Awards and honours

In May, Provost Professor Wendy Larner received the Victoria Medal from the United Kingdom’s Royal Geographical Society, one of geography’s most prestigious awards. She also won the 2018 Women of Influence Award for Innovation and Science and took up the role of President of the Royal Society Te Apārangi in July.

Alumnus and former Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Rt Hon Sir Bill English, received an honorary Doctor of Commerce in December, acknowledging his distinguished record of public service. In May, alumnus Sir Terence Arnold QC received an honorary Doctor of Laws in recognition of his eminent legal career.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Māori) Professor Rawinia Higgins, a highly regarded Māori language expert, was appointed as Chairperson of Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (the Māori Language Commission) in June. In December, Professor Higgins won the Education section of the 2018 Dominion Post Wellingtonian of the Year Awards.

Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Pasifika) Associate Professor Hon Luamanuvao Winnie Laban was made a Dame Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to education and the Pacific community. She also received the ‘Tribute to a Wellington Icon’ award at the Wellington Gold Awards.

First-year student Lewis Clareburt, the first recipient of the University’s Swimming Scholarship, competed in the 2018 Commonwealth Games where he won the 400m individual medley bronze medal. He was also named Sportsperson of the Year at the Victoria University of Wellington Blues Awards.

Associate Professor Rebecca Priestley from the Science and Society group was made a Companion by the Royal Society Te Apārangi, while four staff were made Fellows: Vice-Provost (Research) Professor Margaret Hyland, Professor Emily Parker, Professor Susy Frankel, and Professor John Creedy.

The University’s Ferrier Research Institute received the Discovery Gold Award at the Wellington Gold Awards for work that led to the creation of Mundesine®, a drug that treats previously hard-to-treat lymphomas. Pictured are Professors Peter Tyler and Richard Furneaux from the Ferrier Research Institute.

Professor Rod Downey received the 2018 Rutherford Medal, New Zealand’s top science award, at the Royal Society Te Apārangi New Zealand Research Honours for his research into computability, computational complexity, and randomness.

Two of the University’s recent building projects, the Biological Sciences building Te Toki a Rata and the Rutherford House extension, each won a Local Architecture Award from the New Zealand Institute of Architects.

Alumna and lecturer Dr Pip Adam won the premier $50,000 Acorn Foundation Fiction Prize at the 2018 Ockham New Zealand Book Awards in May for her novel The New Animals.

Professor Sally Davenport from the School of Management was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the New Year Honours for services to science.

Associate Professor Taehyun Rhee was awarded the Research Entrepreneur Award at the 2018 KiwiNet Research Commercialisation Awards for his work in virtual and augmented reality.