

The Wallabies

issue #11

uowd magazine



Top Reads:

The stride for dreams

Navigating your Future

Meet our most brilliant minds

Spring in Bloom



Editor's Column

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his 11th edition of our magazine arrives with a profound sense of accomplishment, shifting our focus from the journey towards dreams to the exhilarating reality of achieved aspirations. Last time, we explored the path; now, we celebrate the arrival.

We believe that true success isn't just about reaching a destination; it's about the transformation that happens along the way. That's why this issue continues our insightful series with interviews from graduating students, reflecting on the dreams they held and the remarkable ways they've brought them to fruition. Their stories are proof that perseverance and vision can get you anywhere. (pg 10-11)

Navigating the future can feel daunting, and we understand that clarity isn't always immediate. In collaboration with UOWD Career Compass, we offer guidance for those still charting their professional course, providing insights to help you confidently step into your calling. (pg 16) We have also covered well-being, by sharing strategies for overcoming roadblocks and nurturing your mental fortitude as you pursue your ambitions. (pg 17-18)

This edition also shines a spotlight on triumphs. We feature students who have earned a coveted spot on the Dean's Merit List, unraveling the dedication and discipline behind their academic excellence. (pg 6-7) And in a true highlight, we showcase an inspiring entrepreneur, Maimuna Rashid, who made the prestigious Forbes 30 Under 30 list. Her company, Pupilar, recently hosted the groundbreaking Next Gen Fest, an event that connected students directly with industry leaders and potential employers, proving that dreams of networking and career breakthroughs are very much within reach. (pg 15)



We're incredibly grateful for the passion and contributions of every reader, student, and faculty member. Let's continue to share these journeys of achievement, fueling each other's paths forward and building a future shaped by realized dreams.

*President Alina and
Vice President Rina*



Table of Contents

I Team Spotlight	
Editors Column	2
Table of Contents	3
II Campus Life and Community	
Spring highlights: Compilation	4 - 5
Spring Feature: Dean's Merit List	6 - 7
Spring Feature: Welcome Week	8
UOWD Sports	9
Student Dreams Interviews	10 - 11
III The Postgraduate Times	12 - 14
IV Lifestyle and Series	
Locked in with Pupilar at the Next Gen	15
Navigating your Future	16
How to Achieve Dreams Despite Roadblocks?	17 - 18
Seasonal Essentials: Dream Themed	19
V Faculty and Alumni	
Beyond the degree	20-21
VI Creative Corner	
Art	22
VII Team Spotlight	
10 th Edition Member Credits	23



Spring Highlights

Sama Youssef



READY? SET... DANCE! JASHN 2025

The largest cultural event that unites talent, creativity, and vibrant celebrations has hit Dubai once more, and who better to participate than our talented UOWD students.

In first place we the electrifying Som Virwani with best Instrumental Solo. Jada Adarrsh with his ability to capture the beauty of what's around us received first place in Videography. Nikita Shanbhag in third place for her Eastern Solo Singing and last but not least! Joel Jogy John in third place for Western Solo Singing.

We're so proud of our winners and can't wait to see who steals the spotlight next year!



LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS: OUR ENGINEERS BUILDING OUR FUTURE

Our civil engineers are determined to get elbow-deep in concrete. Learning how to pour and shape one of the most essential building blocks of life, literally! From understanding the art of mixing to casting and moulding, it's safe to say that our engineer's knowledge on concrete had solidified! ;)



STEPPING INTO YOUR FUTURE: UOWD CAREER FAIR CONNECTS STUDENTS TO SUCCESS!

The UOWD Annual Career Fair connected students with employers from diverse industries, offering valuable opportunities for internships, jobs, and career advice.

Students networked, shared résumés, and explored future pathways, all in one dynamic event. It was a day full of possibilities and professional growth!



SURVIVAL OF THE SHARPEST: UOWD MUN'S THINKERS CHALLENGE HEATS UP!

The UOWD MUN Club hosted a fast-paced Thinkers Challenge, giving students a taste of global diplomacy in action. Delegates represented countries, delivered sharp opening speeches, and debated real-world issues with confidence and strategy.

Thinkers formed alliances, drafted resolutions, and voted on impactful solutions, all in just a few hours! The event was packed with competition, collaboration, and impressive displays of leadership.

It was a great way for students to sharpen their public speaking, critical thinking, and negotiation skills, all while having a blast. More MUN adventures are on the horizon, so stay tuned!

FROM CLASSROOMS TO BOARDROOMS: UOWD STUDENTS TAKE INNOVATION TO THE NEXT LEVEL!



The 2025 UOWD Computer Science Innovation Fair felt more like a high-energy tech expo than a student showcase, and for good reason! Over 100 final-year students, split into 22 teams, unveiled AI-powered solutions that are already attracting major companies. From slashing food waste with “Dunkin’ Demand,” a forecasting tool created with Dunkin’ UAE, to automating handwritten exam grading with “MyAutoGrader,” these projects prove UOWD students aren’t just dreaming—they’re delivering.

Industry partnerships took centre stage, as mentors from top organizations provided tools, real data, and expert guidance throughout the development process. The result? Real-world-ready solutions, confident presentations, and impressive networking wins.

Team ZenAI clinched first place, while teams like Tech Explorers and TeamOne also wowed with innovations in education and AI security. But even beyond the winners, projects tackled serious issues—from drone-based PPE detection to smart fridges reducing food waste.

Judged by professionals from Dunkin’ UAE, Dubai Police, and Help AG, this Fair wasn’t just about grades, it was about game-changing impact. With internships, pilot programs, and job offers already rolling in, UOWD’s tech stars are proving they’ve got what it takes to thrive in the fast-paced world of innovation.



WIRED FOR INNOVATION:

UOWD TECH CLUB AND ENGINEERS AUSTRALIA DIVE INTO ROBOTICS

The Tech Club turned up the circuits with its Intro to Robotics Workshop. A hands-on, high-energy event that gave students a playful, yet powerful, peek into the world of robotics and programming.

From coding simple moves to watching their mini robots strut their stuff, students got a crash course on the magic of what tech can do. Teams collaborated, experimented, and even sparkles lit their eyes as they brought their robotic friends to life, one line of code at a time.

It wasn’t just fun and games, students walked away with new skills, creative confidence, and a taste of the future of innovation. Whether you were a first-time tinkerer or a seasoned coder, this workshop proved that anyone could dive into robotics and have a blast doing it.



CREATIVITY MEETS CULTURE:

UOWD ART CLUB EXPLORES ALSERKAL AVENUE!

The UOWD Art Club recently took creativity beyond the classroom with a vibrant field trip to Alserkal Avenue, Dubai’s hub for contemporary art and culture.

Students wandered through cutting-edge galleries, explored thought-provoking exhibitions, and soaked up the dynamic energy of one of the city’s most inspiring artistic spaces. From bold installations to minimalist pieces, the trip offered a unique glimpse into the region’s evolving art scene.

It wasn’t just about admiring the art, students engaged in discussions, snapped creative photos, and even found fresh inspiration for their own work. Whether you’re an art lover or just curious about culture, this field trip proved that creativity thrives outside the classroom.



Meet our Most Brilliant Minds

The Brainy Stars of this Academic Year!

Cheers and applause echoed throughout the university as UOWD proudly announced their jutting academic stars during the Dean's list ceremony which took place in the lecture Theatre hall on 29 May 2025. Each School had the chance to call on their top achievers with the School of Business and Media taking place from 5:00 to 6:30 pm while the School of Engineering and Computer Science took place at 7:00 to 8:30 pm.

Of course, these students never would've gotten this far without the help of the talented program leaders that made it all possible. For the School of Engineering and Computer science, the professors in charge of the awarding were Dr. Hazem Gouda and Dr. May El Barachi respectively. As for the School of Media, Dr. Feras Hamza, who is also the head of Humanities, Social sciences and Health was present in the event, while Professor Payyazhi Jayashree headed the awardings for the School of Business.

Ananya, who received the Dean's list award from the School of Engineering, reflects on her achievement: "Making it to the Dean's Merit List is a milestone I never

really expected for myself. It is a reminder of the effort and focus that's gone into this journey. My family has been my biggest pillar of support, encouraging me and reminding me of my potential, even when I couldn't see it myself. And of course, my friends, They made sure that while I stayed focused on my goals, I didn't forget to have fun and create memories along the way. This journey has taught me the value of consistency and the need to strike a balance between work and fun."

So for anyone who aspires to be a Dean's lister someday, know that it takes time, dedication, and a lot of hard work, but it is not impossible. There will be times where life shoves you hard and you face bad days, but remember that those days are always temporary and overall, life will always go on an upward trend. And though you must work hard to achieve your goals, never forget to have fun and enjoy the process. With enough dedication, There is most certainly no limit to what you can dream of and accomplish.

Written by John Patrick Traya



School of Marketing, Human Resources, International Business



School of Computer Science



School of Business Finance, Accountancy Business Analytics



School of Engineering



Welcome Week

Spring '25 at UOWD kicked off with a super lively Welcome Week that got freshers pumped! They couldn't wait to meet new people, dive into different cultures, grab networking opportunities, explore different sports teams to find their perfect fit. Freshers experienced a whirlwind of emotions during their first week, with connections already made with amazing people, while some feeling a bit jittery but super thrilled!

The showstopper of the Welcome Week was the iconic Clubs Market Day, which got everyone stoked! The exhibition hall buzzed with excitement, filled with smiling faces and bursts of laughter. The Creator Club had the crowd in stitches with their hilarious Whisper Challenge, while the Leadership Club brought the energy with engaging games like bingo, word searches, and the mind-bending "Guess the Leader." Students mixed, mingled, and shared plenty of laughs—laying the foundation for what's shaping up to be an unforgettable trimester.

The 2025 lineup brought some cool new clubs! UOWD MUN is all about tackling world issues through debates. UOWD AccyVenger Society turns numbers into impact with creative projects. Girl Up Society UOWD, a student-led volunteer society and leadership initiative founded by UNFoundation, offers a space to lead, learn, and speak for change.

As the buzz of Welcome Week settles, one thing's for sure—Spring '25 has kicked off with unforgettable memories, new friendships, and a vibrant community spirit. With such an electric start, there's no doubt that this trimester at UOWD will be packed with growth, creativity, and countless opportunities for every student to shine.





UOWD

Sports Update

-John Patrick

Throughout the years, the UOWD Basketball Team has proven to be a formidable team of shooters and defenders, acquiring many trophies and medals. And as usual, they prove this formidability once again by achieving a qualifying position in the National Championships in the UAE University Games, a remarkable achievement showcasing extreme guts and will. They fought till the quarter finals but met their downfall against CUD. Although they lost upon entering the quarter finals, this was nevertheless a remarkable achievement, conquering almost every other university except AUD who have gone on to become the champions.



Mehul John, Captain of the Basketball team, shares his insights on the game: "This year, tons of guys tried out, and our final team looked solid, I knew we'd do well. We played way more tournaments than before. Started decent while we built chemistry, but match after match, we got closer on and off court and just kept getting better. We were riding that energy straight into the Skyline tourney after doing well at UAE Uni Games. Honestly, we always fell short before, usually in semis, so breezing past that this time fired us up BIG time. By the finals, We all knew what we had to do. **Momentum was ours, everyone was hyped and winning was the ONLY option.** When you get a shot like that, you play like you're unbeatable. **That's the mindset we took in, we gave it everything, and brought it home.**"

All in all, the team expressed their gratitude to all its players, Coach Josephine, and Roy from Student Life for getting them that far. The Basketball team has worked hard on this milestone and has resulted in better camaraderie amongst themselves which they plan to bring to more games. Despite these slight shortcomings, they have done wonders so far and state that the university should expect more accomplishments to come.

The stride for

Dreams

Graduating Students

By Sama Youssef

Q1: What inspired your dream when you first started university, and how has that motivation evolved over time?

Jobin George Kachora

"After excelling in high school, I entered university with the dream of becoming a researcher in engineering material sciences, pursuing a PhD, and eventually becoming a professor. Thus, this led me to become an active peer tutor for FEIS during my early terms. However, as I delved deeper into university life, I was introduced to project management and large-scale engineering projects, which made me realized how much I enjoyed working in teams, managing people, and brainstorming innovative solutions. Consulting and project management began to feel more like my true calling, and that shift in passion has energized me ever since."

Taha Shabbir

"Plot twist: I started as a marketing major! With absolutely zero CS experience from high school, I thought marketing was my path. But something about tech kept calling to me, so I made a last-minute switch to BBIS. Then magic happened. There was this beautiful moment when lines of code transformed into something functional on my screen, and I thought, "This is it. This is MY thing." The evolution is wild — from "maybe tech is cool?" to becoming that person who gets genuinely excited about AI advancements and stays up till 3 AM trying to fix a bug! What started as curiosity bloomed into this all-consuming passion that's fundamentally changed how I see the world around me."

Abdulmalik

When I first started university, I didn't have a specific dream in mind. But I knew I wanted to be somewhere in the finance or project management space — fields that intrigued me with their structure and impact. I wasn't chasing a title or destination, just the idea of building something meaningful.

Abigail Coelho

"I wanted to pursue media when people started telling me I have a voice that could do well in radio and in TV. Since, then I've always been confident about my voice. During my journey, I've also learnt film, production and social media skills that has inspired my interest. Although I still hold on to the same dream, I'm open to branch out and try various paths."

Q2: If you could give advice to your first-year self about chasing dreams during university, what would you say?

Jobin George Kachora

"It may sound cliché, but it's the most valuable advice I can give: keep an open mind. I entered university with a rigid idea of what success looked like, shaped by the people and environments I'd known for 18 years. I'd tell my first-year self to let go of that fixed vision. Say yes to new opportunities. You never know which one might pivot your life in the most meaningful way."

Taha Shabbir

"Deep breath DO. MORE. INTERNSHIPS."

This one stings like lemon juice on a paper cut. First year, I was just trying not to get lost on campus and figuring out how to cook something beyond instant noodles. Second year, I got too comfortable. I told myself "There's plenty of time" while binge-watching shows instead of applying for opportunities. Third year came with capstone projects and suddenly—BAM—graduation was around the corner, and I'm thinking, "Wait, where did all that time go?"

If I could teleport back, I'd grab my younger self by the shoulders and say: "Start earlier. Apply even when you don't feel ready. Rejection is just redirect. And for the love of everything tech, one internship is NOT enough in this industry!"

Abdulmalik

If I could speak to my first-year self, I'd say: try everything. Don't be afraid to say yes to new experiences, even if they feel unfamiliar or out of your comfort zone. University is as much about discovering what excites you as it is about academics.

Abigail Coelho

"First of all, just do whatever you want to do. One thing I really regret is not putting in the work. But I am working on it right now. So, if you want to vlog? DO IT. You want to do content creation? DO IT. You want to start that podcast you've been thinking about but have been procrastinating? DO IT. You want to shoot videos? DO IT. Do something simple. It's okay if it's not original. Show your skills, figure it out and you will come up with something new over time!"

Q3: Looking ahead, how do you plan to turn your dream into a reality — or do you think your dream is still unfolding?

Taha Shabbir

"My dream it's definitely still unfolding—like code that's continuously being refactored and improved. I don't have some master plan with every detail mapped out, and honestly? I'm OK with that now."

What I do have is this persistent vision of building something meaningful in tech—something that's genuinely mine. Maybe it's a startup that transforms how we interact with AI, maybe it's pioneering something I haven't even imagined yet. The beauty is in the possibility.

For now, I'm embracing the journey with its bugs and features alike. I've got enough passion, foundation, and stubborn determination to keep moving forward. And sometimes, having that vague but ambitious North Star is more than enough—it's exactly what keeps the adventure exciting."

Jobin George Kachora

"I believe I'm already building towards my dream, one small step at a time. I really relate to James Clear's idea of "The Power of Tiny Gains," where making incremental improvements every day adds up to big results over time. This has been true for both my technical and soft skills, which I keep developing by doing programs and learning from incredible mentors. I genuinely believe in the power of mentorship and how it helps shape your direction and mindset. It has continued to give me more clarity and I hope that I continue to meet great minds and be transformed."

Abdulmalik

To me, a 'dream' isn't a fixed point. It's more about reaching a place in life where I feel at peace—where I don't have to constantly worry, and where I can simply be. I don't know exactly where that is yet, but that's okay. As long as you're taking steps in the right direction, I believe that's what truly matters.

Abigail Coelho

"I would say my dream is still unfolding. I plan to take hosting opportunities and make connections. Hopefully with the right connections, I end up in places close to what I manifest for myself."

Postgraduates Updates



Stepping Into the Corporate World

A Milestone Worth Attending

If you've ever questioned how to truly prepare for a career in finance, the latest edition of *Stepping into the Corporate World* gave you the answers and then some!

What began as a humble virtual series during the height of COVID-19 has grown into a flagship initiative at the University of Wollongong in Dubai, thanks to the consistent efforts of Mr. Sherwin and the Finance Society. At this milestone event, you had the opportunity to hear directly from Mr. Ramkumar Balasubramaniam, the Chief Financial Officer of a leading multinational bank. From demystifying FP&A roles to tackling the rise of AI in finance, his insights were rooted in real experience. The session went beyond theory, it gave you a roadmap for navigating your career with confidence, adaptability, and purpose.

If you attended, you'll remember how full the room was. Many students, even those standing chose to stay through the entire session simply because the energy and relevance were that strong. It's rare for academic events to maintain such momentum from start to finish, but this one did.

What likely stood out to you, as it did to many of us, was Mr. Ram's authenticity. He wasn't just there to speak, he was there to connect. His openness, willingness to listen, and encouragement to raise your hand for challenges resonated with students at every level.

This wasn't just another event. It was a reminder of how much you can learn outside the classroom when you engage with industry leaders who genuinely care about student growth. The Finance Society, under Mr. Sherwin's leadership helped create a space where you could see what success looks like and more importantly, how to build it for yourself.

So here's a little advice: make the time for events like this. They might not be graded, but they offer something more valuable - real insight, real inspiration, and a real chance to shape your future with intention.

THRILLER PICK OF THE MONTH

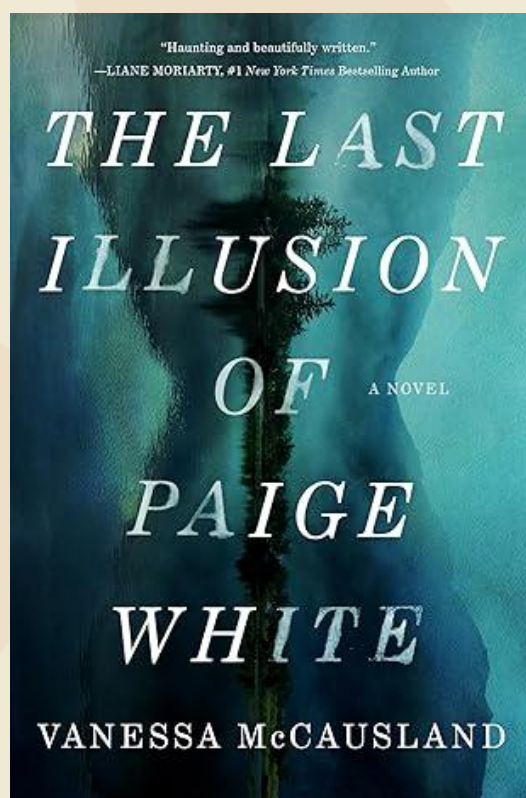
Scroll. Stalk. Shatter.

- how far would you go to protect the truth?

The Last Illusion of Paige White by Vanessa McCausland

*N*eed a break from textbooks and lecture slides? This haunting thriller blends suspense with a sharp look at the world of curated perfection and online identities. Follow Paige White—picture-perfect on social media, but trapped in a world of illusions, memory, and haunting truths. As the layers peel back, you'll find a gripping mystery wrapped in emotional depth, perfect for a weekend read that hits both heart and mind.

Unplug from deadlines and dive into a story where not everything filtered is real.



BEHIND THE PEN



Springtime Tunes, Until We Meet Soon,

*A*s the spring semester comes to an end, here's a little note for every postgrad out there powering through.

We know your Instagram is flooded with vacation stories from friends at other universities. And sure, the envy is real. But here's what's even more real: the hard work you've put in, the connections you've made, and the growth you've experienced. While others were unwinding, you were levelling up.

This wasn't just a semester of lectures and deadlines - it was a canvas. You took on new challenges, formed unexpected bonds, and made memories that will outlast any exam.

Here's to the effort, the endurance, and the sweet reward waiting on the other side.

See you around campus (after the last paper!),

Sanaa Rehman

Postgraduate Writer, Wallabies Magazine, UOWD



Locked In with PUPILAR at the NEXTGEN

If you are fresh-out-of-university, freshman-in-university, or simply young and unemployed with a desire to gain experience and fill your CV to the brim, then this article is worth reading over a cup of hopes (more like adrenaline rush) while surrounded with piles of deadlines, challenges, what-ifs, how-tos, and I-don't-want-to-fail moments.

TAKING THINGS TO THE NEXTGEN LEVEL

While not everyone is a social butterfly, learning to network with professionals and snagging a potential internship or employment through small talks is a huge step especially in getting hired. The NEXTGEN Career Fest proved to be a melting pot of opportunities with promising young talent connecting with top-tier employers across UAE. Hosted on 31st of May 2025 at the in5 Tech, Dubai Internet City, companies like JUMBO Group opened their doors to hiring and hosted real-time interviews and meetups with potential candidates. Alongside this, workshops for career development, exciting hands-on challenges, and insightful panel discussions were hosted to foster the advancement of these young talents in the professional world.

What's to note on these panels were conversations over empowering youth, upscaling them for the growth of the nation's workforce, and the future of hiring. Representatives from Emirates NBD, Emaar, AECOM, and even the UAE Government sat down and produced valuable insights that were certainly eye-opening and served as game-changers for today's youth and future leaders.

PUPILAR AND WHAT MAKES THEM POPULAR

Behind every visionary event is an even more future-forward person or team, such as the organizer Pupilar, a steadily rising youth career community hub that helps industry access and engage with emerging talent across the nation. With more than half a decade of helping youth build careers faster through real-world experiences, mentorship, as well as connecting them to employers, Pupilar brought their A-game in organizing the NEXTGEN Career Fest.

Maimuna Rashid, co-founder of Pupilar, shared her thoughts on how the UAE, in particular, enabled Pupilar to build an impactful community around their platform, "UAE as a country... is a powerful place to connect them (the youth) back to society but again, the most important element is your mindset." She emphasized that going back to the notion and fear of no one caring will only hinder growth and much needed change.

With high hopes and a passion-filled drive, Maimuna is excited to take things to further heights by "making NEXTGEN Career Fest super big" to continuously empower and develop emerging talents in the workforce as well as launching an up-and-coming technology that may take the world by storm. Seeing the pace they are at, there is no doubt that Pupilar is set to branch out at a global stage.



Navigating Your Future: UOWD Career Compass Collab

Choosing a major or switching careers can be challenging, but UOWD's Career Center equips students with expert guidance. This article was crafted with insights from Mr. Farhaan Mansoor and Ms. Mary Gosha, advisors at UOWD's Career Center, offering students practical strategies to shape their academic and professional paths.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT MAJOR

To balance personal interests with career prospects, start by “working backwards” using platforms like Indeed.com (U.S. site) to explore job roles, required qualifications, and daily tasks. Aim for a mix of 80% passion-driven work, like public speaking, and 20% less appealing tasks, such as administrative duties. Self-reflection through the Career Development Platform's free assessments can match strengths to professions. Internships, career talks, and mentorship further align interests with growing fields like digital systems security, ensuring long-term fulfilment.

TRANSITIONING CAREER PATHS

Switching careers requires leveraging transferable skills, such as communication or problem-solving, applicable across industries. Tailor resumes to highlight relevant roles and pursue certifications, volunteering, or freelance projects to bridge gaps. Strategic networking, updated LinkedIn profiles, and expressing motivation in interviews demonstrate adaptability and commitment to the new path.

RESOURCES CAREER CENTER

The Career Development Platform offers tools like CV 360, cover letter builders, and LinkedIn mentorship videos on interviews and networking. Workshops, including CV-building sessions and job search strategy talks, provide practical skills. Free Coursera Career Academy certificates and personalized advising enhance professional competitiveness.

How to Achieve Dreams Despite Roadblocks

By Meenakshi Nagaraj Iyer

"WHETHER YOU THINK YOU CAN, OR YOU
THINK YOU CAN'T - YOU'RE RIGHT."

- HENRY FORD



We've all heard from grownups throughout our lives that school and university are the best years of our lives, while simultaneously being the most crucial ones, and for good reason! It is important to have fun during these carefree years, but towards the end of our teenage, a sense of doom sets in – the inevitability of taking on serious responsibilities and nurturing ourselves financially and emotionally.

Understandably, it is common for people to let their pessimism take over because of minor setbacks and fall into a slump. According to Tayyaba, President of the **UOWD Wellbeing Society**, "Students often run on guilt rather than energy - guilt for resting or not being productive. But the truth is, rest is productive, and more importantly, it's necessary."



There's also this growing pressure to turn our identity into strategy and not discovery, where we think "What version of me should I become?" or worse, "What version of me will be accepted?", instead of asking, "Who am I becoming?" As university students, we are also constantly inundated with the stress of friendships, relationships, exams, assignments, our future career, etc. So, it is only natural that we can tend to get quite overwhelmed and feel lonely. This is where the significance of being **aware** of and **healing** our mental health comes into play, so that we face our challenges head-on and finally let ourselves live one day at a time.



Nevertheless, the only way out is through – we must notice our thought processes, identify patterns and tweak our mindset however needed immediately. When asked about the need for shifting mindsets in youth, **Jaseem**, the **SRC Wellbeing Officer**, said, "I've seen how a shift in mindset from self-criticism to self-compassion, from fear of failure to a focus on growth can completely change the way students engage with their challenges. It allows them to reframe obstacles as opportunities to learn, rather than reasons to stop trying. When we believe that we can grow through effort and experience, we are far more likely to stay motivated and achieve our dreams even when the journey isn't easy."



Seasonal Essentials

Your Ultimate Guide to Self-Improvement and Mindset Mastery

Written by Abigail Coelho



*i am
Confident*

Everyday is an opportunity to become one step closer to your dream self. It's all about what you're doing to shape that mindset. Are you going to start the day accepting that you're never going to be good enough? Or are you going to stop imagining those possibilities and live them? That mindset is a result of being consistent. With that said, we've created a self-help/motivation starter pack that will launch that powerful mindset and bring out your best self!

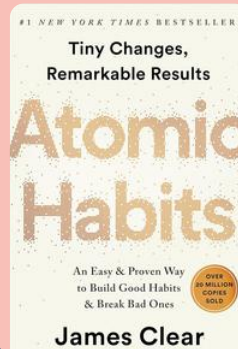
* You are worthy *



Ugly Betty- TV Show

Betty is that signature 'braces' girl surrounded by the walls of the fashionista world. It's not that Betty was ugly, she just never fit the conventional beauty standards set by the fashion industry. Determined, she worked hard to prove herself to the world.

* attract
positivity *



Atomic Habits- Book

You've probably prayed to start doing something once in your life, whether that be exercising an hour daily or working on a skillset. The truth is, you haven't and that's why we wanted to add this book for you. Atomic Habits by James Clear is a revolutionary guide into creating habits - habits that will bring out the best version of you.

i am successful

Self Obsessed- Podcast

Self Obsessed is your ultimate guide to closing the gap between your desired self and your current self. Every episode is a curated guide to managing your life, prioritizing your goals and getting your dream life, step by step. If you're someone looking to be a better version of yourself- this is for you!



The Mel Robbins Podcast



The Mel Robbins Podcast is sweeping away the internet for her relatable content. From self improvement, confidence building, mindset and habits, she covers sensational themes that encourage a productive mindset!

* I CAN & I WILL *



** breathe **

Beyond the Degree:

Written & interviewed by: Zainab Lokhandwala

Behind every inspiring professor is a story worth sharing. At UOWD, Dr. Karol Sikora and Dr. Sadaf Khurshid show how passion, pivots, and perseverance shape extraordinary careers. From early dreams to academic impact, their journeys prove that purpose often emerges where you least expect it. I had the opportunity to interview them and gain valuable insights on their profound journey.

From Dream to Design: Dr. Karol Sikora's Sustainable Vision

Some of the strongest structures begin with simple childhood curiosities- like the ones that surrounded Dr. Karol Sikora growing up. "My father was a civil engineer. My mother was a civil engineer... our house was full of drawings and site photos," he shares. "I had no other option!" he jokes, but even then, his dreams were already forming: "Not about one specific thing, but the outcome- something big, a company, high profits, impact."

Today, Dr. Sikora is recognized for his research in sustainable construction materials, a milestone that reflects just how far the field- and his perspective- has evolved. "When I was a student, sustainability was an academic topic. Now, it's being implemented, measured, and reported. People are thinking beyond shelter- about comfort and the needs of future generations."

His work mainly revolves around timber buildings; a material he believes brings people closer to nature. "You can hug a timber wall. That doesn't happen with concrete," he smiles. He's especially focused on making timber construction affordable, especially in Asia. "Right now, it's considered luxurious. But if we can reduce costs, the potential is massive- especially in places like India, China, Southeast Asia."

So, what does the structure of his dreams look like? "Something natural, sustainable, close to the environment," he says. "It should serve many, be innovative, and feel like it belongs to the future."

When we asked him about the bridge from dream to reality, he firmly replied with- "Action, Dreams are fine, but not enough. Sometimes action, even without a dream, is more important than dreaming without action." With every blueprint and breakthrough, Dr. Sikora continues to build not just structures- but a vision for what sustainable engineering can become!



From Equations to Empowerment: Dr. Sadaf Khurshid's Journey Comes Full Circle

Being appointed as the classroom monitor to becoming an academic mentor, Dr. Sadaf Khurshid's journey is a powerful reminder that the paths we walk, are always of evolving dreams and unexpected purpose. "I always cherished being in positions where I could make a difference," says Dr. Sadaf, whose journey from aspiring medical student to an engineer, business graduate, and now lecturer at UOWD is anything but linear. "Dreams change," she reflects. "But what matters is having something you're passionate enough about to get out of bed for."

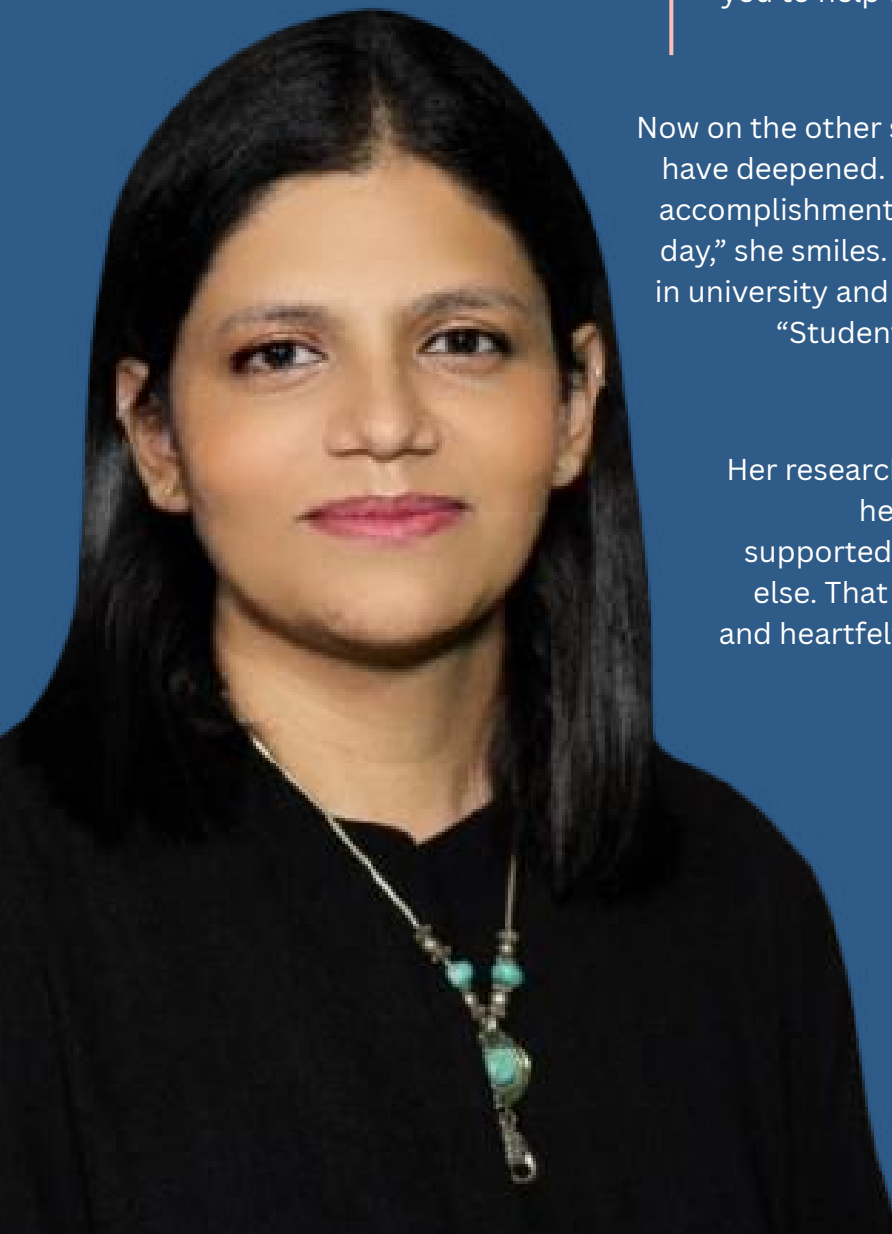
Initially drawn to medicine, Dr. Khurshid shifted to engineering because, as she candidly admits, "They gave me the admission letter early!" Her curiosity and love for math guided her choice, but leadership was always central. "Even during hostel life, I was on the mess committee - making food better for people," she reflects, "You're away from your mother; you want that homely touch."

Yet, industry work left her unfulfilled. "Every morning, I asked myself, is this really what I want to do for the rest of my life?" A turning point came when her parent suggested she pursue her MBA. That led her to UOWD- and, unknowingly, to her future career. "One day after graduation, my lecturer called me in and said, 'I need you to help with admin and maybe teach as an adjunct.' I hadn't planned it, but I was ready."

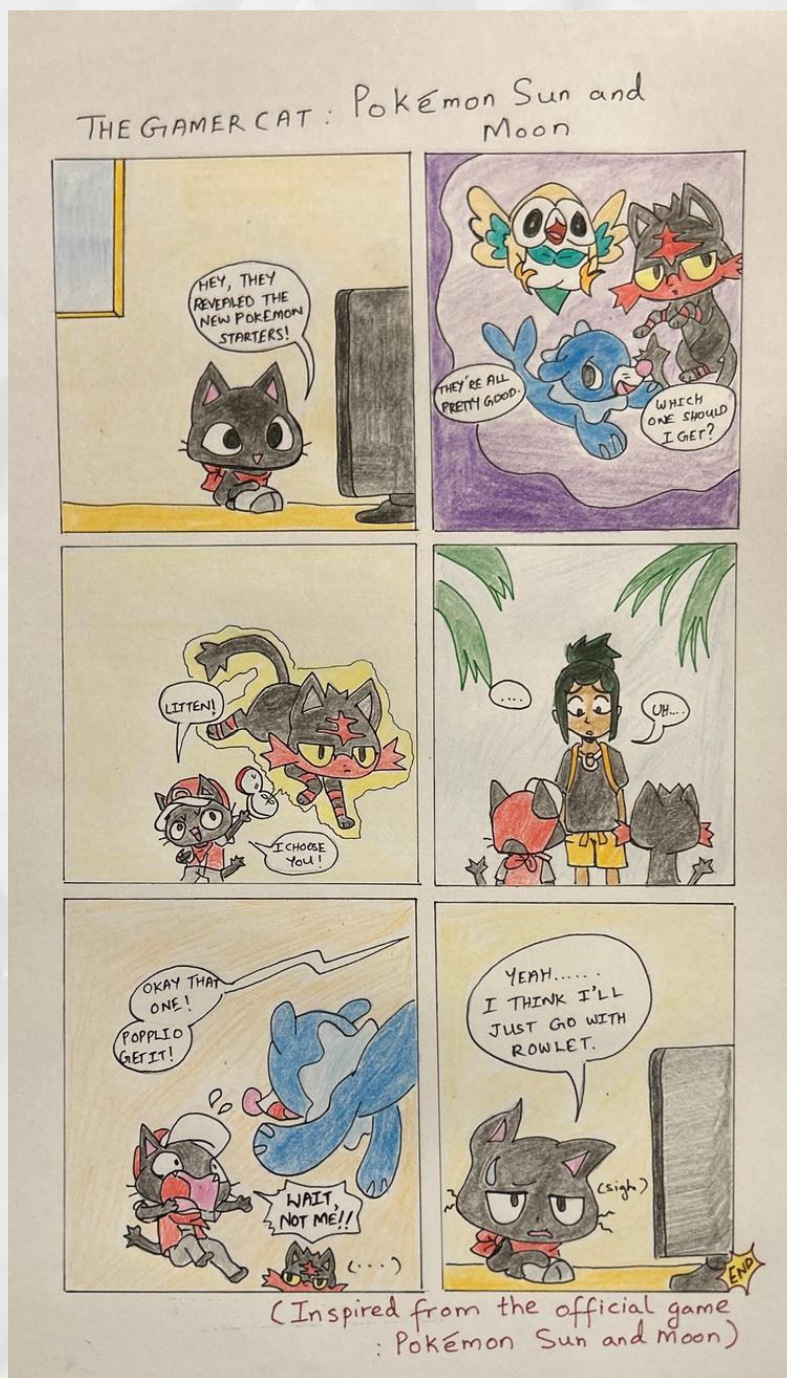
Now on the other side of the classroom, her views on success have deepened. "Success is ongoing. It's that small sense of accomplishment- even if it's just a cup of coffee after a long day," she smiles. With regards to few tips on how to succeed in university and career wise, Dr. Khurshid recommends that "Students must never burn bridges. Your network is everything."

Her research into women social entrepreneurs reflects her passion for empowerment. "If women are supported by their families, they don't need anything else. That support is their jumpstart." Her passionate and heartfelt message to students is "Make your space. Prove your passion. The world will follow."

From building greener cities to empowering future changemakers, these professors remind us that success is more than a destination- it's a journey. Their stories spark inspiration and action. Stay curious, stay bold, and stay tuned- more powerful professor journeys are coming soon in The Wallabies!



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*It's the
possibility of
having a
dream come
true that
makes life
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