



Office Bearer reports Annual General Meeting Tuesday 30 May 2017

Contents

Vice President – Natasha Abrahams	2
Education Officer (coursework) – Oluwadamilola Ayeni (Lola)	3
Women’s Officer – M Parmeswari (Parmes).....	4
Queer Officer – Lefteris Patlamazoglou	5
International Students’ Officer –Jiayao Lin (Iris).....	6
Access and Equity Officer – Ngoc Anh Dang	6
General Representative – Zhengyuan Yao (Alex)	7
Caulfield Campus Representative – Poornima Wickramanayake	7
Clayton Campus Representative – Eniola Ibraheem (David)	8
Parkville Campus Representative – Given Lee	9
Peninsula Campus Representative – Jeane Freer	10
Berwick Campus Representative – Roy Rozario.....	11

Vice President – Natasha Abrahams

Concluding my second year on the MPA Executive Committee, I have had a productive year in which I have been involved with a variety of student issues. I have had the opportunity to represent the MPA within the university as well as on a national and international level.

I look forward to a third and final term on the committee. The following is a summary of my main activities over the past year:

HDR issues

Through my role on the MPAEC as well as through other HDR representative roles, I have provided feedback on the newly implemented PhD training requirements. In order to strategise on issues affecting the research student population, I have facilitated some subcommittee meetings with HDR students of the MPAEC. Additionally, I attend regular meetings with postgraduate student representatives from the Faculty of Arts, to ensure that student issues are discussed at the appropriate university committees.

Fares Fair Campaign

I have organised the MPA's involvement in the Fares Fair campaign. The Fares Fair campaign was started by the University of Melbourne's Graduate Student Association to achieve public transport concessions for postgraduate students. I attended the launch rally and a meeting with David Hodgett MP in March, and have coordinated MPA's participation in a postcard campaign.

Subcommittees and panels

- Facilitated the Excellence Seminar Series subcommittee. Together with Roy Rozario, I have planned for Chancellor Simon McKeon to speak at an Excellence Seminar later this year. I was also involved in organising the Excellence Seminar with Yassmin Abdel-Magied in October 2016.
- Convened HDR subcommittee meetings
- Participated in the 2016 Diversity and Inclusion Week event organising subcommittee
- Sat on the interview panel for hiring the MPA's Communications and Marketing Officer
- Part of the 2016 Supervisor of the Year selection panel

Conference Attendance

- I attended the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA) Annual Council Meeting in November 2016, at which I cast votes on behalf of the MPA and discussed issues faced by postgraduates across Australia. I was also elected to the position of CAPA's General Secretary, a role which complements my position on the MPA as it requires to me have a broad overview of new and ongoing postgraduate issues.
- Along with Peter Hurley and Feifei Liao, I visited the Monash University (Malaysia) Postgraduate Association (MUPA) of the Monash Sunway campus in November, at which we met with the MUPA committee, postgraduate students, and senior

management. This trip was part of the MPA's ongoing commitment to support MUPA towards becoming more independent from the university.

- In February this year, I was part of the MPAEC's delegation to the University of Warwick. The objective of this trip was to compare the student experience at both universities and generate a best practice document which can be used by the MPA as part of lobbying efforts. I coordinated the committee's contributions to the best practice document.
- I attended the Universities Australia Higher Education Conference in March this year. The handful of student representatives in attendance coordinated to ensure students' voices were at least heard during question time of each panel. Along with Lola Ayeni, I prepared a report on the conference to inform the MPA of this year's trends and discussions in the tertiary sector.

Education Officer (coursework) – Oluwadamilola Ayeni (Lola)

I was elected as a General representative in the 2016 general elections, thereafter, I was also elected by the committee into the role of Education Officer (Coursework). It has been a year of efforts, actions towards addressing and improving the overall quality and experience of postgraduates in Monash. The journey started off with a committee retreat in August 2016 where we discussed a lot of issues postgrads experience and how we can tackle them. From these discussions at retreat, several propositions emerged, one of which is the production of a Best practice document for postgrads. As I list a summary of my activities, I will mention that it has been a journey filled with great learning experiences working with a wonderful and supportive team.

Events

- Caulfield Semester 2 2016 and Caulfield/Clayton Semester 1 2017 Postgraduate Orientation events- This included assisting with tours, and being part of the student panel which answered questions from orientation attendees.
- Successfully organised the Postgraduate Careers Forum: 'Set yourself up for career success' with the help of some staff members as well as Monash Careers unit. The event had an average student turn out. Myself and Lynda from careers sent a thank you email to all the speakers for their time and support at the event. Updates from students: I spoke to several students after the event was organised, and they found the session very useful especially in areas where speakers relayed their experiences and the benefits of establishing a networking niche as students.

Conferences/Meeting attendance

- Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations AGM - I attended the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA) conference in Sydney from the 23rd-25th of November 2016. This a student body that represents post graduate students across Australia. Issues pertaining to postgraduates' welfare, travel concessions, student-supervisor relationships amongst others were raised. I consider this

conference a very good platform as I met with other student representatives from other universities. I could draw from their wealth of knowledge and experiences on how they handle issues in their universities

- Universities Australia Higher Education conference- Myself and Natasha attended the Conference on the 1st and 2nd of March. It was a very insightful conference, and report was sent for the committee to view. It included salient topics relating to the future of higher education in Australia as well as recommendations for future MPA delegates.
- Student Forum held by Monash University Library- I represented the MPAEC at the student forum led by Library on Wednesday 10 May 2017. This was a great opportunity to discuss Library programs, resources and activities impacting students, as well as any tabling specific concerns with Library managers and key eSolutions staff. I got a lot of questions from MPAEC member about library use, feedback and other matters arising was relayed back via email to the committee members.

The Monash- Warwick Alliance Trip

This I would consider is the highlight of the term of office. It was a great opportunity for MPAEC members to learn how other universities especially post graduate community (Wawrick, Cambridge and London School of Business and Economics) work. Myself and other MPAEC members on the trip with the help of Monash Warwick Alliance team have collaborated in the production of a Best practices documents. With the hope that this document would be helpful in pursuing several recommended options in the University.

Subcommittees

- Student Advisory Group – Learning and Teaching
- Coursework Admissions and Programs Committee

Other Areas of Interest to pursue:

The Late Submission Assessment Penalty and the Blind Marking Assessment survey- To be table at the Student Learning and Advisory Committee.

Women's Officer – M Parmeswari (Parmes)

Key Activities:

- Attended Women in Health Research Leadership Conference on 14/11/2016
- Attended Student Advisory Committee Meeting
 - Discussed issue of Queer student's representation in the Malaysia campus with the hiring of new advocate.
- Contributed to Warwick-Monash Alliance report
- Worked with Safer Communities regarding Monash University and sexual assault investigation.
 - Ensuring better reporting mechanisms and access to mental health support.
- Represented MPA in the Learning Teaching Committee meeting

- Presented on Amendment to Student Academic Integrity policy pertaining to collusion and plagiarism in group work
- Presented on review of exams leaving student early.
- Worked with Safer communities on content and/or trigger warnings on course introduction in units
- Childcare
 - Spearheaded student group to form playgroup to provide for postgraduate students
 - Feedback session organised
- Working on scholarships for 2 postgraduate women students to attend NOWSA conference
- Organised compulsory grievance officer training for the MPAEC
- Worked closely with Safer Communities to create a training program for the MPAEC

Key trips:

- Attended Monash-Warwick Alliance trip
- Attended Network of Women's Students of Australia
- Luncheon for Women's Officers with Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins
 - This provided us (the women's officers, the MPA Women's Officer and a residential hall women's representative) to talk to other women's representatives about the issues that we face as women and in particular as women students
 - It enabled us to speak to the Commissioner about what we can do to support her work and what she can do to support ours in particular regarding sexual assault in student communities
 - We were also spoken to about the incoming nationwide survey that will look into this issue as well as what we can do to support it and make it as effective as possible

Future:

- More support for mothers (timetabling issues, more flexible meetings with supervisors)
- Gap in terms of addressing mental health (for Carers, grievance counselling, sexual assault support, trauma, disabilities (both visible and invisible))

Queer Officer – Lefteris Patlamazoglou

The MPAEC Queer Office supported LGBTQIA+ postgraduate students to attend the Queer Collaborations conference, hosted at Curtin University (WA) in July 2016.

On the 6th of October the MPA and CCD hosted a Queer Networking Night for Diversity and Inclusion Week. It was a successful night with 40-45 people attending. A panel was organised for the night where a variety of different Monash staff and students talked about what is like being queer at Monash. There was an agreed consensus there needs more work to help transgender and gender non-conforming students and staff.

On the 7th of December, the Queer Office organised Christmas afternoon tea for LGBTQIA+ postgraduate students at the Clayton Campus. The event had a social character and was a great opportunity for exchange of ideas regarding the experiences of the LGBTQIA+ student community.

Furthermore, the Queer Office bearer, with the support of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Major Campuses and Student Engagement), Careers, Leadership and Volunteering, and the MSA

Queer Department, has scheduled a queer industry event for Tue 16 May, as part of the university's IDAHOBIT celebrations. This panel session featuring leading industry experts will cover challenges and opportunities faced by the LGBTQIA+ workforce and will be followed by social and professional networking. The event is free and all of the 100 tickets have been reserved.

International Students' Officer –Jiayao Lin (Iris)

I represented the MPAEC as the International Students' Officer and through my role I have been responsible for all issues pertaining to international postgraduate students. The highlight of our committee this year was visiting Warwick University for an alliance. The aim of the alliance is to complete a best practice guide for postgraduate. We definitely have found out lots of student service Monash can learn from or improve. The following are summary of activities of the year:

Conference attendance

- Attended CAPA AGM in Sydney in December, the meeting was mainly focus on postgraduates' welfare and equity issues
- Attended 2017 Melbourne International Student Conference, to explore and address gap between the practical realities and desire of international students.

Events

- Organized Let's Talk Australia Event with English Connect to help new international postgraduates with culture transition in March
- Corporate with Monash Career Connect to hold the International students' career session, focus on factors to be succeed in career in March

Activities involved

- Attended regular MIISON(Monash Intercampus International Student Organization network) meetings and Vitoria International Student Advisory Network meetings
- Attended International Student Organizations' Training Session for student delegates in December held by International Student Engagement Campus Community
- Attended to the International Student Summit held by University of Melbourne Student Union as panelists in April

Access and Equity Officer – Ngoc Anh Dang

- For the past year, I have promoted many initiatives to improve the wellbeing of postgraduates in Monash including Language Exchange twice, Amazing Game for RUOK day, Yoga Session and Mediation for Mental Health Day.
- I also attended and supported other wellbeing activities such as the Mental Health Champion, Social Hour in Caulfield.
- After 2 semesters, Language Exchange event is considered the most successful event for me because it does meet the need of postgrads in meeting new friends in different countries. I do suggest that MPA will continue to promote the Multicultural activities for postgrads later.

General Representative – Zhengyuan Yao (Alex)

- **CISA conference** – Attended the conference as one of the delegates from MPA, CISA as the peak body representing Australian international students, it's focusing on improving the
- **R u ok?** – raising the awareness amongst students to care for those few in needs.
- **International student conference** - Attended Melbourne international student conference in Victoria University. The conference is focusing on international students' career self-development, as well as networking events for future entrepreneurs.
- **Strategy for intercultural competence** - focusing on national cultural ethics under research context, as well as developing the necessary intercultural skills and knowledge for student leaders and university staff members. Some face to face training workshop and online learning program such as Lilo has been implanted to serve the purpose of creating a culturally safe environment for the university community.
- **Fares Fair PTV in VIC** – the campaign is fighting against Victoria as the only state does not provide travel concession to postgraduate students.
- **#valuepostgraduate** campaign- gather postgraduate students to share their voices of their degree and what's their future expectations. Campaign raises public awareness of postgraduate population
- **Mental health seminar – Knowing the unknown** - raising the awareness of common stigma against people with mental illness
- **CAPA ACM** – Council of Australian Postgraduate Association
- **Warwick Trip and report** – based on Monash & Warwick alliance, the objective is to complete the best practice documents for Monash University.

Caulfield Campus Representative – Poornima Wickramanayake

During the first semester, I:

- Attended the Campus activation workshop at Clayton campus and made suggestions for a sensory garden, leaders in sustainability workshops, including improvement of the unused space outside the MPA lounge in Caulfield which was duly noted.
- Hosted weekly Social hours in an engaging atmosphere and gathered comments and concerns from postgraduates to improve their student experience.
- Organized a badminton club and free weekly badminton sessions after a group of postgraduates expressed their interest in playing badminton at Caulfield.
- Attended the CSEN for this semester
- Provided feedback received from postgraduates to Melany Blackwell for a Mamadukes cafe replacement in the basement of Building H, Caulfield.
- Contributed \$1000 from my office bearer budget in support of the Fares Fair campaign.

Clayton Campus Representative – Eniola Ibraheem (David)

- I began my tenure on the MPA Executive committee in May 2016.
- Attended the Monthly Clayton Student Experience Network (CSEN) meetings as the Clayton Campus Representative.
- The CSEN's were organised and facilitated by Helen Dunne and attended by Helen Dunne, David Copolov, student leaders (MSA), all heads of the campus community networks and other stakeholders. The CSEN's were held to discuss campus issues, projects and other relevant Clayton campus issues. A major discussion all year long was the constructions and renovations of buildings on the clayton campus, campus retailers and upcoming projects.
- I also attended the Council of International Student of Australia (CISA) yearly conference for the year 2016 held in the Northern territory, Darwin, Charles Darwin University precisely.
- In attendance at the conference were various student body organisations representatives from different universities all round Australia.
- The Conference served and is still serving as an avenue for various student body representatives to meet with important government bodies and other educational stakeholders in Australia.
- The CISA 2016 conference was themed 'breaking down barriers, facing the future together as one'. The major issues discussed centred around soaring university fees for international students, the Permanent resident (PR) issues, post study work visa(s), the lack of public transport concession for postgraduates almost round Australia, various issues international students face from housing to employment and racism.
- The conference tackled many of this issues and students present were able to air out grievances and complains to relevant bodies with hopes that they were taken into consideration.
- The conference was an interesting experience with various activities and a grand scale dinner party on the last day to end the conference.
- I also organised an MPA open mic night talent show for postgraduate students which had a good turnout and was fun. Rhian Williams helped put it all together and it was marvellous. I employed various strategies to market this to get postgraduates involved and it seemed like many enjoyed it and would be a good trend to carry on.
- To mark the end of my tenure, I consulted with Caroline Barrows who helped plan a volunteering day with the Salvation army for all executives that were interested and it holds on the 31st May.
- I also helped and worked with other executives on various MPA events to which I attended as well. I planned and organised the amazing race for the clayton campus during the 2016 RUOK week, this event was run on both the Clayton and Caulfield campus in conjunction with other executive members (Ngoc & Feifei).
- I usually as part of my portfolio visit and take records of lounge usage to which I reported once about the poor use of the study spaces by postgraduate students and the damage of the equipment's in there.
- I actively communicated with postgraduates and promoted MPA relevant material via the MPA Facebook page and mine. I also helped various postgraduates who contacted me in their research and in whatever means I could serve.
- I also Initiated the clayton book exchange program as copied from the Caulfield campus.

- I attended the Warwick trip as part of the alliance between Monash University and Warwick university alongside other MPA executive committee members to put together a best practice strategy based on the alliance.
- I regularly attended the MPA general meetings as part of my requirement being on the MPA executive team. During the meetings, the committee discussed best strategies, budget allocations, duties and reviewed various matters concerning the MPA and we usually strategized on how to improve the MPA activities or programs.
- Also, I attended an MPA executive retreat in conjunction with the executive members. The retreat was organised for the current MPA team to meet, interact and perform team building exercises with each other and the previous committee. Also, it helped the team work better together and learn from the previous team.
- Helped out with various MPA campaigns e.g CAPA. I also used part of my office bearer budget to support and fund the postgraduate movement to grant transport concession to postgraduate students.
- Actively volunteered with various campus community divisions on behalf of the MPA as these departments requested for MPA executive members.
- I also was actively involved during my tenure in the MPA Orientation planning team and helped out in my capacity on orientation day giving speeches or answering questions that people might have and also granted tours to new postgraduates present on orientation day.
- I also helped with the international student department on their orientation plan, I helped out by serving on their discussion panel to answer questions that new students might have especially the new postgraduates.
- I also help discuss strategies and student opinions on the very recently opened retail outlets on campus and also discussed strategies with Monash Marketing on retail outlets scheduled to open in the new buildings on campus.

Parkville Campus Representative – Given Lee

This year I have had the pleasure of being the MPA representative for the Parkville Postgraduate Association (PPA) and a general representative for the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS) – Monash University Student Chapter. Serving both roles at Parkville I have attended and helped to organise events for both groups. In summary, I see that both groups are having great progress in improving the postgraduate student life.

For the PPA, they have provided continued support for postgraduate students via organising various social and career events (please refer to list below). In addition, they have successfully completed the first round of their mentoring program and is set to continue for another year.

For the AAPS, with their main role being to increase awareness of career and educational opportunities in pharmaceutical sciences the group has done a successful job this year in providing events to postgraduates in relation to networking (via social media and in person) and academic/industry career pathways in pharmaceuticals (via lunch with guest speakers and co-organising the career expo at Parkville).

Events organised by the PPA:

- Free lunches
- RU OK? Day
- HDR symposium
- Comedy Festival
- Welcome Party
- Sporting events (ice skating, mini Olympics, Zumba for summerfest)
- Holiday related parties (Halloween night, Christmas party)
- Career events (Science, Innovation and the Future lecture Series, Employability Week, Career Expo)
- Charity events (Biggest Morning Tea, Spring Cleaning Clothes donation, World's Greatest Shave)

Peninsula Campus Representative – Jeane Freer

I was co-opted onto the MPAEC in February of 2017. I attended the February meeting as an observer, before my confirmation, and the March meeting as the campus representative. As the April meeting was during semester break, I was out of the country and unable to participate. I found the March meeting concerned with substantive issues, well run and collegial. I look forward to continuing to work with this group, and with the Monash post-grads, especially those based at the Peninsula campus, in the year ahead.

There are a number of issues of concern for the (re)vitalisation of campus life at Peninsula. The first, as mentioned before, is the provision of food that meets the needs of both the local domestic students and the international students. This matter is also mentioned in the Capital Plan, so will be receiving attention at all levels of infrastructure management. As I will also be attending CSEN meetings, I will do my best to include the food issue on the agenda there as well. I continue to be open to input on preferred food provisions for the campus. It may take many months to actually effect a change, but as food is so fundamental, I am optimistic that our concerns will ultimately be heard.

There is plenty of opportunity to organise events on campus and I am invite post-grads with ideas for events will come forward to work with me on getting them going. The use of Straun House is also part of the Capital Plan and it is in the interest of MPA post-grads to make use of this lovely space whenever possible.

Retail options for Monash and MPA- badged goods is extremely limited on the Peninsula campus at the moment, due to the contractual arrangements with the on-campus bookstore. Therefore I am hoping to explore the possibility of a 'pop up shop' on a monthly basis, perhaps in the foyer of the library. I am sure there are many many legal (financial, risk management, etc etc etc) issues involved with this idea, but I am hoping that initiative and enthusiasm will find a place in the 'new' Peninsula. It has been my experience that campus life is supported by the availability of badged goods seen around the place, as can be evidenced by the Clayton campus and its very well-stocked shop.

The question of transport for Peninsula-based students to post-grad events organised on other campuses continues to be of concern. The provision of a mini-bus, perhaps with a properly insured student driver, as well as a volunteer greeting squad (2 or three post-grads) at the destination campus still needs to be discussed to see what the possibilities are. Roy Rozario

kicked this off by bringing a group from Berwick to the event he organised at the Peninsula campus, and I hope this is a harbinger of good things to come.

As the energy gathers to make changes to the post-grad life at the Peninsula campus, I invite you to become involved.

Berwick Campus Representative – Roy Rozario

I am a mature age learner, currently doing my PhD (Education), who has been a Monash student for almost 10 years. My involvement as the MPAEC member came with an email from the MPA bringing attention to the vacancy of the Berwick and Peninsula Campus Representative. Having always been more involved with my own business of studies, family, work and music, I decided to become an Executive Member of MPA and contribute to the student community. Hence, my involvement began with my co-option as the Berwick Campus Representative.

As the Berwick Campus Representative I represented most MPAEC monthly meetings and organised two activities, a Christmas end of the year party and a talk on “unwritten rules of PhD” tailored for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students. I additionally represented the MPA at the annual *Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA)* meeting at Sydney. I also participated in other activities conducted by MPA such as the “Lecturer of the Year” (LOTY), HDR social get together and others. I was also involved in the MPA sub-committees activities, such as, MPAEC-HDR committee and the Excellence Seminar Series Committee.

My greatest contribution as a team came in the form of a comprehensive report prepared by 9 MPAEC members who visited Warwick and London to prepare the “Best Practice Document” for postgraduate students. We had several meetings with senior and middle management and also student bodies and representatives to understand how Warwick University functions. This provided us an insight to compare some of their best practices as against Monash and develop a comprehensive report to be presented to Monash senior management. I believe that this document is invaluable and provides serious gaps in students’ needs that Monash could improve upon in order to become an international leader in learning, teaching and innovation. This document also provides a guideline for future MPAEC members and MPA management staff on the potential future of MPA as a leader of Australia and other postgraduate associations.

Besides these activities, I have in a minor way, also contributed by being present in other meetings relevant to my role as a MPAEC member, especially in the area of HDR contributions.

I am grateful to all postgraduate students at Monash, the MPA, my fellow MPAEC members and Monash management for the invaluable and irreplaceable experience I have gained as the MPAEC member and am grateful for the opportunity to represent you all at Monash, nationally and internationally.