

winner of the 2007 ICTEV teacher of the year:

LAUREN O'GRADY, CAROLINE SPRINGS COLLEGE, CREEKSIDE CAMPUS

Lauren O'Grady, Caroline Springs College - Creekside Campus is the 2007 recipient of the ICTEV Award for Teacher of the Year. (Lauren was teaching at Sunshine Primary School at time of application).

INTRODUCTION

Lauren is passionate about improving her own pedagogical knowledge and applying this to her work with teachers and students alike. Lauren is a young teacher who has shown leadership in the area of ICT beyond her years.

She has achieved success in many facets of her role in developing curriculum, providing sound technical support and innovative programs that lift the intellectual capacity of both staff and students. Last year Lauren worked on expanding students' multi-literacies through forming a digital portfolio action research team. Lauren led this team into researching and developing digital portfolios with small groups of teachers and students. This team of people were then encouraged and trained to lead others in the construction of portfolios in 2007.

Lauren has instigated an innovative program where she enhances children's skills in the use of blogs for reflective thinking, podcasts, 'talking head' movies and involves many students in the production of films. This led to a group of children successfully participating in the Western Region's Re@ct Film Festival. In further developing multi-literacies for students, Lauren has introduced and professionally trained staff in Inspiration, Comic Life, photo stories and interactive whiteboards.

Whilst undertaking and completing her masters degree in educational leadership, Lauren has not only increased the skills of teachers at her school, but has shared her knowledge and skills at various regional forums, conferences and professional development in the use of ICT in the curriculum, including the ICTEV Early Years Twilight professional development.

More recently Lauren was approached to evaluate the interactive whiteboard rollout for the Department which involved visiting schools all round Victoria to assess programs and practices in making recommendations for the continuation of the whiteboard rollout. Lauren was seconded to the Department in Term 4 2006 to collect resources for and to write case studies for the ePotential website.

This resource will soon be available to teachers throughout the state of Victoria and will provide a range of innovative ICT class and curriculum activities. Lauren enables schools to be exposed to cutting edge thinking in the development and implementation of curriculum with embedded practice using technology and multi-literacy tools.

IN RESPONSE TO AWARD CRITERIA

WORK WITH STUDENTS

- Developing student mentors throughout the school to assist students and teachers in classroom ICT integration.
- Working with students on the Re@ct film project. This long term film project took myself and students to the aquarium to film on location as part of their film.
- Working with students in developing student led PD programs which were held at Melbourn and Werribee Zoos this year.
- Developing blogs and podcasts centred around student reflections.
- Working with low level literacy students in developing digital portfolios.
- Introducing concepts of mindmapping, animation, digital storytelling and film to students within the school. Students at Sunshine Primary School have never had the opportunity to work in a multimedia rich environment before. Weekly sessions with myself have allowed this to be part of the curriculum.
- I have a passion for ICT in the early years of schooling and have worked with students in the Prep to Grade 2 area on developing their ICT knowledge so that they are well equipped for multimodal learning in the middle years of schooling.
- Developed a cross school collaborative project centred around Kahootz animation. This project involved two primary schools, a special school and a secondary school and involved students creating collaborative Kahootz expressions about what their school means to them.
- Working with students in leading interactive whiteboard lessons. I believe that the use of interactive whiteboards should be student centred and I aim to reflect this in my classroom practice.

WORK WITH COLLEAGUES

- Winner 2005 Commonwealth Bank eLearning grant. This grant was used to purchase interactive whiteboards to assist students from the Horn of Africa become reflective learners within the school.
- Development of an elearning team, this is extremely important in maintaining an elearning culture throughout the school and provides staff with leadership opportunities in ICT.
- Working with teachers throughout the school in developing their presenting skills and presenting at conferences such as ICTEV and VITTA.
- Successfully leading professional learning teams and professional learning communities in literacy and ICT.
- Working with staff to integrate interactive whiteboards into classroom practice.
- Development of school website and intranet.
- Introduction of mindmapping in Inspiration as a form of assessment for inquiry learning amongst staff at the school.
- Working with staff to begin to capture a bank of digital reflections for use in future digital portfolios.
- Developing an elearning culture within Sunshine Primary School. When I accepted the role as ICT Coordinator the school had no elearning plan and a budget of \$2,000. Through strategic planning and consultation I have been able to increase ICT spending in the school to \$40,000 in two years. I also have worked closely with teachers in a peer coaching role and have developed ICT mentor teachers for each year level throughout the school. Then through a modelling and coaching process we work together to integrate ICT in classroom.
- Development of blogs for every grade within the school. I now assist other teachers and schools throughout Victoria in their development of secure blogs for reflection of learning. A sample of our blogs can be found at <http://www.sunshineps.vic.edu.au/classblogs.html>
- Coordinator of DoE Digital Portfolio Trial which we are currently undertaking. This trial has been resoundingly successful with exemplar portfolios being produced in every year level across the school.

- Development of whole school elearning plan.
- Development of staff elearning PD action plans. During the year I meet with teachers to develop action plans centred around their personal goals in ICT integration.
- Manage elearning budgets with a focus on consensus decision making with our elearning team.

WORK WITH PARENTS

- Working with parents in developing school concert DVDs and school presentations.
- Providing ICT support to parents in formal and informal ways.
- Holding parent information sessions on internet safety and keeping students safe in an online world.
- Working with parents clubs in developing fundraisers with an ICT focus such as a Kahootz fundraiser.
- Encouraging parents to get involved in ICT projects.
- Working with parents in the development of student digital portfolios. The reflective nature of a digital portfolio often requires strong home-school partnerships and through contact with parents this is achieved successfully in the school.
- Providing parents with information on ICT innovations within the school to further strengthen partnerships between Sunshine Primary School and home.
- Enthusiastically working with our parent's club in developing team approaches to internet safety and computer usage at home and at school.

RECOGNITION OUTSIDE SUNSHINE PRIMARY SCHOOL

- Interactive whiteboard consultant. This position has taken me around to nine trial schools in regional Victoria where I have assisted these schools in the development of an elearning culture and further the use of interactive whiteboards in these schools. As part of this position I along with Georgina Pazzi created an Interactive Whiteboard Resource DVD for use in schools.
- Providing clear communication, taking into account intended audiences as demonstrated in my work in developing the Professional Learning teams across the SMYLE Sunshine Middle Years network.
- Enthusiastically participating in collegiate discussions, support and innovative teaching and learning practice as a team member of the Mac network.

- Actively contributing as a team member of the Ascot Vale / Harvester cluster CeLL network through provision of quality professional development and resource support.
- Effectively sharing innovative ICT practices and resources as a seconded Project Officer for the upcoming ePotential ICT Capabilities tool for teachers across Victoria as requested by DoE.
- Successfully presenting educational issues and strategies within schools and public forums. For example parent information evenings, lectures to undergraduates at Victoria University, workshops and papers for regional and state conferences including collegiate team presentations as a member of the WMR eLearning Leadership network.
- Working with other schools in providing professional development of the WMR as part of their shared learning's program which was held this year at the zoo.
- Being sought as a mentor in middle years literacy practice. I have worked with teachers in their development of reciprocal reading strategies, literacy circles and the use of rubrics in the classroom.
- Being recognised as an ICT leader through the Western Metropolitan Region elearning leadership network.

PARTICIPANT IN CONFERENCES AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

- Using blogs as a reflective tool - ICTEV conference 2006 and VITTA conference 2005
- Internet safety for schools and community
- Integrating interactive whiteboards effectively into schools - VITTA conference 2006
- Using Kahootz as a collaborative learning tool 2005
- Inspiring teaching using Inspiration - VITTA conference 2006
- Hands on reflection, make your own blog - VITTA conference 2006
- Digital portfolios authentic assessment in action - VITTA conference 2006 and Echuca I&E Cluster
- Digital storytelling - two day workshop Melbourne Zoo 2006
- Digital storytelling - two day workshop Werribee Open Range Zoo 2006
- Interactive whiteboard integration - various sites around regional Victoria
- ICT and the prep classroom - ICTEV early years professional development 2006 and VITTA conference 2006