

2015 ASG National Excellence in Teaching Awards

State and Territory Award Recipient

Carolyn Coote

Blackmans Bay Primary School
Blackmans Bay, TAS

Carolyn Coote has gathered wisdom and insight from her travels across the world, and has utilised this knowledge and resources to broaden students' global perspective at Blackmans Bay Primary School in Tasmania. With a Diploma of Interpreting in Spanish, and experience in teaching German and Italian at the upper-primary levels, she is well positioned to cultivate her students' intellectual curiosity about the world in which we live.

Carolyn works to promote her students' capacity for philosophical thought, encouraging her students to make choices and take ownership of their own educational journeys. She seeks to find out what they already know, tapping into this prior knowledge and their interests to build a curriculum that allows for individuality and creative expression.

Carolyn keeps an extensive library of more than 1000 books in her classroom, and uses it as a basis for her own structured library lessons. Her library also serves as inspiration for much of her literacy program including the production of students' own books and the creation of individual book blogs by students. She believes quality picture books are an integral part of teaching values education.

She uses weekly Maths relays to motivate and extend students' thinking in mathematics, with excellent results. One of her two teams achieved the second highest score in the State annual Maths Relay, scoring 180 points out of a possible 200. She also integrates the visual arts with mathematics, where possible, to promote student interest.

The main aim of Carolyn's teaching, she says, is for students to become self-sufficient independent learners. She actively encourages students to develop a high level of conceptual knowledge and skills that can be applied to new learning situations and form a solid foundation for life-long learning.

Position	Other responsibilities	Category	Subjects/level taught	Years teaching
Teacher	Maths Relay Team Coordinator, Camp coordinator, extension programs, High School transition program	Primary	Year 5/6	32
Years at this school/centre	School type	Nominated by	Town/suburb	State and postcode
4	Government	Parent	Blackmans Bay	TAS 7052

CONTACT DETAILS:

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State and Territory Award Recipient

Narelle Henderson

Landsdowne Crescent Primary School
West Hobart, TAS

Narelle Henderson has been teaching children for 37 years and her enthusiasm 'hasn't waned yet', she says. At the age of 50 years she, and a group of colleagues, won a fellowship to study in the United States. She has spent the eight years since incorporating that learning into her pedagogical practice.

She has a keen interest in forest and bush kindergartens, and is currently developing a strong outdoor education focus and bush kinder program with the support of her Principal at Landsdowne Crescent Primary School in West Hobart.

Narelle organises regular mornings where her class sets up 'camp' in the bush adjacent to the school. There she encourages the children to investigate their surroundings, climb trees, balance on logs, build shelters, and play imaginatively.

As part of the fellowship, Narelle visited Project Zero at the Harvard School of Education where she discussed new strategies with researchers that she implements in her classroom today. She also met the principal investigator of 'Artful Thinking', Shari Tishman, and uses many elements of that approach in her classroom. Her kindergarten students view great works of art, discuss them and then paint their own versions.

Another strategy used by Narelle is the 'Tribes' process, which helps her develop her students' resilience, attitudes and communication skills. She uses many games to assist individuals to come together as part of the Kindergarten community.

Narelle's knowledge and expertise help her create tremendous learning opportunities for her kindergarten children, as well as a 'beautiful, welcoming and caring atmosphere'.

Position	Other responsibilities	Category	Subjects/level taught	Years teaching
Teacher	Launch into Learning	Early Childhood	Kindergarten	37
Years at this school/centre	School type	Nominated by	Town/suburb	State and postcode
3	Government	Parent	West Hobart	TAS 7000

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Adam James

The Hutchins School
Sandy Bay, TAS

Dr Adam James teaches Year 12 Chemistry, Year 11 and 12 Physical Sciences, and Year 9 and 10 Mathematics and Science courses at The Hutchins School in Sandy Bay, Tasmania. He is an innovative and creative teacher whose methods are admired by his students, their parents and teachers in other schools.

Adam's lessons are particularly theory-laden, but that hasn't dented his enthusiasm for teaching Chemistry in new and innovative ways. The 'flipped and blended' learning model being used by Adam is being enthusiastically observed by the wider teaching community.

An exponent of virtual learning, Adam uploads more than 90 per cent of his senior chemistry lessons to YouTube in relatively short segments that are easily digestible by students.

Students access videos through the school's online virtual learning environment (VLE), and engage with question sets that relate to each topic. They also submit written work and receive feedback through the VLE. The additional class time afforded by this type of teaching is devoted to working through questions and completing experiments and site visits. This model allows Adam to work with each student individually, addressing particular learning needs as they arise, rather than having these key tasks done at home without access to individual support.

Adam created his dedicated YouTube channel in January 2014. By July 2015 it held 46 videos and had 4150 views with 19, 500 minutes of footage being watched.

There's nothing Adam would rather be doing than teaching Chemistry. 'I literally get goose-bumps explaining how delocalised electrons orbit around a benzene ring,' he says.

Position	Other responsibilities	Category	Subjects/level taught	Years teaching
Teacher		Secondary	Chemistry, Maths, Science	3
Years at this school/centre	School type	Nominated by	Town/suburb	State and postcode
3	Independent	Parent	Sandy Bay	TAS 7006

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Fiona Officer

Princes Street Primary School
Sandy Bay, TAS

Fiona Officer has been busy over the last seven years at Princes Street Primary School in Sandy Bay Tasmania. She's been Maths Coordinator, History Coordinator, Landcare Adviser and Curriculum Coordinator for the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program (SAKGP).

Fiona has also been actively involved in the school's Geography and Social committees and has volunteered to assume senior positions in an acting capacity when required.

Of particular note is her central role in the SAKGP where she has integrated gardening and cooking into the curriculum. The Kitchen Garden Program has allowed her students to discover the origins of their food, how it looks while it grows, and how to harvest and cook it into delicious meals with minimal adult involvement. The sense of achievement enjoyed by students has been positive and palpable.

Fiona takes the time to know each of her students, and this enables her to tailor learning programs to suit individual academic, social and emotional needs. Her thorough knowledge of the Australian Curriculum means that all students in her class are challenged through individualised learning tasks that reflect their personalities, interests and abilities.

With 29 years of teaching experience, Fiona is an expert at providing a non-threatening, inviting and inclusive environment where children feel a sense of belonging and ownership over their own learning. She firmly believes that happy and valued students will become productive, engaged students.

Position	Other responsibilities	Category	Subjects/level taught	Years teaching
Teacher	Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program Coordinator	Primary	Year 4	29
Years at this school/centre	School type	Nominated by	Town/suburb	State and postcode
7	Government	Parent	Sandy Bay	TAS 7005

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Drew Roberts

Emmanuel Christian College
Rokeby, TAS

Drew Roberts teaches IT, Technology, Mathematics and Social Studies at Emmanuel Christian School in Rokeby, Tasmania.

Drew began his career in a small rural school that encouraged him to further develop his generalist teaching skills. A passionate educator who believes that humans are lifelong learners, he is dedicated to helping his students grow both within school and outside of it.

In addition to his formal teaching duties, Drew conducts an after-school robotics sessions for secondary students. He has recently extended this initiative to include a coding club that teaches computer-programming languages including Scratch, Python and HTML/CSS.

A devotee of cooperative learning, Drew cultivates an educational environment in which students are free to make—and learn from—their mistakes. He promotes peer-tuition in which inter-student interaction helps problem solving by talking issues through with other students.

Drew also involves parents in their children's learning. He invites them to help their children prepare for a regional competition over a public holiday. Drew keeps abreast of advancing technologies, particularly when they add value to a teaching task. He's in the process of becoming a Google-certified teacher and has found learning management systems, such as Google Classroom, to be an effective means of disseminating learning material—even for students who might have been absent from school.

'I understand that not all students are the same', Drew says, but 'I believe we need to foster a learning environment that caters to all student needs'.

Position	Other responsibilities	Category	Subjects/level taught	Years teaching
Teacher	Code Club	Secondary	Technology, History, Geography, Maths	12
Years at this school/centre	School type	Nominated by	Town/suburb	State and postcode
6	Independent	Parent	Rokeby	TAS 7019

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