



## MEDIA RELEASE

# United States Studies Centre - University of Sydney selected as Host University

Sydney, Australia - 14 November, 2006 - The University of Sydney has been selected to host an Australian based United States Studies Centre.

The announcement was made by the Chairman of the American Australian Association Limited Malcolm Binks tonight at the inaugural dinner of the American Australian Association at the Four Seasons Hotel in Sydney. Among the guests at the dinner, which honoured Rupert Murdoch AC, Chairman & CEO of News Corporation, who is also a Patron of the Association, were the Australian Prime Minister The Hon. John Howard MP; former prime ministers The Hon. Gough Whitlam AC QC and The Rt. Hon. Malcolm Fraser AC CH PC; The Hon. Kim Beazley MP, Federal Leader of the Opposition; The Hon. Philip Ruddock MP, Federal Attorney-General; The Hon. Dr. Brendan Nelson MP, Federal Minister for Defence; Senator the Hon. Helen Coonan, Federal Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts; the United States Ambassador to Australia, H.E. Mr. Robert D. McCallum, Jr.; and the Australian Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Mr. Dennis J. Richardson AO.

In May this year, during a State visit to Washington DC, the Prime Minister announced the Government's A\$25million contribution to endow the initiative. Additional funds are being committed to the Centre by the University and the State of NSW as well as being raised by the Association from business and private individuals in both Australia and the United States. To date significant commitments have been made by the private sector, including Rupert Murdoch AC & News Corporation, Frank Lowy AC & the Westfield Group, The Pratt Foundation, The Dow Chemical Company Foundation and the Merck Company Foundation. The University and the NSW Government will also be making significant financial contributions.

The Centre will be established with its own governing Board of Directors. It will offer a range of postgraduate research studies at the Masters and PhD levels; facilitate professional academic exchanges; operate as a research centre of excellence on U.S. studies and produce scholarly articles and reports.

Its primary objectives will be:

- to deepen the appreciation and understanding of the U.S. culture, political climate and government and strengthen the relationship between both countries;

- to complement and provide leadership on current U.S.-Australian educational endeavours;
- to increase the awareness of the study of U.S. politics and government;
- to promote collaborative research between institutions in Australia and the United States; and
- to operate as a think-tank for Australian-United States relationship.

Plans for the Centre's first year of programming includes:

- a National Opinion Survey measuring what Australian's think about the U.S.,
- a National Summit on U.S. studies which will include an academic conference and a major public forum including lectures and workshops, and
- a Classic American Film Festival run in cooperation with the UCLA's School of Theatre.

A request for tender was issued to all Australian universities at the end of July. A number of applications were received and were assessed by an independent Selection Advisory Committee of eminent Australians and Americans. That recommendation from the Selection Committee was formally accepted on November 9, 2006 by the board of the American Australian Association Limited.

It is intended that the Centre build a reputation for academic excellence, independence and objectivity.

Malcolm Binks, Chairman of the Association, said, "We are very excited to be working with the University of Sydney in setting up this Centre which we are confident will make a vital contribution to the enhancement of the already outstanding relationship between our two countries."

Prof. Gavin Brown AO FAA, Vice-Chancellor & Principal of the University of Sydney said, "This is a Centre for all of Australia. The University of Sydney is honoured to host it."

**About the American Australian Association Limited:** The newly-established American Australian Association Limited is a non-profit organisation based in Australia devoted to relations between the United States and Australia. AAA Australia is affiliated with the American Australian Association, Inc. based in the United States, which was established in 1948 with similar objectives. You may visit our website at [www.americanaustralian.org.au](http://www.americanaustralian.org.au).

Note to Editors: Representatives from the Association, the University of Sydney and the New South Wales Government will be available for individual media interviews from 15 November in Sydney.

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