

Welcome to the August issue of the **In2science** Update and the start of another semester of placements. We welcome the new Peer Mentors and schools to the program. This semester we have Mentors from **Monash University** and we hope they have a great time in the program.

New schools for this semester:

Balwyn HS
Templestowe College
The Lakes P-10 School, South Morang
Westall SC
Wheelers Hill SC

This takes our number to 40 state schools associated with the program.

Unfortunately some of our current schools were unable to host any Mentors this semester due to other school commitments; hopefully they will be in a better position next year.

After what has been a busy start to the term in the schools and a new semester at the universities we have been able to place around 90 university students in 37 of our schools. Our biggest placement to date.

In2science prizes for semester 2 – the following prizes have been donated to be given away to teachers and Mentors who participate in the program this semester:



Prize	Donated by:
Three prizes of \$500 each to schools who have just commenced teaching a unit on nanotechnology or who are preparing one for 2009. The money must be put towards nanotechnology resources to aid teaching. Schools will be required to submit a brief summary of what they are doing to the Peer Mentoring Manager by the end of September 2008 for judging. This is open to school involved in the In2science program and those who have participated in the In2nanotech roadshow.	Nanotechnology Victoria Ltd
Australia's Lost World - A History of Australia's Backboned Animals by Patricia Vickers-Rich et al - a great reference guide 3 copies to go to teachers 3 copies to go to Peer Mentors	The Monash Science Centre
The Weather Makers: How Man Is Changing the Climate and What It Means for Life on Earth. By Tim Flannery 1 copy to go to a teacher 1 copy to go to a Mentor	In2science
One years annual subscription to STAV (or free registration at a STAV conference if already a member) X1 teacher	Science Teachers Association of Victoria
One years annual student subscription to STAV X1 Mentor	Science Teachers Association of Victoria

Additional prizes may become available during the semester.

In2science News

Since our last newsletter in May a lot has been happening for the program. We have been busy training the new Mentors at all of our campuses and **Jacinta Hubble** has trained her first cohort of Mentors at Monash University. Well done Jacinta. Altogether we have trained 47 new ones. Our new Mentors are looking to gain a range of benefits from the program. Here are some of their comments:

"More confidence about what I am studying and my level of understanding."

"Improved communication skills."

"Satisfaction of being able to help the students and hopefully motivate them."

"A satisfaction knowing that I have shared my science experience with others and used my skills."

"Help me put my knowledge of science into action."

"To promote some areas of science [students] may not have been exposed to."



Students get hands on experience in physics with Bob

Hands-on science

Year 8 students from **Mill Park SC** attended an exciting **physics** session at La Trobe's Bundoora campus at the end of Term 2. Mentor Amanda who had been working with the students helped organise this – well done Amanda. The students undertook a range of different activities relating to sound and gained some hands-on experience for themselves. Thanks go to the members of the Physics department, Dr David Hoxley, Bob Aikenhead and Shaun Cooper, for their presentations and activities which really engaged the students.

All our Peer Mentors who complete three rounds of placement receive **letters of commendation** from their respective Deans. At the end of semester one this year the following students completed their third placement:

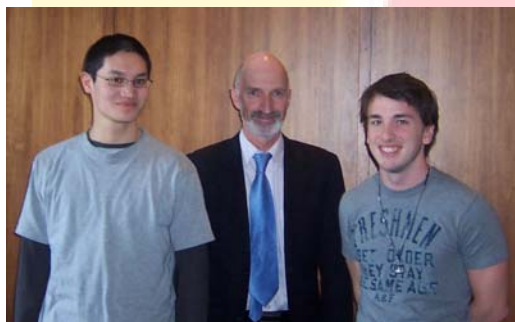
La Trobe University

Amanda Perdomo – 3rd Yr, BSc/Science Education
Rebecca Pantelejenko – 3rd Yr, Biological Science
Megan Huggard – 3rd Yr, Medical Science
Jacob Heppell – 3rd Yr, BSc (Chemical Sciences)

University of Melbourne

Shaun Khoo – 3rd Yr, BA/BSc
Victoria McGrath – 5th Yr BA/BSc
Richmond Glasgow – 5th Yr Engineering/Commerce

Congratulations and thank you from the **In2science** program for your hard work and dedication.



Mentors Shaun and Richmond with Assoc Prof Phil Batterham (Uni Melb).



Mentors Megan, Amanda and Rebecca with Dean, Prof David Finlay (La Trobe)



In2science Manager John receives his citation from Professor Belinda Probert, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

At the end of May, John was awarded a **La Trobe University Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning** for the **In2science** program.

This award has helped raise the profile of the program and showcase the benefits that tertiary students can gain from participation.

John also attended the recent Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (**AUCEA**) conference in early July. Held at the University of the Sunshine Coast, this conference had a focus on sustainable engagement between the community and universities. Many of the Australian universities were represented along with some from overseas. John presented **In2science** as a practical

case study of how a successful program can be achieved as a collaboration of universities. It was a great opportunity to talk with others involved in engagement activities and to learn about the diversity of activities being undertaken across Australia.

Information for Mentors

For many of you this will be your first placement and we hope that, despite a few nerves at the start, you settle into your school quickly. The first few weeks are always the most difficult as you get to know the students and them you. Remember what you learnt at training and try to be as proactive in the class as you can. If you are unsure of anything then do talk to the class teacher or contact the **In2science** coordinators who are only too happy to help and offer advice.

Make sure you talk with the teacher about what you would like to accomplish from the placement so they can support you in achieving your goals. They too may have outcomes they wish to achieve and it is only by working together that these can be realised. Try to learn a few names and don't be put off by students not wanting help initially, as they get to know you they will become more receptive.

Talk to the teacher if you want to take anything in to show the students. Feel free to ask for support from **In2science** if you want to organise any visits etc. Most of all don't be frightened of pushing your 'comfort zone' and do have fun.

In2science blog

We now have a blog for Mentors to share their experiences and support each other. This is the first time we have done this so it will be interesting to see how it works. To be able to post on it you will need to **contact John** to get a password and ID. Have a look and we shall see what use is made of it during this semester. Access the blog through the Mentor's page of the **In2science** website or [go direct](#). We hope as many Mentors as possible give it a try so we can see if there are any problems.

In2science get together. We will be organising some sessions during the school holidays (22nd September – 3rd October) for Mentors to get together to discuss what they have been up to and meet up with their fellow Mentors. Information regarding dates will be sent out soon.

Information for Schools

Many thanks for all your hard work in organising the placements. All teachers hosting a Peer Mentor should have received a letter and booklet on [maximising the benefits of having a Mentor](#) in the class. Do contact us if they have not received one. It is important that teacher read through this to gain the most from the opportunity of having a Mentor in the class.

Teachers should have spoken to their classes about the role of the Mentor as this really helps them understand why the Mentors are there. Hopefully teachers have also shared their expectations with the Mentor and vice versa so everyone is working towards common goals.

Do contact the coordinators if there is anything you would like support with in schools, where staffing and resources allow, the universities are keen to help. The Mentors can be an excellent link between the university and the school so do talk to them if you have any ideas.

National Science Week
August 16 – 24
Theme: Planet Earth, Planet of Change

Don't forget **National Science Week**. You may be doing some special activities and wish to include the Mentors. They may also

have some ideas of things to do to help raise awareness of science. You could hold a science morning tea for all staff and invite the Mentors along!

If there are any issues or concerns during the placement it is important that schools let the program coordinators know straight away so we can help resolve them. Occasionally some issues have only come to light in the evaluations which is often too late.

Website to try

In2science is always on the look out for new and exciting websites that may be of interest to teachers of science and mathematics. Do let us know if you have any recommendations.

Mick Moylan, Chemistry Outreach Fellow, Victorian Institute for Chemical Sciences recommended the following site for chemistry: **Chemical Education Digital Library** - www.chemeddl.org this site has some good information based around the periodic table in an interactive format.

Hyperphysics from Georgia State University is a great site for physics teachers wanting to know a little more or senior students (and uni students). Definitely worth a look: <http://hyperphysics.phy-astr.gsu.edu/hbase/hph.html>

The Science Spot is targeted at middle years students and has lots of interesting activities you may wish to try. <http://sciencespot.net/Pages/classroom.html> it is from the USA and has lots of lesson plans too.

News from the Institutions

The universities are now entering their Open Day period. La Trobe Bendigo held their Open Day on 3 August. Monash University held theirs on the 2, 3 August

La Trobe University

Open Days

Sunday 10 August - Shepparton, Mildura

Sunday 31 August - Melbourne (Bundoora)

Sunday 24 August - Albury Wodonga

Sharks can save lives - La Trobe University scientists are pioneering the use of modified shark antibodies in the quest for new and better therapies against diseases such as malaria, cancers and rheumatoid arthritis.

The University of Melbourne

Open Days

Sunday 17 August - Parkville

Sunday 31 August - Dookie

Sunday 24 August - Burnley

Mining biodiversity and genes **- VC's Research Lecture Series**

Speaker: Professor Ary Hoffmann FAA, **Time and Date:** 6:30PM, Monday 8th September 2008

Venue: Theatre A, Elisabeth Murdoch Building (bldg 134), Parkville

Monash University

Science in the Suburbs" evening lecture series for 2008. Suitable for all ages from 14 onwards. Families, teachers and kids all welcome.

Mercury contamination found in stranded Victorian dolphins

Monash University research into heavy metal contaminant levels in dolphins from Port Phillip Bay and the Gippsland Lakes has revealed high mercury levels may be a contributing factor to dolphin deaths.

John McDonald

In2science Manager