I have decided to begin by reflecting on the power of nature – whether fire or flood – and the messages about community, civil society and the role and responsibilities of the ‘State’.

Having been involved in recent workshops about Workforce Planning in the Human Services and in reflecting on the growing numbers of children needing foster care, it is clear that the ‘baby-boomer’ generation is making a disproportionate contribution to human services and civil society.

The class of 2009 will have many opportunities and the occasional challenge! I wish them well in their professional careers.

Enrolments 2009 – Latest Information

This is the inaugural year of the qualifying MSW programme – and we had limited opportunities to market locally, nationally and internationally. The initial numbers are pleasing and the latest information about enrolments is:

- BSW Year Two 5
- BSW Year Three 13
- BSW Year Four 5
- MSW Year One 27 (21F /6P)
- MSW Year Two 5

Finalists and winners of the inaugural WA Social Worker of the Year awards were honoured at a ceremony held at The University of Western Australia on June 23, 2009. The awards, the first in Australia to recognise the work of social workers, were attended by social workers, colleagues, friends and consumers.

The concept of an awards program celebrating the achievements and contributions of West Australian Social Workers was first discussed by the UWA Social Work Alumni Committee in late 2007. The awards were developed in partnership...
Confidence in the accuracy of our enrolment numbers is still progressing; this is a best guess estimate because of part-time students, returning students and students with credit for core units. There were 11 students on final placements and there are 10 in the final year of the two programme. There are 32 students completing their first placements.

Added to these numbers are the combined numbers of graduates enrolled in the Taught Course Pathway: Graduate Certificate in Child Protection Practice 31
Graduate Certificate in Mental Health Practice 18
Graduate Diploma in Advanced Social Work 4 and rising

Congratulations to Brenda Clare and Mark Sachmann for their successful achievements in building these programmes. This is pleasing because we are growing the postgraduate taught course number in line with the Discipline’s Strategic Plan. The majority of the Graduate Certificate students have been sponsored by the State government. The Graduate Diploma programme will be an important feeder programme for the professional doctorate (DSW).

The number of post graduate research students (MA / PhD) is 30 and rising. Congratulations to Sue Young for her hard-work in the processes of coordinating the induction, supervision and examination of research students.

Staffing and Location
The Discipline has maintained its commitment to qualifying and post-qualifying Social Work education with 5.4 academic staff in 2009 – with Dr Brenda Clare and Dr Sue Young on half-time Study Leave during the year. I was offered a 0.4 contract for 2009 – with responsibilities as Discipline Chair. There are also 1.4 Administrative positions (Rosa and Eva). We have been waiting for a decision about advertising new positions for 2010.

We have also experienced uncertainty about the location of the Discipline with an indication that there may be a move to the School of Population Health in the Faculty of Medicine.

Accreditation of the MSW Programme
The MSW programme has been recommended to be given Provisional Accreditation for two years – the best available outcome of the AASW Review in November, 2008; this means that the MSW programme will be formally reviewed in late 2010.

BSW Prize-Winners 2008
I would like to offer my congratulations to the students named below who were nominated for prizes awarded during the Faculty Prize-Giving Ceremony on Monday, 11 May, 2009:

Margaret Stockbridge Memorial Prize in Social Work:
Deborah Denton

Laksiri Jayasuriya Prize in Social Work Research:
Evelyn Cunningham

Walter Tauss Memorial Prize in Indigenous Issues:
Karen Wickham

Walter Tauss Memorial Prize in Social Work Practice:
Kerry Bradly

Convocation, the UWA Graduates Association Prize:
Evelyn Cunningham

Jean Teasdale Prize in Social Work:
Brenton Webb

Anne Thomsett Memorial Prize in Social Work:
Danielle Murfett

Marketing of the Qualifying and Post-Qualifying Programmes
Effective marketing is essential if we are to grow student numbers. There are a number of web-based strategies – both inside UWA and through accessing government and non-government web-networks - which will, hopefully, be the basis of activities designed to increase enrolments for 2010.

I hope that this edition of the UWA Newsletter will assist in marketing the qualifying MSW and the post-qualifying and postgraduate programmes offered by the Discipline. Please forward it to colleagues.

Mike Clare
27 August, 2009
with the Australian Association of Social Workers, the UWA Discipline of Social Work and Social Policy, and the Curtin University Department of Social Work and Social Policy.

The awards were presented by the Hon Robyn McSweeney, Minister for Child Protection; Community Services; Seniors and Volunteering; and Women’s Interests, and Professor Bob Lonne, President of the Australian Association of Social Workers.

Finalists and winners in four categories were announced at the awards ceremony, hosted by Verity James at the University Club. The overall winner of the inaugural Social Worker of the Year Award, Rosalie Dwyer, was chosen from the four category winners.

Category winners and award presenters at the ceremony. Left to right: Mr Anthony Collier, Ms Rosalie Dwyer, Hon Robyn McSweeney, Prof Bob Lonne, Ms Margaret Stockton, Mr Ben Whitehouse

UWA graduate Rosalie Dwyer is a social worker in the remote indigenous community of Warburton, located more than 1,500 kilometres from Perth, where she is a senior community worker with the Department for Child Protection.

The award of Social Worker of the Year recognises Rosalie’s outstanding dedication and commitment to the people of Warburton and the Ngaanyatjarra communities.

At the awards ceremony, Rosalie was praised as a flexible, resourceful and adaptable practitioner who delivers quality support to the local community.

Rosalie said that “working as a social worker in Warburton and the other Ngaanyatjarra communities is a continuing privilege. I’ve enjoyed social work in a range of roles during my professional life and consider this the best job I’ve ever had.”

Such is the respect that Rosalie has gained from the local community, she has been given her own Aboriginal name.

To hear more from Rosalie listen to her interview on ABC radio at: http://www.abc.net.au/rural/content/2008/s2621210.htm
Social Worker of the Year Awards 2009

CYFAA and UWA Social Work Alumni Rural and Remote Practitioner Award Finalists
Bronwyn Cutler, Kipling Cutler & Associates (Albany)
Rosalie Dwyer, Department for Child Protection (Warburton)
Elizabeth Trotti, Department of Health (Geraldton)
Winner: Rosalie Dwyer

L-R: Bronwyn Cutler, Rosalie Dwyer, Elizabeth Trotti

Anglicare WA Head, Heart and Hands Award Finalists
Anthony Collier, Youth Reach South
Natarlie deCinque, Department of Health
Barbara Meddin, Human Service Consulting
Winner: Anthony Collier

L-R: Natarlie deCinque, Anthony Collier, Barbara Meddin

Department for Child Protection Rising Star Award Finalists
Jessica Pyburne, Wanslea Family Services
Ben Whitehouse, Department for Child Protection
Kirsty Snelgrove, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital
Winner: Ben Whitehouse

L-R: Terry Murphy (Director General, DCP), Jessica Pyburne, Ben Whitehouse, Kirsty Snelgrove, Bob Lonne (President, AASW)

The Social Work Alumni committee would like to thank all those who helped make the inaugural Social Worker of the Year awards such a successful event.
Social Worker of the Year Awards 2009

Rising Star Award Finalists
Jessica Pyburne, Wanslea Family Services
Ben Whitehouse, Department for Child Protection
Kirsty Snelgrove, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital

Winner: Ben Whitehouse

L-R: Terry Murphy (Director General, DCP), Jessica Pyburne, Ben Whitehouse, Kirsty Snelgrove, Bob Lonne (President, AASW)

Richmond Fellowship WA Agent of the Change Award Finalists
Celine Harrison, King Edward Memorial Hospital
Ann Margaret O’Neill, Department of the Attorney General
Margaret Stockton, South Metro Area Health Service

Winner: Margaret Stockton

L-R: Ann O’Neill, Margaret Stockton, Celine Harrison

The Social Work Alumni committee would like to thank all those who helped make the inaugural awards such a successful event.
For the first time we have five PhDs and Masters graduating in the one ceremony. Congratulations to PhD candidates: Trevor Jewell for his work on Martu Child Rearing, Carolyn Johnson for her work on Intimate Partner Homicide, Karen Upton-Davis who wrote an Autoethnography on The Loss of Intimacy, Abdul Razak Abd Nanaf who wrote his PhD on Marriage in Malaysia, and to Chris Harkness whose Masters project explored Partnerships in the social services.

There are a number of candidates following up closely behind and we expect that the 2010 Autumn graduation ceremony will welcome a few more into the ‘successfully completed’ group.

We also have some PhD candidates who have commenced this year and are working on their proposals: Deborah Denton who is exploring The lived experience of practitioners working in a therapeutic role in the prison system, and Evelyn Cunningham who is looking at Motor Neurone Disease and quality of life. And finally we have a number of enquiries which we hope will soon translate into candidacies. Interestingly most of these are International students from a variety of countries, including Sri Lanka, Uganda, The Yemen, Brunei and England. Should all these candidates arrive in the next few months, I would expect to be able to report some fascinating discussions from our postgraduate seminars.

The postgraduate seminars continue to provide a forum for presenting and discussing on-going work, hearing from completed candidates and assisting the beginning candidates to come to grips with the various and sometimes challenging ‘ologies’ as well as planning their designs. Best of all, we enjoy the discussions, learning together, the updates and the good company. In the next half of the year, we expect to hear updates on the topics of Collaboration across policy domains, Foster carers, Anti-smoking strategies impacts, Carers in mental health, Student poverty, Sex Offenders and Child Welfare in Bali. We also are going to hear from some visitors presenting talks titled: Women’s struggle and trouble with violence, fear and drugs, and Risk, protective and resilience factors that contribute to juvenile delinquency.

We currently have two PhD candidates on field work, Carol Kaplanian is in Jordan looking at honour killings, and Kanau Sion is in Papua New Guinea exploring child labour. On their return we expect they will have much to tell us about their studies and their travels.

The Graduate Certificates continue to generate interest in further study, as well as being very successful in their own right. Several enquiries from graduating Certificate students are translating into Graduate Diploma and Master of Advanced Social Work enrolments. We anticipate that four of five Certificate graduates are well on their way to considering the Doctor of Social Work (DSW) in 2010.

My research dissertation was about how partnerships work in human services using a community mental health project as a context. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with participants in the partnership project to better understand their experiences of partnership. Case examples in the literature were used to contextualise key principles of partnership. Key elements of theoretical perspectives were applied as a way to better understand how partnerships might work. The experiences of people and narratives from the literature were examined to arrive at some key elements of partnership.

A second research question involved a discussion of the sociological function of the interpersonal elements of partnerships in the provision of social services. I found that the interpersonal elements bring a potential to reinvigorate the ‘social’ in services at a time when other paradigms, such as those of efficiency and effectiveness, might reduce the significance of relationships. Interpersonal elements also enabled people to become more aware of their interdependencies, and make possible holistic responses to complex social problems. A placing of the interpersonal in partnership work within a sociological context also provides a useful framework for people to better deal with the pervasive barriers that surround inter-disciplinary partnerships.

I found that despite their difficulties, partnerships provide an opportunity to restore meaning to the ‘Human’ in Human Services.
My thesis examined intimate partner homicide and familicide in Western Australia over a ten-year period. Data from police records, coroner’s records and Family Court records were accessed, as were newspapers and electronic newspaper archives. Twelve perpetrators and eight survivors of the offences were interviewed. Perpetrators were asked to complete the Child Trauma Questionnaire, a retrospective self-reporting measure of childhood trauma.

It was found that childhood trauma in the form of cumulative and pervasive child abuse characterised the early life of perpetrators. Survivors reported that they and their extended families had suffered enduring trauma as a result of the homicide(s). In some cases survivors had found the body of their loved one or been present when the homicide occurred.

I was able to identify common factors in the antecedents to the offences. Suggestions were made for addressing the inter-generational and extreme manifestation of intra-familial violence, which the research suggests, is linked to spousal homicide and familicide. Feedback from perpetrators and survivors was included, to assist understanding of the trauma experienced by survivors, and the ways in which services might be improved to assist them in the future. A new model for understanding intimate partner homicide is proposed where the homicide and/or suicide is seen as a strategy for survival of the psychological self.

Carolyn is now working full time as a lecturer at Curtin University and continuing her research into family and domestic violence.

Existing literature and much of the research on marriage and family experiences have been largely and commonly problem-based and deficit-oriented. Even though some strength-focused approaches to the study of marriages and families have been undertaken and have gained momentum there is still much empirical work needed in order for us to understand the complexity and intricacies of what constitutes a quality marital relationship.

In the qualitative research study, Quality of Marriage among Malays, I analysed how quality of marriage is conceptualised and understood by Malays within a Malaysian context. I undertook the research in order to capture and understand how a cohort of Malay people understand and give meaning to the concept of ‘good quality marital relationship’. Research studies on marital quality in Malay culture are very limited and numerically at least, they compare poorly to western scholarly output on this subject. Even though much contemporary marriage literature refers to the importance of gaining an appreciation of cultural issues related to marriage and family, there is a real need for more cross-cultural research. In examining Malay concepts of quality marriage I not only address a culturally-specific research need but attempt to use this to advance cultural sensitivity among relevant policy makers, practitioners, researchers and members of the public.

In this research, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted in the Kubang Pasu district, in Kedah, one of the northern states of Malaysia with forty-five participants across different socioeconomic and demographic backgrounds. In what is an exploratory study I adopted a combination of maximum variation and purposive sampling and utilised a grounded theory framework to underpin the analysis. The data were analysed using both rigorous manual coding and NVivo qualitative software.

The findings of the study are organised around four salient themes that emerged: religiosity and spiritual belief system; communication and conflict management; social network and support resources; and finally, personal characteristics and relational virtues. Three other superordinate constructs were identified and these are used to link the findings into a broader body of sociological inquiry.
My PhD thesis, *Representations of Children in a Monopoly Print Medium*, explores visual and discursive images of children and young people in a monopoly daily newspaper. All news content with a primary focus on people aged zero to eighteen years was collected for a 12-month period, and analysed from a constructionist perspective, using agenda-setting, news source, media framing and critical linguistics media analysis techniques.

A large body of research literature was used to ‘benchmark’ the primary analysis of data. Findings are presented in three thematic frames— the Promotional Child, Victim Child and Deviant Child — and are consolidated in the *Five Stories of Childhood*, an aggregated profile of representations found in the newspaper. The concluding chapter of the thesis foregrounds a perception of children as voiceless, vulnerable and violent characters, featured in a discourse on social control.

Key observations highlighted in my research include the over-representation of disadvantaged children in compromising newspaper images, and the much greater degree of overt, vernacular criticism used for children than is applied to other minority population groups. The extensive use of children in promotional contexts appears to be partially obscured by the altruistic function of non-commercial promotions and advocacy campaigns. ‘Collisions’ between altruistic values and news values were found to be predictive of outcomes coinciding with the interests of a target audience; negative outcomes for socially disadvantaged children; and consistent ‘collateral benefits’ for the news medium — seemingly regardless of outcomes experienced by other stakeholders.

I would like to thank my supervisor Maria Harries and all those who helped with my research.

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**PhD for Maxine Knapp**

This research on the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship of Australia was conducted by a long standing Christian missionary who is an Aboriginal elder of the Noongar people of Western Australia. It explores the history of the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship and in so doing highlights an important chapter in the Christianizing of Aboriginal people of Australia. The thesis uncovers and explores the ambivalence, complexity and conflicts that Aboriginal leaders had with non-Aboriginal missionaries and sections of the church who questioned their motives and abilities in their role of evangelisation.

The methodological approach employed was a descriptive, qualitative and exploratory one. Oral interviews and documentary analyses were utilised. The research is positioned within a missiological theoretical framework in which the researcher was able to explore specific missiology theories of indigenous church planting principles and practices.

The thesis acknowledges that non-Aboriginal missionaries made a positive contribution to evangelisation but argues that their lack of knowledge of indigenous church planting principles and practices hampered the emergence of indigenous church leaders. This thesis demonstrates that it was through their faith, commitment and tenacity that Aboriginal leaders overcame many conflicts and the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship was finally established and the abilities of leaders acknowledged.

At the core of the thesis is the finding that it was this awakening within the Aboriginal evangelical leaders that encouraged other indigenous people to realise their leadership skill and potential and make a positive contribution to the development of indigenous churches.

The study gives new insight to the changing roles of Missions, and contributes new knowledge about the indigenous Church in Australia which demonstrates its significance as an indigenous Church movement.
I understand a little more about love and intimacy now than I did before I spent a decade of my life examining these topics, and much more about myself – as you do when you lay yourself bare, deconstruct yourself and pick over the pieces – at times an excruciating process but for me it had its rewards. I used autoethnography to tell my own story, in 10,000 words, of the rise and fall of intimacy in my now defunct marriage; what some view as a creative writing component. For the remaining 75,000 words, autoethnography guided the process of analyzing my thoughts, feelings, actions and responses to the loss of love and intimacy, an analysis that was both my own, and that of a group of others (to whom the descriptor ‘participants’ doesn’t do justice) - a group of people who began as strangers and finished as friends. Autoethnography allowed the scope to situate my study within the world of embedded, embodied, engaged beings in relation to one another, and of considering the ethics of what I was doing and how I was doing it, in this context.

It was a feminist, emancipatory project. I looked for acts of agency, seeds of mightiness and sites of resistance. I examined what it was that I brought with me to the relationship, my intrapersonal self, that contributed to the demise of the relationship; the contribution of the interpersonal behaviours of my husband and myself; and, most importantly, the ways in which our expectations of ourselves, each other, and of the relationship, were influenced by the wider world around us – socially, culturally and politically (the ethnographic component of autoethnography). In the mood of postmodernism I kept meaning possibilities open, entertained multiple truths, while challenging the dominant discourses.

Through the writing process I learnt things about myself that I didn’t already know. I enjoyed the therapeutic nature of the writing; of writing (and dreaming) my way to clearer perception and a whisper of wisdom.

Like so many other of life’s milestones, the end of the PhD process comes as a loss as well as a gain, made more poignant I suspect by the scary months and years lost in the trenches, the hard clamber up and out of them, and that frantic dash to the finish line amid the din of enemy fire! Now, even as the roar of the cheering crowd continues and the band beats out a triumphant tune, my euphoria is tinged with sadness at the project’s passing. Where is my purpose? What will become of me now? Contrary to vague hopes that employers would seek me out, offering great financial rewards to do... I’m not sure what, this hasn’t happened. I’ve returned to sessional academic work. I harbour ambitions of spending six months in a cottage on the beach of a tropical island, turning my thesis into a book, encouraged by each of my examiners urge to publish. Any offers of accommodation? …Or to do more research on a topic close to my heart. …Or to do absolutely nothing for a day or two or three.

But, come the 14th September 09, resplendently dressed in black gown with red silk sashes, velvet and tasseled mortar board, and wearing a big, self-satisfied smile, I will shake the Chancellor’s hand knowing that achieving my doctorate was one of the most personally worthwhile experiences of my life. Thanks to all those who helped me achieve it.

I pay tribute to my supervisors, Dr Christine Choo who supervised me for the major period of my thesis, and Dr Maria Harries. I was a novice research student with many great ideas (for my thesis), so many that one research student during one of our research forums suggested I had enough ideas for 10 theses. I conquered one.

I thank Dr Choo for the many hours she gave of her time, and for listening ever so patiently to me as I struggled to put my research into perspective. Dr Choo helped me to stay focused. I still hear Dr Choo’s words of wisdom going through my mind: “Get the ideas out of your head and write them down”. Occasionally Dr Choo would add “or you won’t have a thesis”.

Toward the final stage of my research Dr Maria Harries took on the role of principal supervisor. By this time I was getting discouraged, tired and weary, so close to finishing yet the thesis appeared almost out of my reach. One day Dr Harries asked me point blank “Maxine do you want to finish this thesis?” I said “yes”. Dr Harries said “let’s get to work then”. It didn’t take away all the problems or struggles but that pep talk lifted my spirit and gave me the motivation I needed to finish my task.

Finally I am indebted to both Dr Choo and Dr Harries for seeing the potential I had and supporting me to achieve a PhD. I also thank all my research colleagues and your encouragement to me especially in the early years of my research journey.
The vision of the UWA Social Work Alumni is to generate well-educated social workers who are equipped to face the challenges of a changing world and to provide meaningful contributions to the well-being of WA citizens, communities and institutions.

Over 2008 and 2009, the committee has successfully furthered the vision for the Alumni through a number of key achievements including:

- Co-hosting a welcome to new graduates of the undergraduate Social Work degree at UWA
- Developing a proposal for a mentoring program, to be trialled this year with the current graduating class
- Annual General Meeting 2008. Minutes for this meeting can be found at [http://www.socialwork.arts.uwa.edu.au/for/alumni/general_meetings](http://www.socialwork.arts.uwa.edu.au/for/alumni/general_meetings)
- Strategic Planning for 2008 - 2013
- AASW Social Worker of the Year Awards 2009

**Strategic Planning**

A strategic planning day was held in 2008, facilitated by Libby Lloyd. Key objectives for the Alumni Group were identified as:

- Help the University of Western Australia enhance the education and research capacities of professional Social Workers by:
  - Increasing the number of high quality students entering and completing Social Work degrees.
  - Increasing the ongoing development of high quality graduates and postgraduates.
  - Strengthening research and post-graduate opportunities.
  - Establishing collaboration between the Discipline of Social Work and Social Policy and employers.

The full plan can be viewed at [http://www.socialwork.arts.uwa.edu.au/for/alumni](http://www.socialwork.arts.uwa.edu.au/for/alumni). It is exciting to see some of the goals discussed that day, including the awards and the mentoring project, being reached and the committee looks forward to continuing to enhancing the experiences of Social Workers in Western Australia for years to come.

**The Alumni Committee**

The Social Work Alumni Committee is one of the most active groups of its kind at UWA. The committee meets on a monthly basis at the University Club of Western Australia.

The committee has undergone several changes over the past year, with Louise Durack, founding member and Chair from 2005-2008, and Katrina Stratton, Secretary from 2006-2009, vacating these positions on the committee. Louise and Katrina made significant contributions to the aims and vision for the Alumni group, and have played a vital role in the committee’s success. This year we also farewelled Christine Lindsay, our representative from the UWA Office of Development. Christine also played a significant role in the development and implementation of the Alumni’s vision, and was a key resource for the committee, assisting with events, membership and funding.

The committee has benefited from the ongoing involvement of the following members throughout 2008 and 2009:

Joe Calleja (Patron), Siobahn Altham (Chair), Mike Clare (Vice Chairperson), Brenton Webb, (Secretary), Linda Biffen, Brenda Clare, Curtis Clarke, Jenny Kelly, Jenny Robinson, and Brian Wooeller.

A full list of current committee members and their contact details can be found at: [http://www.socialwork.arts.uwa.edu.au/for/alumni/alumnicommittee](http://www.socialwork.arts.uwa.edu.au/for/alumni/alumnicommittee)

**Future Directions**

Activities for the rest of 2009 and for 2010 include:

- New graduate welcome 2009
- Further development and implementation of the mentoring program for recent graduates
- Strengthening membership numbers and the Champions initiative
- Increasing opportunities for communicating most effectively with members

**Annual General Meeting 2009**

Will be held later this year; please keep an eye on the website [http://www.socialwork.arts.uwa.edu.au/for/alumni/general_meetings](http://www.socialwork.arts.uwa.edu.au/for/alumni/general_meetings) for details; the agenda and continued on page 11
a committee nomination form will also be made available.

**Get Involved**

All past enrolled students, staff donors and friends are considered Alumni members. The committee welcomes new members and is keen to hear from anyone who feels they may be able to contribute to the activities and aims of the Alumni group.

If you have ideas about the ways in which the Alumni Committee can best serve Alumni members, we would be delighted to hear from you. We are also always interested to hear news from members, and would love to feature achievements as part of future Alumni News, so get in touch if you have a story to share.

**Contact**

For any further information, please contact Siobahn Altham at skaltham@gmail.com or Brenton Webb at Brenton.Webb@health.wa.gov.au, or visit the Alumni site http://www.socialwork.arts.uwa.edu.au/for/alumni

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**Update on the Graduate Certificate in Child Protection Practice**

As I prepare for the final unit of the Graduate Certificate in Child Protection Practice, it is very good to look back on the first three years of this programme, during which it has become established as a significant part of the work of the Discipline. Numbers of students have grown each year, from 25 in year one to 32 this year, with applications exceeding available places. We have also begun to receive inquiries from potential students in other States, who are interested in the possibility of engaging in the face-to-face learning made possible by the three-day-blocks in which units are taught.

It should be acknowledged that the success of this course reflects, in large part, the ongoing commitment to professional development and Best Practice interventions of the Executive in the Department for Child Protection (DCP); as in previous years, nineteen of the students are scholarship holders from DCP. In addition, another student has received a half scholarship from her employer, a sign of the growing recognition of the programme outside of DCP.

As the convenor of this programme, I am privileged to have had the opportunity to work and learn with the three cohorts of enthusiastic students, all of whom have shown academic rigour, professional expertise, and a deep commitment to improving the lives and opportunities of children, as citizens and as recipients of child protection services. Several graduates from Years One and Two have continued their postgraduate study. Some are about to complete the Graduate Diploma in Advanced Social work with a view to enrolling the Doctorate in Social Work; others are about to enrol to become MA and PhD students. I believe this is a very exciting development for social work as a profession in WA.

As this year’s programme draws to an end, I look forward to celebrating success with this group of students, and to presenting the programme again for a fourth time in 2010.
Since completing her BSW degree with Honours in 2001, Sheree Bootes has worked with youth, adults, families and communities. She has been employed in a diverse range of settings, including an Aboriginal community on Mornington Island in the Gulf of Carpentaria, and working with former child migrants in Fremantle.

For the last three years Sheree has studied Gestalt therapy, which she describes as creating self-awareness and working with issues in the ‘here and now’. Sheree gained Medicare accreditation as a Mental Health Social Worker in 2008, and is also trained in Pranic healing.

In August 2009, Sheree opened *Reconnect Health & Wellbeing* at Lyra House in the picturesque South-West WA town of Denmark. Sheree named *Reconnect Health & Wellbeing* to reflect her holistic approach to working with individuals, couples, families and the community.

Sheree and her partner James live on a 2ha property outside Denmark with their three dogs. Sheree enjoys swimming, paddling and hiking, and also coaches an under 13 mixed soccer team for the Denmark Junior Soccer Club.