

## PICSE's Presence Grows with New Activity Centre Opening



Rick Rose (UWA) and Nakita Smith (CSU) examining micro fauna found in soil compost

PICSE's presence continues to grow with a new Activity Centre being established in New South Wales.

Charles Sturt University has established the Centre which is operating from the EH Graham Centre for Agricultural Innovation with Emma Wordsworth taking up the role of Science Education Officer.

PICSE has already attracted interest, with local school student Amber and science teacher Nakita Smith taking advantage of the Centre's activities.

Amber, a Mount Austin High School student, secured a spot in PICSE's Industry Placement Camp and travelled to the North West of Tasmania in December last year to participate in the program.

*"I knew I wanted to work in agriculture and I thought I knew where I wanted to go, but this opportunity has opened up a range of possibilities you couldn't imagine," she said.*

Amber will complete a five-day Industry Placement in April, and is keen to work with animal reproduction/genetics.

Nakita Smith, a science teacher at Mount Austin High School, received a Travelling Teacher Scholarship.

She travelled to Hobart to participate in the Teacher Professional Development, before joining Amber for three days on the student camp.

*"The PD gave me the opportunity to network and share ideas with other science teachers and scientists on climate variability," she said.*

*"The experience will develop knowledge and skills of teachers to implement effective lessons."*

For more information about the CSU PICSE activities contact Emma Wordsworth on (02) 6938 1832, 0408 700 693 or email [ewordsworth@csu.edu.au](mailto:ewordsworth@csu.edu.au).



## ..... From the Director

### Planning Forum Pays Dividends for Science Officers

On the 14th February, 22 PICSE staff from all states participated in the PICSE biannual Science Education Officers' Planning Forum at the School of Agricultural Science, University of Tasmania.

These forums are the "engine room of PICSE", providing professional development for Science Education Officers (SEOs) including extensive networking for sharing successful activities, analysing the previous year's evaluation data and developing strategies for the future.

During the forum, scientists from significant investors are invited to brief the SEOs on ground-breaking research which will be promoted by the SEOs when talking to more than 7,000 Year 11/12 science students in classes across the nation.



The PICSE Team while gathered at Hobart for the biannual Planning Forum

The SEOs were able to discuss these exciting research projects with Dr Caleb Gardner (Fisheries Research Development

Corporation), David Hohnberg (Murray Darling Basin Authority), Prof Sergey Shabala (Grains Research Development

Corporation) and Stuart Burgess (Horticulture Australia Ltd).

**Assoc Prof David Russell**

# PICSE STUDENTS SPEAK OUT

The pinnacle of the PICSE year is the Year 11/12 Industry Placement Scholarship. In 2010/11, 154 students provided written and verbal reports about the impact the camp and placement had on their future career and study options.

The following are extracts from several reports, one from each PICSE Activity Centre. Let the students now speak for themselves!



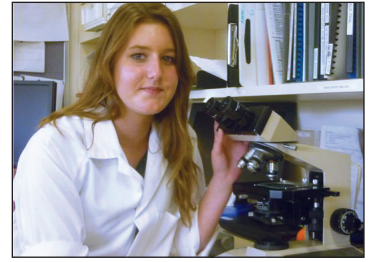
**Alexandria**  
Elizabeth College  
University of Tasmania

Before PICSE came to speak at my school I thought agricultural science was farming, period. I was 110% sure that agriculture wasn't for me.

My time on the PICSE camp and on industry placements was thoroughly enjoyable. I met so many interesting people and learnt so much about an industry, which through ignorance, I had been completely against. I have developed new passions and fallen in love, with grass!

**Brydie**  
Albany Senior High School  
University of Western Australia

My placement has influenced not only my views on agriculture, but my plans for my future studies and career. Before participating in the Industry Placement Camp, I planned to pursue a career in forensic science, but after seeing the exciting things I could do in agricultural science, my views have changed. I was still not quite sure if I was going to study either an ag science or a general science degree. After my Industry Placement however, I hope to do an agriculture science degree, which will hopefully lead me into animal research.



**William**  
Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School  
University of New England

I think I have learned more about broadacre farming here in a week than what I did in Year 11 Ag Science. This week has pushed me closer to taking a career in the agricultural side of things.

**Brooke**  
Urrbrae Agricultural High School  
Flinders University

After completing my Industry Placement at Flinders University, I have decided that marine biology is definitely a career I would like to consider. I am now looking forward to beginning my BSc at Flinders next year and hopefully pursuing a career in marine biology.



**Josh**  
Suncoast Christian College  
University of the Sunshine Coast

My Industry Placement has enlightened a new area of science which I had not even considered previously in terms of career options. As I had originally been interested in medical research, and I enjoy the outdoors, plant research presents itself as a good halfway point of researching both biological organisms in an open-air environment.

**James**  
Urrbrae Agricultural High School  
GrowSmart Training, SA

The Industry Placement has shown me what horticulture has to offer and it has really broadened my horizons for what I plan to do in the future. I could take many different paths in agriculture and horticulture for my future careers and I definitely want to work in these areas.



**Vanessa**  
Pittsworth State High School  
University of Southern Queensland

Before I heard about the PICSE program I wasn't really interested in science. I only studied science up to Grade 9, and I wasn't really open to trying new things. But after this experience I had to change my mind about science. It is such an interesting area and I didn't realise it is so important. I have never met people who are so interested in doing science and in learning about new things. I am so glad that PICSE gave me the chance to have so many good experiences. They just changed my life. I wanted to do the scholarship program to do something different and I don't regret it in any way.

PICSE is funded by the Federal Government's Diversity and Structural Adjustment Fund, University of Tasmania, University of Western Australia, University of New England, University of Southern Queensland, University of the Sunshine Coast, Flinders University, Charles Sturt University and the Grains RDC, Cotton RDC, Fisheries RDC, Dairy Australia, Horticulture Australia Ltd, Cotton CRC, Murray Darling Basin Authority, Dow AgroSciences and National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training .