Editorial

Welcome to the first edition of Australian Educational Computing for 2006. In this edition of AEC Margaret Lloyd from QUT responds to statements made by Edward Mandala, the past president of the Australian Computer Society as reported in The Australian on November 29, 2005 (more on this below); Nick Reynolds describes his use of MicroWorlds with student teachers at the University of Melbourne; Sandy Schuck and Matthew Kearney from the University of Technology, Sydney, discuss the potential of student generated digital video to enhance or change pedagogy while reporting findings of a research project conducted in five Australian schools; Graeme Lock (Edith Cowan University) and Chris Forlin (The Hong Kong Institute of Education) report on the use of information and communication technologies in remote school communities in Western Australia and finally, Petra Redmond from USQ (currently on exchange at the University of Calgary) returns to the theme of our last edition and reports on a case study which attempted to increase ICT skills and self confidence in a small group of female secondary students using go gURLs.

A Critique of No Train No Gain

In November 2005 an article, by Diana Thorp, foreshadowing a meeting of senior IT academics and Australian Computer Society representatives appeared in The Australian. In the article, the then President of the Australian Computer Society, Edward Mandala, placed the blame for the falling number of students enrolling in IT courses at university on how IT is taught in our schools. Lloyd’s article is a response to this accusation and a defence of Australian teachers and IT curricula. As Lloyd cogently argues, assertions such as this need to be challenged because they can quickly become the cornerstone of policy and, there is danger in applying simple explanations to complex situations. I commend the sentiment of the article and congratulate Lloyd on taking the time to respond in such a clear and lucid manner.

National (and International) Award Winners

Following on from Margaret Lloyd’s defence of Australian Teachers it is with great pleasure that AEC celebrates and recognizes the winners of our state and national awards for the teacher of the year and the leader of the year. Congratulations to all state winners who subsequently become eligible for national (and in the case of Leader of the Year, international), honours. The ACCE, Teacher of the Year (and ICTEV Teacher of the Year) for 2006, is Christine Trimmell from Narre Warren Primary School in Victoria. Christine has been the ICT/Coordinator as well as the school librarian at Narre Warren since 2000. Prior to taking up this position she worked in private schools; the Catholic Education system, as well as several other government schools. Christine is the recipient of several ICT related awards and has been involved in several ICT related projects including, Rainbow Fish, Challenge of the Mind, PADEC choose your own adventure, Communicating through Poetry, Bilby Travel Buddy, and Census at Schools. Congratulations to Christine and the Narre Warren school community.

The ACCE Leader of the Year (and QSITE Leader of the Year), is Lindy McKeown, teacher, professional development consultant and volunteer from Ipswich, Queensland. As the ACCE award winner Lindy was nominated for the ISTE Outstanding Leader award, and she won! This international award recognizes and honours individuals who have demonstrably improved education through the use of technology. A fantastic achievement by Lindy when you consider that candidates for the ISTE award are nominated by ISTE Affiliates, a network of more than 70 professional associations representing more than 85,000 educators worldwide. Nominations are reviewed by an eight-person team of education and technology professionals from around the world; the review team is appointed by ISTE’s Affiliate Executive Committee. Congratulations Lindy.

ACEC 2006 – IT’s up here for thinking!

The 2006 ACEC conference will be a time to celebrate Christine Trimmell and Lindy McKeown’s achievements, and the achievements of many educators and administrators who use ICT in education. So if you have not yet registered and booked your flights and accommodation, log on to www.acec2006.info and get a move on. It will be a fantastic conference set in one of the most stunning locations on the planet.

Thanks to the editorial team; Donna and Nick (good luck in UAE, Nick) for their editorial assistance, Suzanne for the cover designs and desktop publishing, Michelle for administration, the Editorial Board for their support of the Journal and their willing (and voluntary) participation in the review process, and the ACCE Board for their ongoing support. In our next edition we will be publishing papers of excellence from ACCE2006, see you in Cairns.

Geoff Romeo (Ed)