

November 2013

A newsletter for RAMUS Scholars, Mentors and Alumnus members

From the RAMUS team

The end of 2013 is fast approaching and whether you are a scholar who will be graduating this year or one who is continuing your studies next year, or a current mentor, you'll find details about end-of-year requirements in this issue of the *Newsletter*.

Nominations for the 2013 RAMUS Mentor of the Year Awards are now open. These annual awards recognise and celebrate mentors who have made an outstanding contribution to supporting their scholars and encouraging their rural aspirations. We encourage scholars to consider nominating their mentor for this Award.

Our congratulations to the current and previous RAMUS Mentors who have recently received national awards for their various contributions to rural medical service, general practice and training. There is a piece about them in this *Newsletter*.

In October Susan attended the GP13 Conference in Darwin and two weeks later Lesley attended the Rural Medicine Australia 2013 conference in Cairns. Thanks to those mentors, scholars and alumni who attended the RAMUS networking breakfasts at those events. It was wonderful to see the RAMUS connections being made, and in some cases renewed.

Also in this issue:

- information about the Conference Placement Program for 1st semester 2014;
- an invitation to completing scholars to join the RAMUS Alumnus program;
- news from the National Rural Health Alliance about *Friends of the Alliance*;

and much more.

With best wishes for the coming holiday season and for 2014

The RAMUS team



GP13 RAMUS breakfast



RMA 2013 RAMUS breakfast

Congratulations to our award winning doctors

A number of RAMUS alumni and mentors have been recognised in recent major national awards.

Dr Rebekah Adams from Broome WA, (RAMUS alumnus and previous mentor) has won this year's Royal Australian College of General Practitioners General Practice Registrar of the Year Award. Presenting the award on the eve of the GP13 conference in Darwin, Dr Liz Marles, RACGP President, said, 'Dr Adams is an inspiration, not only to other registrars, GPs, staff and students, but importantly to patients. She manages a demanding work and study load, demonstrating enthusiasm and innovation toward education and learning, at the same time juggling her young family and community involvement'.

Current mentor, **Dr David Chessor** of Kempsey NSW, received the 2013 RACGP National Rural Faculty Rural Registrar of the Year Award. Congratulating Dr Chessor on receiving the Award, Dr Kathy Kirkpatrick said, 'Dr Chessor is a great asset to his local community as he provides first class medical care as well as ensuring that his community has adequate numbers of future GPs. He advocates tirelessly through his innovative work to promote rural general practice, improved Aboriginal health and quality education for rural registrars'. Dr Chessor also received the GPET 2013 Registrar of the Year Award in September.

Previous mentor, **Dr Mark Miller** of Goolwa Medical Centre SA, is the recipient of the 2013 RACGP General Practitioner of the Year Award. This prestigious award is presented to a general practitioner who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to the general practice profession, excellence in primary healthcare provision, and significant involvement in training and continuing professional development.

Dr Peter Annetts and Dr Trish Mackay, a husband and wife GP team from Glen Innes NSW, received the Telstra RDAA Rural Doctors of the Year Award for 2013. Dr Annetts is a previous RAMUS mentor and Dr Mackay is a current mentor. They have practised in Glen Innes for the past three decades. Dr Ian Kamerman, the newly elected President of the RDAA said, 'Both Peter and Trish have been dedicated to providing the best medical care to their patients, as well as training and teaching countless medical students and nurses over many years'.

Dr John Menzies (previous mentor) of Camperdown VIC, has received the Peter Graham 'Cohuna' Award for

2013. This Award is given annually by ACRRM in recognition of those who provide outstanding advocacy and medical service to their community.

Dr John Hall of Oakey QLD (previous mentor and a RAMUS Mentor of the Year in 2006), has taken out the Rural Doctors' Association of Queensland Legend of the Bush award. The award is given for longstanding service to the RDAQ and its ethos of providing first class advocacy for rural doctors to improve health outcomes in the bush.

2014 RAMUS application round

Applications for RAMUS 2014 are now open and will close on **13 January 2014**.

The 2014 RAMUS Application Form and Guidelines are available at <http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au>.

RAMUS Mentor Awards 2013 – nominations now open

Nominations are invited from current and former RAMUS scholars for the 2013 RAMUS Mentor of the Year Awards. If your mentor has inspired you, if the time you have spent with them has been the highlight of your year, if they are your role model and a valued source of encouragement and advice, you can acknowledge and show your appreciation by nominating them for a 2013 Mentor Award.

To nominate a mentor, please send a statement of up to 400 words outlining your reasons for the nomination and the contribution that the nominated mentor has made. Please include a photo of your mentor, or (even better) of yourself with your mentor, with your nomination.

Send your nomination by email to ramus@ruralhealth.org.au by 31 December 2012.

The annual RAMUS Mentor Awards recognise and celebrate the important contribution that RAMUS mentors make to supporting and teaching scholars and to developing scholars' links to rural practice. You can read the profiles of the 2012 RAMUS Mentors of the Year, Dr Aniello Iannuzzi and Dr Peter Vine, in the April 2013 *RAMUS Newsletter* (<http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au/newsletter>).

The 2013 RAMUS Mentor Award winners will be announced in the first *RAMUS Newsletter* for 2014.

Scholars' end-of-year requirements

The end of the year is coming up rapidly. Whether you are graduating this year or will be continuing next year, it's time to begin thinking about the end-of-year requirements for your RAMUS.

We recently emailed details of the end-of-year acquittal requirements to all scholars. If you haven't received the package please contact us so we can check your address and re-send it if necessary.

The details and forms are also available at <http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au/scholars>

Continuing scholars: please note that your scholarship payments for 2014 cannot start until you have submitted all the documents with a due date of 31 December 2013 (except the Mentor Report).

Tips for your scholar report

Your annual scholar report gives an opportunity for you to reflect on and communicate your experiences as a RAMUS scholarship holder over the past year.

What to include:

- ❖ an overview of your activities and experiences relating to rural practice and what these have meant to you. Please refer back to your Scholar Mentor Plan for 2013 and comment on whether you were able to achieve everything you planned;
- ❖ coverage of your activities and relationship with your RAMUS mentor;
- ❖ notes about academic or personal achievements you would like to share with the RAMUS team – don't be shy about mentioning if you have received university awards or prizes, have published an article, or presented at a conference; and
- ❖ feedback on your experience of the RAMUS Scheme.

There is no set format for the report; feel free to use any style or approach you wish. Aim for 600 – 1,000 words in length. There is a Scholar Report pro-forma at <http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au/scholars> which you can download and use.

Photos are especially welcome – either incorporated with your report, or sent separately.

You can submit your report as an email attachment (preferred) or by mail or fax.

Scholars' reports are highly valued as sources of information and stories about scholars' many activities and achievements. They are a demonstration of RAMUS scholars' enthusiasm for and commitment to the health and wellbeing of people living in rural, regional and remote areas of Australia.

As such, de-identified extracts from selected scholar reports are used in reports on the RAMUS Scheme to the Department of Health (the funding body for RAMUS).

We may wish to publish your report, edited extracts from your report, and/or your photos in the *RAMUS Newsletter*, on the RAMUS website or Facebook page or in other National Rural Health Alliance publications such as the *Partyline* magazine. If so, we will contact you beforehand as a courtesy to seek your clearance.

RAMUS is on Facebook

Stay up to date with RAMUS news, ask RAMUS a question or communicate with other RAMUS scholars, mentors and alumni. To join the RAMUS Facebook group, go to: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/348490061904468/>

Note: this is a closed Facebook group, exclusively for RAMUS scholars, mentors and alumni.

Scholarship payments in 2014

Graduate Payment Schedule: payments will commence on Thursday 16 January 2014, then fortnightly until 18 December 2014; all payments \$400.

Undergraduate Payment Schedule: payments will commence on Thursday 27 February 2014, then fortnightly until 18 December; all payments \$454.55.

A 2014 RAMUS scholarship calendar will be sent to continuing scholars in November.

Want to change your payment schedule?

Scholars on the Undergraduate Payment Schedule have the option to change to the Graduate Payment Schedule from the beginning of 2014.

We recognise that the Graduate Payment Schedule may suit some scholars in undergraduate courses better, especially in their later years of study. Each year we consider requests on a case-by-case basis from scholars on the Undergraduate Payment Schedule to change to the Graduate Payment Schedule.

If you decide to change to the Graduate Payment Schedule you cannot then change back to the Undergraduate Payment Schedule at a later date.

To make a request to change to the Graduate Payment Schedule from January 2014, you must contact the RAMUS team before 31 December 2013 to discuss your particular situation. Scholars on the Undergraduate Payment Schedule will soon receive an email with more details.

Conference Placement Program 2014

Applications are now open for the Conference Placement Program (CPP) for 1st semester 2014.

A preliminary list of eligible conferences for the first half of 2014, together with the CPP Guidelines and Application Form, is available at <http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au/conference-placement>

The list of conferences will be reviewed in early 2014 for other upcoming conferences that meet the CPP criteria.

For eligible conferences being held in February – April 2014, please submit your CPP application by **20 January 2014**.

Some of the eligible conferences coming up in the first half of 2014 are:

- ❖ RANZCOG Provincial Fellows Annual Scientific Meeting, Port Lincoln SA, 13-16 March
- ❖ Rural Health West Annual Conference, Perth, 15-16 March
- ❖ RANZCOG Indigenous Women's Health Meeting, Adelaide, 2-4 May
- ❖ World Congress of Cardiology, Melbourne, 2-7 May

- ❖ Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists Congress: Evolving landscapes in mental health, Perth, 11-15 May
- ❖ RDAQ Annual Conference, Brisbane, 6-8 June

The CPP provides grants to assist current scholars and former scholars who are members of the RAMUS Alumnus program to attend selected conferences that have a strong rural and remote health context or will enhance clinical skills in rural practice.

Scholars are welcome to suggest conferences for adding to the list. If you would like to suggest a conference, please refer to the CPP Guidelines for the eligibility criteria for conferences and the details about how to submit a proposal. Proposals should be submitted to the RAMUS team at least three months before the date of the conference.

Feedback from scholars sought through the annual survey

Every year we seek feedback from selected RAMUS scholars about their experiences of RAMUS and their future career aspirations.

The 2013 scholar evaluation survey is now open and is for scholars who started their scholarship in 2013 and those who are graduating and completing their scholarship this year. If you are a new or completing scholar this year, please go to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/83BK25N> to take part in the survey.

The annual surveys help to build a picture of the effectiveness of RAMUS in supporting rural students in their medical studies and of the career goals of RAMUS scholars. Survey results are reported to the Department of Health (the funding body for RAMUS). Survey responses are confidential and information from the survey will be used in de-identified, consolidated form only.

Former scholars are available to be RAMUS mentors

More than 60 former RAMUS scholars have indicated they are available to be RAMUS mentors from 2014.

These potential mentors are practising in rural, regional or remote locations in NSW, NT, SA, QLD, VIC and WA. They are all keen to support a current RAMUS scholar as they were supported by their rural doctor mentor during their studies.

Continuing scholars who need to change their mentor in 2014 are welcome to ask the RAMUS team for the contact details of former scholars they could approach about becoming their new mentor.

Does RAMUS have your current contact details?

If any of your details change, please notify RAMUS by email (ramus@ruralhealth.org.au) or phone (1800 460 440) or through the RAMUS website <http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au/update-ramus-scholar-details>

Completing scholars invited to join the RAMUS Alumnus program

Scholars who are graduating in 2013 can stay in touch with RAMUS through the RAMUS Alumnus program. More than 870 former scholars and current and former mentors are members of the Alumnus program.

Joining the Alumnus program connects you with fellow doctors with a commitment to rural practice. Alumni receive the *RAMUS Newsletter* and invitations to RAMUS networking events, and can be members of the RAMUS Facebook group. You will also still be eligible to apply to the RAMUS Conference Placement Program for support to attend selected conferences.

Joining the Alumnus program is a pathway to becoming a RAMUS mentor once you start your vocational

training (usually PGY3) and are working and/or training in a rural, regional or remote location.

Membership is free.

Download the Alumnus program brochure and membership form at <http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au/alumnus>.

RAMUS mentoring an accredited professional development activity

The Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners have recognised mentoring of RAMUS scholarship holders as eligible activities for their professional development programs, under a category of 'teaching medical students'.

RAMUS mentoring is an accredited ACRRM PDP activity; one core point per hour can be claimed, up to a maximum of 30 core points. ACRRM accreditation is pending for the new 2014-2016 triennium.

Currently, under the RACGP QI and CPD Program, RAMUS mentors may claim up to 40 Category 1 points by completing an individual application to the College's Program. The QI and CPD Program is also about to start a new triennium from 2014.

The annual RAMUS Mentor Report form will include a section where mentors can record whether they wish to claim ACRRM PDP or RACGP QI&CPD points.

For more information about the ACRRM and RACGP professional development requirements, please contact the Colleges directly.

The opinions expressed in the *RAMUS Newsletter* are those of the contributors and not necessarily of the National Rural Health Alliance or its individual Member Bodies.



Australian Journal of Rural Health

RAMUS scholars have free online access to the *Australian Journal of Rural Health (AJRH)*.

Access is through the RAMUS website (<http://ramus.ruralhealth.org.au/ajrh>)

The October 2013 issue of the AJRH provides evidence on the critical need to develop oral health training and resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers. It also has original research reports on temperament and character traits of remote area allied health professionals, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, observational studies of small rural emergency departments and two articles from Far North Queensland – original research on diabetic major amputation and a clinical report of a child bitten by a puffer fish.

Friends OF THE ALLIANCE

Supporting the health interests of the people of rural and remote Australia

The National Rural Health Alliance is Australia's peak non-government organisation for rural and remote health. The Alliance's Vision is good health and wellbeing in rural and remote Australia and it strives for equal health for all Australians regardless of where they live. Among its many activities, the Alliance manages the RAMUS Scheme on behalf of the Australian Government.

To mark the end of 2013, RAMUS scholars, mentors and alumni will soon receive the Alliance calendar for 2014 and a copy of the November 2013 issue of the Alliance's *Partyline* magazine.

Later in November, you will also receive an invitation to join the *Friends of the Alliance*: a network of people and organisations who support the Alliance's objectives and provide the NRHA with additional grassroots connections for its work in the constantly changing rural and remote health landscape. The support received from *Friends* helps the Alliance to gather evidence to advocate, promote and communicate to Government and other policy makers about the health and wellbeing needs of the 6.7 million people in rural, regional and remote Australia.

To find out more about the work of the NRHA go to <http://ruralhealth.org.au/>



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The National Rural Health Alliance administers the RAMUS Scheme on behalf of the Department of Health. The Alliance is the peak non-government body working to improve the health of Australians in rural and remote areas.