

2018 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

HIGH LEVEL SUMMARY

- Council refreshed and stable
- Membership fees removed
- Relationships continue to improve

INTRODUCTION

The GMA is a 42 year old independent, incorporated, not-for-profit association for alumni of the UWA Business School's (UWABS) Master of Business Administration (MBA) and postgraduate courses. Its constitution aligns it closely with UWABS' purpose and values. Its board or council consists of 12 volunteer directors or councillors. With no operational staff, the GMA council (Council) acts as an operational board. Councillors conduct all of the tasks associated with the running of the GMA and they rely on the support of partners, sponsors and additional volunteers. The Council aims to provide value to its alumni members and current UWABS MBA and postgraduate students, who are the future alumni.

The GMA has been through some challenging times in recent years, but this has started to change. Its relationship with UWABS, the students and alumni have slowly improved, with more interest being taken in the GMA and what it offers. There is still much work to be done but the outlook is positive.

The October 2017 Annual General Meeting (AGM) saw elections that resulted in a stable 2018 council, with nine of the 12 councillor positions being filled. The Council size later increased to 11, with most councillors new to the Council, bringing in fresh ideas and new perspectives. Roles and responsibilities were distributed amongst the councillors and a strategic outlook was taken, with the intention of continuing improvement and future success of the GMA in mind.

STRATEGIC OUTLOOK

MEMBERSHIP

In previous years, the GMA has struggled to attract new members. One potential barrier to signing up new members was the membership fee of \$30 per year for a student and \$80 per year or \$180 per three years for alumni. It was decided that removing the membership fee would be beneficial and the idea was tested. At the Trimester 1 MBA orientation day in January, the membership fee was waived, resulting in an increased interest from students to join the GMA. Following on from this, a motion was passed in the February Council meeting to remove these fees, resulting in one less barrier to attracting new members.

As of September 2018, the GMA had a total of 1,710 members, consisting of:

- 470 students
- 1,113 alumni

Since 19th October 2017, the GMA has had 30 new member applications which are included in the figures above, and we are still processing a number of new applications. This compares with only six new member applications received in the previous year.

STRATEGY DAY

A strategy day was held by the Council in May. *Jon Bilson*, a Principal Consultant from the Cumberland Consulting Group acted as our external facilitator on a pro bono basis, for which the Council was very grateful. Looking forward to the next 12 to 18 months, some of the Council's plans include seeking feedback from its members, developing new events and building closer relationships within the UWABS.

MBA ORIENTATION DAYS

2018 saw the return of the GMA to the MBA and Graduate Certificate orientation days held prior to the start of each trimester. The Council was invited to the networking drinks at the end of each orientation day. These were great opportunities to meet with new MBA students and not only share the GMA councillors' own study experiences, but also to show how the GMA can be of benefit to them. Thank you to *Jenna MacDonald* from the UWABS Student Experience Team for facilitating this.

UWA MBA STUDENT SOCIAL CLUB

The GMA has a good relationship with the UWA MBA Student Social Club (UMSSC). The Council again sponsored a prize at the UMSSC end-of-year ball last December, as well as attending the ball. It is a fantastic event and I foresee future Councils continuing to support it. The GMA and UMSSC also jointly marketed two UMSSC First Friday drinks this year, with the aim of bring students and alumni together. Separate to this, Council members usually attend the First Friday drinks.

RELATIONSHIPS

As mentioned above, the GMA is working to develop closer relationships within UWABS. With the university and UWABS restructure now almost two years old, the renewed structure has had time to settle, providing the GMA with a better opportunity to engage with individuals in this new setting, including Dean Professor *Peter Robertson*, MBA director *Allan Trench*, *Tiffany Hall*, *Geri Ngui* and *Jenna MacDonald* from the student engagement team, and others. The GMA is also developing its relationship with the Faculty of Arts, Business, Law and Education (FABLE) and its Executive Dean, Professor *Matthew Tonts*.

The GMA continues to maintain a strong relationship with its patron and former UWA Chancellor, *Michael Chaney AO*. The Council is grateful for his ongoing support, especially his efforts to secure fantastic keynote speakers for our Annual Black Tie Dinners, as well as his generous donation which provided financial support for this year's dinner. The GMA has continued to develop its relationship with the UWA Chancellor, *The Hon. Robert French AC*, and Vice Chancellor, Professor *Dawn Freshwater*, both of whom attended this year's dinner.

The GMA's relationship with the Convocation of UWA Graduates (Convocation) continues as both organisations have a common goal of engaging with alumni. The current Warden of Convocation, Dr *Doug McGhie*, is a former president of the GMA, from 1992 to 1993. Current GMA Council member *Graham Harmsworth* is also a current council member of Convocation.

Our relationship with Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) has helped the Council to run its successful Annual Black Tie Dinners both this year and in the past. Thank you to *Brenda Tournier*, Director, Alumni & Community Relations, *Lechelle Green*, Alumni Relations Officer (FABLE), *Josh Van Kampen*, Alumni Relations Officer, and others at DAR. Also, while not an official duty, GMA councillors have also volunteered their time as mentors that DAR's Career Cafés.

The Council would like to acknowledge and thank its returning sponsors, including *Business News*, *Chartered Accountants ANZ*, the *UWA Innovation Quarter*, and *Manny Tamayo Photography*. Note, *Manny Tamayo* is an MBA graduate and GMA member.

Finally, the Council would like to thank UWABS Professor *Phil Hancock* for conducting our financial audit this year, and in years past, pro bono.

EVENTS

As mentioned above, following our strategy day, the GMA is developing new events to be run by the 2019 Council. In 2018, there were two key events, the Annual Black Tie Dinner, and the Australia Update: Raising the Standard of Living.

The Annual Black Tie Dinner was held on Saturday 18th August 2018 at the University Club of Western Australia. It was well received with positive feedback, and it was great to see people up and about in the room, connecting and reconnecting.

GMA patron, *Michael Chaney AO*, secured *Zoe Yujnovich*, chairman of Shell Australia, as our keynote speaker. *Zoe*, a UWA graduate, spoke about the future of energy and what Shell is doing to support this future. She was both informative and inspiring, with the audience asking a number of insightful questions. Following this, UWABS Dean *Peter Robertson* thanked *Zoe*. On behalf of the Council, I would like to thank *Zoe Yujnovich* for being our keynote speaker and *Michael Chaney AO* for arranging it, as well as UWABS Dean *Peter Robertson*.

For my president's address, I spoke about my MBA journey, the importance of alumni and how the GMA will continue to work closely with UWABS, the University, the Perth business community and our alumni, to everyone's benefit.

Margaret Harper presented the Charles Harper Prize to joint 2017 winners *David Warby*, a current GMA student Councillor, and MBA graduate *Bindi Shah*. It should be noted that there is only one \$500 prize provided in a year. With well deserving joint winners this year, MBA director *Allan Trench* organised the second \$500 prize and my thanks go out to him. The GMA Legend award was presented to *Bevellee Partridge*, a strong and long-time supporter of the GMA.

The dinner committee was led by councillor *Aine Healy Carter*, along with councillor *Rebecca White*. Additional councillors provided support to the committee as was required. As mentioned earlier, the dinner was once again supported by DAR. My thanks go out to everyone involved in the lead-up to and on the night.

The second event, the Australia Update: Raising the standard of Living, was held on Tuesday 4th September 2018 at the University Club of Western Australia. It was a one-day public forum presenting a series of public discussions on the emerging political and economic challenges facing Australia. It was supported by the UWA Public Policy Institute, UWABS and FABLE. Within this forum, the GMA hosted the Research Showcase and MBA Advantage book launch. My thanks go out to councillor *Aine Healy Carter*, who led this well-received event.

The GMA also ran an end-of-year sundowner in December last year at Public House in the Perth CBD, which was well attended. And the GMA are planning a fire-side chat event with our patron *Michael Chaney AO*, in conjunction with the 2018 AGM in October.

COUNCIL

The Council has remained fairly stable since the AGM in October 2017, in contrast to the previous year. Starting out with nine councillors after the AGM, the Council increased in size to 11 before eventually dropping back to nine. During this time, councillors *Dominic Lalor*, *Tara Bennett-Connell* and *Joe Bradley* were co-opted onto the Council and councillors *George Ross*, *Lucy Oborn* and *Rebecca White* resigned for personal reasons. All of these departures were amicable and I thank them all for their service. The list of 2018 councillors is available in the table below.

The UWABS representative position on Council remained vacant this year. However, the Council has been in discussions with the School and this role is expected to be filled in the 2019 Council.

The Council also had difficulty filling the international student councillor position in 2018, with the position being vacant for four months. In accordance with the GMA constitution, the Council was able to use its discretion and filled this position with a domestic student.

I would like to thank past councillors, Immediate Past President *Mark Palermo* and former treasurer *William Ooi* for providing support in 2018. Finally, I would like to thank the all the councillors who have served on this year's Council. They are volunteers and their efforts are appreciated. Being on Council offers many rewards, including a chance to network at a higher level, build new skills and gain board experience. I encourage anyone interested in giving back to the UWABS and the university to nominate for Council prior to our AGM on 24 October 2018. I also wish to note that as Immediate Past President, *Mark Palermo* is under no obligation to attend Council meetings.

The following table displays councillor attendance to GMA Council meetings held between the October 2017 AGM and September 2018.

2018 GMA Councillor Meeting Attendance			
Name	Position	Eligible to attend	Attended
Conrad Pires	President	10	9
Rebecca White*	Vice President	9	9
Lucy Oborn*	Secretary	5	2
Graham Harmsworth	Graduate Councillor / Secretary	10	7
Michael Andrews	Treasurer	10	9
Aine Healy Carter	Graduate Councillor	10	9
Steven Bayne	Graduate Councillor	10	8
David Warby	Student Councillor	10	7
George Ross*	Student Councillor	3	1
Dominic Lalor	Student Councillor	8	7
Tara Bennett-Connell	Student Councillor	5	4
Joe Bradley	Student Councillor	5	5
Position not filled**	Business School Representative	10	0
Mark Palermo***	Immediate Past President	10	1

* Resigned from Council
 ** Expected to be filled in the 2019 Council
 *** The Immediate Past President is under no obligation to attend Council meetings

FINAL MESSAGE

This year marks my sixth year on Council and second year as President. It's now time for me to move on to other things and I will resign from the Council at the AGM in October. I leave the Council with good memories and experiences from the past six years. I really value the relationships I've built during this time with past and present councillors, students, alumni, UWABS, the university and the Perth business community. Thank you to the members for electing me to Council and I'm grateful for the opportunity to have served as President. Thank you to this year's Council and in particular, I'd like to thank Immediate Past President *Mark Palermo*, former councillor and treasurer *William Ooi*, and councillors *Graham Harmsworth* and *Rebecca White* for their support in recent years.

The GMA has slowly improved its position over recent years and continues to do so. This year's Council, a group of talented people, has continued the GMA's journey down the path of success. I am confident that the 2019 Council will continue to do the same. I look forward to continuing my involvement with the GMA and seeing this alumni community prosper.

Yours sincerely,



Conrad Pires
MBA GAICD
President
Graduate Management Association of UWA (Inc.)