – but what I find offensive is that $2,000. To me, that’s pathetic that they’re asking for it. They should be there funding it – the government – and saying: You then give us a percentage of your profits, or something. But, let’s get you out there. But, how we did it is, again, international contacts, going there, knowing where we were going. Peter Shergold: And how did you develop your international contacts?

Linda Suttie: In reality, the chocolate world is pretty small. So, we knew people that are all over the place. You go out there. You know where you want to go. You get that appointment. Maybe we’re pretty good at getting into those areas. And then, you flow from there. Once you’re in somebody who’s very important in that country, you can easily open doors elsewhere. Because we do our own product development etc inhouse, we can respond very quickly. That is something that a lot of Australian companies and just seeing what people do have a problem we’ll fix. So, we ended up – maybe it was easier in that regard that our attitude was where it was going. But we still have all those contacts and we’re back into Japan. But, it’s once you’re in and you have your contact and are honourable – Australians tend to be honourable – you flow from there.

Peter Shergold: This is interesting. Why doesn’t an organisation like that work on an income contingent basis. In other words, you’ll get the support. You get, for example, $20,000 of support. It is, in effect, a loan. But you only repay it if your income or if your profit reaches a certain level.

All: Like HECS.

Peter Shergold: Yes that’s what I mean. Exactly the same income contingent. So, for many of the organisations that would gain
support from government, the reality is that they probably won’t be successful. But there will be some of those organisations which will be highly successful and would be very happy to pay a profit or a royalty stream out of that.

Lisa McAuley: I recommend looking at multiple channels when looking to enter a new market. Firstly, the power of DFAT, use the DFAT network. The other is trade promotion organisations in other countries, and the other is the Chamber movement. Some local Chambers are incredibly powerful with really good business connections, like AustCham.

Peter Shergold: The Vietnam Chamber of Commerce, we found is a very good one.

Lisa McAuley: So, in fact, you’ve got 4 channels. And I’d hit them all up.

Peter Shergold: So, we’re started with a very negative story about government. I think we’re saying actually it’s negative in certain ways. First of all, they’re starved of funds. Second, if you just go to them initially, you tend to get very generic information that’s not very helpful. But, if you actually get your networks and want to build on them, then you will get useful help. So, which are the Chambers you think are particularly useful from Australia’s point of view? Is it the Israeli one? In my experience, the Australia-Israeli Chamber of Commerce. Anthony. So, when you went and you went to this big Expo in China did you get any help? Or, did you just see this was going to be on and decide you were going to attend?

Anthony Attard: Just jumped on it. I’m just a bit of a spontaneous decision maker. It’s another way I find markets is advertising in their local magazines or whatever. And then, you know, you might attract. That’s the way I do it, anyway.

Peter Shergold: This is interesting. So, you’ve made this great success. You’ve had this greaty success. Now, presumably you’re reaching a bit of an inflection point here and thinking whether you’re going to take this to the next stage. So, with those contacts you’ve already got, would you then think, for example, of using DFAT in China to actually build upon what you’ve already got?

Anthony Attard: Perhaps. But I’ve never been introduced to it. To be honest, I don’t know what you’re talking about.

Lloyd Gilbert: But you know the market really well, don’t you? You know who buys your product?

Anthony Attard: I do, mate. I know when to buy. I know when to put, when to hold the money, when not to pay and the rest of that.

Nigel Garrow: I guess, for any of us, there’s not necessarily one route to go. I mean for us, as a University, though you’ve got loads of networks, the one I found that was most helpful was professional bodies. I made contact with professional bodies here, went to see them in Vietnam in particular, went to – and all of a sudden, that opens up a whole new network. So sometimes, you stumble across these. You think: OK, So, what have we got here? What are the relationships we’ve got? Actually, might they be relevant? And not all of them are going to conceive. But actually in the main a number of them may well just. There’s no one answer. You have to use all of them.

Lisa McAuley: There is one answer.

David Mumford: I think the best start would be the NSW Business Chamber. They give you access to Austrade, gives you access to AusIndustry, to your grants and things. It basically can give you access to pretty much everything from that central starting point in terms of networks and talking to the international trade team. So, they’ll put on Trade Missions. And they’ll pay for your business. But they’ll pay Austrade for your business matching. And that’s kind of just a very basic start to getting to know the Chambers. They’ll take you to other Chambers and they put on trade missions. That’s the starting point. And you actually have to spend the time turning up to events and doing those things.

Amando Camacho: And what organisation is that?

David Mumford: NSW Business Chamber.

Leonie Ferreter: They’re very good.

Peter Shergold: They are.

David Mumford: Absolutely. They’ll take an interest in your business and they’ll get to know your business. And then, they can actually give you other recommendations from that as well.

Paul Van Bergen: So, I think some of the opportunities, particularly for small and medium enterprises, is to actually look at some of the students, for example, who are doing business degrees. So, they might have studied engineering, and then they’re doing either an Executive MBA or they’re doing business studies to actually round out their career. One thing you might think about is actually bring- ing these on, either as interns or earn-while-they-learn people.

Nigel Garrow: So, the change that’s happening in education is: it’s not about just sitting in a room and listening to a lecture. A lot of it is actually learned by doing. So, the idea of the Parramatta – the Peter Shergold building – it’s a vertical campus. And it’s a much more about having workshops and actually sort of tutorial style collective and collaborative learning. These students actually need real life projects to work on. The ideal would be that they work with particular companies and actually help the company create an export market. But also, at the same time, they actually get academic style information that actually benefits all of Western Sydney businesses.

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Armando Camacho.
Peter Shergold: Well, it’s worth remembering, in labour costs, I can see why many of our exporters want to produce overseas. But, my knowledge of natural health products, suggest that manufacturing in Australia is actually what gives us the edge. When you see Chinese tourists going into pharmacies and taking off shelves of Australian products, you realise they’re doing it because they think this is a high quality Australian product. And that brand actually helps. I suspect some of that might be even the case with Australian chocolates.

Linda Suttie: Absolutely.

Peter Shergold: So, it’s horses for courses, isn’t it? There’s some things you think: well, actually, what we own is the intellectual property. We can manufacture this better elsewhere, and then export but there are certain goods where actually the manufacturing is crucial in terms of the fact that it is Australian produced. I don’t know where furniture would sit.

Dean Kuch: Well, it depends. I was going to say it depends on the industry. I mean for us, we design and patent all of our products, and we have a lot of components that are made in Vietnam or China – in Germany, in the UK – all around the place. But, most of the time it comes to us to do the assembly, before it will get despatched to our clients, certainly in the Australian market.

For overseas, say in our UK office, there are some products that we have – it’s fully manufactured in China and despatched from China to the UK market and for some products, to the US as well. One of the things I was going to say: one of the biggest mistakes that I’ve made was not employing or not teaming up with the right people. And if I was to go do it again, I would pay more money to have the right person because if you kind of – and maybe for it was a little bit not quite sure of myself – not quite sure of how successful we’d be – and would the ideal person really be interested to partner with us. But I’ve wasted years with the wrong people, paid them not as much money as what I would have paid. But, you know, it’s not any return. And not only hasn’t got any return, but I’ve lost so many years of market opportunity.

Leonie Ferretter: And potential brand damage.

Dean Kuch: Yes.

Leonie Ferretter: And that’s actually is a really common thing.

Dean Kuch: And brand image, because you can’t lose the image of the market without succeeding. So the most important thing is... to make sure that you partner with the right people, whether that’s people you’re employing or people you’re doing business with. It might cost you a little bit more upfront.

Anthony Attard: And I’ve thrown money at things. I’ve thrown big money at business with. It might cost you a little bit without succeeding. So the most important thing is that you’re employing or people you’re doing business with. We can all think of people who have gone overseas and ended up in worse situations from having people who have been, frankly, fraudulent.

David Mumford: Exactly. You’re talking about identifying markets. But really, you have to identify your channel before you identify your market.

Peter Shergold: OK. So, just can you spell that out? I think it’s really important.

David Mumford: So, you’re talking about China. We’re talking about agents. So, it’s not just trading companies. It could be just some guy who knows somebody who knows somebody. Or it could be a company who’s handling multiple brands. When you’re talking about specific branding, you might know that: I would like my products to be in this particular retail outlet. For example, I supply Costco, around the world. So, if I can supply Costco direct from Australia, I don’t need a local agent to do anything. But it does mean you have to spend more time fostering the relationship. It’s a lot of travel. It’s a lot of building relationships personally. At some point in time you may need some local assistance on the ground. You take that as it comes. But, I can supply direct in a country, or I can have an agent distribute them in a country. Everybody asks for exclusivity. So, if they’re exclusive to me, then I could be exclusive to them under the right terms. And if they’re already handling my competitors’ product, I don’t want to deal with them. It’s an automatic not suitable person for me.

Anthony Attard: That’s it exactly.

David Mumford: So, really, a good way to start in a country is to foster a direct relationship with a retailer, without having agents and middlemen and all that kind of stuff, if it’s as possible. So, I do that with duty free, department stores, Costcos, all around the world. And that kind of, using a multi branding strategy, that can kind of get you established, get to know the market. Then you can back with an alternate brand that you want to supply another part of the market, or a wider range of general market in general, for which you could appoint a local distributor who knows the market, who has connections in those certain retail outlets you want to go to. So, rather than just saying: Ahh, I want to go to China, or, I want to go to Vietnam, it’s: What’s my plan in that market? Where do I want my product to eventually sell?

Anthony Attard: I drop a fishing line in the water and just wait till the fish come to us – and throw back the ones I don’t want.

Peter Shergold: So, tell us. You really are sort of new in this area. I’m interested in what your strategies are.

Darren Leatherby: Well, my baby’s just been born. So, I’m still working out what size nappies it needs. But I actually was listening to everyone and I got some good ideas. I think before we break at 11:30 – so just everybody knows. If there was one thing from your own background that you think would be most helpful in building your export market, from what you know now or don’t know now, what would it be?

Darren Leatherby: I know. So I was thinking about something very, very simple.

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Continued from page 30

Darin Leatherby: They’ve got the 10 year lithiums. So, you don’t have to change the battery every year too.

David Mumford: So, in terms of an export strategy, you’ve got strong branding. So you said: Made – as seen on TV.

Darin Leatherby: Yes.

David Mumford: So, you could contact any home shopping network in South Korea or places like that as a new export market, choosing your channel directly.

Darin Leatherby: OK. Right.

Peter Shergold: Dam, it’s great to have you. I would like to think, in 5 years time: My God. He’s sweeping the world now with his Holy Smoke alarm. We remember him when he was sitting at this table. So we’ve heard so much about the challenges. We’ve heard what might work best and what appears to work very poorly. We’ve heard about not just building an export market, but trying to sustain it and the challenges to face. We talked about the early stages and then the later stages. I think it would be useful just to try and ask each of you: What is the one thing that really would be helpful to you? You’ve got the 10 year lithiums. So, you don’t have to change the battery every year too. So, you said: Made – as seen on TV. We remember him when he was sitting at this table. So we’ve heard so much about the challenges. We’ve heard what might work best and what appears to work very poorly.

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Continued from page 32

Lisa McAuley: Exactly. So my one advice is, please – and actually it just really supports Leonie here – sometimes taking a little bit of time to understand what it is that they’re doing for you can help you to understand how to manage that relationship.

Paul Van Bergen: You’ve got the courses as well, anyway.

Lisa McAuley: Yes we have the courses that can assist you.

Leonie Ferrett: They connected internationally. And he’s just connected internationally. And I’m amazed that I haven’t heard the word today – and that is, LinkedIn. He’s done it all on LinkedIn. It’s got all the advantages and all the risks of most online channels.

Amando Camacho: But I think also, before someone nowadays, at a certain level before they do business with you, they’re going to check your LinkedIn. So, having your LinkedIn up to date is important.

Peter Shergold: Before I continue the conversation any more, tell us what you think is the key message, I’d really be interested.

Yasmin Khedri: Peter Shergold: Yes.

Peter Shergold: I think it’s really smart. It doesn’t always work out in that way. I know because of the number of people who contact me on LinkedIn. It’s got all the advantages and all the risks of most online channels.

Amando Camacho: But I think also, before someone nowadays, at a certain level before they do business with you, they’re going to check your LinkedIn. So, having your LinkedIn up to date is important.

Peter Shergold: Before I continue the conversation any more, tell us what you think is the key message, I’d really be interested.

Lisa McAuley: Yes. I’ve been listening and agreeing with most of what everybody is saying. But, as you’ve pointed out, it’s individual. And what works brilliantly for one is an absolute waste of time for others, with all the best of intentions.

Amando Camacho: You’ve made a very, very well. Amando?

Amando Camacho: Last week I was in a meeting. And I met a very, very well connected man. He’s connected with Woolworths and Coles and Myers. And he’s just connected internationally. And I’m amazed that I haven’t heard the word today – and that is, LinkedIn. He’s done it all on LinkedIn. And he just gets up there and he’s in there, and he’s getting all these contacts that he’s talking about and wanting to build networks and things; e does it on LinkedIn.

So, if I could just say something that I think would help everyone is – and I’ve got on the week-end. I started seeing and learning more about LinkedIn.

Peter Shergold: It’s another way of creating the collaborative networks online.

Amando Camacho: Yes.

Peter Shergold: I think it’s really smart. It doesn’t always work out in that way. I know because of the number of people who contact me on LinkedIn. It’s got all the advantages and all the risks of most online channels.

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Lisa McAuley: I have to be honest. I’ve been listening and agreeing with most of what everybody is saying. But, as you’ve pointed out, it’s individual. And what works brilliantly for one is an absolute waste of time for others, with all the best of intentions.

Peter Shergold: That’s true.

Lisa McAuley: And I just think it is wonderful that there are people who are trying to move this country forward. I guess my biggest message is that you’ve given a little bit of positivity in what is a pretty difficult – I mean, some things just fly. I do think there should be a clarity of how to come in, with the different aspects, where it sort of says – Alibaba for us is a disaster. And we got Alibaba – actually flew out to see us to push and everything. And, you know, when you just have a feeling in your stomach and you ask them a few things, and it just doesn’t come through. But, it’s working for you.

Anthony Attard: No, it’s not.

Linda Sutte: But where’s the next step.

Anthony Attard: No. It’s just the point that I made. It didn’t work that well.

Linda Sutte: I really think there should be more, as you’re saying – and maybe led by the universities. I think that’s actually amazing to have that feedback.

Peter Shergold: Well, connections and advice and support are important. But no-one can do this for you. You’re leading it.

All: Yes.

Peter Shergold: Beyond all this, you develop a gut feel a gut feel of who you do business with when you’re trying to export overseas. I think that really is crucial. And you can get help on that. In doing business with China – any significant business, with contacts – I think I would always, if it was significant checking out those contacts with DFAT and Austrade. And they will help because it really is important sometimes, of knowing who’s who in a very complicated zoo, which is the market.

Anthony Attard: Absolutely. Will the government help in that situation?

Peter Shergold: Yes.

Lisa McAuley: One thing we haven’t talked about – and I think it’s actually quite powerful – is actually, where you’ve got organisations like KPMG that have a global network, they know – they will know in their global head office in that one market, they’ll have all the contacts.

Leonie Ferrett: We also have forensics which help actually with due diligence of all the organisations and which is something to be aware of that you can actually undertake due diligence using forensic teams to see if people are who they say they are.

Anthony Attard: Oh, not that so much. You know who they are, because you go there. I mean we go and visit their factories and meet them, and go out and have these big lavish dinners and all the rest of it. It’s just the Chinese culture is about ….. they’ll move the goalposts.

Peter Shergold: But you can – through DFAT and Austrade; through KPMG, you can do due diligence. It is often really important. You’re all trying to make a profit. I run a university. I can tell you now that one of the things I’m obviously trying to do is bring in Philanthropic gifts and donations. That’s...
really important. Someone recently offered the university $1M. It looked very good. Until we did the due diligence we weren’t aware that this was a person - it was alleged - who had history of breaching Indonesian fishing rights. So, it really is important to check these things.

Nigel Garrow: I mean I’d really echo what was said earlier. I think the one additional thing I’d say is to leverage more the cross Western Sydney collaborations. I just feel that this is a very collaborative area. And I think our ability even to do things like this occasionally, where you get to meet people fairly close with similar interests, I think there’s quite a lot that can be gained from doing that with varying groups.

Michael Walls: Absolutely.

Peter Shergold: Thank you.

David Mumford: Right. So I think part of the conversation, like there seems to be like a bit of: what does it take to be an exporter. So, we’re talking about having a strategy, having a direction, having an idea of where you want your markets to be. You do need an export plan, but it’s not a plan that has to be stuck to it’s the Bible.

Peter Shergold: So, it’s a sort of flexible plan?

David Mumford: Obviously, it has to be flexible. You have to be able to go with spur of the moment things that come up. But you have to be ready and prepared to handle all of them equally. And it’s a full time job – exporting. It’s not a something I’ll do, if I get a chance. It’s got to be very deliberate. As you said, you need people. You need back office people who can do the logistics, the documentation, who can get the Certificates of Origin, who can do all the running around. My industry is very heavily regulated. Exporting is not just: oh I’ll send a pallet. Sometimes it’ll take a year to 2 years of documentation and FDAs and things like that. So, it’s a pretty serious decision to go into business with somebody. And that also affects your market selection, so, really determining what the barriers to entry are, in terms of regulatory requirements. And having said that, pretty much every country you go to, you’ll have to modify your product in some way. So, every market’s got to be treated individually. Pack size changes. Formulations change. Packaging design changes. You’ve got 16 markets. You’ve got 16 products of the same thing in some cases. So, it’s something you’ve got to be prepared to do. In terms of market selection, I’ll tend to go for markets that do have very difficult barriers to entry. So, obviously, the more barriers to entry, the less competition. So, I’ll avoid China like the plague. Whereas, I’ve been getting documentation with Saudi FDA for like about a year and a half now. And then, you can find a little side way. You can do like a food item – like a gummy bear or something to get the market started while you’re doing the regulatory work. But I’ll steer clear of China. But I’ll go to Saudi, I’ll go to Macau, I’ll go to South Korea, where product quality is very important because it actually gets checked. The laboratory analysis gets done. So my market selection is determined by: where isn’t everybody, where can I have a point of difference based on quality and where can I support that market. So, that’s not in my plan: where am I going to go because these things just come up and the more that you get around, the more that you join these kind of networking opportunities and meet some people, the Business Chambers is very strong – Business Awards – Export Awards – automatically becoming a finalist in the Premier’s Export Awards, you’re automatically somewhat known. You’ll automatically be introduced to other people, the same as the NSW Business Chamber Awards. There is an Export category. There is an Innovation category for inventors, Start-up categories. There’s not just the big companies that win these things. Once you’ve won that kind of award, that really has a lot of leverage in your export. It gives you a bit of credibility when you’re a new exporter, even when you’re an established exporter. It’s something that’s very, very valuable and not that difficult to do. And the process of an Export Award is very good for you as well. It could basically form your export strategy: The questions are all aimed at: what’s your strategy; how did you do this, or things like that. So, I think it’s a good exercise just to have a look at the Premier’s Export Awards.

Peter Shergold: I couldn’t agree more. It’s really insightful. I used to chair and I’m now on the Board of a Capital Start-up. It’s cyber security. A different sort of area again. By winning first of all the ACT Export Awards we’ve actually been on trips overseas with the ACT Chief Minister and more recently, with the Prime Minister. And that starts to open up contacts. It is a very two way relationship because when Premiers go overseas to visit Korea or India, they want to take a delegation who are actually doing business there. That helps them get credibility. But, you also get credibility as being part of that mission because in many Asian countries, they like to know your business has the support of the Premier or the Prime Minister.

Darina Leatherby: I’d like to thank KPMG because I just received something on my email about an Innovation competition they’re having in – where is it? Melbourne. And it’s this year category is Emergency Services.

Peter Shergold: You’re home and hosed!

Lisa McAuley: I just would like to thank everybody because, from an Export Council perspective, all of your insights we actually really use. We do actually listen. We actually do take things. We do actually go try and change things – very very slowly, sometimes. But one thing is: unless you have a voice and you come to us, ….. we’re very your voice to government on what we need to do, but we need you to tell us. Unless we hear; we need a collective voice. And eventually you chip away. We’ve had small wins over the years. But, you know, we just keep chipping away.

Peter Shergold: Thank you.

Paul Van Bergen: In a hyper-competitive market and with information flows being so much quicker, the reality is that exporting is not easy. The lesson here is: you need to not only know your customer, but you need to know your whole supply and value chain, and build those relationships. That means you may need to be collaborative, get advice and understand the advice early on, be prepared adapt your business model so that you have the greatest chance of success.

Peter Shergold: Thank you very much.

Michael Walls: I’d just like to say thank you to everyone for coming. It’s been a really eye opening. I think that the whole notion of how to export is something that needs specialist knowledge. It’s very clear that if you reached out, just how knowledge is there to be shared. So, I think it’s been a good session.

Paul Van Bergen: Thank you for chairing, Peter.
First look: Volvo lifts lid on XC40

Life begins at 40: The XC40 will be offered with a diesel and petrol powertrain from launch, but an all-electric and a hybrid version are also expected down the track.

Volvo takes aim at premium crossover sales stars with new XC40

Volvo has finally ripped the covers off its new XC40 crossover that will be the company’s first contender in the burgeoning compact SUV segment and face stiff competition from its premium rivals.

The XC40 is set to hit Australian showrooms in the second quarter of 2018 and will be pitched as a rival for the likes of the Audi Q2 and Q3, BMW X1, Mercedes-Benz GLA, Lexus NX, Mini Countryman and the upcoming Jaguar E-Pace.

Revealed in Milan, Italy today, the XC40 marks the third SUV in Volvo’s portfolio following the large XC90 and mid-size XC60, and ensures that the Swedish brand is now covered in the main SUV segments.

As reported, the XC40 will be underpinned by the new CMA modular vehicle architecture that was co-developed with Volvo’s Chinese parent company Geely and will form the basis for all other ‘40 series’ models as well as future compact Geely models.

Other models in Volvo’s 40 series are likely to include a small sedan – previewed by a concept revealed in May last year – and a replacement for the ageing V40 hatchback.

From launch, the XC40 will be offered with a D4 turbo-diesel and a T5 turbo-petrol Drive-E powertrain, but Volvo is yet to reveal engine outputs and performance figures.

The XC40 has been part of a lengthy teaser campaign since the reveal of the concept, with the swept up look from the rear door panel into the C-pillar, the dual-tone roof and body, Thor’s hammer LED daytime running lights, Volvo’s signature vertical tail lights and a tailgate spoiler.

Volvo Car Australia managing director Kevin McCann said the XC40 would be a welcome addition to the local line-up and will fit the lifestyle of many Australians.

“Volvo has a strong leadership in design. The new XC40 is no exception, even by our already high standards,” he said.

“We wanted the XC40 to be a fresh, creative and distinctive member of the Volvo line-up, allowing its drivers to put their personality in their driveway. Drivers want a car that reflects their personality, and the XC40 is that car.

“The exterior has an athletic sculpture, while the interior of the XC40 is multifaceted and ingenious, making it yet another example of our human-centric approach. The XC40 is a perfect car for an active Australian lifestyle, and perfectly represents our ongoing transformation plan.”

Volvo Cars president and chief executive Hakan Samuelsson said Milan was the perfect place to show off the new crossover.

“The XC40 is our first entry in the small SUV segment, broadening the appeal of the Volvo brand and moving it in a new direction,” he said. “It represents a fresh, creative and distinctive new member of the Volvo line-up. So it only feels natural to reveal the XC40 here in Milan, a buzzing European hotspot for fashion, art, design and lifestyle.”

Production kicks off at Volvo’s Ghent, Belgium factory in November.
**Citroen uncovers C3 Aircross compact SUV**

**Laissez-flair:** The Citroen C3 Aircross brings bold and unmistakably French styling to the compact-SUV segment.

**Funky C3 Aircross bolsters Citroen SUV range, global release H2 2017**

**ROBBIE WALLIS**

Citroen has unveiled the production-ready C3 Aircross compact SUV, which could help the French brand take a bigger bite of the lucrative compact-SUV segment, if it gets the green light for Australia.

GoAuto has contacted Peugeot’s recently-announced Australian managing director, to confirm whether it will be offered Down Under, but if it arrives, a likely follow the European debut which is set for the second half of the year.

Based on the C-Aircross concept from this year’s Geneva motor show, the C3 Aircross can be customised in 90 different exterior colour combinations, as well as five interior design schemes.

The C3 Aircross has retained much of the styling from the Geneva concept, including the two-part headlight set-up, narrow grille with integrated Citroen emblem, square air intake and silver lower bumper.

Rear styling is virtually unchanged from the show car, with a prominent, three-part rear bumper, soft, rectangular headlamps, and “Vetemani blind C-piller design.

European customers can choose from a range of wheel designs either 16- or 17-inches in diameter, while the colour combinations are split into eight body colours, four roof colours and four colour packs.

The diminutive C3 Aircross measures 4150mm long, 1760mm wide, and 1640mm high, making it shorter and narrower than the segment-leading Mazda CX-3, but with a higher roofline. It also sits 20mm higher than the segment-leading Mazda CX-3, but with a higher roofline. It also sits 20mm higher than its rivals.

CRHON is claiming the C3 Aircross has one of the most spacious and adjustable interiors in the segment, with ample head and legroom, boot space of 410 litres (that can grow up to 1289L with the rear seats folded), and a flat-folding front seat that offers a load length of 2400mm.

The interior features a simplistic, square-shaped theme with a large touchscreen infotainment system, spare use of buttons and five different design schemes.

Tech features include Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, MirrorLink and wireless smartphone charging.

Safety features include park assist, active safety brake, lane departure warning, blind spot monitor, speed limit recognition, intelligent beam headlights, driver assistance alert, top rear vision reversing camera, colour head-up display and Grop Control, Citroen’s multi-terrain driving system which features hill descent control.

Powertrains for the C3 Aircross will be a mixture of 1.2-litre turbocharged three-cylinder units in both manual and automatic configuration, and a turbo-diesel engine, most likely the 1.6-litre four-cylinder unit, teamed exclusively to a manual gearbox.

Produced at Citroen’s Zaragoza plant in Spain, the C3 Aircross will go on sale in Europe in the second half of 2017 followed by a global rollout after that, with pricing announced in July.

Citroen CEO Linda Jackson said the uniqueness of the C3 Aircross would set it apart from its rivals.

“Bringing together all of Citroen’s expertise in cabin space, modular design and comfort, this people-minded SUV stands out in the B SUV segment with its unique body styling,” she said.

“It has a different mind set, a different style of protection and adventure, consistent with the expectations of customers today.”

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**Toyota drops V6 from updated HiLux range**

Automatic choice: The Toyota HiLux update has seen an increase in variants equipped with an automatic transmission, up to 17 from 12 in the outgoing range.

New variants, no petrol V6, some minor price tweaks for Toyota HiLux line-up

**ROBBIE WALLIS**

TOYOTA has given its best-selling HiLux pick-up range its first update since the eighth-generation model went on sale in September 2015, dropping the slow-selling petrol V6 engine and adding new variants ahead of its on-sale date next month.

Price of entry to the updated range remains unchanged at $29,990 plus on-road for the 2.7-litre petrol 4x2 single-cab WorkMate manual, while the range-topping SR5+ 4x4 dual-cab auto has been reduced by $50 to $58,440.

SR 4x4 dual-cab variants have risen in price by $70, while all other HiLux models wearing the SR badge have decreased by $80.

A number of new turbo-diesel variants have been introduced to replace the 4.0-litre petrol V6, while new automatic variants have been added to the 4x2 range of overall HiLux sales, Toyota also recently axed the V6 in the LandCruiser Prado.

Two new variants called Hi-Rider have been added to the 4x2 range, which gives the vehicle the higher stance of the 4x4 models without the all-terrain driveline, and is available on extra-cab SR, as well as dual-cab WorkMate and SRS HiLux vehicles.

The sole pick-up extra-cab offering, the SRS manual, has been swapped in favour of the six-speed auto.

Additions to the 4x4 dual-cab range include an entry-level WorkMate cab-chassis automatic, and two new dual-cab pick-up variants called the SR+ manual and auto SR versions.

The top pick-up extra-cab offering, the SRS manual, has been swapped in favour of the six-speed auto.

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JAWS benefits include:

- JAWS website is updated EVERY day with new job opportunities available.
- JAWS Facebook page has over 29,000 fans.
- JAWS is supported by two of the region’s leading newspaper groups – Western Weekender and Western Sydney Business Access; ensuing that the brand is well promoted at all times.
- Advertisers can select from packages that include social media and traditional print advertising.
- JAWS offers value for money compared to more conventional forms of job advertising.
- Gets real results that you can observe.
- Many businesses use only JAWS when advertising available jobs.
- It is modern recruitment; JAWS gives the employer more control.
- JAWS newsletter database exceeds 5,000 recipients.
Penrith Mayor Cr John Thain said that as a parent of a disabled child, he is especially pleased to be a project champion for this most worthwhile initiative. “For those who experience some form of disability, meaningful employment not only contributes to their economic security, independence and social interaction, it also improves their mental health and other life opportunities," Cr Thain said.

Employment of people with disability is not just good for the person with disability, it also makes good business sense. Employers can often access wage subsidies, equipment modification schemes and other forms of support to employ people with disability.

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Free business breakfast series

Penrith Council will host a business breakfast at the Penrith Civic Centre from 7.30 to 9.30am, Tuesday October 10 to launch the Nepean Jobs For All Project.

A joint initiative of Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury and Penrith City Councils with funding through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), this awareness and capacity building project encourages businesses to employ people with a disability.

The project will highlight the real benefits that employing people with a disability can bring, and address some common myths and stereotypes.

Penrith Mayor Cr John Thain said that as a parent of a disabled child, he is especially pleased to be a project champion for this most worthwhile initiative.

“For those who experience some form of disability, meaningful employment not only contributes to their economic security, independence and social interaction, it also improves their mental health and other life opportunities,” Cr Thain said.

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Employers who attend the breakfast will be offered training and resources as well as professional networking with business leaders across the region.

Similar events will be held in Windsor on Wednesday, October 18 and Katoomba on Thursday, October 26.

Culinary Carnivale renowned for food

A PULSTAIN line-up of entertainment has been confirmed for Culinary Carnivale – Fairfield’s renowned Spanish and Latin American Food Festival.

Mayor of Fairfield City Frank Carbone said Culinary Carnivale, now in its seventh year, was set to be bigger than ever with a wide range of entertainment to match the culinary fare.

“Culinary Carnivale is a signature event in Fairfield, attracting visitors from far and wide to enjoy the food and be enthralled by the colourful family friendly entertainment,” Mayor Carbone said.

“The line-up of entertainment is our best yet and has a mix of everything from traditional and contemporary that is sure to interest all ages and members of the family.” Australia’s iconic female Indigenous performer Christine Anu will headline Culinary Carnivale. Anu said she was excited to be performing at Culinary Carnivale. A wide range of entertainment will be packed into the afternoon.

The crowd will enjoy el ritmo latino (the Latin rhythm) with the Uruguayan drumming and dancing of Comparsa Urumbe and the breathtaking dancing of the Latin Stars Samba Troops.

Event visitors can also immerse themselves in the traditional with Sonido De Los Andes (Sound of the Andes) and the ever popular Victor Valdes Y Su Mariachi for a real Mexican party. Dancers Tierra Colombiana (Columbian Land) and musicians Los Pibes (The Guys) will captivate with a mix of folk and contemporary.

Quetzal Guerrero will mesmerise with his eclectic fusion of Mexican and Brazilian rhythms and sounds influenced by folk, soul, reggae and rock! And Dauntless Movement Crew will captivate with their action performance of breakdancing, hip-hop and parkour.

Free amusement rides are also available throughout the day in Ware Street.

Entertainment and entry to Culinary Carnivale is free. Save the date and come to Spencer and Ware streets, Fairfield and enjoy La Vida Buena (the good life) on October 21 from 11am to 4pm.
Blacktown City Council has launched a water recycling project that can capture up to 200 million litres of stormwater a year for sports field irrigation at Blacktown International Sportspark.

“Blacktown City Council being environmentally responsible by harvesting stormwater from Angus Creek that would otherwise simply run out to sea,” Mayor Stephen Bali said.

“The alternative would be to use high quality mains water for irrigation, which is a waste of resources and it also means we can water the fields when restrictions are in force.”

Chair of Blacktown City Council’s sports committee, Councillor Brad Bunting, said watering sports fields with drinking water makes no sense.

“It makes sense to use stormwater on sports fields when billions of litres flow past the BSP each year and would otherwise flow down Angus Creek, into Eastern Creek and then out to sea at Broken Bay via the Hawkesbury-Nepean,” he said.

“There is also a long term saving of around 10 per cent, compared with using mains water. The $6.2M project was assisted by $2.2M of Federal and $286,000 of State Government funding.

“The filtration system is so good the water is five times cleaner that the required water quality standards for irrigation, Mayor Bali said.

“This is due to the highly effective natural treatment process of the wetland and floating wetland system,” Mayor Bali said.

“The Scheme also collects stormwater from hard surfaces such as the Sportspark stadium roof and surrounding car parks. It not only irrigates the Blacktown International Sportspark, but is also piped to the neighbouring Anne Aquilina, Kareela, Charlie Bali and Nurragingy reserves.

Blacktown City Council engaged two local Aboriginal artists, Jamie Eastwood and Donna Brown, to paint murals on the storage tanks to represent the underground pipe network, waterholes, wildlife and plants used in the project.

**Project details**

Blacktown International Sportspark is an elite international sporting facility that hosted more than 5,000 events and attracts over 750,000 visitors a year.

Angus Creek is a tributary of Eastern Creek. The Angus Creek catchment is 655 hectares and generates about 2 billion litres of stormwater a year, which runs off the suburbs of Rooty Hill and Minchinbury and into Angus Creek.

Potential applicants are reminded to refer to the Community Grants Guidelines 2017-2018 to assess their eligibility to apply. All organisations and groups are strongly encouraged to discuss their projects with the relevant Council Officer prior to submitting their application.

For more information on the 2017/18 Community Grants Program, contact The Hills Shire Council on 02 9843 0322 or email comminfo@thehills.nsw.gov.au.
Passion to help drives Armando

Most inventions are born out of necessity but for Western Sydney business coach Armando Camacho, his invention stemmed from his passion for helping others.

“As a business consultant, I just found there wasn’t enough out there to help businesses grow their brand,” he said.

So Mr Camacho founded SignRise, a range of lightweight, portable signage that offers businesses better exposure.

Chances are you’ve passed one of Mr Camacho’s signs in the street – a barrier outside a local café, flying banner waving in the breeze at a carnival or festival, display boards at expos and umbrellas at outdoor events.

And the more than 200 product range has been embraced around the world and by iconic names in business like KFC, Toyota, Nestle and others.

But the jewel in SignRise’s crown is the car pop up – a rectangular fabric box attached to the roof rack that expands at the touch of a button, advertising a company’s wares or spruiking a campaign.

“People are realising that brand is key; it’s how you get your name out there,” said Mr Camacho who is based at West Pennant Hills.

“I think branding is the most profitable thing a person can do in business and our range is probably the most inexpensive way companies can grow their brand.

“It’s wonderful when you go into a showroom for example and you see your invention is being used to in turn support their own business.”

With the help of Western Sydney patent attorney Andre Meyer, Mr Camacho patented his range of signs by highlighting their uniqueness – they are conveniently expandable and the elliptical tower displays can be erected in seconds and are supported by a patented expanding pole, giving the advertisement 360 degree exposure. The banners can also be illuminated for greater impact at night.

“When you’re done, the signs neatly pack away into a compact, purpose designed bag and are made of washable, crease resistant fabric.

“Marketing is very difficult to quantify but the reality is if one person sees my sign and it registers in their mind, then I’ve done my job,” he said. “If 1000 people see it, then that is even better.”

Mr Camacho said he had big plans for his pop up range which he hoped would be taken up by NSW Police or motoring giant NRMA after discussions with police in South Africa proved promising.

“Every police car should have one. Too often you see people ignore the flashing lights sometimes simply because they are too low and not noticeable. If the lights were raised and sat on top of the pod and the whole pod was lit up then motorists wouldn’t miss it.

“You can even display a message on the pod so it can fit in with the latest police awareness campaign. The car would definitely take on a bigger presence.

“It would also work well with the NRMA roadside safety vehicles.

“Real estate agents in the US love this product because they can go from a car with no branding to a car with branding at the press of a button.”

The car roof product was praised at an engineering excellence awards ceremony for its design, excellence in promotion and simplicity of use. Mr Camacho’s other products have also won awards for their ease of installation and multi-purpose function.

Find out more at www.signrise.com.au or contact Armando Camacho on 0423 226 215 to view his product range.
Sector is strong
THE manufacturing sector recorded 10 consecutive months of growth with the Ai Group’s Performance of Manufacturing Index rising to 56 points. Construction, mining and agriculture recorded expansion. However, this comes at the same time as manufacturers are having to deal with record high energy prices, higher raw material costs, a stronger Aussie dollar, tough global competition and the departure of the car industry.

World class defence
BAE Systems Australia will build a world-class defence hub in Victoria for its maritime, aerospace and land warfare projects – the biggest in the nation and capable of accommodating up to 1,000 engineers and technicians.

1,000 apprentices
BAE has also announced that if the Federal Government selects it for the SEA5000 Future Frigate program it will recruit another 1,000 apprentices and graduates in areas such as steel work, mechanical, electrical and technical trades.

Driverless shuttle trial
CONSTRUCTION workers at Sydney Olympic Park will start using a driverless shuttle bus as part of a two-year trial of autonomous vehicles by the NSW Government.

Major upgrade completed
PACKAGING company Orora has completed a $42M upgrade of its Adelaide glass bottle manufacturing plant. It has increased production capacity by 60 million bottles. Orora estimates that the expansions will add another $10M in business to their supply chain.

Collaborative grants project
NATIONAL Energy Resources Australia has announced grants totalling $15M for collaborative projects which help our energy sector become more competitive and innovative.

New gas power station
TRANS Alta Energy has commissioned a new gas power station at Port Hedland to supply electricity to the Pilbara region. The plant produces 150 megawatts.

Supply devices to US
AUSTRALIAN manufacturer Medical Developments International has been chosen to supply respiratory devices to more than 600 pharmacies in the US.

Combat vehicles to be built
THE Victorian Government has signed a heads of agreement to have 225 new Combat Reconnaissance Vehicles built at the former Holden site at Fishermans Bend. The Land400 project is valued at $5B.

Portable clothes lines
MEANWHILE, with the demise of the auto industry its supply chain members are being forced to reinvent themselves to remain in business and one company in South Australia has gone from making car batteries to a portable clothesline for the aged care and disability sectors.

New solvent made
VIVA Energy Australia’s refinery at Geelong is manufacturing its first new solvent product since the 1980’s called Vivasol X55 which is used in the automotive industry. More than 700 people work at the refinery.

Non-electric ban
CHINA is considering a ban on the production of non-electric vehicles.

PM at loggerheads
AGL and Prime Minister Turnbull are at loggerheads over the future of the Liddell coal fired power station with the energy company saying it is committed to shutting it down in 2022.

Black box recorders
TELCO manufacturer Myriota will develop the world’s first black box recorder for infantry soldiers. It will collect valuable data and act as a security beacon.

7,000 new jobs
THE Victorian Government predicts that its $11B Metro Tunnel rail project will create 7,000 new jobs, not 5,000 as originally estimated. This will include 500 apprentices.

Fastest growing region
GLOBAL analysts say that the industrial automation market turned over $44B last year and by 2022 it will be worth almost double that amount. Asia Pacific is the fastest growing region.

Assembly in Adelaide
DRIVERLESS vehicle manufacturer Naviya is to build an assembly plant in Adelaide. The French company currently has facilities in France and the US.
Addressing the housing affordability issue

PARRAMATTA, like many suburbs in Sydney, suffers from a lack of affordable housing and I commend New South Wales Premier, Gladys Berejiklian who has addressed this issue as a priority.

Make no mistake there is no silver bullet and no single solution. This is especially evident in Western Sydney as the region experiences strong population growth, changing demographics and changing lifestyle trends.

We need sensible and practical solutions.

The housing affordability issue is a result of many factors and requires multiple responses to meet this challenge.

In a report to the Premier, former Reserve Bank of Australia Governor Glenn Stevens outlined issues with supply and demand arising as a consequence of a strong performing NSW economy, historically low interest rates and foreign investment. On the supply side, he highlights a ‘cumulative shortfall in the number of dwellings’ since the mid-2000s.

To meet these challenges the NSW Government has announced a raft of measures to help improve housing affordability.

Firstly, we have announced first home buyer stamp duty exemptions, a $1.2 billion initiative. From 1 July 2017, stamp duty has been abolished for first home buyers purchasing a property up to $560,000 and stamp duty discounts apply for homes up to $800,000.

For those trying to get into their first home, this provides significant savings of up to $24,740.

Secondly home buyers are entitled to a $10,000 grant if they build a new home valued up to $750,000 or buy a new home up to $600,000.

The Government’s comprehensive package of measures also includes abolishing insur- ance duty on lender’s mortgage insurance, increasing surcharges for foreign investors and removing stamp duty deferral for investors on residential off-the-plan purchases.

Many agree that a major part of the answer is increasing supply.

The Government is also boosting supply of new dwellings by accelerating zoning and building accompanying infrastructure, including roads, schools and hospitals.

Recently the NSW Government announced the Greater Parramatta Priority Growth Area. This will deliver 72,000 new dwellings over 20 years. A Special Infrastructure Contribution (SIC) will ensure that we not only build density but communities that have access to good transport, health care, road upgrades, new schools and open green space.

While the NSW Government has articulated a number of responses and these are important steps our approach must be balanced.

We must also encourage both industry and community groups to deliver affordable housing.

Evolve Housing, one of the nation’s largest not-for-profit national Community Housing Providers under the leadership of CEO Andrea Galloway is leading in innovation in this area.

They have launched a ‘profit for purpose’ real estate agency which reinvests profits back into growing the supply of affordable housing stock. This model delivers cheaper rental accommodation for low to moderate income earners.

There are those who advocate for mandatory inclusionary zoning targets but simply mandating that builders must provide affordable housing is risky.

We must be careful to avoid unintended consequences such as passing the cost of providing affordable housing to those who do not quality for affordable housing. This in turn could create further price inflation.

Changing demographics and lifestyle trends means we should also look at the diversity of supply at different price points. We should consider changing planning requirements relating to dwelling sizes and the provision of car parking and whether this can be offset by proximity to major transport hubs.

We also need to consider the opportunity to incentivise industry to deliver affordable housing by increasing density on appropriate sites, to offset the supply of affordable housing.

The Government also plays an important role in the delivery of more social housing, more dwellings, and improved liveability and amenity.

The Telopea Master Plan is an exemplar of rejuvenation of public housing stock and the creation of an integrated public, affordable and private housing community.

A 70:30 mix of private and social housing not only delivers more homes but also builds a harmonious, vibrant, and diverse community.

Affordable housing is a key priority for our communities and this government. We must have a sensible balanced approach that does not impede supply.

We must also continue to have a dialogue between government, community and industry.

Most importantly we must avoid political grandstanding and recognise that complex problems require considered and informed solutions.

Geoff Lee is State Member for Parramatta.
Money

Rules for reimbursing travel

Records are essential to show purpose; a detailed travel diary and invoices are essential for substantiation of amounts

KAYLENE HUBBARD

WHAT employee travel can I, or should I, reimburse?

You will recall the article from last month in which I discussed the ‘rules’ relating to claiming tax deductions for business travel. The question has been asked whether these ‘rules’ are any different when the question relates to travel by employees, rather than business owners. The short answer is – not really. Let’s discuss.

Employers can reimburse any travel costs incurred by employees. That is a matter of employment policy and will vary from employer to employer.

However, where an employee is reimbursed for travel, or has travel costs paid on his or her behalf by an employer, this will constitute a fringe benefit provided to that employee, and a fringe benefits tax liability will arise to the employer.

The fringe benefits tax liability is reduced however, to the extent that the travel would have been ‘otherwise deductible’ to the employee.

That is, where the employee would have been entitled to deduct the costs in his or her personal income tax return, a fringe benefits tax liability will not arise.

It is clear that travel to and from work, while it is in connection with earning assessable income, is not deductible to an employee. Similarly, an employee's costs of relocating for work and living away from home to work are not deductible.

The position still stands that the golden rule is that purpose determines what is, or would be, deductible to an employee.

Broadly, transport expenses (including airfares, train, car or bus costs) are deductible where the travel is undertaken in performing an employee's work activities.

It will be a question of fact as to whether an employees’ travel will be deductible, however the questions to be asked are as follows:

• Do his or her work activities require the employee to undertake the travel?
• Is the employee is paid, directly or indirectly, to undertake the travel? and
• Is the employee is subject to the direction and control of their employer for the period for the travel?

In relation to accommodation and meals, these are generally seen to be of a private nature and non-deductible. However, where these expenses are incurred by, or for, an employee in performing the employee's work activities, these will be deductible.

The key requirements are:

• An employee's work activities require them to undertake the travel;
• The work requires the employee to sleep away from home overnight;
• The employee has a permanent home elsewhere; and
• The employee does not incur the expense in the course of relocating or living away from home.

Recently released a draft ruling on this topic (TR 2017/D6 for those who would like more detail), and the guidance it gives is stated to be subject to the overarching requirement that the factors mentioned have not been contrived to give a private journey the appearance of work travel.

The ruling also states that apportionment may be required where travel has a dual purpose – in the same way as outlined previously for business owners.

As for business owners, for employees purpose is key and is the determining factor for deductibility. Also, records are essential to show purpose. A detailed travel diary and invoices are essential for substantiation of amounts.

There is no set limit on how much an employee can spend and how much you can reimburse. However you should consider the impact that any seemingly excessive spending may have on the purpose argument.

In summary, the key points to remember are:

• Reimbursed or provided travel is a fringe benefit unless it would be otherwise deductible to the employee;
• Purpose is still king;
• Purpose must be related to employment;
• Document everything; and
• Apportion where necessary.

Kaylene Hubbard is Tax Director at KPMG GWS.

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It's not just the players being tracked throughout the season.

ACH time German football team Bayern Munich plays a home game, the event generates nine million separate pieces of data.

There’s data about what the players do on field gathered from sensors in their uniforms, data on where the bottleneck is; data on sales and red card concessions and how the crowds move to them; and data on where the workers and volunteers are at every point in time.

It’s all used in the growing field of sports analytics, recently examined in Beyond Moneyball II: Analytics Leadership in Sports: An Ecological Analysis of FC Bayern Munich’s Digital Transformation, a new paper by Felix Tan, a senior lecturer in the school of information systems and technology management at UNSW Business School, and his colleagues Xiao Xiao and Jonas Hedman, both from the Copenhagen Business School.


Lewis traced the true story of how Billy Beane, the general manager of the US Oakland Athletics baseball team, was able to beat teams with more money by using data and statistics.

In some respects, the clubs have similar problems in terms of managing the crowds and the event.

It is possible in the US, because sports teams often own the stadium where they play, and so have an interest in investing in better customer experience (for instance, most Australian stadiums have poor mobile wifi which is needed for so many applications) and have an interest in ensuring the food and merchandise concessions also do well.

“In a disjointed ecosystem in Australia,” McCumber says. However, there are signs of change. The AFL owns Etihad Stadium in Melbourne and is interested in analytics, and many of the new franchises that are hoping to join the National Soccer League have proposed building their own stadiums, suggesting they could also add these capabilities.

Another area of sports where analytics plays a major role is in match scheduling, which is McCumber’s particular area of expertise.

McCumber and KPMG started doing the scheduling for the US National Basketball League two years ago, taking over a process that used to be done by hand.

The revenue for sports is obviously to grow a fan base and get the fans engaged with you, buying your merchandise.”

— FELIX TAN

In deciding when matches take place, they have to take into account how much time to give players between games to recover, how much travelling they have to do, which games and teams rate well on television and when, which likely gate takings will be for a particular date, and stadium availability, to name just a few. In fact, there are around 1000 constraints on when games can take place.

The problem is solved with analytics, via a program that can run 200 million alternative scheduling minutes, ultimately looking at $35 trillion different schedules to determine the optimum outcome. In this area, Australian sports are not so far behind, and are starting to adopt the technology.

This article was first published in Business Think, the journal of UNSW Business School. www.business-think.unsw.edu.au
Financial abuse cuts across cultures

Supriya Singh

CAROL, in her late 60s, had a joint bank account with her second husband. She put her A$560,000 in savings into it. Her husband didn’t have a regular wage but controlled the money. Carol also had a credit card but her husband monitored its use. “I wouldn’t dare spend it on anything without speaking to him,” she said.

This use of a joint account to financially abuse is just one out of nine I encountered in a pilot study with my fellow researchers Marg Liddell and Jasvinder Sidhu. We examined how financial channels used to express care can also be used to control.

The pilot study is based on 40 interviews in metropolitan Anglo-Celtic and Indian communities in Melbourne and Sydney.

There were 13 interviews with Anglo-Celtic women and 13 with Indian women with past experience of family violence (all have pseudonyms in this article). Another 14 interviews were conducted with community leaders and family violence service providers.

The women we interviewed all told of their partners monitoring, denying and restricting access to money. Men in these relationships also withheld their earnings from household use or stopped working, reducing their partner’s access to money, especially benefits.

In both the Anglo-Celtic and Indian communities cultural expectations around the way men and women manage and control money play a role. For example joint bank accounts are a symbol of commitment in Anglo-Celtic marriage.

But another stereotype of the man as the provider also proved to be a myth among the Anglo-Celtic women we interviewed. Of our 13 participants, ten husbands or partners didn’t provide financial support for their partners.

Karen, 60, said her husband stopped working two years after they got married. When he did work, he spent the money he earned on “men’s toys”, while she budgeted $1 a serve of meat per person.

In the Indian community money controlled by the male in the family, is a means of ensuring family protection and well-being. So, we found women in the Australian Indian community were slow to question the beginnings of financial abuse.

Fiona, 47, who used to work as a financial analyst, deplored her savings in her husband’s account. She said: “I totally trusted him. I didn’t think I wanted to have my own account!”

Not all our participants agreed to their husbands controlling their money. In the two stories we heard of women keeping their money separate from their partners, the marriage ended.

Asha, 32, an information technology professional and her husband had agreed to keep some money joint and the rest separate. After marriage, her husband pressed to control the household money. Asha said: “He saw this as a trust issue.” The marriage ended in less than two years.

Money for most Indian families belongs to the family rather than the couple. For example a lot of Indian parents fund their children’s education in Australia, they also help if they can with housing and investment. In return, children, particularly sons, see it as their duty to care for their parents in terms of money and care.

But this dynamic can also lead to the husband feeling entitled to sending his wife’s earnings - without consultation - to his parents. One of our study participants Devi, 33 came to Australia on a student visa in 2006, with her husband who had a spouse visa. She said: “Sometimes, I knew he had sent money to his parents and sometimes, I did not.”

In Indian communities a husband may also feel he can legitimately ask his wife’s family for money and assets. This is in cases where there may or may not be dowry (payments from the bride’s family when the couple marry).

However, our interviews showed this can also lead to a continual extortion of money from the wife’s family.

Devi said her parents did not pay a dowry, but they paid the couple’s travel costs for migration. Under pressure from her husband, her parents sold land in India to help them buy land to build a house.

Another study participant’s parents also sent over A$100,000 which went to her husband for his business.

These are just results from our initial research and we hope to continue studying this type of financial abuse in other cultures, regional and rural areas and from the perspective of men.

If families are more sensitive as to how culture shapes conversations about money and respectful relationships, it could help to prevent this abuse. It also raises red flags for family violence service providers about how financial abuse crosses cultures.

Hearing these stories, a woman who teaches service providers how to identify financial abuse in our study said: “I began to think how I should talk about money with my four-year-old daughter.”

Supriya Singh is Professor, Sociology of Communications, Graduate School of Business & Law, RMIT University. This article was first published at www.thecommunity.com.au
More study = lowered heart disease

A new study has found increasing education by 3.6 years – similar to the length of a university undergraduate degree – could reduce the risk of heart disease by a third.

A decrease of this magnitude is similar to short-term use of a cholesterol-lowering medication.

Coronary heart disease refers to the build-up of plaque in the blood vessels supplying the heart. Over time, this build-up may lead to the blockage of one or more blood vessels, depriving the heart of oxygen, and producing a heart attack. Coronary heart disease is the most common cause of death in Australia and worldwide.

While education has previously been associated with better health outcomes, there has been limited evidence that education actually causes these health effects, rather than just being linked by association.

The suggestion has been that actual benefits may derive from variables associated with both education and risk of heart disease, such as socioeconomic status.

How can we establish cause and effect?

To demonstrate that exposure to A causes outcome B, scientists traditionally rely on randomised controlled trials. In randomised controlled trials, subjects are randomly placed into a group receiving exposure A, or a group that does not (typically some sort of placebo or sham treatment).

This randomisation process ensures the groups are equal on average across all variables at the beginning of the trial, except for the exposure variable. When the groups are compared at the end of the trial, any difference between the groups can therefore be attributed to the effect of the exposure.

But due to the obvious ethical dilemmas posed by restricting education for a group of people, a randomised trial is not feasible in this situation.

The closest reflection of such an experiment was the staggered introduction of an additional year of schooling in Sweden, between 1949 and 1962. Comparing health outcomes by region, the extra year of school decreased all causes of early death after the age of 40. But in this new study, scientists turned to nature, and the genes we randomly inherit from our parents. They used a technique called Mendelian randomisation, which utilises the random transmission of genes from parents to offspring, to mimic a randomised controlled trial.

More than 160 genetic variants have been shown to be associated with years of education in dozens of studies involving more than 500,000 men and women.

We don’t know exactly how these genes predict how many years of education someone will have, but we know that people with these genes on average will go on to more education.

The researchers used genes to randomly classify participants into high or low education groups. Participants in the genetically high and low education groups should have been equal across all other variables because of this randomisation.

Thus, any difference between the groups in terms of risk of coronary heart disease should be because of education.

Individuals who had randomly received more genetic variants associated with longer education from their parents were also less likely to suffer from heart disease. This observation suggested that increased number of years in education causally decreased risk of heart disease.

How does education make us healthier?

The reduced heart disease risk brought about through increased years of education seemed to be mediated by better lifestyle choices – less smoking, healthier diet choices and lower cholesterol levels.

One of the limitations of such a study is that genes linked to educational attainment were associated with other traits such as self-discipline, which would influence other things such as smoking and diet. So a difference in risk of heart disease between the groups might be due to the effect of one of these other variables rather than an effect of education.

If education decreased the risk of heart disease, then the effect of this should be similar across all the different genes used in the study. If, however, another variable besides education were responsible for the association, then the apparent effect of education on heart disease should vary across the different genes used in the study.

As the authors found a relatively consistent effect of education on risk of heart disease across all genes in the study, it appeared their results were robust and their assumptions valid.

Importantly, the authors’ conclusions were also supported by the results from previous observational epidemiological studies and quasi-experiments like the Swedish study.

This study alone may not carry sufficient weight to prompt calls for extending the number of years at school mandated by government. But it does add more robust evidence that more years in the classroom could lead to reduced risk of heart disease, and subsequently longer life.

This article first appeared at www.theconversation.com.au. David Evans is Professor of Statistical Genetics, The University of Queensland.
N. a Sydney-exclusive, Melbourne Theatre Company’s (MTC) critically acclaimed musical What Rhymes with Cars and Girls will be presented by Riverside Theatres from October 11 to 14 as part of its national tour.

An intimate musical gem, What Rhymes with Cars and Girls weaves together the poetic songs from the ARIA award-winning debut solo album by Tim Rogers – the album which cemented the You Am I frontman’s formidable reputation as one of Australia’s premier songwriters – with words by award-winning playwright Aidan Fennessy.

Under the direction of Clare Watson, the original cast and creative team will return to the stage to bring this contemporary Australian tale of love back to life including the acting and singing talents of Johnny Carr and Sophie Ross, completed with a three-piece band led by musical director Tim Rogers.

What Rhymes with Cars and Girls sees two lovers brought together by a conjunction of the stars and a pizza delivery gone awry. Tash is a smart-mouthed singer in a band and Johnno is a three-time loser from the wrong side of the tracks.

But, what do you know? It’s love. This urban romance knows that it’s never the coming together, it’s the holding on.

MTC Artistic Director Brett Sheehy said, “What Rhymes with Cars and Girls going on tour is a testament to Australia’s desire for contemporary, home-grown works. When you combine a feel-good love story inspired by an iconic Australian album with some of the country’s most charming creative talents, you’re bound to create a type of magic that captures the hearts of its audiences, as it did when it premiered in 2015. I have no doubt that it will delight audiences right around the country.”

**Cast:**
Johnny Carr and Sophie Ross
Musicians: Ben Franz, Xani Kolac
Director: Clare Watson
Musical Director: Tim Rogers
Set Designer: Andrew Bailey
Costume Designer: Kate Davis
Lighting Designer: Richard Vabre
Sound Designer: Russell Goldsmith

**What:**
What Rhymes with Cars and Girls.

**When:**
8pm from 11th to 14th October; and 2pm on 14th October.

**Location:**
Riverside Theatres – Corner Church and Market Streets, Parramatta.

**Tickets:**

Bookings: riversideparramatta.com.au or (02) 8839 3399.

**NATIONAL TOUR DATES AND VENUES**
- Geelong Performing Arts Centre - 21-23 September 2017.
- Ulumbarra Theatre, Bendigo - 29-30 September 2017.
- Riverside Theatres Parramatta - 11-14 October 2017.
Developers release stage 3 of BREEZE

DAHUA Group Australia (Dahua), has launched stage three in the company’s New Breeze master planned community in the South West’s suburb of Bardia. Stage three comprises over 700 land lots and is aptly named Parkside.

Parkside land and house and land releases will be surrounded by three new expansive parks and playground facilities spanning over 6.5 hectares.

It is also across the road from National Parks and Wildlife Service’s Cabramatta Creek precinct, which is part of Edmondson Regional Park. This park is one of four precincts that will offer a range of recreational and natural bushland experiences for residents and will open on October 8, 2017.

Jesse Johnson, Sales Manager for New Breeze said: “Parkside is all about parks, backyards and wide-open spaces for recreational pursuits. Hundreds of people have already registered their interest in stage three. Purchasers of all ages and demographic profiles are expected to buy including first home buyers, downsizers, up sizers and investors. Nature lovers and people that appreciate an outdoor lifestyle will embrace Parkside.

“A wide range of land lots are available to suit all budgets. Current purchasers have been our greatest selling tool. They have told family and friends about New Breeze who in turn have also bought.”

“New Breeze is the fastest selling project in the South West since launching in April last year with over 550 sales secured to date. We expect Parkside to sell very quickly.”

According to the State government’s Sydney Growth Centres Strategic Assessment Report (2010), the population in the South-West will grow exponentially with approximately 300,000 new residents by 2031.

“New Breeze is all about location and is well placed to capitalise on the region’s growth forecast over the next decade. The community is situated adjacent to an existing school (Bardia Public School) and is 400 metres from the future Edmondson Park Town Centre and Edmondson Park Train Station,” added Mr Johnson.

A variety of lot sizes from 200 sq m to over 638 sq m are available in Parkside with prices starting from $299,000 to $628,000. All of the land lots are positioned within walking distance to the new parks.

New Breeze will comprise 1280 new homes with a range of housing types. The development will include large high-quality parks and playgrounds, a sports oval, bike and cycle paths and 40 hectares of open spaces for recreational activities.

The project is only eight kilometres from Liverpool’s CBD and about 45 minutes from Sydney CBD.

It is at the gateway to the expanding Sydney South West Growth Centre and provides easy access to the proposed second airport at Badgerys Creek.

The sales office is located on the corner of Bardia Avenue and Macdonald Road, Bardia. For further information and to register your interest in New Breeze visit www.newbreeze.com.au or call 1300 832 482.

Key points

- House and land releases surrounded by 6.5 hectares of parklands.
- Hundreds of people have registered their interest in stage 3.
- South-west expected to grow by 300,000 new residents by 2031.
- Project is 8 kilometres from Liverpool and 45 minutes form CBD.

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Norwest City developer in line for collaboration

MALAYSIA’s Mulpha Group has prepared a proposal to amend existing planning controls to facilitate higher building capacity for the development of a town centre at 4 Century Century Circuit, Baulkham Hills.

The proposal seeks to amend the Hills Shire Local Environmental Plan 2012 to rezone the land for the redevelopment of Norwest Marketown.

General manager of Mulpha Norwest, Tim Spencer, defined the Norwest City proposal as a “15-minute city”, aimed at providing accessibility and convenience to between 15,000 and 20,000 residents within a 1.5km radius.

“The new Norwest City is a vision of a future community that not only contributes, but leads the evolution of culture and plays a role in fostering the thought leaders of tomorrow,” Spencer said.

The town centre will include the development of nine buildings ranging from four to 40 storeys in height. In June, the Hills Shire Council referred Mulpha’s proposed development to the Department of Planning and Environment for gateway determination.

A rescission motion has since been lodged by the NSW planning minister and the proposal will be brought back to council.

Mulpha Norwest’s proposal for the new town centre development includes:

- 26,000 square metres of retail floor space accommodating a variety of supermarket opportunities, specialty retail and other related facilities serving a growing community;
- 84,000 square metres of floor space for commercial, office, community, leisure and other service activities creating additional jobs to meet the target for Norwest;
- 1,056 high density residential dwellings within 300 metres of the proposed Norwest Rail Station, and Norwest Town Centre and Business Park, supporting transit orientated development.

The Norwest City proposal aims to provide high quality amenity, open and civic public spaces and a permeable pedestrian-focused urban structure, presented in a relaxed and campus-like setting that extends the surrounding streetscapes.

This proposal comes on the back of Mulpha Norwest’s changing approach to development – placing a greater emphasis on collaboration.

“We acknowledge the future is too bright for us to harness it by ourselves,” he said.

Norwest City is centred around providing a select group of amenities including Food Street, an all-hours open-air dining precinct, enhanced by its proximity to the pool and community facilities, retail connections and garden terraces.

The Norwest Metro Station are due to open in 2019. If approved, the Norwest City Marketown redevelopment is estimated for completion in 2022.

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Economics and same-sex marriage

FABRIZIO CARMIGNANI

Owe and companionship make most people happy and generally represent two of the key reasons why couples marry.

In the economists’ view, love and companionship are a particular type of commodity: they cannot be purchased or traded on a market, but they can be produced by a household to generate happiness for its members.

There are potentially many other of these “household-produced” commodities, including raising children, preparing meals, caring for each other, and achieving economic stability.

The question is then how to produce these commodities more efficiently so that people are happier.

Efficiency in this case does not just mean “more”, but also “better quality” commodities. For instance, the happiness of a person is not just determined by the number of meals prepared and consumed, but also by their quality.

Economists look at marriage in this context. Examining the commodities marriage can produce helps us understand why people marry, how individuals sort each other into married couples, and what this means for society as a whole.

It turns out that economics does a pretty good job at explaining and predicting patterns of marriage that would otherwise appear irrational. For example economics can help explain why there is a difference between married and non-married people when it comes to if, and eventually how much, they want to work.

We marry because...

The fundamental economic view of marriage goes back to the theory of Nobel Laureate Gary Becker.

People can produce household commodities in some amount without necessarily having to marry. However, when people marry, they pool their resources together (the most important one being time) and can specialise in certain tasks. This allows them to produce more and better quality household commodities.

For instance, by sharing tasks such as shopping and cleaning, a married couple can produce better quality meals than two individuals who shop, clean and cook separately.

In principle, the same productivity gains could arise from a co-habitation or de facto relationship. However, in this case, the two people in the relationship would also have to set up contracts to figure out important arrangements like household finance and inheritance (among other things).

There also is some significant costs, not only in money but in time, in working all of this out. Whereas a marriage contract already embeds some of these aspects. That in itself is an efficiency gain associated with marriage over cohabitation or de facto relationship.

So, if people want the commodities we mentioned: love, company, doing tasks together, they are better off (i.e. happier) if marriage is permitted.

This whole framework doesn’t require people to be of the same or different sex. Heterosexual and homosexual couples will generate different patterns in terms of what commodities they produce. Still, marriage will generate some productivity and efficiency gains for couples, irrespective of their gender.

What economics has to say about the effect on the rest of society

From an economic perspective, the fact that same-sex marriage allows people to achieve some productivity and efficiency gains (which some of us might call happiness!) does not automatically mean that it should be established by law. For example, if same-sex marriage were to produce some negative effects on the rest of the society.

In this regard, the public debate has focused on how permitting same-sex marriage would (or would not) reduce overall marriage in society, increase divorce rates, or lessen the importance of having children in marriage.

In fact, there’s now a growing body of empirical research, published across various fields (from economics, to demography, sociology, and public policy), that estimates the impact of permitting same-sex marriage on marriage, abortion, and divorce rates (or couple stability).

A study in 2009, using US data, found no statistically significant adverse effect from allowing gay marriage. Another US study in 2014 found no evidence that allowing same-sex couples to marry reduces the opposite-sex marriage rate.

One more study indicated that same-sex couples experience levels of stability similar to heterosexual couples. That study also found that for couples (both same-sex and different-sex) living in a state with a ban against same-sex marriage there was an associated instability.

To some extent, findings from this line of research are still preliminary and have to be taken with caution. This is because same-sex marriage, even where permitted, has been introduced only recently.

Therefore only a relatively short time span is available to observe its effects. So the jury is still out.

However, my own reading of the research produced so far is that there is generally little evidence of significant negative societal effects of same-sex marriage.

Going forward, as more data becomes available, empirical research will allow for a more refined assessment of the impact of same-sex marriage on society and the extent to which permitting same-sex marriage could (or could not) weaken the social purpose of traditional marriage.

Fabrizio Carmignani is Professor, Griffith School, Griffith University. This article was first published at www.thecounterpart.com.au
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Want to inspire kids to learn STEM? Get them to build a robot

THE music is pumping, the crowd is cheering and people are dancing. This is science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM), but not as you know it.

I’m at the Sydney Olympic Park Sports Centre as an invited judge for the 2016 Australia Regional FIRST (For the Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Competition.

The competition is for students aged around 14-18 who, with the help of mentors and teachers, have six weeks (or significantly less in several cases) to design, build and program a robot for a designated challenge. This would be a difficult task even for seasoned engineers.

Forty-three teams from all around Australia, China, India, Singapore, Taiwan and the USA are here to take part, and the atmosphere is electric.

This year’s challenge is a medieval quest, with the arena designed as a castle and the challenge is to break through their opponent’s defences, weaken their tower with boulders (sponge balls) and try to capture it.

The teams have to work in an alliance with two other teams and develop a strategy together to beat the opposite alliance. Things can go wrong, and when something fails it’s back to the pit to problem solve and fix things under intense time pressure, all with the additional stress of the judges pestering them with questions.

robots across the nation
Every team I spoke to had an incredible story to tell. The perseverance and dedication of the students in both building their robots and getting there is overwhelming, and for some teams both have been a major struggle.

A Chinese team from Lanzhou travelled here on their own without their mentor and had to ask companies and universities in China if they could borrow equipment and space in their laboratories to build their robot.

The Narooma High School team, from New South Wales, raised funds by selling 300 cupcakes and ran a RoboCamp to help 8-11-year-olds learn the basics of robotics and computing to also generate money.

Another team is Thnder Down Under, which was established at Macquarie University and brings together mentors with students from schools across Sydney. It’s the first Australian FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) team, and helped bring the competition to Australia.

Since starting up in 2009, Thnder Down Under has brought robotics to rural and remote communities in Australia. It has provided no-interest loans to teams for robotics kits so that teams can run RoboCamps and become self-sustaining.

It’s partnered with another team to create FIRST Ladies, a network for girls in FIRST globally. It has helped start up teams in China and also helped develop an underwater robot and lego-robotics-style water safety game to utilise technology to help save lives.

The Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Foreign Minister Julie Bishop stopped by to see the action. Chris Stacey, Author provided

Continued on page 53
At the inspiring FIRST ladies’ breakfast on Friday morning, I spoke to Louise from the Kan-Bot Crew, a rookie team from Kaniva, a small Victorian farming town located about half way between Adelaide and Melbourne.

Kaniva College has around 100 students of secondary age and about 17% of the students are taking part in the team, an accomplishment in itself. The team was supported by local sponsorship due to a major drought last year, which placed financial stress on the small farming town.

They were unable to bring their two programmers to Sydney and so three other teams have been lending them their programmers and other technical assistance to keep them up and running.

For the Kaniva students this has been an extremely valuable opportunity to mix with like minded peers.

Education first

What really surprised me is that FIRST Robotics is not just about STEM. The students learn lifelong skills in leadership, entrepreneurship and communication as well as gaining confidence and meeting likeminded peers from around the world.

There is a real emphasis on teamwork and assisting those around you, and I don’t think we agonised over the decisions. All decisions needed to be unanimous and eventually we reached consensus, wrote the award scripts and headed out to the arena just in time to catch the semifinal and finals.

It is heart breaking that some teams – especially the rookie teams – do not know how close they came to get an award and how long we agonised over the decisions.

All teams were deserving of awards and should be proud of their efforts at the competition. But in the end, the winning alliance was made up of the Barker Redbacks, House of Ulladulla, Game of Drones and Thunder Down Under.

As a judge, I’m also an ambassador for FIRST Robotics with a hope to inspire students by communicating my love of science, especially my passion for volcanoes, to show them what is possible through STEM.

However, at the end of the tournament, I am the one feeling truly inspired and uplifted after meeting such an ambitious, motivated, and brilliant set of young people.

Heather Handley is Senior Lecturer in Geochemistry and Volcanology, Macquarie University. This article was first published at www.theconversation.com.au

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“It’s no exaggeration to say the Western Sydney Airport is one of the biggest economic game-changers our state has ever seen.” – Gladys Berejiklian, NSW Premier, speaking at a Western Sydney Business Connection function.

“Why should the locals of Parramatta have to travel afar to experience the vibe and quality of a top restaurant.” – Alex Aslan, of Aslan Hospitality Group, commenting on the $2.5 M, 600-square metre venue. Alex & Co, in Parramatta.

“The chamber has made a submission to the Commission For Sydney asking that they ensure there is a focus on supporting business growth... (we are) lobbying the city of Parramatta to ensure the draft economic plan supports all existing businesses in Parramatta.” – David Hill, president, Parramatta Chamber of Commerce, on the rate of business failures.

“The chamber welcomes the NSW Premier’s consideration of creating a free economic zone around the new Western Sydney Airport to encourage global corporations to move into the aerotropolis.” – David Borger, director, Sydney Business Chamber, Western Sydney.

“This is fantastic news for the City of Liverpool, and for Western Sydney. It is critical that the company responsible for planning Western Sydney Airport is based in Western Sydney.” Stephen Bali, president, Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC) on the location of the Western Sydney Airport Corporation in Liverpool.

“We’re finding the level of corporate business that is moving out here, or having a requirement to do business out here, need a hotel room.” – Brett Barlow, GM, Campbelltown Rydges Hotel, on a $16 million expansion of the hotel.

“The Riverside Stables complex has been a project nine year in the making and it is a massive investment by Inglis into South Western Sydney.” – Wendy Waller, Liverpool Mayor, on the $140 million William Inglis stables and hotel complex at Warrick Farm Racecourse.

“We are a city with game-changing catalyst development including the Western Sydney Airport, Western Sydney Priority Growth Area, Penrith Health and Education Precinct and Sydney Science Park, so we are well positioned for the future and ready to make the most of the transformative opportunities on our doorstep.” – John Thain, Mayor of Penrith, calling for a North-South rail line linking Western Sydney Airport to Penrith and Campbelltown.

“Western Sydney is one of Australia’s largest, fastest growing and most diverse economies and I am delighted to announce that we have engaged with some of the region’s key partners to help place Western Sydney at the forefront of more visitors’ minds.” - NSW Minister for Tourism and Major Events Adam Marshall.

“This is also a good time to reflect on what else makes for good operations. Overwhelmingly, being part of a local business community has been shown to really drive growth. We network, we buy and sell, and we partner with each other. Yes, it makes good business sense to belong to a local Chamber of Commerce.” – David Hill, President Parramatta Chamber of Commerce.

“AECOM is committed to providing flexible work options for all our employees, whether they are on secondment to Western Sydney based clients or they live in the region and want an alternative to the daily commute into Sydney CBD.” - Western Sydney Director Justine Kinch of AECOM.

“The Sydney Business Park, is fast becoming a major shopping and warehouse distribution and logistics destination for the region.” - Sydney Business Park manager, Owen Walsh.

“Marketing is very difficult to quantify but the reality is if one person sees my sign and it registers in their mind, then I’ve done my job. If 1000 people see it, then that is even better.” - Armando Camacho.
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Or take time to just breathe in one of the yoga classes. Another option is to challenge all your senses with Body Balance or reap the benefits of stretching and flexibility in a Flex Stretch class.

The highly skilled Yoga instructors practice the traditional Hatha style of yoga and classes are open to people of all abilities. Using a variety of yoga poses integrated with strength and stretching to connect the mind and body, these classes calm consciousness and create a sense of wellbeing. For the best value and highest quality Pilates and Yoga classes, come and see the friendly team at Atmosphere.

Where exercise is a positive and exciting experience

Atmosphere Health & Fitness Club in Penrith makes exercise a positive and exciting experience.

While most gyms boast one training space, Atmosphere offers more than 120 group fitness classes in 10 separate training areas.

They include everything from high-energy workouts to the gentler yoga and Pilates classes. If high intensity is more your thing, the fitness timetable also includes body pump, body step and kickbox sessions, with the latter featuring a specifically designed free standing kickboxing bag to complete your workout.

For those more focused on the cardiovascular, the purpose built HIIT (high intensity interval training) studio guarantees to take your fitness to the next level.

Atmosphere is truly a gym for all ages. After school Boxfit classes cater for young children looking to improve their fitness and build self-esteem while trained coaches run the club’s jujitsu classes.

The Active Kids Club crèche, which offers two hours of child minding for children aged from as young as six weeks to 12 years, is a unique and fun space. Run by professional child care workers, the kids club features a large indoor play structure, ball pit and slide with a dedicated toddler zone and nursery area and a Wii console for the older kids.

The crèche is perfect for families with young children looking to fit in a workout or fitness class, but would otherwise be unable to do so. Clients of Revive also have access to Active Kids Club, where they can leave their children for up to two hours while they are pampered at the Day Spa. Revive Urban Health Retreat offers a unique spa experience with treatments tailored for men and women looking to escape the stress and tension of their daily grind.

After a hard hitting workout, the four-lane, 50 metre heated, indoor pool or the brand new traditional hot rock sauna are welcoming retreats. Swim classes are available for all levels of swimmers from beginners to advanced and even the elite athlete who is training for an event.

Technology plays a key role at Atmosphere.

Music kiosks feature on the gym floor for you to select your favourite tunes to listen to while you exercise and interactive screens will display your fitness statistics and training plan through your own wellness account.

The Multisport studio is ideal for cyclists and triathletes wanting to ride in safety without compromising the training effect.

Connect your bike to the computrainer, start pedalling and the television screens display forward motion video and real time data, providing the rider with instantaneous feedback from their training session. Not such a serious cyclist, Atmosphere’s My Ride plan through your own wellness account.

Finally, the all new OUTRACE training rig is the first in Australia and will provide a unique individual and class training experience for members and guests of Atmosphere. Be sure to check it out!


Only Day Spa that offers child minding

Atmosphere Health & Fitness Club boasts Penrith’s only luxury urban health retreat, Revive. Revive is also the only day spa to offer child minding, with clients having access to Atmosphere’s Active Kids Club crèche for up to two hours to enjoy their treatment.

The day spa is the ideal space to escape your day and feel truly spoiled. Step into a robe and treat yourself to a head to toe spa experience and exciting experience. Where exercise is a positive and exciting experience.

Atmosphere is truly a gym for all ages. After school Boxfit classes cater for young children looking to improve their fitness and build self-esteem while trained coaches run the club’s jujitsu classes.

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Boost your staff’s productivity and morale with corporate group fitness training.

Book your next corporate team building session at Atmosphere or talk to us about a corporate membership to help keep your staff fit and healthy!

At Atmosphere, we believe in the power of fitness to improve productivity and morale. With our corporate group fitness training, we can help boost your staff’s performance and overall well-being.

16-19 Lambridge Pl, Penrith. Ph: 02 4760 0700
www.atmospherefitness.com.au

At Revive we can tailor spa treatment packages for your next girls day out, hens day, baby shower, birthday celebration or corporate event. Choose Revive Urban Health Retreat & Spa, located in the heart of Penrith, for your next group or corporate booking. Catering available from Nutrition Station North Penrith.

Ph: 02 4760 0709  www.revivehealthretreat.com.au