

## ACS Foundation supports new CSU degree with 60 scholarships

The ACS Foundation will support Charles Sturt University's innovative new Bachelor of Industry Computing with 60 new scholarships for students who enrol in the program.

**THE NEW DEGREE** is designed to impact Australia's current ICT skills shortage quickly by equipping students with recognised vendor certifications and getting them into entry-level positions to gain relevant industry experience after just 12 months study.

CSU's work integrated learning approach allows students to continue their formal education part time to acquire the full ICT Core Body of Knowledge while gaining relevant practical experience on the job.

Most students are expected to be employed in technical support roles, which provide a great stepping stone for growing their knowledge and moving into more senior roles as they improve their skills.

Adjunct senior lecturer at CSU Martin Hale said the entire program is conducted remotely, leveraging the Internet and CSU's 40 years of experience in distance education.

"We're hoping to attract students who are passionate about getting into ICT and want to make a quick start," said Hale. "The program is intensive, with three full semesters of study

instead of the usual two, and students need to appreciate that there is a substantial amount of work in achieving some of these industry certifications before they begin full-time work."

The university has established an island on virtual world Second Life, where students can attend lectures as avatars, raise their hand and ask questions, and participate in group discussions.

"The Internet offers a complete learning environment," he said. "There's really nothing you can't do online, so it's a very exciting time to be developing programs."

The ACS Foundation is initially offering incentive scholarships for 30 indigenous students, 20 women and 10 merit-based applicants, with plans to increase the number of scholarships available over time.

"The ACS Foundation is thrilled to be able to help support industry relevant degrees such as this one from CSU, which combines industry certification, relevant work experience and a university degree qualification," said ACS Foundation Chairman John Debrincat.



John Venator, President and CEO of CompTIA, presents Professor John Hicks, Dean and Professor of Economics from Charles Sturt University with a Certificate recognising Regional Best Practice for the new Bachelor of Industry Computing degree.

## Record Year for ACS Foundation

**THE ACS FOUNDATION** keeps going from strength to strength, thanks to the hard work and commitment both of its executive team and a dedicated group of volunteers.

The Foundation enjoyed yet another record year in the 2007 financial year, awarding 430 scholarships worth a total of \$4.4 million, including \$4.2 million in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. These three states remain by far the most active, although the Foundation is working to expand its involvement in other parts of the country.

"This was another excellent result for the ACS Foundation," said Executive Director John Ridge. "We were able to build on existing relationships with several key corporate and government organisations and launched several new programs of scholarships along the way."

John is optimistic that 2008 will be even more successful, thanks to growing awareness amongst employers of the need to actively encourage young people to consider an ICT career.

"The recent inaugural ICT Careers Week really helped to raise awareness of the diverse array of career options available in ICT and the many associated benefits, such as high salaries, international mobility and flexible lifestyle. We're excited about the opportunity to make a difference to the ICT skills shortage in Australia by attracting more people into this sector," he said.

Both the ACS and ACS Foundation played prominent roles along with the AIIA in driving ICT Careers Week initiatives.



National ICT Careers Week launched by (from left) Dr Paul Scully-Power, AIIA CEO Ian Birks, ACS CEO Kim Denham and Chair of the Careers Week Steering Committee Penny Coulter.