Review of operations
Regional engagement

Goal: to engage in productive partnerships to further the region's interests and the University's strategic priorities

Inform decision-making about sustainable futures for the region

USC hosted the inaugural public meeting of Sunshine Coast Regional Council on 3 April 2008, and the Mayor and Councillors (including two USC graduates) acknowledged the value of existing University-Council relationships and the common goal of a sustainable future. The newly-amalgamated Sunshine Coast region represents the previous local authorities of Noosa, Maroochy and Caloundra. It is now the fourth-largest regional local government in Queensland and one of the largest in Australia.

Conferences

More than 200 business, government and community representatives gathered on campus for the fourth annual State of the Region Summit, where discussions centred on three new strategies for implementation by 2011 to maintain sustainable regional growth. The conference was sponsored by St George Bank, Investa, Parsons Brinkerhoff, Munro Thompson Lawyers and USC.

Other on-campus events addressing regional interests included:

*   the ninth Australasian Urban History/ Planning History Conference, where town planners and academics from Australia and New Zealand discussed the national effects of "sea change" on town planning;
*   a national Public Policy Network Conference exploring federal-state relations, Indigenous issues, rural policy, minerals policy and globalisation, environmental and oceans policy (co-hosted by USC and University of Southern Queensland);

*   public forums at the World Environment Day festival;
*   a series of public seminars on urban planning;
*   a sustainability forum on climate change, led by the Sunshine Coast Mayor and featuring an international panel of specialists (one of three by-invitation events sponsored by USC, Council and Parsons Brinkerhoff); and
*   the fifth National Conference of the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance. This attracted public and private sector community engagement practitioners plus people from 35 Australian universities to discuss ideas such as ways to develop universities as "eco-versities".

Promote and support research effort, teaching programs, scholarly activities, strategic partnerships, consultancies, educational initiatives and productive relationships with governments and their agencies that contribute to advancing regional sustainability

Teaching tomorrow's teachers

Two academics (one each from USC and Queensland University of Technology) are leading a joint research project aimed at merging sustainability with teacher education curricula at five partner universities: USC, QUT, James Cook University, University of Southern Queensland and Australian Catholic University. Outcomes so far include a pre-service charter for sustainability, presented to the Queensland Education Minister and awaiting publication.

Links with schools

Voices on the Coast, an annual week-long literature festival including a two-day on-campus program co-hosted by Immanuel Lutheran College and USC, won the 2008 Maroochy Council Australia Day Award for the Community Event of the Year. About 5,000 school children attended—up from 4000 the previous year.

School-related research outcomes included publication of *It's a Girl Thing*, a book including practical advice for parents and teachers on combating cyber-bullying among girls. Authored by a behaviour management specialist, it follows *Boys Stir Us*, outlining strategies for engaging positively with boys.

CareerConnection staff reached out to local schools with Exploring Career Pathways seminars for students in Years 10 and 12. They also contributed to the Sunshine Coast Schools Industry Links Scheme via practice interview sessions for students at Sunshine Beach State High School, Mountain Creek State High School, Kawana Waters State College and other high schools.

Other school-linked initiatives included:

- 105 school visits conducted in Queensland, to areas including Sunshine Coast, Caboolture, Brisbane, Darling Downs, Bundaberg and Maryborough.
- USC coordinated the Sunshine Coast University Showcase incorporating all Queensland universities participating in a roadshow to 14 Sunshine Coast high schools.
- The inaugural Sunshine Coast Science, Engineering and Technology Expo for Years 5 and 9, was organised by USC, Education Queensland, the Queensland Government Office for Women, Engineers Australia and Girls in ICT.
- A dozen high school visits discussed study and employment opportunities with 350 Indigenous students.
- Indigenous workshops were held on campus for 122 school students—part of the second Indigenous Education Symposium.
- The annual Business Enterprise Day was organised by USC's Faculty of Business and the Business Educators Association of Queensland for 200 students from Years 9 and 10.
- Sponsorship of the Maths Tournament involved approximately 300 secondary school top maths students from Sunshine Coast schools.
- Development and delivery of a complete term of study in molecular biology, biotechnology, and molecular forensics at a Sunshine Coast school.
- The Food for Thought program involved gifted high school students from around 10 schools in science activities relating to primary industries and food.
- Development of a biotechnology kit for high schools, which is now being used in schools across the region (co-developed in conjunction with the Queensland Museum and Education Queensland).
- Two language immersion days brought together native speaking international students and school students to do vocabulary exercises, activities, games and general interaction.
- Guidance Officer Day, an informative event for more than 80 guidance officers and careers advisers about USC's study options was held in May.

Enterprise Tuesdays

Seven Enterprise Tuesday events drew large crowds again this year. Each free public event featured a presentation by a successful entrepreneur and networking opportunities for local business owners, young entrepreneurs and start-up company directors. The program, based on one of the same name at the University of Cambridge, is part of a wider USC initiative inspiring entrepreneurship.

Topics and speakers this year included:

- staff motivation (Dr Angela Huntsman, UCLA);
- avoiding big mistakes (Sunshine Coast entrepreneur Steve Huff, founder of Typéfi, Praxis Systems, Sixty Second Parent and other companies); and
- lifestyle and global business (Karen Woolley, CEO of ProScribe).

Workplace partnerships

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences contributed to re-establishment of a regional branch of the Australian Association of Social Workers, and ran several successful forums involving USC students and practising social workers.

CareerConnection staff ran career planning and job-search workshops as two-hour sessions over four weeks. Topics included career planning, writing resumes, exploring hidden job markets, and interview skills. They also organised employer-led seminars on topics such as specific industries, job-search and employment opportunities, with presenters drawn from:

- ANZUK Teachers,
- Education Queensland,
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade,
- Brisbane Catholic Education,
- Defence Force Recruiting,
- PriceWaterhouseCoopers,
- Ernst and Young,
- Commonwealth Bank, and
- Walt Disney World Florida.

Community support for USC teaching included significant input to scholarships and bursaries.

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More than 40 local, national and government employers talked with students at the annual Careers Fair; and an alumni Skills Workshop helped completing students refine job search techniques such as writing job applications and performing well at interviews.

Students and graduates: advancing community interests

- Jonty Bush (business graduate, 2002: named Queensland Young Australian of the Year in 2008 (and national Young Australian of the Year in 2009) for her work as CEO of the Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group, which she joined in 2003 as a volunteer.
- Jarryd Townson (business marketing and business design): marketing coordinator at the Toyota National Country Music Muster, a six-day event near Gympie.
- Sharna Taylor (public health): organiser of the Fusion Festival, a free public event for Mental Health week.

Making the most of an Olympic year ...

- Graduate Marayke Jonkers (social science and arts communication): Silver Medal for swimming at the Paralympic Games in Beijing.
- Associate Professor Brendan Burkett: Sports Science Coordinator for the Australian swimming team at the Paralympics.
- Lecturer Gayle Mayes, former Olympic kayaker* and 2008 Olympics visitor: using video links to deliver university lectures and school talks from Beijing.
- USC's nomination as a Talent Assessment Centre for the Australian Sports Commission's National Talent Identification and Development Program: finding and preparing new athletes with Olympic potential.

*Ms Mayes donated her 1992 Barcelona Olympics tracksuit and 2000 Sydney Olympic Relay torch to USC this year (see page 24).

Work-integrated learning

The Work Integrated Learning initiative represents one of the University's most critical partnerships with the business community. It facilitates work placements for students within regional professions, businesses and industries. This year, 119 regional professions, businesses and industries provided WIL placements. In 2009, a new Career Placement Database will boost capacity to track placement data and histories across all operational areas.

Prepare graduates capable of contributing to the achievement of regional economic, social and cultural environmental priorities

A current review of graduate attributes, aimed at maintaining currency in the workplace, takes account of graduate contributions to the region.

A Graduate Certificate in Sustainability was accredited and minors in both sustainability and entrepreneurship were approved. All are available from 2009.

SIFE: enhancing communities

The University continued its involvement in Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) as an initiative whereby students learn to create economic opportunities for others while developing their own leadership, communication and teamwork skills.

The University's SIFE team won $1,500 as a semi-finalist at this year's SIFE Australia National Conference and Championships, with an entry based on projects begun or continued in 2008. These included the following:

- The Rai Rai Vinaka project helped Fijian people gain entrepreneurial skills, financial literacy and an understanding of business enterprise while developing a sustainable eco-tourism operation. The collaboration involves USC, a remote highland community in Fiji, and Sunshine Coast-based adventure tourism company Fiji Dreaming. Work to date has included analysis, market research for a resort, and planning for a permanent natural water purification system.

- The Eumundi Markets Sustainability Initiative aims to help 600 stallholders (whose income from a million visitors totals $2 million each year) achieve Australia's lowest ecological footprint market.
- In 2008, SIFE students led classes in fundamental marketing theories and concepts at three local schools as an adjunct to students' business enterprise studies, with plans to continue the initiative in 2009.

Play a leading role in initiatives and planning designed to foster economic and social development, and shared infrastructure, within the region

Clever Networks

The University, Maroochy Shire Council and Allegro Networks won a $2.9 million Federal Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) grant to develop regional high-speed broadband network capability. The grant, from the Federal Government's Connect Australia Clever Networks Innovative Service Delivery program, matched funding from project partners, including $600,000 from USC. Infrastructure will be available in mid-2009, enabling leverage for future needs.

University Hospital

USC, the University of Queensland and Sunshine Coast TAFE continued working with Queensland Health to plan for and provide teaching, skills training and research facilities at the new Sunshine Coast University Hospital, due to open in 2014.

Innovation Centre

The Innovation Centre's Business Incubator and new Business Accelerator represent significant investment by USC and the local State and Commonwealth Governments in advancing the knowledge economy on the Sunshine Coast. The Accelerator complements the Business Incubator, which has assisted around 50 start-up businesses during the past six years. More than 25 companies make up the Innovation Centre, which employs more than 70 full-time and 30 part-time staff.

Sharing infrastructure

USC partners with government and non-government bodies to develop shared, jointly-funded infrastructure at Sippy Downs as a value-adding strategy to benefit the whole region. At year's end, 11 shared infrastructure partnerships were in place and total investment by USC's partners was about $11.36 million. Project outcomes include:

- occupancy licences (eg with the University of the Third Age, Sunshine Coast);
- in-kind developments such as the Compensatory Habitat;
- major projects such as the Sports Stadium; and
- smaller initiatives like Alumni Way.

Sharing resources

USC's short history includes an enduring community focus visible in public events, educational initiatives and access to resources such as sport and Library facilities.

This year a free Psychology Clinic in the new Health and Sport Centre added a new element to the mix—much-needed psychology services for the region alongside work-integrated learning opportunities for advanced students. Clinic activities include assessment of and treatment for (with or without referrals) for wide-ranging mental health conditions experienced by adults, adolescents and children.

All-in celebrations

University and outside communities joined forces on campus for numerous celebratory and/or awareness-raising events such as:

- World Environment Day;
- International Nurses Day, featuring tours of the nursing teaching precinct, study and careers advice and displays of nursing memorabilia;
- a half-day forum co-hosted by Queensland Health and USC on National Social Work Day; and
- a National Sorry Day event including a forum and production of a mural—a foot- and hand-print painting on calico.

The Art Gallery received 14,644 visitors in 2008, which was a new record.

(From left) Australian String Quartet members Sophie Rowell, Rachel Johnston, Sally Boud and Anne Horton tune up for their seventh annual concert at USC—part of their 2008 Australian Concert Series. Proceeds benefited the new Health and Sport Centre.

Community-access classes included ...

- A two-day professional development course for property developers.
- An evening career planning workshop for adults and high school students.
- 10-week language courses in French, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, German, Mandarin and Spanish.
- A one-day course about online marketing.
- A free professional development conference for Sunshine Coast child protection workers (co-hosted by USC and Queensland Department of Child Safety).

Free exhibitions at USC Art Gallery* included ...

- Grassland: paintings by Yvonne Mills-Stanley.
- Dryland: multi -layered and textured collages by Pamela Kouwenhoven.
- Thread: portfolios of 38 advanced computer-based art and design students.
- Western Desert art by Indigenous artists such as Naata Nungurrayi, Ronnie Tjampitjinpa and George Tjungurrayi.
- Memento: souvenirs finalling in the Memento Australia Awards.
- Place = Space + Meaning: tourism-related postgraduate projects by business students.
- Come this way: photographs of ephemeral art by Burnside State School students.
- inSIGHT: digital illustrations by advanced design students.
- Tattoos and Piercings: a Human Canvas, a photographic exhibition touring from the Port Macquarie Hastings Regional Gallery, NSW.
- Artworks by senior students from more than 20 local high schools.

Open 10am to 4pm Monday to Saturday; exhibition program supported by Coastline BMW.

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Key performance indicators

Regional relationships and projects: research and consultancy

Data is based on HERDC*–reported research projects and consultancy project information managed by the University's Office of Research; and income figures provided by Finance. (Note: data relates to projects of regional relevance, consistent with target statement.)

*HERDC: Higher Education Research Data Collection.

Regional relationships and projects: learning and teaching

This year, students completed WIL placements in 119 regional professions, businesses and industries. Data was tracked manually with data sets held separately within operational areas, thus presented some small potential for double-counting. A new IT-focused Career Placement Database piloted successfully with the areas of education and nursing this year and widespread use from 2009 will provide more accurate information for reporting.

Regional relationships and projects: shared, jointly-funded infrastructure

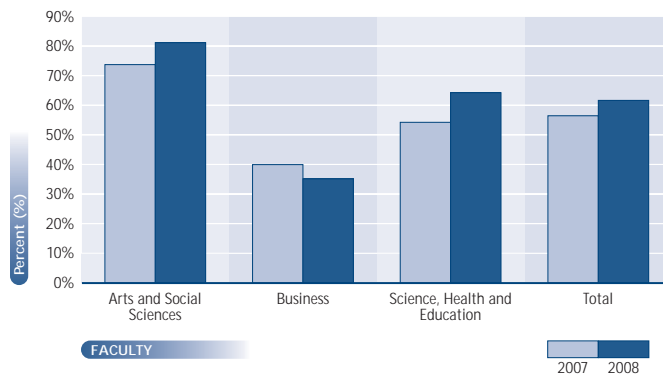USC's partners invested $11.36 million in 11 shared infrastructure projects on the Sippy Downs campus.

Regional relationships and projects: support to advance the knowledge economy

Twenty-seven companies in the Innovation Centre currently employ 75 full-time and 34-part-time staff. (Note: data reflects employment created directly through operation of the Innovation Centre and associated business development programs.)
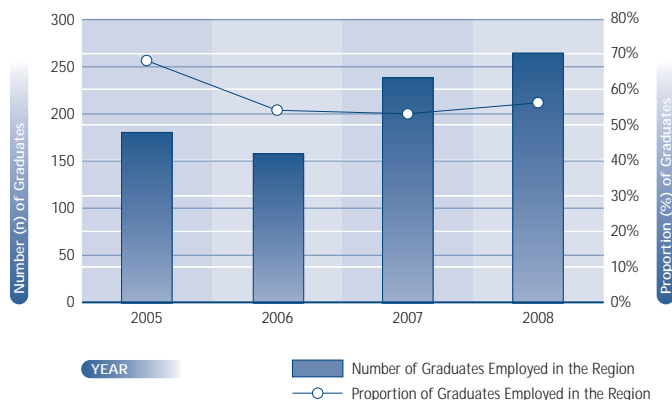
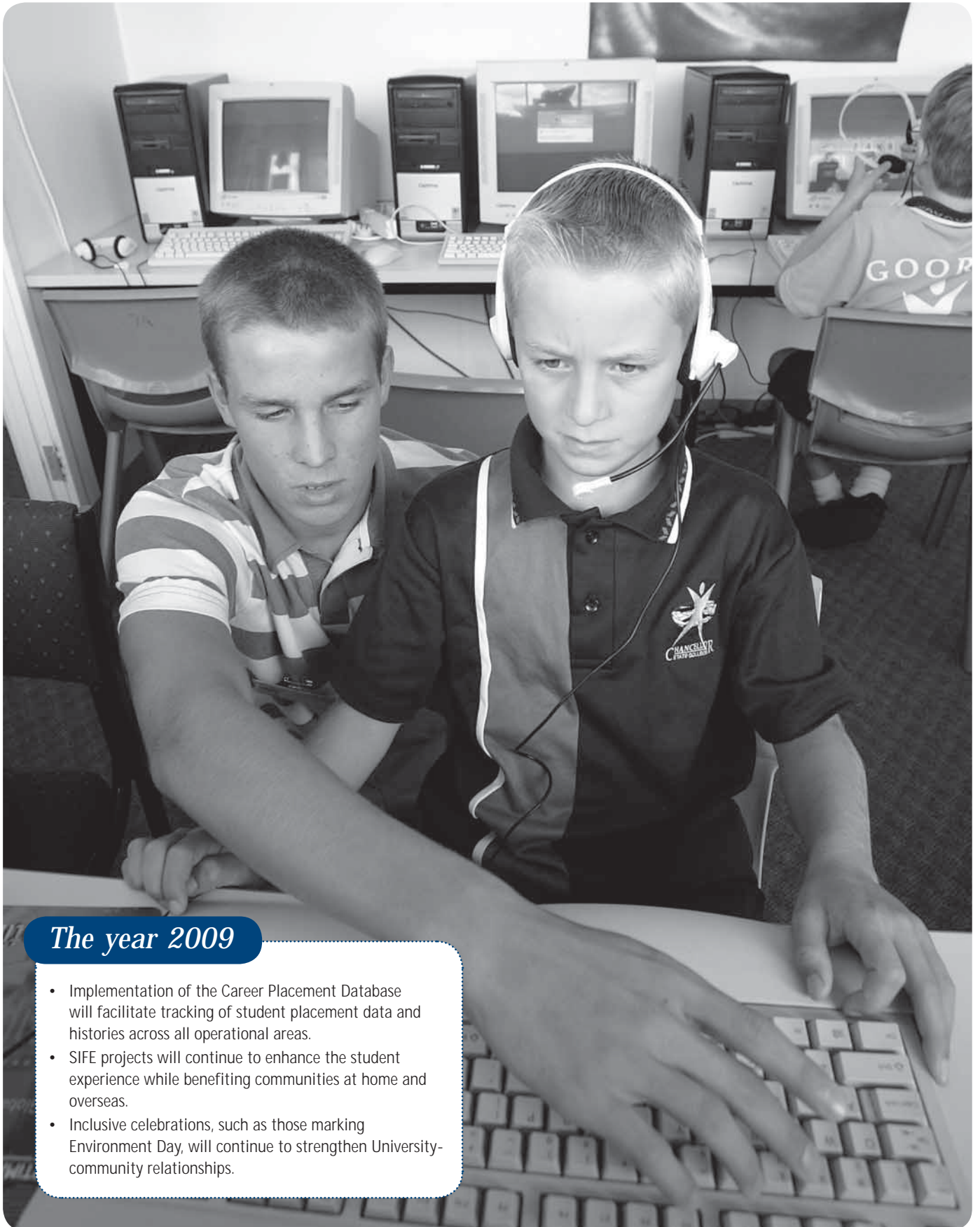### Number of graduates employed in the region

The table, right, is based on data from respondents to the Australian Graduate Survey (AGS), completed annually by graduates within four months of graduation. Data suggest the number of locally-employed USC graduates fell from 180 in 2005 to 158 the following year. This result improved dramatically a year later (in 2007), with 237 graduates employed locally and again in 2008 with 264 graduates employed locally.

Percentage (%) of research and consultancy income related to projects of regional relevance

Number (n) and proportion (%) of graduates employed in the region

The year 2009

- Implementation of the Career Placement Database will facilitate tracking of student placement data and histories across all operational areas.
- SIFE projects will continue to enhance the student experience while benefiting communities at home and overseas.
- Inclusive celebrations, such as those marking Environment Day, will continue to strengthen University-community relationships.