

Suncorp Commits to Fight against Skin Cancer in WA

The SKMRC received a significant financial boost earlier this year, forming an important partnership with one of the country's leading financial service providers, Suncorp.



Adam Gilchrist, David Foster and Peter Klinken with students Mahalia Aiyana and Cooper Allen

Recently, the partnership saw Centre founder Yvonne Kirkbride join Australian cricketer legend Adam Gilchrist in awarding 20 vital shade tents to local community groups.

Suncorp's SunWise Shade Tent Grant Scheme called on West Australian sporting clubs and community groups to apply for a \$4000 shade tent, with the winners announced at the July event.

Mrs Kirkbride said it was a fantastic experience to be part of an initiative that would help so many children and families protect themselves from the dangers of the sun.

"It was a real privilege to stand beside Suncorp's SunWise ambassador Adam Gilchrist and play a part in providing these important sun protectors to a huge range of community groups from across WA," she said.

"Suncorp received such a positive response to the Scheme from a large cross-section of the community, which is very encouraging to hear, because it means West Australian's are taking action to avoid melanoma."

WAIMR Director Professor Peter Klinken said Suncorp's support would go a long way towards the search for improved diagnosis and treatment of melanoma.

"We're extremely grateful for the opportunity Suncorp has offered, which will help fund existing research projects and open up new avenues of investigations into how we can better diagnose and treat melanoma – in turn, we hope all West Australians will get behind Suncorp's effort to help ease the burden of skin cancer in WA," he said.

Suncorp Group Executive Banking David Foster said the bank wanted to match its corporate commitment to Western Australia, where it now had seven branches, with a genuine commitment to the community.

"Our 16,000 staff combined with the relationship we have with over seven million customers nationally, provides an established and strong community base from which to support research at the SKMRC and awareness of melanoma dangers," Mr Foster said.

WA Golf Open

The Western Australian Golf Association, together with the PGA of Australia and the Cottesloe Golf Club have developed a new concept – the 2009 John Hughes Geely WA Open Championship – which in October, will honour Scott Kirkbride's memory, raise funds for the SKMRC, bring people to the game of golf and showcase the best of WA produce.

"Scott was a great mate and an amazing golfer – he was a club champion and worked for the WA Golf Association, so what better way to celebrate his life and contribution to our Club than to associate his name to such a prestigious

championship," Cottesloe Golf Club general manager Brad White said.

"Scott joined the Cottesloe Golf Club at just 14 years old and took out his first trophy at just 16, then starting at just 22 years old took out the Club championship at Cottesloe four years in a row, between 1999 and 2002, a feat only achieved by three others throughout the history of our Club.

"I know that if Scott was with us today, he would have been playing in this tournament and he would have been an outstanding competitor! I'm hoping this event not only raises much-needed funds



Scott Kirkbride

A Legendary Luncheon

Guests at this year's annual SKMRC fundraising luncheon were treated to some of Perth's legendary sports stars including former international cricketer and Australian captain Kim Hughes, and AFL footballer, coach and Chief Executive of the Clontarf Foundation Gerard Neesham, who both shared inspirational stories.

Hosted by Mark Readings, the event also featured addresses by Channel Nine Perth personality Dixie Marshall and leading wine writer Ray Jordan, who imparted their wisdom to an enthusiastic crowd.

Once again, thanks to generous support from sponsors, donors and guests, the luncheon held at Subiaco Oval was a huge success – attracting 320 guests and raising

around \$50,000 for the SKMRC.

One of the highlights of the afternoon was a first for the event – the announcement of the SKMRC Discovery Research Priming Grants, designed to support world-first research that will unveil genetic clues towards treating melanoma.

Professor Grant Morahan and Dr Louise Winteringham were awarded \$100,000 and \$50,000 respectively for their year-long projects.

While Professor Morahan will dedicate his funds to his search for genetic clues that may help the body strengthen its own prevention against melanoma, Dr Winteringham will lead a team investigating the tumor suppressor gene Hls5 and its potential influence in

melanoma.

"We have already uncovered a role for Hls5 in leukemia and breast cancer, and during that process we noticed that the gene also interacts with a number of key proteins involved in one of the known growth pathways associated with melanoma," Dr Winteringham said.

"So far, we've found that Hls5 influences proteins affecting the growth of certain cancer cells, so we will now work to find out whether this is the case for melanoma. Ultimately, we hope to be able to pinpoint and correct the defects that contribute to melanoma growth."

The Hls5 tumour suppressor gene was first reported by WAIMR Director Professor Peter Klinken in 2004.



Professor Peter Leedman, Dr Louise Winteringham, Carolyn Williams, Professor Grant Morahan and Yvonne Kirkbride

Back row: Mark Readings and Kim Hughes. Front row: Dixie Marshall, Yvonne Kirkbride, Gerard Neesham and Ray Jordan.



for the SKMRC but helps get the message out to golfers about the importance of protecting themselves and their family from the sun."

SKMRC founder Yvonne Kirkbride said the Club was and had always been, a very big part of her family's life, so was thrilled it would honour Scott and generously support the SKMRC.

"When Scott was being treated for melanoma he was in the running to take out

his fifth championship but unfortunately couldn't complete the course because of his illness. I know he would be delighted that an event of this calibre was being held to help others avoid melanoma in future," she said. Mr White said this year's Championship would return to the PGA Tour of Australasia and the accompanying Festival of WA would feature a variety of marquees from local wine and food establishments offering samples of their produce for spectators.

The WA Open will be held at the picturesque Cottesloe Golf Club in Swanbourne from Thursday October 22 to Sunday 25. Entry is free on Thursday and Friday with \$50 tickets, including vouchers for food and drink samples on course, available to follow the weekend play.

For tickets, please call the SKMRC on (08) 9224 0333 or the Cottesloe Golf Club on (08) 9384 3222.