

Presentation of the Philippa Maddern Awards 2019 by Dr Nin Kirkham, President, UWAASA

- I want to begin in a way that has rightly become a tradition at The University of Western Australia by acknowledging that this event takes place on Noongar land, and the Noongar people remain the spiritual and cultural custodians of this land and continue to practice their values, languages, beliefs and knowledge.
- A very warm welcome to colleagues, students and friends of the University to this celebration of the life of Philippa Maddern; a celebration of her contribution to learning in pursuit of wisdom and excellence at this university and a celebration of the positive influence that UWA's academic staff, past and present, have had on students, the University and the community of which we are all part. I am pleased to say that once again, Philippa's sister Mrs Dorothy Howes and niece, Dr Hilary Howes, have travelled to be with us from the Eastern States. I also extend a very warm welcome to those receiving the Philippa Maddern awards and their families. Anticipation is half the pleasure so I won't reveal names just yet.
- What I will do is invite our Chancellor, The Honourable Robert French to come forward. The Chancellor has kindly agreed to present the awards to the recipients.

Presentations:

The Philippa Maddern Awards were developed by the UWA ASA to honour and celebrate the life of Philippa Maddern, a wonderful colleague and mentor, a fierce defender of the academic mission and an outstanding contributor to the University and the wider community. The award seeks to draw attention to the contribution made by inspirational academic staff at UWA that goes beyond the traditional categories of research and teaching excellence to highlight collegiality, community engagement and mentoring. The Philippa Maddern award honours academics in three categories:

Posthumous

Former Colleagues – retired or no longer working at UWA and,

Present Staff

I'll begin with the latter. Could I ask the recipients to make their way to the front when their name is announced and I will read some of the wonderful things that have been said about them by nominators, colleagues and students and then also give them the opportunity to say something in response, should they wish?

I hope you will bear with me while I take the time to tell you not just about some of the professional achievements, but also about the personal qualities that they display.

I am delighted to announce the recipient of the 2019 Philippa Maddern UWA Academic Staff Association Award in the category of **Present Staff is:**

Professor Lyn Parker from Asian Studies in the School of Social Science. Lyn has worked at UWA for 20 years. She was nominated by a colleague with a host of strong supporting statements by many others in her school and past and present students. Lyn is joined here tonight by her two daughters, Shelley and Clare (who has come from Canberra to be here tonight).

Lyn's contribution to UWA — in academic leadership, diverse and substantial research output, international reputation and supervision of PhD students, especially from Indonesia—is immense. She established the Western Australian Indonesian Forum, which attracts postgraduates from across several campuses to annual conferences at UWA, the Indonesian Study Group and conferences such as the Asian Studies Association of Australia 2015 and Women in Asia 2017.

But, more important for this Award, is Lyn's contribution as a wonderful human being, her selfless care for others, supervising, guiding and encouraging her postgrads, as well as supporting and mentoring fellow academics.

When reading through the statements in support of her nomination I noticed several words that occurred over and over. They were 'care, compassion, commitment and humility'. Lyn's students and colleagues all recognise the quiet way in which Lyn goes about her work, providing support, encouragement and acting as an exemplar of how one should work and live.

I quote:-

"Lyn has won teaching awards, but the depth of care that Lyn has given me cannot IN ANY WAY be adequately captured by something like Excellence in Teaching".

"Lyn is the kind of professor that I aspire to become. She demonstrates not only how to be a senior academic, a scholar, supervisor and educator but also how to be an excellent colleague. We need more like her if we are to continue to seek – and share – wisdom".

Congratulations Lyn.

Our next Award recipient in the category of **Academic Retired or No Longer Working at UWA** is **Professor Kim Kirsner**.

Kim is here with his wife, Professor Kathryn Hird and daughter Tyko. He joined UWA Department of Psychology in 1972 and retired fully in 2014.

Kim's students particularly remember his enthusiastic lectures in cognition and the opportunities that he afforded them, such as co-writing papers and collaboration that were not normally available to students at that time. He inspired many to academic careers in universities around the world.

In his field of research, several of Kim's papers are still considered classics in the area of Implicit Memory, and in 1997, he was elected a Fellow in The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, an honour bestowed for scholarly distinction in research or the advancement of social sciences.

Outside of the University, Kim was instrumental, as a founding member of the Finding Sydney Foundation, in locating the wreck of the WW2 warship HMAS Sydney, an extraordinary achievement in that he employed

techniques from cognitive science, rather than traditional shipwreck location techniques. Kim's unique approach solved a decades-long mystery and helped many families finally understand what happened to their loved ones.

My warmest congratulations to Professor Kim Kirsner.

This year, we decided to honour **two academics posthumously**.

The first is **Professor Robert Lambert**, and his wife Lynne is here to receive the award, with their daughter Justine and Robert's sister Margaret and brother-in-law Richard. Robert was nominated by a group of colleagues with immense support from others in the labour movement globally.

Professor Lambert started his academic career in South Africa, before joining the Business School at UWA in 1990. His scholarship made a critical contribution to labour studies and his academic achievements in this area reflected his intellectual acumen. Rob earned an international reputation for the quality of his research and was also held in high esteem by both colleagues and students for his mentorship and teaching.

Outside UWA, Robert was passionate about trying to right the wrongs in our society and was unique in his use of scholarly tools in combination with social movement leadership.

Rob's commitment to social justice stretched back to his involvement in the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, but it was Rob's concern for the status of workers in the South that motivated his most lasting activism.

His research had taken him to some of the nearby countries where he met and saw first-hand the status of workers. His scholarly understanding of neoliberalism combined with his concern for workers that he met, inspired him to become involved with the trade union movement as the International Affairs Officer for Unions WA and then as the WA representative on the Australian Council of Trade Union's (ACTU) International Affairs Committee to raise awareness and foster action for workers in countries of the South. In 1991, he established SIGTUR, the Southern Initiative on Globalisation and Trade Union Rights, bringing together trade unions from across the world and showing his deep commitment to social justice and labour rights. Rob's approach combined an understanding of the unique experiences of other people and contexts, with an ability to develop solutions based on his academic understanding.

Congratulations Robert and I ask Lynne to receive the award on his behalf.

Our **second posthumous award** is for **Associate Professor Romit Dasgupta**. Unfortunately Romit's father, Captain Mihir Dasgupta, is unable to be here this evening but Margaret Dey will accept the award on his behalf.

Romit graduated from UWA in 1986, with a Masters in Japanese Studies in 1990 and a PhD from Curtin in 2005. He first taught here in 1992, and then took a tenured position in 2000, teaching units on Japanese language, society and popular culture in Asia. His research in Japanese masculinity is world-renowned and more recently, his research into the connection between Japan and Turkey and the positioning of the

countries in Asian research was innovative. Romit learnt Turkish, spent time in Turkey as a visiting scholar, and became an active and loved friend of the Turkish community.

However, Romit was nominated for this award by numerous colleagues, both academic and professional staff, because of the person he was. Professional, highly organised and respectful to all, he was proactive and willing to help others in regard to any issues, consistently demonstrating his passion in supporting his colleagues and students, all of whom he considered *senpai* - a senior friend. He had genuine interest in people, taking time to talk and remembering everyone's name, as well as that of their partner and children. A word that came up time and again in his supporting statements was 'empathy'. It is clear that Romit was a truly kind and caring colleague and friend.

Romit had the ability to create a relaxed, easy-going and inclusive environment which did not discriminate by age, gender, race, religion or language and I quote "*he made our staff and student community at UWA a much kinder and caring place to work and learn in*".

Also, "*I cannot speak highly enough of the memorable Romit Dasgupta as a thoughtful scholar, colleague, teacher, friend, author and mentor. Romit had a fine, inquiring, far-reaching and encouraging intellect that he was always willing to share with others in a very generous, supportive and self-effacing way. His contribution was not only to UWA and Asian Studies: Romit's contribution was and is everywhere*".

Congratulations to Romit and I welcome Margaret to receive the award on his behalf of his father.

Finally, I would like mention here that the strength of the field once again amply vindicates UWAASA's decision to recognise the influence that academics have on colleagues and students at UWA, their contribution to our community that goes above and beyond the standard research and teaching mission.

Philippa Maddern was the moving force behind UWA's ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. She left a legacy of inspirational leadership, commitment to students and a long record of kindness that we are pleased to commemorate with these Awards. I congratulate all the candidates and look forward to a robust field of candidates in the 2021 Awards.

- Thank you to our Chancellor, the Honourable Robert French for presenting the awards. That concludes the formal part of this evening. I would like to ask the recipients and their families to be available for some more photographs. The names of the recipients will be added to the UWA Academic Staff Association Honour Board which hangs outside the Fox Lecture Theatre in the Arts Building.
- I invite you to join the informal part of the celebration and share a food, drink and lively conversation with us.