



NEiTA presents

Program



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NEiTA presents

The 2010 ASG National Teaching Awards—an opportunity to meet 10 of Australia’s leading teachers and leaders.

At NEiTA’s 2010 ASG National Teaching Awards, 10 recipients will receive recognition for their outstanding contribution to teaching. Selected from more than 1100 nominations received in 2010, these teachers and leaders accept their awards as representatives of the thousands of teachers in our schools and centres who, each and every day, inspire their students.

Profiles of these great teachers also show them as leaders among their colleagues and their education setting, innovators among the teaching profession, and people able to engage others within the community.

About NEiTA

The NEiTA (National Excellence in Teaching Awards) Foundation was formed in 1994 with the support of the Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) to honour exemplary teaching throughout Australia and New Zealand.

NEiTA and its long-term partner, ASG, are proud to continue their support for the teaching profession by acknowledging the valuable role inspirational teachers play in the development of our youth.

NEiTA is Australia’s only community-centred teaching awards program. Teacher nominations are submitted by the consumers of education – from school parents, school councils, parent associations, committees of management, secondary students councils, and community organisations.

Eighteen years into its awards program, NEiTA has received more than 20,000 nominations for excellent and inspirational teachers from early childhood and school communities throughout Australia. More than 1000 teachers have received awards, and over half a million dollars has been awarded in professional development grants, prizes and endowments.



**Sir Gustav Nossal AC, CBE, FAA, FRS
NEiTA Patron**

Great teachers do not merely impart their knowledge to students; they empower them to continue the quest for learning and understanding so that one day the pupil may surpass the teacher. This is how our nation grows.



**Mr Terry O'Connell, Chairman
NEiTA Foundation**

The ability of teachers to inspire students and their colleagues is increasingly becoming a valued quality—great teachers inspire greatness in their students. NEiTA acknowledges and celebrates the outstanding contribution great teachers make to Australia's education system, the nation's quality of life, and the ability to shape young minds.

Today's NEiTA National Award recipients represent the thousands of inspirational and excellent teaching professionals who through their commitment to education, their students and their communities, impart information, help children discover themselves and the world around them, and provide guidance and support along the way.

They also serve to remind Australians that the dedication of our outstanding teachers makes a tremendous difference to the community. The work of teachers is vitally important, but the work of great teachers demonstrates just how much teachers count in shaping the world that we experience tomorrow and into the future.



**Dr Gordon Young, Chairman
Australian Scholarships Group (ASG)**

The Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) recognises the important role teachers play in helping children reach their education potential and has supported NEiTA from its inception in 1994.

Teachers make important contributions to the nation's youth by imparting knowledge and providing learning experiences that motivate students to take responsibility for their own learning. It has been shown that school leaders help encourage a vibrant teaching community resulting in higher standards of education, for the benefit of our country's children and youth.

The ASG inspirational teachers and school leaders also help to create a school environment that leads to positive participation in society and responsible citizenship.



The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth

I would like to acknowledge NEiTA and the dedication with which the organisation continues to work in partnerships with communities across Australia to recognise and reward the teaching profession through the National Teaching Excellence Awards. I understand this event has been held for the last 18 years, and this is a milestone to be celebrated.

I extend my congratulations to the winners of this year's awards. Each teacher has been nominated by their community for their dedication and inspirational leadership that has had a profound, positive impact, not only on the students they teach but on the wider community. Such an achievement truly deserves this national recognition.

Great teachers are essential in making every school a great school, offering every child a quality education. These awards recognise those in the teaching profession that contribute every day to making this a reality.

The theme of this year's awards, '*Teachers Count*', is a timely reminder of the impact a teacher has not only on students, but also the community, the education system and the nation. There is no doubt that the teaching profession plays a pivotal role in preparing future generations of Australians for a productive and inclusive role in society.

I would like to offer each winner both my thanks, for the vitally important job they do every day and my congratulations, on the receipt of the National Excellence in Teaching Award.

Peter Garrett



The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP,
Minister for School Education,
Early Childhood and Youth

Message from our Guest Speaker

Professor Stephen Dinham

Inaugural Chair of Teacher Education and Director of Learning and Teaching
Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne



Professor Stephen Dinham,
Chair of Teacher Education and
Director of Learning and Teaching,
Melbourne Graduate School
of Education, University of
Melbourne

There has been universal recognition that the major in-school factor affecting student learning is the teacher and that teacher quality varies widely.

The biggest equity issue in Australian education today isn't computers, new buildings or equipment. It's each student having quality teachers and quality teaching in schools supported by effective leadership and professional learning in mutually respectful local community contexts.

Life isn't fair, but good teaching and good schools are the best means we have of overcoming disadvantage and opening the doors of opportunity for young people.

The NEiTA 2010 ASG National Teaching Awards are very significant in recognising and encouraging quality teaching. I congratulate the award winners and commend the organisers of these awards for their efforts to further the cause of quality teaching in Australia.

Stephen Dinham

NEiTA 2010 ASG National Teaching Award Recipients

Early Childhood

Suzanne Johns *C & K Wynnum General Gordon, Wynnum, Queensland*



As the kindergarten teacher at C & K Wynnum General Gordon, Suzanne Johns creates a learning space full of wonder and enticement.

The children become co-creators in establishing learning spaces. They have helped to construct their own science, music and discovery areas, art studios, dramatic play areas, and the Zen Peace Garden which encourages quiet activities such as butterfly watching, reading or water games. These co-creations give the kindergarten children a sense of ownership and engagement with their learning spaces.

Suzanne strives to involve her students' extended families in the children's early childhood education which helps to foster a strong sense of self, family and community for her students. At the end of each year, Suzanne presents each family with a personalised learning journal recording their child's educational journey.

Suzanne creates an environment where children feel safe and nurtured, and she shares her enthusiasm with parents and the wider community.

Suzanne's National Award is for Community Engagement.

Carmen Parker *Farmhouse Montessori School, North Balgowlah, New South Wales*



As Director of the Farmhouse Montessori School in inner Sydney, Carmen Parker promotes Montessori principles passionately, as well as her interest in sustainability and appreciation for the natural environment. Students are involved in real projects whether it is the construction of a chicken coop, creating a vegetable garden or caring for a river bed.

Nationally, Carmen has been actively involved in the publishing of the *Montessori Matters* newsletter and has presented numerous talks and written many articles on Montessori practices.

In 2002, Carmen was invited to speak to parents, teachers and government officials in Suzhou, China, about the Montessori philosophy. She worked with parent groups and conducted television and radio interviews. Her trip was so successful that Carmen has returned to China regularly since then to continue her work.

Carmen is dedicated to sharing her passion for Montessori education not only with her community, but also nationally and internationally.

Carmen's National Award is for Leadership.

NEiTA 2010 ASG National Teaching Award Recipients

Primary

Brigitte Mackenzie *Mount Surprise State School, Mt Surprise, Queensland*



Mount Surprise State School is the hub for a small rural community of 150 people in far North Queensland. As the school's principal and multi-age class teacher for Prep – Year 7, Brigitte Mackenzie has a strong focus on social and emotional pedagogy and community.

Brigitte has high expectations for her students and strong partnerships with their families. To broaden students' educational horizons, she has organised networks with other small schools, accessed distance education services, and organised field trips and international visitors. She has also brought technology into her classroom, and integrated it into all key learning areas with every student using their own school-funded laptop.

Since her arrival in 2008, Brigitte has lifted the school's NAPLAN results from the bottom 20 per cent of the state to the top 20 per cent of the nation. She is a teacher making an enormous difference in a small rural community.

Brigitte's National Award is for Community Engagement.

Lyn Nelson *St Leonard's Catholic Primary School, Glen Waverley, Victoria*



As Special Needs/Wellbeing Coordinator at St Leonard's Catholic Primary School in Melbourne, Lyn Nelson looks after the educational, social and emotional needs of the whole school community. She oversees a team of teacher aides, and writes and monitors individual learning plans for more than 50 students with special needs.

In 2009, Lyn oversaw the design and construction of a Wellbeing Centre. This centre is now the hub of learning for the school, and also gives dignity to students working with special needs staff. All students access its resources at lunch time.

Lyn is also on the School Leadership Team, and is Teaching and Learning Coordinator. She coordinates the school's Maths and Reading Intervention Programs and assists in analysing test data and working with teachers to better understand each child's individual needs.

Lyn also supervised St Leonard's winning entry in the Catholic Education Office Melbourne 2010 Student Wellbeing Drama Festival. Lyn's commitment and empathy allow her to be a positive force at St Leonard's for both students and fellow teachers.

Lyn's National Award is for Leadership.

NEiTA 2010 ASG National Teaching Award Recipients

Primary continued

Mark Sparvell *Kadina Primary School, Kadina, South Australia*



As Principal of Kadina Primary School, Mark Sparvell believes that a values-based education can make all the difference to a child's schooling experience. In recent years, Mark has coordinated National Values Education projects and carries this focus into his leadership role.

Mark is an innovative educator. In 2009, he won the Asia Pacific Region Microsoft Innovative Teacher of the Year Award with Connect Thinking, an online project allowing students worldwide to collaborate on environmental and sustainability issues. He was then awarded Microsoft's worldwide prize in Brazil, the International Innovative Award in Collaboration.

Mark is an active member on leadership committees and reference groups. He has chaired Regional Youth Development Groups and regularly provides professional perspective on curriculum initiatives. He has assisted Schoolaid to identify school-based philanthropy, and has been both a judge and mentor for Microsoft's International Innovative Teacher Forum. Mark presents at many national conferences. By embracing the latest learning technologies and their possible impact for the future, he demonstrates his willingness to learn, and so reinforces the value of education. Mark is currently working as an Executive Consultant in ICT and Innovation for Principals Australia.

Mark's National Award is for Innovation.

Nicky Taylor *Reynella Primary School, Old Reynella, South Australia*



Nicky Taylor is a creative and innovative educator who deeply understands the connection between social and emotional competencies and academic results. Nicky creates a safe and nurturing classroom environment for her Year 4 students at Reynella Primary School.

Nicky has implemented new educational programs including *Play is the Way*, a program which strengthens social, emotional and physical development. Its success and effectiveness has led to the school now using it for all year levels.

Nicky also introduced *Community Circles*, a student-led program to share and solve students' home and school issues. Students learn to communicate their feelings and concerns effectively, and to respect each other's different circumstances. As a result, attendance and student motivation have greatly improved, and reported classroom and yard behaviour incidents for her students have dropped to zero.

With her creative implementation of social, emotional and academic plans, Nicky has had a profound influence on the students at Reynella Primary School.

Nicky's National Award is for Innovation.

NEiTA 2010 ASG National Teaching Award Recipients

Secondary

Melinda Elith *Urana Central School, Urana, New South Wales*



Situated in a small rural town in the Riverina, Urana Central School boasts 40 students from kindergarten to Year 12. As Science teacher, Melinda Elith uses the latest teaching technologies to run an inquiry-based program. Her students gain above state average results each year.

Melinda is an incredibly active leader in her community and organises a vast array of extracurricular activities and support programs for students. She is currently a Year Advisor, regular Relieving Head Teacher, swimming and first aid instructor, tennis club president, In-school Coordinator for the Riverina ACCESS Program, and coordinator of SEAT, the Student Representative Council, and Priority Schools Program for Student Equity Development.

Melinda also produces and directs the school musicals, coaches netball, organises excursions, runs workshops, coordinates the school magazine, and runs the school's Environment Day and Clean Up Australia Day activities. Melinda leads her students into learning by knowing and caring for them and her community.

Melinda's National Award is for Leadership.

Rosita Hooyer *Pavilion School, Mill Park Campus, Victoria*



The Pavilion is a government secondary school that aims to create a safe and secure psycho-social rehabilitation environment. The school's program promotes academic rigour for previously disengaged learners.

Rosita Hooyer is the sole teacher at the Mill Park campus, and is responsible for the entire education curriculum of her 32 students. Rosita is re-engaging these teenagers back into the education system after lengthy periods of disengagement from all forms of education.

To help connect with her students, Rosita gets to know each of them personally, their interests, their family backgrounds and their abilities. She then develops carefully targeted learning goals for each student.

Rosita's classes are already having an impact on the well-being of many families in the region. She is building a well-earned reputation as a teacher who can successfully assist in the reintegration of disenfranchised adolescents through the power of transformative education. Rosita gives her students the intangible assets of hope and possibility.

Rosita's National Award is for Community Engagement.

NEiTA 2010 ASG National Teaching Award Recipients

Secondary continued

Andrea Rundle *Katanning Senior High School, Katanning, Western Australia*



Andrea Rundle is Teacher in Charge of Engagement and Inclusive Learning at Katanning Senior High School, a low socio-economic school with a diverse range of students and backgrounds south-east of Perth.

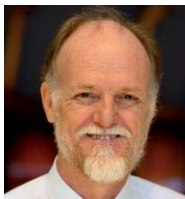
Andrea has designed specific and practical hands-on programs to re-engage, motivate and stimulate at risk students including the school's ACCESS and Senior School Engagement Programs.

She is Coordinator of Country Week, a weeklong sporting carnival held in Perth, with more than 110 upper secondary students competing in 12 different sports against 43 country senior high schools.

Andrea's expertise in re-motivating disengaged students is widely recognised. She serves on the State Advisory Board for Senior School Engagement Programs, and is a speaker at state-based forums. In 2008, Andrea received an Education Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Teaching Profession. Andrea's work has touched many students and families and changed their lives for the better.

Andrea's National Award is for Innovation.

Mark Sullivan *Brisbane Girls Grammar School, Spring Hill, Queensland*



As Director of Instrumental Music at Brisbane Girls Grammar School, Mark Sullivan believes in the power of music and its ability to transform lives. During his 14 years at the school, Mark has created an intense musical culture and the exceptional standard of music performance for which Girls Grammar is renowned.

Contrary to traditional practices, Mark's programme is ensemble based, underpinned by sound pedagogical principles, and provides a clear progression in skills. Students are organised by progress rather than age, creating cohesive ensembles and a dynamic social context. The school has more than 800 ensemble positions in string and symphony orchestras, choirs, concert and jazz bands, and percussion, contemporary and chamber music groups.

Each year, Mark coordinates two music camps, 30 concerts, workshops by guest professionals, two music festivals and numerous solo competitions and performances. It is no surprise that more than 30 of Mark's students have become professional musicians or teachers. This is his lasting legacy.

Mark's National Award is for Community Engagement.



With Thanks

NEiTA wishes to thank the Australian Scholarships Group (ASG), Marcom Projects and You Can Do It! Education for their continuing support and commitment to Australian students and teachers.

NEiTA would also like to express heartfelt thanks to Professor Stephen Dinham, Dr Gordon Young, Dr Ros Otzen and Ms Leigh Hay for their participation in the NEiTA 2010 ASG National Teaching Awards presentation.



Australian
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