



BTA NEWS

Better Together Alliance Newsletter
prepared by Sandy Gunn

September 2016

Better Together Alliance

Out There Program

On Friday 16th September, the finale of two weeks' worth of work with the Australian Ballet for the Out There Program was a Showcase Performance of the Better Together Alliance Students. The performance showcased the commitment of the students over the two weeks to create, develop their movement skills and work together as a team to produce a very successful event. Watching the students over the two weeks, saw individuals gain in confidence, creativity, leadership, teamwork, and enjoyment. The ensemble from the Australian Ballet facilitated 10 hours of training over the two weeks for our students, where working together, the students created performances that they could be proud of. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Australian Ballet for the outstanding program that was provided to the Better Together Alliance, and to the ensemble members (Tim, Jack, Jasmine and Chantelle) for their amazing work with our students. Thank you to the teachers at each of the Alliance Schools (Paul Oliver, Tanya Sayers, Kyla McGregor, Jamason Lopez and Fiona Campbell) for their commitment to the program and students, and to all attendees at the showcase performance, being there to support our students. Most importantly to the students, who took on this commitment with great enthusiasm, willingness to learn and for their confidence to perform, I thank you for your involvement in this great program. I am looking forward to an ongoing relationship with the Australian Ballet for the continued involvement of the Better Together Alliance with this program.



*"We will do
better for
young
people by
working
strategically
together"*

BTA Focus



Upcoming Events

- Induction for 2017 BTA travelling students – Oct
- BTA Student Council - 26th Oct
- TFA Better Together Conference Horsham - 6th Oct
- Network Meetings – Week 5 Term IV
- Big Ideas Presentation Night – 21st Oct



BTA Student Council

The next meeting for the BTA Student Council is set for Wednesday 26th October at McGuire College. Students will be continuing their work on developing their ideas around activities and events that will be presented through the BTA.

Network Meetings

The next network meetings will be conducted during Week 5, Term IV. Details to follow.

The benefits of collaboration recognises not just in the sharing of goods but in their creation too.”
(Smith, 2015)

Opportunities Ahead

Year 9 Dookie Camp – Planning is continuing for the opportunity to offer an agricultural link camp to Year 9s in the future. Mooroopna Secondary College are in the current planning to trial the camp in 2017. Thankyou to MSC for their eagerness to make this an opportunity for the BTA. Thankyou to Lighthouse Project and Melbourne University for the chance to make this happen.

Induction days – Feedback early on in the year with students who travel to complete subjects at another Better Together Alliance school indicated that they would like to have an induction session at their new host school. These days are being organised for October this year in preparation for the start of 2017.

BTA Community Forums – Through discussions with individuals both in the Better Together Alliance Schools and with community groups, some important issues have been raised that impact our youth across Greater Shepparton. The proposal to address some of these issues is conduct a BTA Community Forum once a term, where students, staff, parents and community members can gain access to expert advice from guest presenters on a range of issues. The first Community Forum has been planned for March 2017 focusing on Digital Citizenship (CyberSafety). The BTA has engaged the services of Susan McLean (top Australian expert in CyberSafety). Details of event to follow.

Cultural Tours – Following feedback from students involved in the Big Ideas Project, there has been expressed a want from students to gain greater understanding of Greater Shepparton Cultures. Thanks to the outstanding partnership with the Lighthouse Project, planning is underway to provide a two day program for the BTA schools in their end of year programs where students will visit different cultural communities and spend time hearing about different cultural groups in Greater Shepparton. Details of program to follow.

BTA Production

Very exciting news for 2017..... The BTA is in the process of producing the first Better Together Alliance Production. This concept has been enthusiastically adopted by the Performing Arts staff at all four schools and planning is underway for a large scale production in July 2017, involving students and staff from across all four schools.

Transform EdX- Better Together

On Thursday 6th October I have been asked to speak at the next Teach for Australia Professional Development forum to be held in the Wimmera at Horsham Secondary College. I have been asked to speak on the work of the Better Together Alliance in Greater Shepparton and I am very much looking forward to spreading the word of great work hat is being done here in Greater Shepparton by the four Better Together Alliance Schools.

NRG

Program

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The NRG Program is an initiative of the Better Together Alliance together with La Trobe University, Shepparton. The program has been designed to address the following principles:

- Providing an integrated program for students with identified potential for learning.
- Partnerships and shared responsibility between schools, parents and tertiary providers support quality engagement of students with potential for learning
- All learners have the right to access to educational programs which meet their specific learning needs and abilities

Student selection process will begin during Term I, 2016



Celebrating Success

Student Report on ICI Conference – Jack Brisbane Yr 12 WPSC

On the **26th of August**, I had the privilege to attend the **16th Global Immunology Conference**. Witnessing the collection of worldwide knowledge collaboratively shared and distributed by the world's leading immunologists, was an experience I will never forget. The day included a practical lab component associated with the diagnosis and spread of disease, speed dating with international scientists and finally a lecture by Noble Prize Winner and former Australian of the year, Peter C. Doherty. Overall, the day was an inspiring opportunity that I'd recommend to anyone considering a career involving biology.

Upon arrival we were rushed into a laboratory experiment that involved analysing the infection rate of a theoretical disease and determining who and how people were infected. After a short break we entered a speed dating session that was awesome! The knowledge, experience and passion world leading immunologists possess is truly incredible. First we spoke with Professor Phil Hodgkin who at a young age was inspired by The Clonal Selection Theory - believing "it was the coolest thing he'd ever heard of." He graduated as an immunologist and currently runs a laboratory working with computers to model immune responses, particularly those involving B-cells. I found it incredible to know how something we study in year 10 to year 12, is the basis of a world leading immunologist's career. Next, we were introduced to Professor Ellen Rothenberg from California, who co-ordinates a Caltech lab focusing on identifying the transcription factors and signaling events that induce T-lineage gene expression in an uncommitted precursor and determining how they work to force the cell to relinquish other developmental options. Inspired by T-cell development from hematopoietic (blood) stem cells, she is amazed how they undergo thousands of divisions and still remember to be T-cells, even though they have the genes to turn into any cell within the body. To be listening to the knowledge and experience shared by these scientists was rather overwhelming and simply "sick as." Just realising that things we learn in our class are just broader versions of biological processes that can be narrowed into life time career is quite special.

To finish the day we listened to Peter Doherty, a smart and funny man who has worked for more than 50 years and attended 14 out of the 16 congresses like this one I have just attended. His discovery of how T cells recognise their target antigens in combination with major histocompatibility complex (MHC) proteins in 1973, lead him to his life-time career. Originally a veterinarian surgeon, he now is reaching the end of his successful career. Doherty was an inspiring man who again studies something that we in secondary school biology have also learnt broadly about.

In summary, the day was an experience I will never forget. The uplifting passion all the famous scientists enable our health system to constantly improve treatments. Overall the 16th Global Immunology Congress was truly an amazing experience. In the ocean of biology, we at school seem to ride the waves, whereas careers can be as deep as the ocean's extreme depths.

I'd like to thank Karen Utber for selecting me to attend this rare and inspiring opportunity, and also Sandy Gunn, Co-ordinator of the Better Together Alliance, for organising, driving, and allowing me to attend the event, plus all her other work that enables our local school communities to work together towards better student education and wellbeing in our region.



Celebrating Success con...

Year 7 Mentoring Program – the Lighthouse Project Mentoring Program is proving to be a great success at McGuire College. Mentors and Mentee meetings are ongoing and students involved have been providing positive feedback about their connections made with their Mentors. With this success, BTA and Lighthouse Project are looking to expand the program and currently in the recruiting of further Mentors from the community to be a part of this program in 2017. Thankyou to the Lighthouse Project for the amazing work with the program, the Mentors for their commitment to their mentees and to McGuire College for taking on the challenge of piloting this exciting program.

Debaters Association of Victoria's (DAV) 2016 regional competition. - On Thursday the 8th September Shepparton High School hosted Numurkah Secondary College, St Mary of the Angels Secondary College, and McGuire College who joined Shepparton High School students in the debating competition and debated in affirmative and negative teams on topics such as 'That schools should provide free meals for students', 'That after schools sports should be made compulsory', 'That professional sports should have separate leagues that permit the use of performance enhancing drugs' and 'That the government should increase finding to the arts'. This event was organised by Ms. Denise Stewart who said that students from all schools performed extremely well and the competition was tough from an academic and public speaking perspective. Ms. Stewart was also pleased to see topics related to sport explored. Shepparton High School would like to thank DAV, all participating schools, parents and students for their involvement.



Contact Us

Any news or concerns, please contact

Sandy Gunn
Executive Officer
Better Together Alliance

PH: 0400 505 326

gunn.sandy.m@edumail.vic.edu.au

General Placement

Mondays—Shepparton HS

Tuesdays—Mooroopna SC

Wednesdays—Wanganui Park SC

Thursdays—McGuire College

Fridays—Community of Greater
Shepparton