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ANNUAL REVIEW 2023

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The Massey University Foundation is a trust and a registered charity (cc27593). Founded in 2004, the Foundation fosters philanthropy and administrates gifts to the university.

The Foundation provides scholarships, research funds, staff, equipment and buildings that the university could not otherwise afford, and by doing so, helps to make Massey academically and financially stronger.

At the end of 2023, the Foundation had net assets of about \$62 million. Endowed funds are invested with approved investment managers, and the distribution of funds is overseen by the Foundation's board of trustees. The board has a fiduciary duty of care to ensure all funds donated to the Foundation are managed and distributed appropriately and according to the donor's wishes.

The Foundation publishes its audited accounts on its website: www.massey.ac.nz/foundation and the board gives an annual report to the Massey University Council.

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Cover Image: McEwan Pacific Student Scholarship recipient Eugenie Motulalo worked full-time throughout her degree to support her family and pay for her study **Photo Credit:** Stuff Limited

MESSAGE FROM FOUNDATION CHAIR BRYAN MOGRIDGE

2023 was a year marked by both challenges and achievements. Once again, I am pleased with the Massey University Foundation's performance over a testing 12 months.

Despite having a smaller team, a challenging internal environment and global uncertainty, the Foundation finished the year with total fundraising of \$4.6 million. I would like to thank donors for their support and for their confidence and trust in the board to manage their gifts.

The year saw little relief from the financial pressures that all higher-education facilities are facing, with international student numbers still not back to pre-Covid levels. The additional economic pressures of high inflation and recession only underscored the importance of the Foundation's contribution to the university.

In 2023, the Foundation once again gave to a variety of causes, with the vast majority of expenditure awarded to deserving students (\$1.298 million) and groundbreaking research (\$1.294 million). Yet another \$542,000 was directed to academic chairs and teaching positions. The Foundation is making a tangible difference to the lives of many.

Thanks to a prudent approach, the Foundation's investments also performed well, returning a pleasing \$5.6 million, or around 10 percent, over the year.

This outstanding performance helped leverage the Foundation's assets to reach over \$60 million for the first time in its history.

This significant milestone puts the Foundation on schedule to achieve its mission of having \$100 million in assets by December 2027. You will be hearing more over the coming year about its plans to achieve this, and its loftier vision of having \$500 million of assets by 2047.

I would like to thank the board of the Foundation: Paul Bayly, Dianne Kidd, Wayne McIlwraith, Jan Thomas, Shelley Turner and Ben Vanderkolk, for their diligence and support over 2023. I would especially like to thank retiring trustee Ben Vanderkolk for his four years of service to the Foundation.

Earlier this year, I was pleased to welcome new trustees Adam Peren and Ross McEwan to the board. Both Ross and Adam bring unique insight and a wealth of valuable business experience.

Finally, I'd like to again extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our supporters, whose generosity and commitment have made our achievements possible. Together, we are building a brighter future for Massey University and the communities it serves.

Ngā Manaakitanga



MESSAGE FROM FOUNDATION DIRECTOR MITCH MURDOCH

Difficult conditions demanded 2023 be a year of "resetting" for the Foundation and for the university. It became evident that the economic recovery post-Covid was going to be a long, hard haul - with international students struggling to get visas to study in New Zealand a notable obstacle. The year was a tough one, punctuated by rapid restructuring and change.

The Foundation has embraced the challenge this environment poses and has reset its strategy. It has restated its intention to reach \$100 million in assets by 2027 and looked further to the horizon, to 2047, when it aspires to have assets of \$500 million.

The Foundation is increasingly focusing its efforts on chairs and scholarships – areas that build strength for Massey. Scholarships help us to attract and retain the best students in a very competitive environment, while academic chairs and salaries allow us to engage and keep intellectual capital with the university. Support for both also relieves some pressure from Massey's bottom line.

On the pages of this review, you can read about the generosity of the T.R. Ellett Agricultural Research Trust, which works through the Foundation to support academic staff in Massey's School of Agriculture and Environment. You can also read about the impact of the Kirk Family Scholarships – one of the most significant scholarships the Foundation gives.

I would, of course, like to thank our donors for their continued support of Massey. I believe passionately that higher education has the power to change lives and unlock hidden potential in people and science. I must thank all of you who share that vision and support the Foundation and its work.

I'd also like to thank the hard-working staff of the Foundation and the board of the Foundation for their endless support and encouragement.

Ngā Mihi



2023 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

INCOME

The Foundation has two forms of income; one from donations, the other earnings from its invested donations. Donations that are endowed, or are not for immediate expenditure, are invested in the Foundation's Endowment Investment Pool (EIP), while other gifts that are for immediate or near-term spending are invested in the Current Use Investment Pool (CUIP). The CUIP does not typically hold large sums of money.

At the beginning of 2023, the EIP held \$54,186,556 in assets. The EIP is invested in accordance with a Statement of Investment Policy and Objectives set by the board and is currently split across three fund managers: Continuity Capital, Milford Asset Management and Nikko Asset Management. The fund is invested at medium risk over a range of assets including global shares, New Zealand and Australian shares, private equity, bonds and cash. Over the 2023 year, the EIP returned 9.7 percent, or \$5,459,000. This was an outstanding result, especially after the volatility of 2022.

By contrast, the CUIP held just \$2,070,565, and was invested in fixed interest, where it earned a 5.6 percent return, or \$116,000, thanks to rising rates.

Income from donations in 2023 was steady at \$4.6 million and was a pleasing result in a contracting economy. The largest portion of donations went to scholarships, followed by research. Academic salaries and chairs accounted for the next-largest tranche of donations.

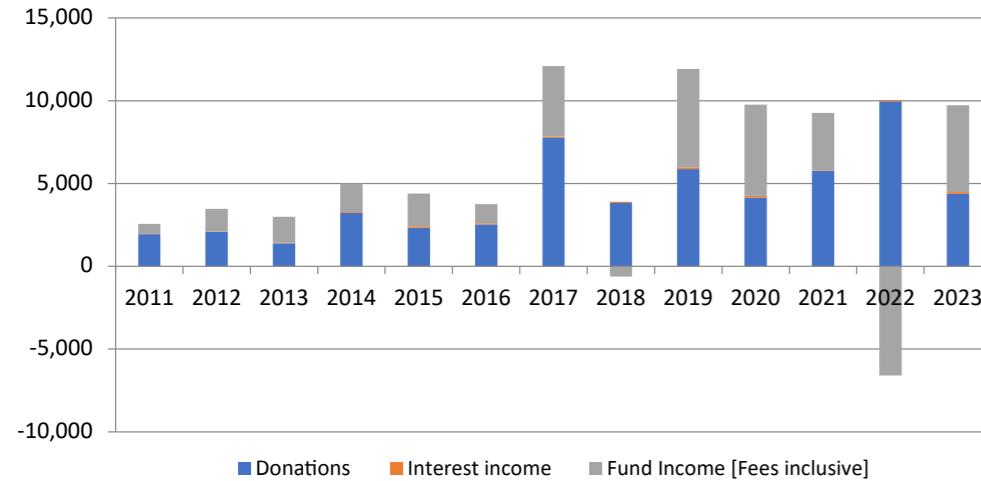
DISTRIBUTIONS

The Foundation distributed \$4,226,000 in 2023, its highest-ever total disbursement (with the exception of 2021, when the Foundation handed over some \$4 million to the university for the refurbishment of the Refectory Building). In what has become a typical pattern for the Foundation, the 'lion's share' of distributions went to scholarship and research funding, which accounted for \$1.298 million and \$1.294m respectively.

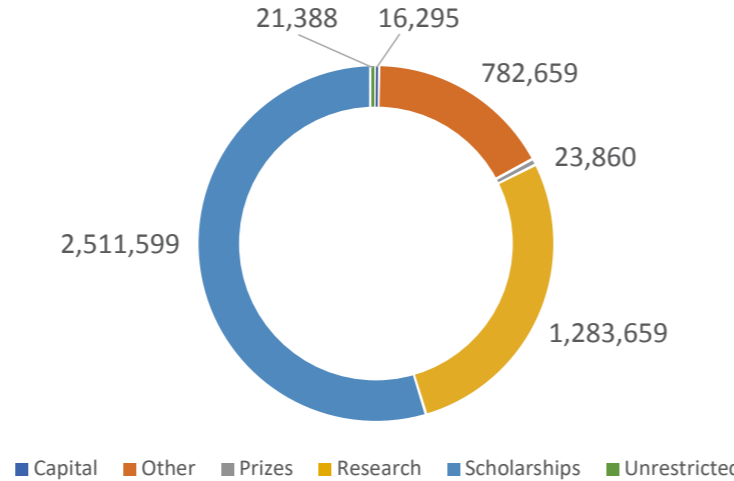
Academic chairs and salaries were a pleasing 13 percent of distributions, or \$542,000. Attracting and retaining the best academic staff in a highly competitive global market is difficult for universities, and the support of academic chairs is increasingly important to the university. Prizes accounted for just \$50,000 of distributions.

Overall, the year ended well for the Foundation, with an increase in equity of \$5,754,000 million, giving the Foundation total assets of \$62,010,000. This is the first time in the Foundation's history that its total equity has gone over the \$60 million mark.

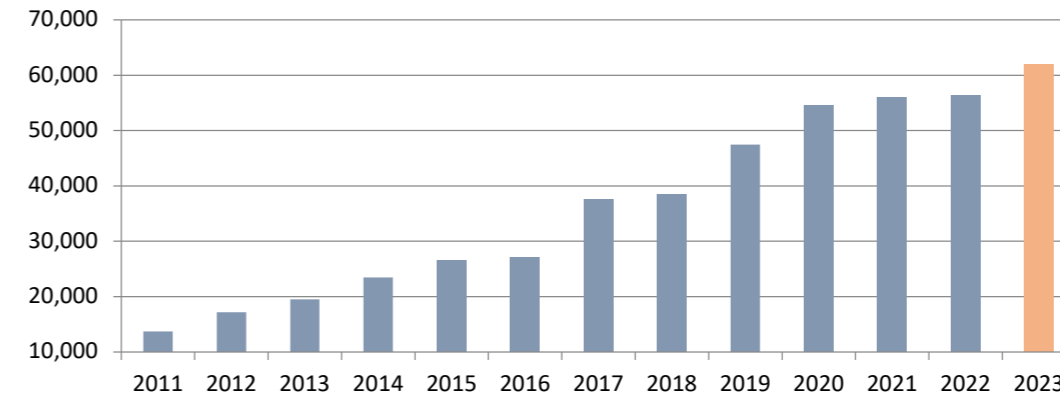
ANNUAL INCOME BEFORE DISTRIBUTIONS (\$000's)



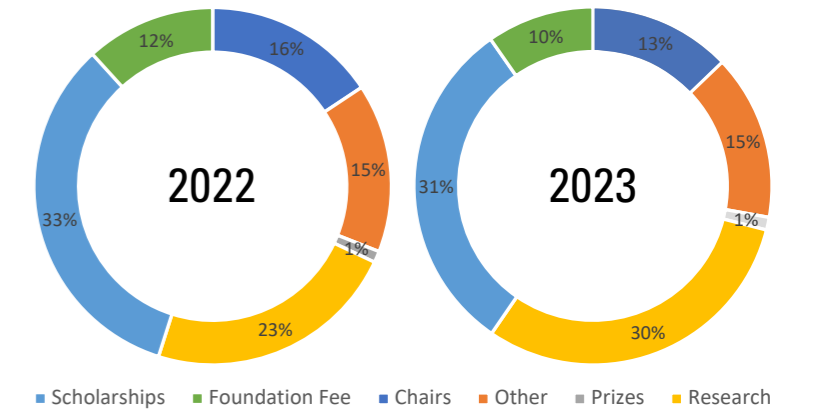
2023 DONATIONS BY TYPE



TOTAL EQUITY (\$000's)



DISTRIBUTIONS



TO VIEW THE FOUNDATION'S FULL AUDITED ACCOUNTS VISIT: [MASSEY.AC.NZ/FOUNDATION](https://massey.ac.nz/foundation)

2023 HIGHLIGHTS



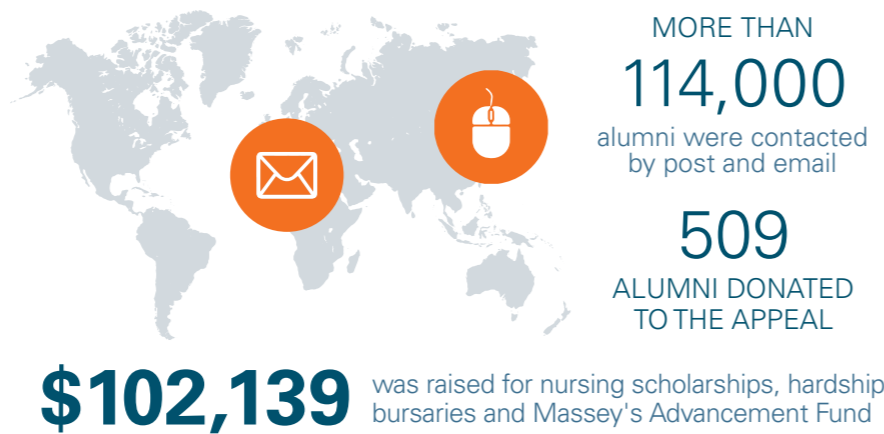
TOTAL ASSETS



SCHOLARSHIPS



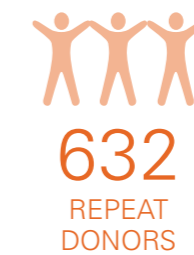
ANNUAL ALUMNI APPEAL



DONATIONS CAME FROM SUPPORTERS IN 17 COUNTRIES



DONORS



PACIFIC STUDENTS CARVING NEW PATHS WITH HELP OF MCEWAN SCHOLARSHIPS

A fund aiming to redress a shortage of scholarships for Pacific students has awarded over \$140,000 to Massey students over the last five years. The McEwan Pacific Student Fund was established in 2019 with a \$674,000 gift from alumni Ross and Stephanie McEwan.

Scholarships through the fund, managed by the Massey University Foundation, are helping Pacific students break generational cycles and achieve success at tertiary level and beyond.

Scholarship recipient Eugenie (Genie), a first-year nurse working in Auckland Hospital's haematology ward, also worked full-time throughout her degree to help pay for her study and support her family.

The \$16,000 scholarship paid for textbooks, transport costs and course fees. "It really helped keep my student loan down, relieving me of more financial burden."

Genie's mother passed away from breast cancer at 42, when Genie was 17, and the Massey graduate took seven years off between high school and tertiary study to help raise her younger siblings and contribute to the family financially.

Witnessing the care her mother received in hospital inspired her to pursue a career in nursing, and completing a cadetship at Auckland Hospital to become a healthcare assistant gave her confidence to apply for the Bachelor of Nursing.

Holding down a full-time job while studying full-time involved "long days and lots of coffee", but her work – as a healthcare assistant – complemented her course, she says.

Genie has enrolled in a postgraduate certificate in nursing and plans to become a nurse practitioner. She hopes to help educate communities to achieve better health outcomes for Pacific people.

"I am very grateful to the McEwans for supporting my passion for supporting others and helping me finish the journey that began with my Mum's passing – my nursing degree."

Rose Salani will receive \$24,000 over three years to help her through the five-year Bachelor of Veterinary Science degree.

She is grateful she can pour her focus and energy into her studies and placements.

"Third-year vet is notoriously difficult as the workload increases from four to five courses. The scholarship takes financial strain off me and my family. I did not want to have to find part-time work and I don't want my Mum to have to support me more than she does."

The scholarships are helping Pacific students succeed at tertiary level – something that has been out of reach for previous generations, Rose says.

"My Dad, who has passed away, did not graduate from high school as he had to work to support his family. The scholarships are supporting us to have better futures, and this will help not just us, but our families and future families we may have."

Rose, who tutors Pacifica high school students and last year served as the Pacifica representative on Massey's students' association Te Tira Ahu Pae, has dreamed of becoming a vet since she was in intermediate school.

"I'm really enjoying getting into the clinical aspect of it and working with animals and clients."

"The scholarships are supporting us to have better futures, and this will help not just us, but our families and future families we may have."

Recipient Kresten Nimo, in her third year of Massey's Bachelor of Nursing degree, says her \$16,000 scholarship helped relieve financial stress, allowing her to focus on her study and hospital placements without the added pressure of a part-time job.

"It's really difficult to hold down a part-time job while you're on placement. My transport costs increased with placements, so the scholarship has helped in that respect too."

Attracted to nursing by the opportunities to specialise, Kresten says a recent placement at Starship Hospital has inspired a passion for paediatric nursing.

"I really enjoy helping people and seeing the positive impact I can have on children under my care."

Ross McEwan, the former chief executive of National Australia Bank and former head of the Royal Bank of Scotland, graduated from Massey with a Bachelor of Business Studies majoring in Personnel Management in 1980.

Stephanie McEwan, née Duncan, graduated from Massey with a Bachelor of Technology with Honours, majoring in Food Technology, in 1978.

Stephanie says in seeking to "give back" to New Zealand and Massey, she and Ross identified a dearth of support specifically for Pacific Island students.

The scholarships aim to support students through full-time tertiary education that can be immediately and practically applied at the end of the degree. "We wanted them to bring their skills and knowledge and make a direct impact back into their communities.

"Pacific Island people contribute so much and make New Zealand a very colourful place. We wanted to return the favour."

Tasa Havea, Dean of Pacific Student Success at Massey, says the McEwan scholarships were the first significant scholarships specifically for Pacific Island students at Massey.

More have since been established; in some cases modelled on the McEwan Scholarships, which can be renewed for a further two years should the student meet or exceed a certain grade.

The scholarships reward success for students who often juggle study with family and community responsibilities.

"A typical Pacific student will be working part-time to help Mum and Dad while studying full-time. They might be captain of a netball team, in the church choir and teaching at Sunday school, while also looking after young siblings or elderly relatives at home.

"It can be difficult for them to prioritise study, but the financial incentive means a lot to them. The Pacific community is so grateful to the McEwans and for the opportunities they have created."

Right: McEwan Pacific Student Scholarship recipient Kresten Nimo



LOVELL AND BERYS CLARK: SUPPORTING POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS IN PERPETUITY

Twenty years after the Berys and Lovell Clark Scholarships were first awarded, a \$1.97 million bequest has ensured their lasting legacy supporting top postgraduate study through Massey. A farming couple from South Auckland, Berys and Lovell established the scholarships with a bequest of \$500,000 after Lovell's passing in 2002. Berys passed away in 2022, gifting a further \$1.97 million to the scholarship fund.



Left: 2005 scholarship recipient Jenny Tomes (left) with Berys Clark

The two endowments [from Lovell and Berys] together constitute the second-largest bequest in the history of the Massey University Foundation.

In twenty years, the scholarships have paid out over \$400,000 to more than 50 students. Berys' bequest means the fund can continue to support up to 15 students a year in perpetuity.

The scholarships are awarded to postgraduate students studying science, biotechnology, agriculture, humanities, arts or business, based on academic merit.

2022 recipient Michaela Heron received \$6600 towards her Master of Business Administration (MBA) costs, which will total about \$45,000 over her three years of part-time study.

Making the MBA leap was "overwhelming", from both a financial and confidence perspective, says Michaela, who is working full-time for the Department of Corrections as a rehabilitation programme manager. "But the Lovell and Berys Clark Scholarship came at a really significant moment. It helped relieve the financial burden but also gave me a massive confidence boost, as one of the criteria is academic merit. I said to myself, 'Okay, I need to do this, and I can do this'."

Michaela has since received other scholarships to support her study, which is imparting valuable leadership and management skills, she says.

"I'd love to be involved in senior leadership and governance in social services, whether it's in government or a non-government organisation. The MBA has exposed me to private sector ideas and new ways of thinking."

'[The scholarship] helped relieve the financial burden but also gave me a massive confidence boost.'

The delivery of the MBA online by Massey made it feasible for her to study, as it's a 40 minute commute to Palmerston North from her rural home in Pohangina.

"I am very grateful to Massey and the Clarks. The scholarship really encouraged me and recognised my hard work and the importance of grabbing the opportunity to study with both hands."

Aryan McKay, who received a total of \$15,600 as a scholarship recipient in 2022 and 2023, says the funding has helped cover a range of costs associated with her Doctorate in Clinical Psychology, including for travel, accommodation, professional development and resources.

Aryan is investigating the hauora (holistic wellbeing) benefits and therapeutic applications of taonga pūoro (Māori musical taonga).

"I have two boys who have been diagnosed with ADHD and they have quite complex, high-need behaviours and learning requirements. I wanted to learn more about how I could use taonga pūoro to support them better."

"[Without the scholarship] I might have been able to pull this off, but it would have been a lot more stressful and I would have had to go into debt to manage it. I'm very grateful for the scholarship, it's made a big difference to me and my whānau."

Berys, a schoolteacher, completed a Bachelor of Business Studies extramurally through Massey in 1994, and while Lovell never had the opportunity to study, he wanted to help others benefit and contribute through higher education.

John Donnelly, Lovell's nephew, says the Clarks were kind, down-to-earth people with a deep love for farming and the land.

In twenty years, the scholarships have paid out over \$400,000 to more than 50 students. Berys' bequest means the fund can continue to support up to 15 students a year in perpetuity.

"They were generous to a tee, and they were always interested in helping young farmers get ahead."

Foundation director Mitch Murdoch says the Clarks' remarkable generosity will touch the lives of many, as scholarship recipients go on to contribute to communities in New Zealand and overseas, in their chosen fields of work and research.

"Their legacy is immense, and we are grateful and proud to be its custodians."

Right: Aryan McKay received Clark scholarships in 2022 and 2023 towards her Doctorate in Clinical Psychology



PASTURE DEVELOPER'S TRUST FUNDS RESEARCH AND TEACHING

Two new lecturing positions at Massey will help address a shortage of research and teaching in grassland science – a field vital to New Zealand's productive sector.

The roles are funded by the T.R. Ellett Agricultural Research Trust; established in 1979 by Trevor Ellett – a Massey alumnus and former lecturer and farmer – with the proceeds of seed sales from his breakthrough ryegrass pasture.

The funding, through the Massey University Foundation, will initially support the two positions for five years. It brings total funding from the trust for scholarships, teaching and research at Massey since 2022 to \$298,000.

Paul Kenyon, Head of Massey's School of Agriculture and Environment, says pasture agriculture is central to New Zealand's ability to produce animal products in an efficient manner.

But pasture scientists retiring over the last ten to 15 years have generally been hard to replace, creating a paucity of knowledge and capability in the area.

"The support from the T.R. Ellett Agricultural Research Trust allows Massey to build real depth in that area and

allows Massey to contribute positively to teaching and research in agronomy and pasture systems science."

Trevor Ellett Senior Lecturer in Grassland Science, Dr Andrew Cartmill, relocated from Wisconsin in the United States to take up the role.

An expert in pasture root systems and agroecology, Andrew jumped at the opportunity to contribute to research and farming practices in New Zealand.

As the pasture research lead for Whenua Haumanu – a Massey-led collaboration investigating regenerative agricultural practices in New Zealand, he is overseeing research comparing plant root systems in conventional and diverse pastures.

"Understanding the growth rate of roots and how they respond to animals grazing is really important for understanding the whole pasture system – right from soil microbes through to greenhouse gas emissions [from livestock]."

Right: Dr Andrew Cartmill installing a minirhizotron tube to look at root growth



An expert in pasture root systems and agroecology, Andrew jumped at the opportunity to contribute to research and farming practices in New Zealand.

A lot of innovation occurs on-farm rather than in the lab, Andrew says, and he hopes to work extensively with farmers in New Zealand.

"I'm very honoured to be offered the role and I'm excited about adding to the body of knowledge that already exists.

"New Zealand's agricultural sector is built on grazing and we're reliant on pastures for that. It's incredibly important science and there are huge opportunities to improve our systems."

Sam Wilson, Trevor Ellett Lecturer in Grassland Science, says he hopes to encourage young people into agriculture careers – and in particular those with a research focus.

Despite its importance to New Zealand's productive sector, grassland science has struggled for prominence in the last few decades, with other fields – such as genetics – capturing greater interest, he says.

Agricultural science graduates are also in high demand and many opt for jobs in agribusiness over further study and research, he says.

"It's really important that we're able to keep doing empirical, field research to inform practice on farms, and it's really important that we have the people to do it. It's vital for our economy."

In 2022, the trust awarded Sam funding for his PhD research into factors affecting plantain persistence. The new position has given him financial security while he wraps up that study and transitions to researching and lecturing, he says.

"It's really important that we're able to keep doing empirical, field research to inform practice on farms, and it's really important that we have the people to do it. It's vital for our economy."

"I'm very grateful for this opportunity. I've always enjoyed seeing young people grow and achieve things, and I feel I have the ability to connect with a wide range of people."

Trustee Dr Errol Thom, a pasture agronomist and friend of Trevor Ellett, says Trevor was an ardent advocate for pastoral farming and a pioneer of ryegrass development in New Zealand.

Farm trials showed the ryegrass present on Trevor's Mangere farm had better growth and persistence than cultivars available to farmers at the time. Trevor arranged for commercial seeds companies using the Mangere ryegrass in their breeding programmes to pay a royalty into a charitable agricultural research trust, later named the T.R. Ellett Agricultural Research Trust.

"He showed great foresight. He felt agricultural research wasn't being funded very well, and he wanted his ryegrass to be used for the benefit of farming in general. These two new positions are a fitting legacy to what he started."

Right: Trevor Ellett Lecturer in Grassland Science Sam Wilson



MASSEY ACADEMIC BACKS TANZANIAN VET RESEARCH

Tanzanian veterinary students are moving to the lush plains of Manawatū to pursue postgraduate research, sponsored by Massey University's Professor Richard Laven.

Richard, a Professor in Production Animal Health and Welfare at the School of Veterinary Science, saw an opportunity to support Tanzanian vet students to improve cattle and dairy farming knowledge and practices – ultimately boosting productivity and economic activity in Tanzania.

To date, three students from Tanzania's Sokoine University of Agriculture have received scholarships from Richard to investigate aspects of cattle and dairy farming.

Inaugural recipient Chacha Werema investigated methods for detecting and treating lameness in dairy cattle, including the use of infrared thermography (IRT) and "in-parlour scoring (IPS)" - while cows are stationary in the milking shed - to detect the condition.

He concluded that both approaches were reasonably effective in distinguishing clinically lame from non-lame cows in New Zealand and Tanzania, but will benefit from further research and refinement.

Chacha also analysed locomotion scoring - a method of giving cows a lameness score based on their movement that is widely used in New Zealand - and recommended changes to how scores are recorded to increase efficiency, in line with practices in the United Kingdom.

His findings indicate locomotion scoring of cows after milking would be effective in Tanzania, he says, and more observers should be trained in the method there.

Complementary research by Chacha into the efficacy of preventative hoof trimming in cows to ward off lameness concluded that it had little effect, and New Zealand farms should focus on early detection and treatment.

Chacha's scholarship - which covered his course fees and travel to and within Tanzania – made his research possible, he says.

"[Studying at Massey] exceeded all my expectations. The passionate community of staff and students from diverse backgrounds really impressed me."

Right: Chacha Werema hopes to establish a dairy farm training facility in Tanzania



Chacha hopes to establish a specialised training facility for dairy farming in Tanzania, to help farmers there succeed.

Richard says research by another scholarship recipient, Kabuni Kabuni, is investigating the merits of using ambient-temperature semen in artificial insemination in Tanzanian cattle.

The third recipient, Athanas Ngou, is studying dairy smallholders to identify and share best knowledge and practices and lift productivity.

"[Studying at Massey] exceeded all my expectations. The passionate community of staff and students from diverse backgrounds really impressed me."

"If you can increase milk production on a Tanzanian dairy farm by two litres, that can double production and make a huge difference," Richard says.

"The more milk produced by Tanzanian dairy farms and the more development you have, the better it will be for the country."

Richard established the scholarships through the Massey University Foundation after visiting two of his Masters students from Tanzania, who had received funding to study through the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

He plans to expand the scope of the scholarships to support students from other countries with developing production animal systems.



Richard Laven in Ethiopia, aged four

It was in East Africa that Richard was inspired to become a vet; his father was seconded to Ethiopia with the Royal Air Force when Richard was a child, and it was there he met an English vet who would become his mentor.

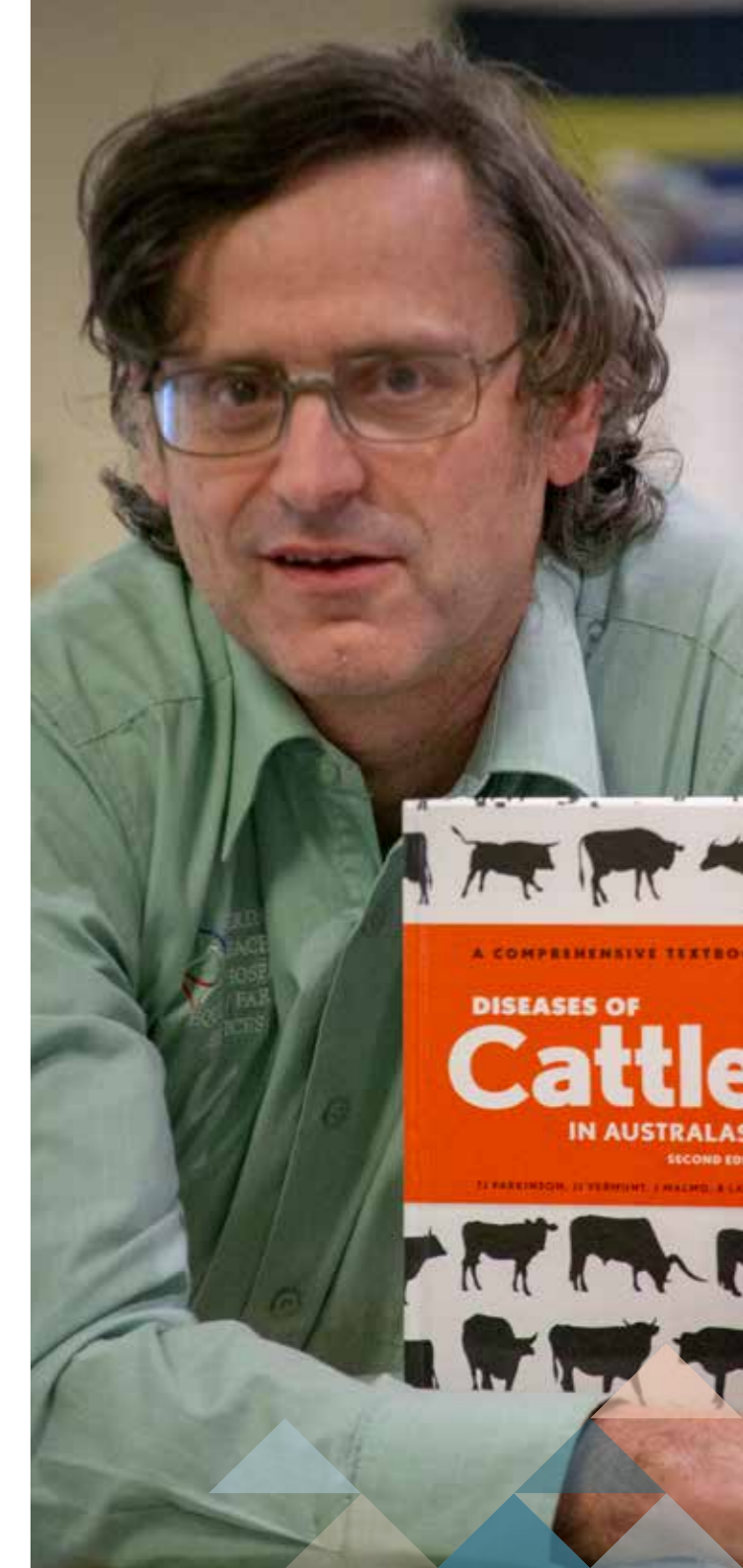
Richard says he relishes the chance to travel and visit his students and see their research firsthand.

He has funded the scholarship through extra income – including from consultancy work – and other academics have also donated to the fund.

The scholarships and the research they support have wide-ranging benefits – for cattle and dairy farming in both Tanzania and New Zealand, Massey, the students and himself, he says.

"The Foundation has been a great vehicle to help make this happen."

Right: Professor Richard Laven has researched cattle health and welfare extensively



KIRK FAMILY SCHOLARSHIPS FUELLING SPECIALIST VET TRAINING AND RESEARCH

A \$3.3 million gift by the Kirk family is advancing farm practices and veterinary care nationwide, funding \$348,000 in scholarships over the past five years. The Kirk Family Scholarships were established in 2017, and the initial endowment to the Massey University Foundation has now grown to \$4.4m.

The scholarships have enabled both research and specialist training across a range of veterinary disciplines, improving knowledge, understanding, animal welfare and productivity.

Dr Winston Mason, co-founder of veterinary epidemiology and research provider EpiVets, received \$84,000 in 2018 to fund his three-year PhD on dairy cattle lameness, inspired by his time working on-farm as a vet.

His investigation identified various risk factors for lameness, including using concrete stand-off pads, as well as best-practice treatment; early and proactive diagnosis, hoof trimming and using a wooden block to lift the affected hoof off the ground.

“Using these simple, practical measures, we recorded the fastest lameness cure rates in the world. We had the animals healthy and back in the herd in seven days.”

While New Zealand has the lowest incidence of cattle lameness among developed, commercial dairy farming nations, it is still seen as a significant problem by New Zealand farmers, Winston says.

About three percent of New Zealand dairy cows are suffering from lameness at any point in time. Lameness is in significant pain, produce less milk, can lose a lot of their body weight, are less likely to get pregnant and are more likely to be culled. Once an animal has been lame, they are more likely to have recurring cases.

Winston says some farmers have adopted the best-practice protocols for treatment, and the onus is on the veterinary profession to communicate them, offer their services and train farmers so they can treat lameness themselves.

The funding through the Kirk Family Scholarships meant Winston could apply for co-funding for the research, including from the Ministry for Primary Industries through its Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures initiative, which aims to support innovation in the food and fibre sectors.

“I’m incredibly grateful for the support from the Kirk Family Scholarships. They turned a regional study into a nationwide study.”

Massey University, DairyNZ, Boehringer Ingelheim and Veterinary Enterprises Group also made financial contributions to the project.

“I’m incredibly grateful for the support from the Kirk Family Scholarships. They turned a regional study into a nationwide study.”

Veterinary neurologist and senior lecturer Anita Shea received \$111,000 in 2020 towards her PhD investigating attitudes to veterinary neurology.

There is a tendency for vets to view the discipline as difficult, impacting their confidence and treatment of suspected cases in animals, Anita says.

A similar phenomenon has been observed and studied in human neurology.

“We have GP vets feeling panicked and unconfident. They might refer cases for further tests and feel stressed when people can’t afford that, when all that might be needed is a simple blood test.”

The study concluded that personality traits – including types of perfectionism and tolerance for uncertainty – likely play a role in dictating attitudes towards veterinary neurology, Anita says.

“It’s inherent in neurology that you don’t always get answers and that can be quite unfulfilling for some people. You need to do diagnostic investigations such as MRIs that are quite expensive and not available in most vet practices.”

Vets who enjoy neurology tend to be more comfortable with not having all the answers, using logic to move forward with a case. They also incline towards a type of perfectionism in which difficulty and failure are considered challenges to overcome, rather than evidence of low ability.

Anita, who is recognised as a specialist by the European College of Veterinary Neurology and also works as a Vet-CT teleconsultant, found learning methods also played a role in how neurology is perceived, with more superficial, rote-learning approaches reducing knowledge retention and confidence long-term.

She is now working with Massey’s vet school to incorporate her findings into the curriculum, by introducing more video content and case studies to help increase understanding.

Ultimately, Anita hopes the research, which could be applied to other subjects or disciplines perceived as difficult, will help students selecting their specialties, lead to greater confidence among vets in managing neurology cases and improve perceptions of the field.

“If vets can be more confident and measured in their approach, that benefits the patients, their owners, the relationship between vet and client and the vet’s own mental state and career satisfaction.”

Anita says she was lucky enough to be taught anatomy by Professor Ted Kirk at Massey and remembers his encyclopaedic knowledge on the subject.

Ted was a well-respected and loved member of Massey’s veterinary science faculty. He passed away in 2022.

“I’m so grateful to the Kirk family for the scholarship,” Anita says. “We cannot make progress without research and evaluation. I was able to research my passion and without their support I would not have done it.”

Wendi Roe, Professor of Veterinary and Marine Mammal Pathology at Massey’s School of Veterinary Science, says the fund is one of just a few that specifically supports Massey veterinary graduates through postgraduate research in a variety of disciplines.

The scholarships have funded students through specialist residency training at Massey – removing a financial hurdle for both students and the university – as well as vets returning to postgraduate study after a stint practising.

“The ability to offer veterinary postgraduate training through the fund is huge for us. The fund is substantial enough to support people right through the whole of their PhD or Masters qualification. Without it, that would be a massive undertaking.”

Right: Veterinary neurologist and Massey senior lecturer Anita Shea and her dog Ellie



\$1.5 MILLION FOOD TECH FUND SERVES UP FIRST SCHOLARSHIPS

A \$1.5 million scholarship fund is fuelling research by top graduates of a Massey University Bachelor of Food Technology degree delivered in Singapore.

The fund supports graduates of the programme to undertake postgraduate study in New Zealand. Massey has been teaching and graduating students in the Bachelor of Food Technology (Honours) in Singapore since 2016.

Inaugural recipient Felicia Peh will receive \$150,000 through the Massey University Foundation over three years to support her while she undertakes her PhD in New Zealand.

She is investigating the potential of native ferns to provide ingredients for foods, including food products for people with dysphagia – or difficulty swallowing.

The research builds on that already conducted by Associate Professor Lara Matia-Merino, Massey's Food Product Technology team leader, and Professor Kelvin Goh, Massey's Academic Director in Singapore, into mamaku fern extract, which was found to have properties suitable for dysphagia food products.

"Many of these native ferns have been traditionally consumed by Māori and used for medicinal purposes," Felicia says.

"We're looking to build up the scientific knowledge around them and identify alternative food ingredients that come from these natural sources and even potentially improve on ingredients currently in use."

Massey's strong reputation in food technology research and the fact that Felicia already had a connection with its faculty through the Bachelor of Food Technology programme were compelling reasons to pursue postgraduate study in New Zealand, she says.

Right: Felicia Peh and her great grand aunt Peggy Choo among the cherry blossoms on Massey's Manawatū campus



The scholarship made that possible. "It's very costly to be paying for fees, accommodation is very expensive and the cost of living is rising. The scholarship has made all the difference."

Felicia cites working with Ferrier Research Institute scientists, including Dr Ian Sims, to investigate the structure of the polysaccharides of native ferns as just one of many learning highlights of her first year.

"I'm really thankful for how this scholarship, my very supportive supervisors and family have made it possible for me to have this precious opportunity to develop professionally as a researcher."

Food technology research has the potential to help solve sustainability and supply challenges in food systems, Felicia says.

"I am really thankful for how this scholarship, my very supportive supervisors and family have made it possible for me to have this precious opportunity to develop professionally as a researcher."

"I was also drawn to food tech research on novel polysaccharides because it can be applied in many areas apart from food, including pharmaceuticals and cosmetics."

Lara says the scholarship will lure more of the very high-quality Singapore students to Massey and New Zealand – for the benefit of Massey's research capabilities and credentials, New Zealand's food industry and consumers.

Some graduates of Massey's Food Tech degree in Singapore who have studied in New Zealand without the scholarship have since settled here and pursued careers in the industry and research.

Food tech graduates are highly sought after, with many graduates of the Massey Honours degree in New Zealand and Singapore finding employment in the food industry before they have finished study.

"Food production is the largest industry in New Zealand. The scholarship is a great way to invest in its future by encouraging research."

Felicia says studying in New Zealand has been an eye-opening experience.

"Harvesting ferns from forests and extracting ingredients from them is something totally new to me.

"The pace of life here is slower; people take the time to say 'Good morning' and have a chat with you. I like the lifestyle – but not the cold so much."

Right: Associate Professor Lara Matia-Merino, Massey's Food Product Technology team leader, and Felicia Peh, harvesting kiokio or palm leaf fern



MACGEORGE RESEARCH FUND GRANTS APPROACH \$1 MILLION

A fund that began with a bequest of £1447 has awarded over \$920,000 to more than 140 research projects across the field of animal science since 2001. Recent research supported by the fund could assist struggling sheep farmers in making the leap to self-shedding flocks, improve the success rates of wildcat captive breeding programmes in zoos and spur the development of a more effective vaccine for mastitis in dairy cows.

Managed by the Massey University Foundation, the MacGeorge Research Fund originated as a bequest from the late Miss F.E. MacGeorge in 1961. The endowment – which has grown substantially through investment returns and contributions from a variety of sources - was established as the MacGeorge Research Fund in 1999.

Massey Professor in Animal Science Patrick Morel says the fund is invaluable to the university – as research funding is elusive and projects involving experiments can become expensive.

The fund's impact is far-reaching; grants through it have helped secure co-funding for projects – extending the depth, breadth and ultimately, the quality of the research.

Findings from research financed through the fund may also lead on to more significant studies, attracting larger grants, he says.

For example, a research project by Professor Stephen Morris, from Massey's School of Agriculture and Environment, into breeding self-shedding sheep received \$9000 in MacGeorge funding in 2020.

It has since evolved into a five-year research project, financed with more than \$130,000 from the L. A. Alexander Trust Board, and is investigating many aspects of sheep production through comparison of the (self-shedding) Wiltshire and (non-shedding) Romney breeds.

Building on that research, Associate Professor Nicola Schreurs received \$11,430 in MacGeorge funding in 2022 to investigate the carcass and meat quality of Wiltshire-cross lambs in comparison to Romney lambs.

While the self-shedding trait of Wiltshire sheep significantly reduces costs for farmers, there is reluctance among farmers to incorporate the breed into their flocks, Nicola says, as Wiltshire-cross lambs are

The MacGeorge funding enabled us to research in much greater depth and compare over a couple of years. We were able to gather a much larger number of samples and so our research provides much more compelling information."

anecdotally perceived to produce smaller carcasses than Romney lambs, and so earn lower returns.

"We found that the Wiltshire-cross lamb has equal carcass characteristics to the Romney breed. There is just as much meat on a Wiltshire carcass as a Romney carcass from lambs of the same age and managed under the same conditions. Wiltshire-cross lambs tend to look taller, which may account for the perception of them being leaner or lighter."

The meat schedule (price paid per carcass) is down this year, and farmers may be looking to trim their overall operation costs, Nicola says.

"Currently, the shearing cost is just that, a pure cost now, because wool returns do not come close to covering the fee for harvesting the wool.

"The MacGeorge funding enabled us to research in much greater depth and compare over a couple of

years. We were able to gather a much-larger number of samples, and so our research provides much more compelling information."

Massey senior lecturers Rao Dukkipati and Alex Grinberg secured \$12,000 in MacGeorge funding in 2023 for their PhD student, Matthew Duah Osei, to examine the ability of selected proteins in a vaccine to stimulate an immune response in calves.

If the proteins perform as hoped, that could lead to a large-scale study to test the efficacy of the vaccine in reducing the incidence of mastitis caused by *Staphylococcus aureus*.

Mastitis can reduce milk yield and quality, lower fertility, increase veterinary and medicine costs for farmers and increase the risk the affected cow is culled.

Massey Senior Lecturer in Livestock Production Systems Lydia Cranston says the fund has enabled two of her PhD students to extend their respective research projects into the use of perennial ryegrass and the more drought-tolerant pasture brome as a pasture mix for sheep and dairy cattle.

Initial funding for both projects covered the cost of measuring pasture growth, but the MacGeorge funding enabled the students to study the performance and behaviour of the livestock grazing on it.

"We were able to give the whole picture of how this [pasture mix] would work on a farm. Results were pretty positive in that the animals' grazing behaviour was not negatively affected by the different pasture mix."

Lydia and lead researcher Associate Professor Ignacio Lopez have now applied for a significant grant from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to run a large-scale version of the

research, so they can present more authoritative results to commercial farmers.

"The MacGeorge fund allows us to answer some initial research questions. Once we know we're on to something interesting, we can go big on it."

MacGeorge-funded research goes well beyond the farmgate, also supporting studies to improve knowledge and welfare of dogs, cats, little penguins, deer, kiwi, horses and sea lions.

Research to identify effective, non-invasive methods to detect when a cat goes into heat won \$11,500 from the MacGeorge fund in 2022.

Masters student Sian Elliot used domestic cats to test accelerometry (activity measurement) and infrared thermography methods, but the findings are intended to be applied to wildcats in captive breeding programmes, such as in zoos – which typically have a relatively low success rate.

While further research is needed, the methods could replace current approaches to detecting oestrous in wildcats, including using anaesthesia to take blood and cell samples, which tend to induce stress, Sian says. "Reproduction does not go well with stress."

Professor Morel says the MacGeorge fund is "a very important cog in the wheel of animal science research through Massey.

"The fund supports students to complete their PhDs, which not only contributes to the field of knowledge in their chosen topics, but also enhances Massey's status as a leading research institute."

Right: A MacGeorge-funded research project led by Professor Stephen Morris has evolved into a major, five-year investigation with more than \$130,000 in funding



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