

Where can
**ACU
TAKE
YOU?**



Benny Callaghan

Benny, an arts graduate from ACU, is now Chief Executive of the School of Social Entrepreneurs which runs nine-month programs for would-be entrepreneurs. Benny's students have provided affordable fresh food hampers to struggling families, helped girls in Sierra Leone attend school, and given young people access to driving lessons.

"The school is not about taking experienced entrepreneurs; we're taking ordinary, everyday people with big passion and ideas."

The school is built on the premise that people who experience problems first-hand often have the best ideas on how to solve them, but often lack the skills, confidence, experience and networks to bring them to life.

"Every day I get to associate with some pretty inspired and remarkable individuals, and see their projects go from an idea to an initiative which is changing people's lives."



James Ajaka

James' passion for building brands began while studying a Bachelor of Commerce at ACU, and has taken him from the world of boxing to the role of CEO at Nudie juices.

One of James' first adventures in business came after meeting boxer Kostya Tszyu. "I felt there were so many things he should be doing with his brand," said James, who then went on to secure Kostya a line of boxing equipment, a DVD and a triple book deal. "We put together a whole bunch of initiatives for Kostya which are still around today."

Then in 2002, James was approached by Tim Pethick to launch a fruit juice business. "When we started, there was a blender, one truck and some fruit – we sold 40 bottles in our first week. Now [Nudie is] in every Coles, Woolworths and McDonald's in Australia.

"I always think back to my days at ACU... On a day-to-day basis I still use the things that I learnt at school."



Sarah Forgan-Doane

Sarah chose to study education at ACU because she wanted to make a positive impact on people's lives.

"I was really drawn to ACU's involvement with people," Sarah said. "I admire that. It makes you think outside your own little square."

After graduating from her degree, Sarah took up a teaching position at St John's Primary School in Auburn. Inspired by the impact she was having there, she began to think about what she could do to improve education in poorer nations, and turned her sights to Africa.

She boarded a plane for Namibia where she took up work training teachers and educating students in western Africa.

"The thing I love the most is seeing the teachers' faces after they have developed something new at a workshop and how proud they are of their new resources and skills. It was a very humbling experience."

Sarah later returned to ACU to complete a Masters of Education to better understand how to consult communities about their own goals, rather than imposing an agenda on them as an outsider.



Heather Machin

Bachelor of Nursing graduate Heather never knows what her day will bring, but that's to be expected when you work in a flying hospital and treat blind patients all over the world.

The 32-year-old is Director of Nursing for the ORBIS Flying Eye Hospital, which brings together dedicated eye care professionals and aviators to give the gift of sight to developing countries.

Onboard the refurbished DC-10 jet aircraft, local doctors, nurses and technicians from developing countries work alongside ORBIS's international medical team to exchange knowledge and improve their skills.

"It's an incredibly diverse role and on any given day I can be working on accreditation and policy development, as a nurse, flight attendant, or even loading cargo."

In the 48-seat classroom at the front of the plane, doctors give lectures, discussions and live broadcasts of surgical procedures being performed in the Flying Eye Hospital operating room.

In the two years since she got the job, Heather has been to India, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Oman, Nigeria, Uganda, China, Indonesia, Vietnam and more.

"I particularly love returning to places I have worked before and seeing how the skills we helped them develop have made such a big difference to their practice," she said.



Jean Madden

Realising the negative effects that lack of sleep and lying on concrete has on the physical and mental health of homeless people, ACU graduate Jean Madden came up with the Street Swag.

Made from lightweight waterproof canvas and a foam mattress, the swag can be folded into a bag, helping preserve the dignity of the homeless and acting as a deterrent to theft and violence.

In 2009, Jean beat actor Brad Pitt to win the prestigious INDEX design awards "people's choice" category for her invention.

In 2010, she was named Queensland Young Australian of the Year.

Jean who has both a Bachelor of Education (Primary) and Master of Arts (Theology) from ACU, said that more than 15,000 Street Swags have been distributed to those sleeping rough around Australia so far.

"The Street Swag is not about solving homelessness, but about keeping people alive for as long as possible. It's a great privilege to be able to help."