



ONU Centennial Trust Recipient in 2012

PAUL BONNITCHA (ON '00)

Dr Paul Bonnitcha attended Newington from 1995 to 2000 on an Academic Scholarship, was Dux in all secondary school years, won the Headmaster's Scholarship in 1998 and earned a UAI of 99.90 for his HSC.

From early on in life Paul has been involved in numerous aid and volunteer organisations, promoting health both nationally and internationally. This included fundraising for the Hermann Gmeiner School and CanTeen while at Newington College, involvement from a young age with activities such as "Clean up Australia" days and working bees with local community organisations, and years of academic tutoring and sports coaching, which he has undertaken pro bono in numerous different capacities over the years.

After finishing Year 12 at Newington College, university studies provided Paul with the opportunity to combine his love of science and medicine with his desire to perform socially constructive work. He is currently in his twelfth consecutive year of tertiary study. This has included a Bachelor of Advance Science, Honours year, Master of Science, PhD and his current medical program for which he is in the penultimate year. Additionally, Paul has worked throughout his time at medical school as a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Sydney and has co-authored eleven publications. His ultimate career goal is to work as a world leading researcher and clinician either in the area of oncology or epidemiology.

Medical students are frequently allowed to perform a three month elective overseas during the course of their studies and recently Paul was offered a prestigious opportunity by a collaboration of The University of Sydney Medical School, the Boden Institute, the Office of Global Health and the Pohnpei National Department State Hospital (in the Federated States of Micronesia) to complete this elective period at the host hospital in FSM.

This is the first time this opportunity has been offered to any medical student, and it was only awarded to two people within the medical school following an application and interview process. In addition, this posting will allow Paul to become involved in developing solutions to Asia-Pacific problems in a manner beyond what is usually permitted for medical students.

The involvement of so many different organisations presents a rare collaborative elective which combines both research and clinical work. The Boden Institute in particular has a strong research background in epidemiology and disease prevention research, behaviour change and health promotion, and clinical trials on chronic disease prevention and management. They have collaborations with a number of Pacific Island organisations and communities, including one with the Pohnpei National Department. This provides Paul with the unique opportunity to perform volunteer public health work and research as well as provide clinical based assistance to the people of the region.

This position is a chance for Paul to make a real difference in the health outcomes of the Pacific Region. The elective itself is based in The Federated States of Micronesia, which, up until recently, faced its major disease burden from communicable and infectious diseases. This is an area of research where Paul has extensive experience and is certain he can make a meaningful contribution to these solving problems when he travels to Micronesia and works directly with the people of the region.

Travelling to and within the Federated States of Micronesia and the daily cost of living is relatively expensive so Paul will be using his endowment towards his personal cost of completing this elective.



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DAVID THODE (ON '02)

Mr David Thode attended Newington from 1991 to 2002 and was involved in several extracurricular activities while at school. He attained the rank of C.S.M in the Cadet Corps and received full house colours however sport was always his passion.

David received sports colours for water polo (2001 and 2002) after which he went on to coach junior water polo (U13s through to U16s) from 2002 to 2005. He continued to play water polo socially after school, but after leaving Newington he attended Sydney University where he started playing American Football and has done so from 2003 to the present. David has played in every New South Wales representative team since 2006, through to captaining the Australian team in a Tri-Nations style tournament with Great Britain and Sweden in 2009. The sporting highlight of his career to date was being awarded University Blues in 2010, an honour limited to approximately fifteen athletes per year and limited to a select group of scholar athletes.

He graduated from The University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Science degree. Although it was not his chosen career field, he majored in psychology, which exposed him to a very different aspect of science that is not explored in traditional science disciplines, such as chemistry or biology. Psychology allowed him to study a broad and diverse range of subjects, including history, philosophy, and traditional sciences, giving him the ability to move on and work in dentistry with an open mind, to quickly adapt to each unique clinical situation and to build a strong rapport with almost any patient no matter their personality or background which is truly invaluable.

Becoming a dentist was David's passion for as long as he can remember. While at school and for his work experience period he shadowed two leading prosthodontists, Drs. Paul Hogan and Markijan Hupalo. This combined with having an outstanding family dentist while growing up, fuelled his early desire to pursue dentistry as a career. Commencing the Sydney University Bachelor of Dentistry program in 2010 was the start of a challenging but thoroughly rewarding program.

For the past two years David has been a committee member of The University of Sydney Dental Association. He has been active in their social, academic, altruistic, mentoring and sport programs. In addition, he has played an integral role as a member of the Australian Dental Students Association by his large involvement in the organisation of a nationwide dental student conference that was held in Sydney in July 2012. As part of a 12-person team he was responsible for coordinating the daily activities of over 600 students from across Australia and New Zealand. Throughout his four-year degree, David is expected to remove approximately 50 teeth as well as be involved in four more complex surgical extractions. Although extractions are not performed as regularly in dental private practices as they were in previous generations, the ability to perform them safely and confidently is a vital skill in being a well-rounded general dentist even if one does not plan to specialise in oral surgery.

Hence David's initial conversations with Dr. Mark, the head dentist at Northern Provincial Hospital in Vanuatu. Dr Mark casually mentioned that their record number of extractions in a single day at the hospital was 180 teeth. David figured that if he were able to work with Dr. Mark in his hospital surgery, he would be able to remove at least twenty teeth per day in addition to other restorative dental work, such as fillings and root canal therapies. The experience of not only the extractions, but the administration of local anaesthesia, wound management and patient care in a single week at Northern Provincial Hospital, would exceed what he can currently accomplish during his Sydney dental program.

Beyond the benefit of all the experience he will gain while volunteering at Northern Provincial Hospital, David is looking forward to being able to assist and improve the oral health of the local indigenous population who are known as the Ni-Vanuatu or colloquially as Nivans. Despite the close proximity to Australia, Vanuatu is still considered part of the developing world and the oral health of the population is drastically under-served. Preventative measures and treatments are non-existent and many members of the population cope with severe orofacial pain as a daily reality since they have no access to private dental care.

David's participation and involvement in the dental team at Northern Provincial Hospital will help improve the clinic's treatment efficiency and increase the number of patients that the clinic is normally able to treat in a day. As a volunteer at the Northern Provincial Hospital and with the assistance of the ONU Centennial Trust, David can make a real difference to the health of the local Vanuatu community while also enhancing his abilities as a clinician and advancing his career as a dentist.

Through his volunteer work in Vanuatu in 2013, David hopes to further cultivate and refine those skills. The opportunity to progress his abilities as a dental clinician combined with the chance to provide a desperately needed health service to the local population is something that he is very excited about.



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PAUL MCMULLEN (ON '04)

Mr Paul McMullen joined the Newington community in 1997 when he started Year 5 at Wyvern House. He went on to become School Captain the following year and in his final year at Newington he was elected Deputy Senior Prefect. Paul enjoyed school life; he was involved in several drama productions such as *The Tempest*, *Twelve Angry Men* and *The Crucible*. His talents were also extended to music, playing the bassoon in the Symphony Orchestra, Symphonic Winds and the Wind Quintet and the saxophone in the Jazz Band. He was a member of the GPS Orchestra and a member of the Chapel and Chamber Choirs. Paul was presented with Honour Colours in Year 11 and with Colours for Music and Drama in Year 12.

Paul's association with the school didn't end after leaving Newington. He coached soccer at Wyvern House and cricket at the senior school for a number of seasons, as well as running the Newington Soccer Association fundraising BBQ stall each Saturday in the winter season for three years. It gave him great pleasure to be invited back to Newington in 2010 to give the keynote address to the current boys at the Winter End of Season Dinner.

While at Newington, Paul developed a passion for Ancient History and English Literature which is what led him to enrol in a Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Sydney, majoring in Ancient History. In his final year of his B.A. he was awarded the Senior Undergraduate Essay Prize for Ancient History after which he undertook an Honours year. The Honours year ended with 1st Class Honours in Ancient History after which he received the Britta Petzl Memorial Prize for the best Honours thesis in Ancient History.

While at The University of Sydney, Paul played bassoon with The Sydney University Symphony Orchestra while serving as Secretary of the Orchestra. He sang with the Sydney University Madrigal Society and the Sydney Philharmonia Choir. In addition to his musical involvements, Paul played for six seasons in the Premier League and Premier League Reserves for Sydney University Soccer Football Club.

Paul continued with his studies and graduated earlier this year with a degree of Master of Philosophy in Classics and Ancient History. While completing his M.Phil, Paul served as the postgraduate representative to the Department of Classics and Ancient History at The University of Sydney. Some of his work is published and he served as a Research Assistant on an interdisciplinary Australian Research Council project involving the departments of Classics and Ancient History, Philosophy, and Performance Studies.

For the last four years, Paul has taught at The University of Sydney as a tutor in first year undergraduate courses on Ancient Greek History, the third year course on Ancient Greek Religion and served as a marker in the second year course on Ancient Historiography – the study of the concept and philosophy of history. His hope is to continue to develop as a teacher and researcher, and to pursue a career in academia.

Paul recently applied for and was admitted to Pembroke College, Cambridge on a partial scholarship to undertake a Doctorate in Classics. The opportunity to undertake his Ph.D. at the University of Cambridge and work with some of the most learned and respected individuals in his field is an opportunity not to be missed.

Paul is passionate about his research and instilling his knowledge in others. Undertaking his Ph.D. at the University of Cambridge will further ignite Paul's passion as a scholar which is an important step in his professional development and academic career. Paul will use his grant to see him through this chapter of such a successful career.