

# NEiTA 2009 ASG Inspirational Teaching Awards

## State and Territory Award Recipient



## Nicola Forrest

Bachelor of Education (Secondary), Master of School Leadership  
**Lyndhurst Secondary College**, Cranbourne, Victoria  
Nominated by: School Council

*Position: Leading Teacher, Teaching and Learning Leader • Category: Secondary • Level taught: Year 9 Inquiry, year 11 English • Years teaching: 13 years • Years at this school: 7 years • School type: Government • Town/Suburb: Cranbourne • State: Victoria • Postcode: 3977*

### Why teaching?

In many ways, I have been a teacher for as long as I have been a learner. When I first started school, I would come home and teach my younger brothers (possibly under duress!) using my wardrobe door as a blackboard.

From a young age, I had the unique experience of helping to teach my mum to read. Her courage and determination as a learner has had the most significant impact on the way I work with others in my career today. It is the privilege of helping others that inspires me to be the best teacher I can be.

### Engaging and motivating through inquiry based learning

Nicola Forrest believes that every child is capable of successful learning. Based on the principles of inquiry learning, multiple intelligence types and mixed ability classes, her teaching practices are stimulating and inclusive. Nicola truly engages her students by encouraging them to link their learning to their own worlds. In this manner, she gives the students ownership of their own education and helps to make their learning seem more relevant and valuable.

Nicola implemented and leads a year 9 inquiry based learning program in the college's purpose-built Inquiry Centre. She oversees a team of teachers and more than 200 students carrying out the inquiry-based program for Science, Humanities and Integrated Studies. Students are immersed in new ideas, taught the key understandings, and then choose their own areas of deep investigation. The pupils also decide how they will share and disseminate their new knowledge and findings. Nicola's assessment principles are based on assessing the learning journey, not just the end result.

Nicola also runs the City School Project in which all year 9 students spend four days in Melbourne's Central Business District with their core teachers. The students get to participate in investigative tours, interactive question and answer sessions, and hands-on learning experiences. Nicola was selected for the i-NET Developing Young Leaders Program that, in 2005, also included a study tour to the United Kingdom. This program resulted in Nicola leading the implementation of various teaching and learning initiatives across the school.

Despite her busy schedule, Nicola is always prepared to mentor other educators. She takes time to support both new student teachers and fellow experienced educators. She conducts numerous professional development sessions for her peers.

Nicola has completed her Master of School Leadership while teaching full-time. She is a committed, focused and inspirational teacher who engages and motivates students and other teachers with her innovative teaching methods.

#### Contact details:

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