

Welcome to the first **In2science** update for 2008 – International Year of Planet Earth. We are now entering our fifth year of operation as the program continues to grow. 2008 is going to be a big year for **In2science** with some exciting changes to look forward to.

New schools joining **In2science** this semester are:

Collingwood College
Gilmore College for Girls, Footscray
Lakeside Secondary College, Reservoir

Montmorency Secondary College
Sandringham College
University High School, Parkville

We welcome them all and hope that both teachers and students will benefit from having the support of Peer Mentors in science and Mathematics classes.

In2science News

Our best news for **2008** is that we have a new funding partner and a new university joining the program.

In2science is pleased to announce that **The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD)** has provided funding till 2010. We are looking forward to establishing our partnership with **DEECD** and supporting as many government schools as we can through the program. We are extremely grateful to the **William Buckland Foundation** for their kind support in getting the program up and running over the past four years.

From Semester 2 this year **In2science** will formally be joined by the Faculty of Science at **Monash University**. We worked with Monash on our **ASISTM** funded project (2006-07) and it is wonderful to have them on board. **Jacinta Hubble** (based at the Monash Science Centre) will help organise **In2science** and look after the Monash students who participate – welcome to **In2science** Jacinta. Through working as a consortium of the three universities we will be able to support more schools over a wider area.

Jacinta can be contacted via email: jacinta.hubble@sci.monash.edu.au or Tel: (03) 9905-1371

As we start our placements this week we have about **87 Peer Mentors** working in 34 schools with approximately **3,000 high school students**. The level of enthusiasm and commitment the Peer Mentors have shown is to be commended.

We have trained 66 new Mentors ready for semester one. A big thank you goes to all those past and current Mentors for their help during the training sessions; your help and advice was highly valued by the new Mentors to the program. These new Mentors have expressed a diverse range of outcomes they want to achieve from their upcoming placements. Here are a few examples:

Gain confidence and challenge myself.

Figure out if teaching is for me.

Build my science communication skills.

Self-satisfaction, confidence and knowing that I am able to give something back.

To gain an enriching experience and explore a possible career path.

Placement Dates:

From the week of 10th March to the week of 26th May (excluding the two Easter weeks).

Unfortunately not all those who applied were able to be placed in schools this semester. Once again, geographical location and the matching of timetables prevented some students being placed. Also some schools could only accommodate one or two Mentors due to teacher commitments. As a result we already have a growing list of Mentors awaiting semester 2 placements.

In2science prizes – this year we are trying to raise the profile of the program further by inviting companies and organisations to donate prizes that we can give away to teachers and Mentors who have participated each semester. This semester we are extremely grateful to the following who have offered prizes to get things started:

Nanotechnology Victoria Ltd – the offer of \$1000 each towards the costs of attending a nanotechnology-related conference in Australia for any two teachers who are able to show evidence of developing nanotechnology-based curriculum in their school during this semester. Submissions will be due to the Peer Mentoring Manager by the end of placements (week of the 26th May) for judging. This is open to school involved in the **In2science** program and those who have participated in the **In2nanotech** roadshow.

John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd – have donated several school science text books and teachers resources to be awarded to teachers who are hosting a Mentor and to Mentors undertaking a science teaching related degree program. These will be drawn from a hat at the end of placement:

1. **Nature of biology** VCE Bk1 – X2 teachers
2. **Physics 1 VCE** – X1 teacher
3. **Science Alive level 6 teacher support kit** – X1 Mentor studying education
4. **Science Quest 1&2** – X1 Mentor studying education
5. **Science Quest 3&4** – X1 Mentor studying education

Geoscience Australia - has donated several resources for teachers to help engage students in Earth Science. These will be drawn from a hat at the end of placement:

1. **Earth Echoes** – DVD of Victoria's crust and seismic survey – X2 teachers
2. **National Ocean Flythrough (3d footage), Uluru & Kata Tjuta a geological history, Silicate Chemistry – teachers notes**– X1 teacher
3. **ESRI Australia** – mapping package for education – X2 teachers

Many thanks to these companies and organisations for donating these to **In2science** to give away as prizes for people involved in the Peer Mentoring program.

In2science happenings at the end of 2007

In2nanotech Roadshow – Last year we headed down to visit schools in Gippsland for the 2007 roadshow. We had a wonderful time visiting and presenting at schools from Warragul to Lakes Entrance. Thanks go to **NanoVic** for making all this possible and to the many companies that offered support and materials. The roadshows are a great way of helping engage students in the regional areas of the state and getting them enthused about science. During the roadshows we were also able to undertake some professional development for teachers, allowing them to explore this exciting area of science. Students attending were: **Daniel Langley, Emma Thornton, Leigh Sands** and **Tom Paton**, all who study Nanotechnology/Science double degrees at La Trobe. It is only with their dedicated effort that the roadshows work. To see the full report on the roadshow visit the [In2nanotech](http://www.in2nanotech.com.au) website.



Daniel explains how nanotechnology can enhance the properties of glass.



Mentor Alisa receives her letter from Dean, Prof. Peter Rathjen and In2science board member Soula Bennett.

Awards for long service to In2science – those Mentors completing three or more placements for the program receive letters of commendation for their efforts from their respective Dean. Those students from **the University of Melbourne** were invited to the Faculty's end of year celebration of achievement on Thursday 29th November 2007. Fantastically two of them are still mentoring in 2008; supporting students for their 5th semester in a row, quite an achievement. Well done Alisa and Vincent.

Information for Mentors

Finally after all the waiting, training and flurry of emails to organise your placements you now finally have the chance to start mentoring.

For many of you this is your first time mentoring in schools and naturally you will feel apprehensive about your first visit to the school. Past experience tells us that Mentors usually take 3-4 weeks to feel comfortable in their role and to get to know the teacher and students. The best advice from past Mentors is to get involved in the activities and get talking to the students as soon as you can. Ensure you establish lines of communication with the teacher (email etc) and if you feel confident suggest ideas of things they may want to try. Most importantly: have fun.

We are currently planning a visit schedule to see Mentors at their school. Unfortunately due to the number of Mentors there will only be one visit each. However, if there is something happening at the school that you would like us to come and see or to include in the newsletters then please contact us.

Do contact us if there is anything you need help or support with and let us know how things are going. Remember we may be able to help out with resources and prizes for the students.

Information for Schools

Please ensure our thanks are passed to all teachers who have become involved in the program this semester. Hopefully the benefits that can be gained from having the Mentors in the classroom will be achieved.

Please feel free to put information and photos in your **school newsletters** and on your **school websites** about the work the Mentors are doing as this helps raise the profile of science and mathematics in schools.

All teachers should have had a copy of the [teachers guide](#).

It is important that the Mentors know in advance of any days that the school is closed or lessons are not running as many of them travel some distance to get to you.

Please encourage teachers to complete and send in the '**Outcomes Planning Form**' as this helps provide valuable feedback about the program and how schools aim to use the Mentors to achieve certain goals.

Website to try

[International Year of Planet Earth:](#)

Check out Geoscience Australia's website for information:

[Physics and Ethics Education Project:](#)

UK site covering a range of resources both teachers and students would find useful.

[Bioethics Education Project:](#)

UK site covering a range of resources both teachers and students would find useful.

This [website](#) is for teachers of physics, enabling them to share their skills and experience of making experiments work in the classroom.

[Interactive Physics Simulations:](#)

Fun, interactive, research-based simulations of physical phenomena from the Physics Education Technology project at the University of Colorado.

News from the institutions

La Trobe University

Molecular Plant Breeding CRC - offer a **FREE** genetics education program "[Get into Genes](#)". This program has been very successful and bookings are being taken now.

Alternatively you can contact Belinda Griffiths:

Tel. 9479 5185, email: belinda.griffiths@getintogenes.com.au

[Science Teachers Assistance Program \(STAP\)](#) - aims to assist teachers by providing a range of activities for students and teachers within select areas of Science, Technology and Engineering.

The University of Melbourne

Open Day 2008 - Veterinary Clinic and Hospital - This is an opportunity for future students and the community to go behind the scenes at our state-of-the art Veterinary Clinic and Hospital. Interest in attending our 2008 open day at the Veterinary Clinic and Hospital in Werribee is already greater than ever.

Venue: Veterinary Clinic & Hospital, Werribee, 250 Princes Highway, Werribee, Victoria, Melways: 206 G5

Date: Sunday 13 April 2008, 10am - 4pm

There will be the chance to speak to veterinary staff, meet current students and take a tour of the outstanding facilities.

To secure your place for the 13 of April please [register online](#).

Monash University

The [Monash Science Centre](#) will be running an April school holiday program. Details can be found on their website.

John McDonald

In2science Manager

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/scitecheng/mentoring/index.html>