

NEiTA MEDIA RELEASE

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NEiTA helps launch another Armstrong into 'Space'

Today, NEiTA (the National Excellence in Teaching Awards) and the Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) presented the NEiTA 2008 ASG International Space Camp Award to the Northern Territory's, Bakewell Primary School librarian, Mrs Helen Armstrong.

Mrs Armstrong was nominated for the award because of her outstanding commitment to encouraging a passion for science among her students—culminating in the establishment of the NT Space School, and facilitating school visits by NASA astronaut Dr James Reilly.

NEiTA is the only program in Australia to offer the space camp prize—giving one outstanding teacher the opportunity to represent Australia at the NASA affiliated 2009 International Space Camp for Educators, held in Alabama (USA).

Mrs Armstrong said she was honoured to participate in the space camp, which will enable her to network with some of the world's top educators.

"To meet and interact with other teachers and build upon my space knowledge is not only inspirational to myself personally, but will also allow me to inspire my students and fellow colleagues.

"Receiving the space camp award is definitely a highlight of my teaching career, especially as I have always had an interest in Science and the space frontier," she said.

The space camp is based on a simulated space course—just like the training Neil Armstrong might have completed before his famous moonwalk many years ago.

Joining Mrs Armstrong on her trip to 'space' will be two ASG beneficiaries. They were selected to represent Australia at the International Space Camp for Students, from their outstanding applications in an ASG beneficiary promotion. For the first time, ASG is sponsoring their space camp adventure.

Olias Bartel, a year 12 student from Birdwood High School in South Australia, and Sabine Bellstedt, a year 11 student from Castle Hill High School in New South Wales, were selected to attend the student space camp because they showed exceptional aptitude in their academic and extra-curricular school activities.

Olias Bartel says he is "thrilled" to go to the International Space Camp, which will help develop his skills in Science. "I plan to study Maths and Physics at university, and hope to become involved in space related work and perhaps even become an astronaut," he said.

Sabine Bellstedt also aspires to a career in Science. "I plan to become a university lecturer in Science, and Cosmology especially. I take Physics and Chemistry at school and I'm enjoying them both immensely," she said.

Olias and Sabine will join 80 international student delegates at the 2009 International Space Camp for Students held at the International Space and Rocket Center, Alabama (USA) in July.

ASG formed NEiTA in 1994 to help recognise the teaching profession and the important role it plays in the development of young minds. Now in its 16th year, NEiTA has received more than 19,000 nominations, and provided more than \$600,000 in prizes and grants.

NEiTA's 2009 ASG Inspirational Teaching Awards are now open for nominations for 'all-sorts' of teachers from 'all-sorts' of people. More information on NEiTA's 2009 award program is available from the NEiTA website: www.neita.com.au or contact NEiTA on free call 1800 624 487.

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A list of the National Award recipients by State and Territory and their profiles can be found on the NEiTA website: www.neita.com.au

Interviews, Profiles & Images:

- Profiles and images of all national award recipients will be available on the NEiTA website: www.neita.com.au from Friday 29 May 2009.

For more information, please contact:

Janet Thomas, Public Relations ASG on behalf of NEiTA

Ph: 03 9276 7758 Mob: 0402 837 758 Email: publicrelations@asg.com.au

or

Jenni Bolton, Public Relations Assistant

Ph: 03 9276 7786 Email: publicrelations@asg.com.au

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Head Office: 23-35 Hanover Street Oakleigh Victoria 3166 Phone: (03) 9276 7777 Fax: (03) 9276 7745 www.neita.com

Contact: Public Relations Email: publicrelations@asg.com.au