



MEDIA RELEASE
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EQUINE PRIZES ANNOUNCED

A cash prize and an all expenses paid trip to one of Europe's leading thoroughbred studs have been won by two Murdoch University Veterinary Students.

Fourth year veterinary student Michelle Abraham was awarded the Emilio Balzarini Travel prize and final year student Tamara McElroy was awarded the Emilio Balzarini Commitment to Equine Prize. The awards were sponsored by Wellard.

As part of the travel prize, Michelle will travel to the Scuderia Siba stud in Brescia, Italy, later this year. The stud is run by the Balzarini family, who also own and operate Siba Ships in Italy and Asia and the Wellard Group in Australia.

The stud stands a number of stallions as well as its own and client's broodmares. It has 180 loose boxes plus breeding barns and a special yearling development program.

Michelle said the travel prize created not just one, but many opportunities for furthering an international appreciation for the equine industry.

"With the transportation of horses across the globe, it is this international appreciation and knowledge acquisition, which I believe is the key to supporting and driving the success of equine veterinary practice, and therefore the future of the industry," she said.

"I am extremely appreciative of this opportunity and look forward to visiting the Balzarini Stables in 2008. The experiences and knowledge gained in undertaking this prize will go beyond my own benefit as I aim to share these experiences, knowledge and ongoing enjoyment."

Tamara has used the Emilio Balzarini Commitment to Equine Prize prize to relocate to NSW, where she was offered an internship position at Randwick Equine Centre – one of Australia's premier equine hospitals.

"Horses always held an appeal over other animals and it was natural that I would gravitate in this direction in my veterinary career," she said.

"The Randwick practice staffs many registered specialists and thus it is an excellent opportunity to learn off highly skilled and well respected veterinarians.

“I plan to use this internship as a stepping stone to a residency programme, and from there to obtain specialist qualifications. I hope to have a long and fulfilling career in equine medicine.”

The Emilio Balzarini Commitment to Equine Prize began last year and is awarded to the student who shows outstanding commitment to equine medicine and surgery.

Wellard principal Mauro Balzarini said both Michelle and Tamara were worthy award recipients.

“We are funding the prize to encourage students to consider equine veterinary science as a rewarding and long term career and to increase the knowledge and experience of current veterinary science students to pass onto their peers,” he said.

“The commitment from both Michelle and Tamara indicates our goals are being achieved.”

Mr Balzarini said the Commitment to Equine Prize recognised Emilio Balzarini’s foresight, vision and hard work establishing and developing the Wellard business 30 years ago and his life long passion for thoroughbred horses.

Murdoch University School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences Dean Professor John Edwards thanked Wellard and the Balzarini family for their donation to the School through the Murdoch University Veterinary Trust.

“The Murdoch University School of Veterinary Sciences and its equine centre have developed a great reputation in the equine industry, and prizes and donations from companies such as Wellard reward students who are excelling in their field; encourage other students to attain excellence; and promote equine veterinary science to prospective students.”

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Picture: Murdoch University veterinary student Michelle Abraham was awarded the Emilio Balzarini travel prize by Murdoch University School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences Dean Professor John Edwards and Mr Emilio Balzarini.

(Note: Please contact Cameron Morse at cmorse@wa.porternovelli.com.au) for a high resolution version.