



Gender Equity @ CSU

Recognising Women in STEMM - Dr Lihong Zheng

In March this year Charles Sturt's Dr Lihong Zheng was awarded the Academia Award at the Cisco Women in IT Awards. More than 70 women were nominated and Dr Zheng, who belongs to the School of Computing and Mathematics as Senior Lecture in computer science, was selected as one of only seven winners. She was recognised for her exceptional performance and leadership in promoting Information Communications Technology and encouraging students to choose and excel in the STEMM fields, especially here at Charles Sturt. The Award marks the proudest moment of Dr Zheng's professional achievement, so far.

We had the chance to ask Dr Zheng a few questions about her experiences as a female academic in this field, her hopes for the future of women in STEMM and what inspires her to do the work she does.

Dr Zheng joined the University in 2008 after receiving her PhD from the University of Technology, Sydney and a Masters of Engineering from the Department of Automation, Taiyuan University of Technology in China. Concentrating her studies in electrical engineering, Dr Zheng has a passion for creating automation projects that improve efficiencies and outcomes in industry. She has had many successes working on a variety of projects such as building

robots for all kinds of functions and creating number plate recognition technology for highway monitoring. *'As an engineer I like doing things, getting my hands dirty. I am a tech person!'*



Dr Lihong Zheng (5th from right) at the Cisco Awards

In conjunction with her research and industry focused work, Dr Zheng is an exceptional educator and ambassador for STEMM related fields. She is passionate and successful at developing high quality curricula that inspire and encourage future generations into the field and to be creative, questioning thinkers.

This commitment to her students and the future health of her discipline was on display in 2017 when she helped a group of twelve Charles Sturt students

win a silver award at the international 'Internet of Things Spartan Challenge'; an educational event with 250 universities worldwide participating. The Charles Sturt team was the only one to represent an Australian University.

Dr Zheng is especially keen to see more women enter the STEM fields, and to see for themselves a successful and rewarding career there. She notes that despite the increasing industry demand for STEM graduates, *'females in the STEM disciplines are poorly presented. I have only taught a few girls in my subjects. There is an urgent need to showcase girls' achievements and to encourage more girls to select a STEM career'*. Her advice to girls and younger women seeking to carve out a path for themselves is to have *'curiosity and persistence, keep an open mind and keep yourself up to date with the new information and techniques. And always be positive and do not be afraid of failure'*.

Looking forward, Dr Zheng is focused on continuing to apply computer vision and machine learning technologies to practical problems, and to keep pioneering work in industries that helps cut costs while improving product quality. When she is not working towards this goal, or supporting and inspiring her students Dr Zheng enjoys cooking and is most proud of her universally adored dumplings!

Congratulations on the award and all you do for STEM and Charles Sturt, Dr Zheng!

Bluestocking Week



The Senior Women's Forum, Human Resources Equity & Diversity and Athena SWAN Project Team in collaboration held a panel discussion to mark Bluestocking Week.

Bluestocking Week is held annually in the middle of August, and the dates for 2019 were 12th-16th August. Bluestocking Week is named for the first

generations of university women of the 19th century who grabbed the term and, even as it was used by their opponents as a derogatory dismissal of their achievements, proudly wore it as a badge of serious scholarship. More information on Bluestocking Week can be found [here](#). The session was recorded, and will be available online soon.

The panel discussion was on the Successes and Challenges of Female Academics, and was moderated by Associate Professor Cate Thomas.

The panel consisted of Carli Kulmar (Lecturer in Law, Faculty of Business, Justice and Behavioural Sciences), Annabel Matheson (Senior Lecturer, School of Nursing, Midwifery & Indigenous Health) and Associate Professor Kogi Naidoo (Director Learning Academy, Division of Learning and Teaching). Thank you for taking part, and the valuable insights you provided.

Women's Health Week

Women's Health Week is a week dedicated to all women across Australia to make good health and wellbeing a priority. Women's Health Week is the time to do something for your health and start making positive changes that can last a lifetime. Now in its 7th year, Women's Health Week ran from the 2nd-6th September 2019. Each day of the week is dedicated to a different theme:

Monday: mighty movement

Being active is powerful stuff. Let's learn how to move more and stay motivated. Take a step towards a stronger and healthier you.

Tuesday: bathroom boss

Bladder and gut health are important business for your health overall. Learn how to have a happier bladder and gut, instead of just trying to get by.

Wednesday: reproductive health

Whether you're thinking about your future fertility, having issues falling pregnant, looking for the right contraception choice, or just wanting some help for your hormonal health – getting the right advice is important.

Thursday: treasure chest

We're talking about chest health... the health of your heart, the health of your breasts. Make it your mission to gain the knowledge and skills to protect these important body parts, one heartbeat at a time.

Friday: mastering your mind

Take a moment for mental health. Become the master of your own mind, press 'pause' on the busy button and learn how to tackle issues such as worry, anxiety, exhaustion and loneliness head-on.

For more information, please visit the [Women's Health Week website](#).



Father's Day

Father's Day is celebrated annually all across Australia on the first Sunday of September. The date for Father's Day for 2019 was on the 1st September. Father's Day honours fathers and celebrates fatherhood, paternal bonds, and the influence of fathers in our society.

Here at Charles Sturt University, we have a range of initiatives in place to help parents and parents-to-be. Included within the Enterprise Agreement are generous flexible working arrangements, parental leave and carers leave provisions. Charles Sturt is committed to providing a flexible, supportive and accessible work and study environment for staff and students with family or caring responsibilities.

Information that may be of interest to families relating to leave arrangements such as purchased leave, special leave, personal leave, leave without pay,

change of fraction, remote work and Flexible work arrangements can be found [here](#).

'Research by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency highlights that on average men are not utilising these conditions and entitlements to their full potential. Even though the designation of primary and secondary carer roles is not defined by gender at [Charles Sturt](#), the uptake of parental leave by men is extremely low; with no males at the University taking primary carers leave during the 2018/19 WGEA reporting period. This decline from the 2017/18 period is concerning, as equality between genders will not occur unless we encourage and enable men to take on a greater share of parenting responsibilities.' – Vice Chancellor Andrew Vann

CEO of Reddit Alexis Ohanian shares his insights and experience of taking paternity leave after the birth of his child. The story can be accessed [here](#).

Workplace Gender Equity Strategy 2018-2022 Update

A recent submission to the Equity & Diversity Committee meeting with the ordered list of the action items from the Workplace Gender Equity Strategy shows that we are progressing relatively well and are on track with timeframes.

We have recently submitted our Workplace Gender Equality Agency annual report after being endorsed by the Vice-Chancellor's Leadership Team. We are happy to announce that we have been deemed compliant. The public report can be found [here for review](#).

We have run more DV-Alert sessions in Wagga and Albury back in June, and have run another in Dubbo. The Orange session will run on the 10th September (still places available, register via genderequity@csu.edu.au) and a session will run in Bathurst on the 17th October. The Bathurst session is now full, with various members of the Vice-Chancellor's Leadership Team in attendance.

There will be two 2-Day Domestic Violence Workshops, one focused on Indigenous (Wagga Wagga) and one focused on Disability (Bathurst). Keep an eye out on What's New for details on how to register soon. A formal partnership with Lifeline

centres that service the areas our campuses are located is currently progressing as well.

A huge congratulations to Jenny Roberts, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students), who recently became a White Ribbon Advocate which is one of the key action items of the Strategy. Read more about this announcement [here](#).



We are currently seeking a male member of VCLT to approach to become a White Ribbon Ambassador. Please note 22nd November in your diary, which is White Ribbon Day. Planning will begin shortly to mark this day.

Unconscious Bias and Inclusivity Training – Evaluation Report

The first round of training delivered to staff consisted of 10 sessions across February and March 2019. During the first round a total of 160 staff completed the training. Those in attendance were a mix of professional and academic staff of various levels across the University. Overall, the training was well received by staff with favourable results shown in both the data and written responses.

The evaluation report is based on the feedback gathered from the open-ended questions asked in the post training survey. The report includes a summary of the common themes and reflections from Nicholas Steepe as one of the main creators of the program and one of the core facilitators. The report concludes with identified outcomes as a result of this evaluation. You can access the full report [here](#).

The training is currently being reviewed, before a Facilitator manual is developed. Following this, train-the-trainer session will be running so more people are able to run and deliver the training.

Nic Steepe Wins 'Out Role Model of The Year' Award

We are delighted to congratulate our colleague and friend, Nic Steepe, who was awarded the Out Role Model of the Year at this year's [Australian LGBTI Inclusion Awards](#). These awards celebrate Australia's top organisations for LGBTI+ inclusion based on the results of the Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) and recognises leaders, individuals and networks that have made a significant impact on LGBTI+ inclusion within their workplaces.

In winning the award Nic said, *'I'm extremely proud of what I have achieved, and I am so thankful and appreciative to be involved in organisations like Charles Sturt University and the Pinnacle Foundation that celebrate and validate my whole identity'*.

Nic is the Equity and Diversity Project Manager here at Charles Sturt where he works to promote, recognise and progress equity principles and practices across the University. He has made key contributions to the development of our University-wide Gender Equity Strategy as well as the major roll out of Unconscious Bias and Inclusivity Training.

Beyond his work with Charles Sturt, Nic is also involved in community groups and initiatives including the Central West Rainbow Alliance, an organisation that promotes inclusion and support for regional and rural LGBTI+ individuals. He also sits on the Pinnacle Foundation Management Committee as the Scholar Manager where he supports the charity's work of providing scholarships and mentorships to disadvantaged LGBTI+ young people.

Nic is committed to and passionate about regional and rural inclusion, having spent his whole life living in the country. Improving inclusive outcomes for everyone is something he thinks we can all do right where we are and with our everyday actions. *'I believe that we can make a positive difference in this world, no matter how big or small. What we do as individuals, within our communities, in our personal and professional lives, does make a difference to somebody. It will have a ripple effect. I think the small changes have the biggest impact*

and we need to take pride in the small steps we are taking towards equality’.

We are so proud of who Nic is and the work he does here at Charles Sturt and in our communities more broadly. All of us in the Gender Equity and Athena SWAN teams are thrilled that his leadership and advocacy work has been recognised and celebrated this way.



Nic Steepe (right) at the Inclusion Awards

Want to know more about gender equity?

The issues surrounding gender inequality are complex and have ongoing impacts both here at Charles Sturt and in our everyday lives. The following links aim to improve knowledge around the subject.

1. More than just like-for-like wages needed to tackle gender pay gap

Confusion exists around the concept of equal pay and the concept of the gender pay gap. Libby Lyons, director of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency pens an opinion piece to clarify some misunderstandings. The Sydney Morning Herald article can be found [here](#).

2. The one salary negotiation hack that will get you what you're worth

Buisness Chicks, as part of there Masterclasses focusing on *How to ask for a payrise* and *How to ace your next performance review*, provide insight into a website called 'What's the salary'. The website aims to promote equal, transparent and

fair salaries regardless of age, gender and tenure. The article can be found [here](#), with links to the other masterclasses.

3. That pay gap? Gender discrimination is increasingly to blame

Women's Agenda pen an article highlighting how gender discrimination plays a huge role in the gender pay gap. They also provide some useful solutions to addressing this. The article can be found [here](#).

The articles we highlighted in this edition focused on the gender pay gap, acknowledging Equal Pay Day which was held on the 28th August 2019. The pay gap at Charles Sturt is currently 12.9%, 1.1% lower than the national average, and 1.3% lower than last year. Read the media release from the Vice-Chancellor [here](#).

Key dates

There are lots of events and activities planned to support and promote gender equity at Charles Sturt. In addition to those activities listed below, keep an eye out for announcements in What's New and check for updates on the Gender Equity [webpage](#).

10 September	Dv Alert Training – Orange Campus
25 September	Gender Equity & Intersectionality Athena SWAN Team Meeting
9 October	Webinar – Mental Health Month (Details TBC)
17 October	DV Alert Training – Bathurst Campus (Full)
23 October	Gender Equity & Intersectionality Athena SWAN Team Meeting
6 December	Gender Equity @ CSU newsletter published



For more information, to subscribe to newsletter updates or to get involved, please contact the team at: genderequity@csu.edu.au