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Media Statement

## **WE'RE WOMEN AND WE COUNT**

Five female statisticians based in the Laboratory for Genetic Epidemiology at the Nedlands campus of the Western Australian Institute for Medical Research are proof there are increasing numbers of women working in science.

The team of Julie Marsh, Pamela McCaskie, Nicole Warrington, Annette Fedson and Gemma Cadby are all involved in medical research as part of their postgraduate degrees at The University of Western Australia (UWA), and are the largest group of female statisticians in academia in WA.

The team's supervisor, WAIMR and UWA Professor Lyle Palmer, said International Women's Day (March 8) was the perfect opportunity to recognise the fact that more women were becoming part of the scientific community in WA.

"It is great to see that more women are seeing science as a vibrant and fulfilling career option – particularly in areas such as statistics which in the past have often been dominated by men," said Professor Palmer.

"Many people do not know how critical statisticians are in the genetic research arena – but they are the backbone of our work.

"For example, Julie, Pamela, Nicole, Annette and Gemma carry out tasks such as analysing complex genetic data and developing new software tools to allow us to unpack the causes of common diseases such as heart disease, sleep apnoea, prostate cancer, and skin cancer."

WAIMR Director, Professor Peter Klinken, said that WAIMR was strongly committed to creating more opportunities for women in medical research and science.

Pamela McCaskie will embark on a new career path this year as she begins a lectureship at UWA.

The three year lectureship will see Ms McCaskie take on a joint position between the UWA School of Mathematics and Statistics and WAIMR's Laboratory for Genetic Epidemiology.

"I think it's a great opportunity to be given a faculty position so early in my career, and this lectureship will allow me to dedicate half my time to solid research and the other half helping teach tomorrow's statisticians and researchers," said Ms McCaskie.

Celebrated on 8 March, International Women's Day is the global day connecting all women around the world and inspiring them to achieve their full potential.

### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

**Natalie Papadopoulos 0407 984 435, [natalie@capturemedia.com.au](mailto:natalie@capturemedia.com.au)**