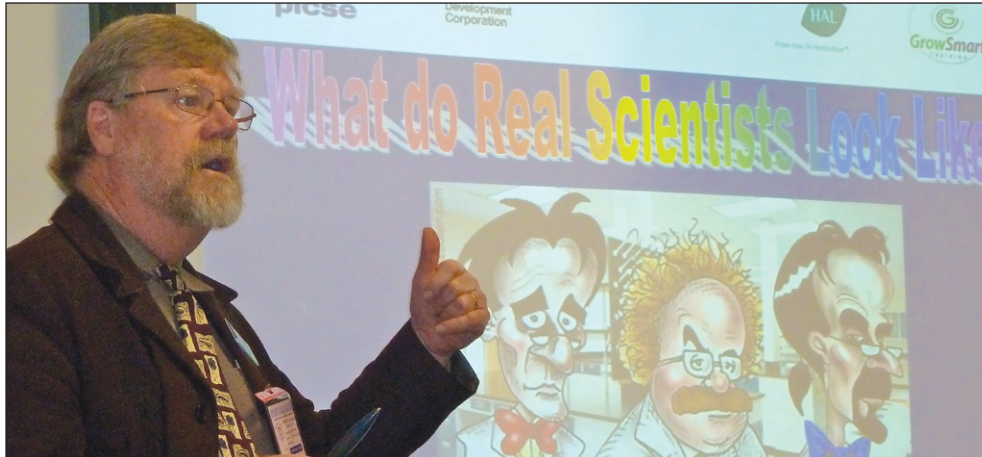


PICSE is a “life changer” for students



PICSE GrowSmart SEO, Trevor Noble, presenting to school students

PICSE provides life changing experiences. In June, a number of Industry Placement Scholarship students had the opportunity to interact with Federal Members of Parliament in Canberra.

The meeting not only provided a memorable time for them, but also an

opportunity to explain to the group how the PICSE program has impacted on their career decisions.

After a recent camp for Year 9 and 10 students, a teacher from one of the participating schools wrote, “This is a life changer for these kids. Kahlia is now

considering a Uni pathway. Before, she just wanted to work on a station. She is very talented and this has opened her world”.

This illustrates the value of the PICSE program.

This term Science Education Officers (SEOs) are busy visiting schools to give presentations on the importance of science in primary industry, and to advertise PICSE’s Industry Placement Scholarship.

Students are shown the amazing science that is used in the production of our food and fibre.

SEOs are also assisting schools with the Science Investigation Awards, which give students a fantastic opportunity to do some ‘real’ science and win some significant prize money!

It is exciting to think that there will be students who will decide that a science-related career in primary industry is what they want to do as a result of their engagement with the PICSE program.



..... From the Director

Science Investigation Awards made us more interested in science

All around the nation PICSE Science Education Officers have been visiting classes in primary schools and high schools, assisting teachers and encouraging students in their science investigations. This in-class support is unique to PICSE and demonstrates our commitment to building useful partnerships with school communities.

Last year in the national evaluations, 79% of primary school students and 89% of secondary school students reported that they preferred to investigate their own topic. There is always an amazing range of thought-provoking topics, from “Do Dogs Really Go Wacko from Schmackos?” to “Does Eating Fruit Improve Your Reaction Time?” and every topic in-between! Not surprisingly, 70% of primary students enjoyed science more, after participating in the Science Investigations Awards (SIA).

During this month, the Science Education Officers will be managing SIA judging events in 13 centres around Australia. These events are designed to celebrate and value the efforts that the students (and teachers) have put into their individual scientific projects, as well as showcasing



Sue Lanham with Tanika from Chancellor State College, winner of the Dow AgroSciences Award

the students’ quality projects to university staff, local business/industry supporters and parents.

I would like to conclude with a few quotes from students:

- “By taking part in this program, my view of science was impacted greatly, I feel science is amazing!”
- “The program really opened my eyes

to how much falls under the category of science! I didn’t realise this before!”

- “It made us more interested in science because it was something that we enjoyed!”
- “The SIAs gave me an insight into agriculture and why it is an important field of study.”

Associate Professor David Russell
PICSE Director



Sunshine Coast science students put to the test in awards program

Young scientists of the future put their theories to the test at this year's Science Investigation Awards at the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC).

The annual awards provide an opportunity for students to investigate a topic (usually a science conundrum of their choice) by formulating a research hypothesis to discover the answers.

Students presented their work, verbally and poster format, to a panel of respected and experienced judges.

This year, more than 100 students were judged by scientists, community members, researchers, Education Queensland staff and USC academics.

Queensland Chief Scientist Dr Geoff Garrett AO was among the guest speakers at the PICSE USC awards and presented prizes to students.

One judge commented *"I think the program is excellent in its ability to promote a higher level of thinking and engagement."*

Generous sponsorship funds enabled students to receive cash prizes ranging from \$50 to \$500.

The overall Junior Scientist Award was won by Olivia from Mountain Creek State



Primary student winners and VIP presenters show their excitement at the USC Science Investigation Awards ceremony

School and Jacqui, from Sunshine Beach State High School, won the overall Senior Scientist Award.

Top prizes of the evening went to projects entitled "Let There Be Light", "Hot Stuff" and "Friction Fun". Students enjoyed the experience, looking at all the fantastic projects, and engaging with scientists.

One student commented *"I now view science more as a real life application rather than just an experiment"*.

Major sponsors for the evening included GRDC, FRDC, Dow AgroSciences, Woolworths, Education Queensland (SEEC) and Science SPARK.

Other sponsors including COSMOS magazine and Buderim Ginger provided valuable in-kind support, and so too did volunteers who greatly assisted with the event.

Congratulations to all students for their outstanding science investigations and poster displays. We look forward to the 2012 entries.

2011 SIA snapshots from WA & QLD



Sarah and Kailey from Year 8 Pinjarra SHS (UWA SIAs) have their project assessed by judges



Jacqui from Sunshine Beach SHS (USC SIAs) with her Overall Senior Scientist winner's cheque



Rebekah from Year 8 Pinjarra SHS (UWA SIAs) proudly displays her Elephant's Toothpaste project



Alexander from Year 9 Centenary Heights SHS (USQ SIAs) won the Woolworths Fresh Food Prize - Best Food Focused Investigation