Welcome to the July Edition of Australian Educational Computing. AEC would like to acknowledge and celebrate the work of the 2009 joint winners of the ACS/ACCE “Teacher of the Year”—Roland Gesthuizen (ICTEV) and Sue Urban (CEGSA) and “Leader of the Year” Paul Newhouse (ECAWA) and Monika Stinton (QSITE). Congratulations also to all state award winners. Sue Urban was also the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Outstanding Teacher of the Year.

Sue Urban - ACS/ACCE Teacher of the Year/ISTE Outstanding Teacher

Sue is not only the ACS/ACCE Teacher of the Year she is also the ISTE Outstanding Teacher of the Year. This is a remarkable achievement. Candidates for the ISTE award are nominated from a network of more than 300 professional associations representing more than 100,000 educators worldwide. The nominations are reviewed by an eight-person team of education and technology professionals from around the world. Sue was nominated by CEGSA for both awards for her work integrating technology into instructional programs across all grade levels. She has been credited with developing curriculum for students across different sectors of schooling and developing students’ information technology skills through problem solving, communication and research that can be applied across the curriculum to other subjects. She has also been a strong supporter of programs for highly gifted students.

Sue is Vice President of CEGSA. She has been an information technology teacher and school leader for 10 years, and a classroom teacher for 14 years, in South Australian Catholic Schools and is now at Wilderness School, Medindie. She has demonstrated her dedication to integrating technology into instructional programs to engage and motivate students and deliver grade-level and standards-based curriculum. She has developed curriculum for students of all year levels (R-12) across different sectors of schooling (State, Catholic and Independent education). Sue’s high quality interpersonal skills have facilitated her ability to collaborate with colleagues with a wide range of skill levels. She is able to quickly adjust her approach to meet the needs of her audience whether it be a small informal coffee and biscuits ‘just in time’ professional development session with staff from her school, a philosophical debate about current issues related to digital citizenship at a CEGSA meeting, or the development of a new senior secondary curriculum policy document for the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE).

Sue is a strong advocate for the use of technology as a tool for 21st century learning. Her passion for IT and Gifted Education has led to innovative initiatives that have included the development of exciting curriculum for students, online professional development opportunities for teachers (2006) and relevant information programs for parents. As President of the Gifted and Talented Children’s Association from 1999 to 2003 she hosted the World Conference in Gifted Education in 2003. Since she joined the CEGSA committee in 2001, she has provided strong support and leadership in diverse roles that have included publicity officer, conference organiser, awards committee convenor and professional development provider.

Sue is now CEGSA’s Outstanding Teacher of the Year, ACS/ACCE national teacher of the year and ISTE international teacher of the year. To win all three awards is a fantastic achievement—congratulations Sue.

Roland Gesthuizen – ACS/ACCE Teacher of the Year

Roland (nominated by ICTEV) is a secondary Science and IT teacher at Westall Secondary College (WSC). He is an individual and a brilliant teacher. He has a distinguished history of using ICT in education and provides inspiration to many teaching colleagues and students. At WSC, he has implemented a range of innovative ICT programs in the junior and senior curriculum. Beyond just using technology for its own sake, he has worked hard with a clearly stated ambition to use it to help make the world a better place.

Westall Secondary College is the only Australian secondary school to teach Khmer to the senior level. Roland was eventually able to deploy Khmer as a native and stable language onto all the school computers. For the first time, our Cambodian students had the opportunity to engage with technology in a way that gave authority to their language and history by authoring documents in their own language script and keyboard.

Following his work engaging Khmer students, Roland worked with overseas colleagues to build bridges with third world countries with the OLPC project. Long before the announcement of Ultranet, Roland had already begun to deploy an intranet (using Moodle) at WSC on a server built from scrap and spare parts. He has helped WSC deploy a laptop program for students. Working with student technicians he has adapted ultra-portable and cheap computers using the Ubuntu Linux desktop to create a robust wireless Netbook solution.

As a charter member of the GLOBE project in 1996, he was trained by CSIRO education and sponsored by the Monash Cooperative Research Centre for Atmospheric Research. Over the past decade he has organised the collection of over 5000 atmospheric and biological data with around 300 Year 9 information technology students. His group of students were able to use their findings to help secure feral proof fencing for the local park where they were undertaking their long-term baseline environmental measurements.

As part of the NASA CloudSAT mission, Roland’s students help collect ground-truth satellite images on their fly over path by taking photographs of a hemispherical reflector and...
posting these online. The satellite activity has been published as an exemplary ICT activity for VELS. Following a successful Internet webcast of the Mercury solar transit made in a school classroom with a home made pinhole camera and webcam, Roland's class was approached to build and mount on the roof of the school an Earthial as a southern hemisphere reference point. Whilst other Earthiials have been constructed by science museums around the world, it is of note that the Australian station was designed, built and still maintained by a group of year 10 students. His service to VCE IT teachers is immense. On many occasions he has taken the initiative in presenting professional development sessions that are innovative, informative and highly valued by his colleagues. At all times he has correctly interpreted the requirements of the curriculum documents, but has been able to visualise and implement programs that engage all of his students.

Roland makes a very active contribution to the professional community, and is an active member of ICTE, VITTA and other professional groups. AEC congratulate Roland on his award and on his brilliant career.

Paul Newhouse ACS/ACCE National Leader of the Year

Paul is an Associate Professor at Edith Cowan University (ECU) and was nominated for the national leadership award by ECWA because of his exceptional leadership in the use of ICT in education. For many years, he has continued to give unstintingly of his time, expertise and energy for the benefit of students, teachers and the community. He is recognised internationally, nationally and across Western Australia for his innovative and pioneering work. His driving commitment to making a difference to teaching and learning in schools is reflected in his high visibility to the profession through his direction and influence on Information Communication Technologies (ICT) in the educational environment at school and university level. He is well-known for his comprehensive research and ground-breaking practices in the use of portable computing devices and online learning and assessment, which are linked to his broader areas of expertise in curriculum design, teaching methods, learning processes, evaluation of courses and professional development strategies. His most recent focus has been on digital forms of assessment.

Paul was recognized by ECWA with Life Membership in 1999 and with the Leader of the Year award in 2007. Other awards conferred upon him include a Teaching Fellowship from Edith Cowan University (ECU) for leadership in tertiary ICT application and in 2008, an Award for Outstanding Professional Service from The Professional Teaching Council of WA and in 2009. This year Paul was also selected as the joint winner of the ASC/ACCE Award for Outstanding Leadership in the Use of ICT in Education. His experiences as a classroom teacher, publisher, ICT coordinator, curriculum designer, lecturer and researcher led to his 2003 appointment as the Director of the Centre for Schooling and Learning Technologies (CSaLT) at ECU. This post allows him to initiate and guide research in ICT in WA schools, and empowers him to provide direction for the training of future teachers as they apply ICT in their profession. Further, as the leader of CSaLT, he is also in a position to mentor and guide staff and post-graduate students in their endeavours to build richer ICT school usage, and through consultancies and representations to liaise and support the Department of Education and Training Western Australia (DETWA), the Curriculum Council (CC), the Association of Independent Schools in WA (AISWA) and the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (CEO WA).

Individual teachers, principals of schools, whole schools, education departments, curriculum developers, tertiary students and Paul's academic peers have all witnessed and benefited from, Paul's selfless dedication to promoting and supporting the use of ICT in education. Paul is a highly respected professional in the field of ICT in education and AEC congratulate Paul on a remarkable career.

Monika Stinton ACS/ACCE Leader of the Year

Monika (nominated by QSITE), along with Paul is the joint winner of the ACS/ACCE National Leader of the Year award for Outstanding Leadership in the use of ICT in Education. Monika started her career as a classroom teacher, was introduced to computers by a student with disabilities, and, as a computer coordinator for her school for many years, led the effective integration of IT.

In 1996 she moved on to be an Education Advisor - Learning Technologies for the Sunshine Coast region. It was during this time that she began the Sunshine Coast Chapter of QSITE. She continued as leader of QSITE Sunshine Coast until 2006, ensuring that quality professional development and networking was facilitated and participated in by members. The responses to events was always positive, with great attendances to demonstrate that the professional development was timely and met current needs. QSITE Sunshine Coast flourished for many years under Monika's leadership. Next she was appointed the Professional Development Manager of Buderim and Mountain Creek State Schools. Her brief was to develop expertise in using ICT effectively with teaching staff and beyond. As part of that role, she organised and ran the only self funded ICT Learning Development Centre in the state.

In 2000, she returned as an Education Advisor - Learning Technologies for the Nambour and Mooloolaba districts and then chose to move outback to Longreach district in 2002, ending her career with Education Queensland in 2004. She was appointed chair of QSITE Outback upon arrival at Longreach and led both chapters for a couple of years until 2006, when she resigned the chairmanship of QSITE Sunshine Coast, to concentrate on the challenges of leading an outback chapter remotely.

She continued to lead QSITE Outback until 2008, ensuring that quality professional development was provided to educators, regardless of their remoteness. She now works in a freelance mode with various education sectors always furthering the effective integration of ICTs through developing the online capabilities and pedagogies of teachers. It is her firm belief that the future is here now; that 21st century pedagogies must be purposefully blended with the best of what we do well, now, in order to meet the changing needs of students. AEC congratulate Monika on her award and her remarkable career.

Thanks Donna, Nick, Suzanne, Michelle and members of the Editorial Board.

Geoff Romeo (Ed)

* I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the authors of the applications submitted to ACCE for these awards, I have drawn heavily on the content of these applications to construct my editorial.