

QSITE

Dr Petrea Redmond

The QSITE board have been busy with a significant number of activities occurring across the state – and many more planned. We've collated the PD opportunities into a Term calendar to make it easier for members to identify what is happening in their area.

The biggest event for us is, of course, the much anticipated **State Conference in Townsville** from 23 – 25 September. Christie, Norena, Liz and Trish have been very busy putting together a packed program for us. For those of us who have been suffering with the winter chill, the prospect of some warmth is very enticing. The conference is in the middle of the Queensland September holiday period so you have plenty of time to take in the tropics either before or after. We'd love for you to join us.

Chapter Round Up

Six months into the year already and QSITE members have been able to access a wide variety of professional learning opportunities across the state. Each of the chapters has developed programs to meet the needs of members in their areas as well as to foster interest for new members.

Far North Queensland Chapter is supporting schools in preparation for the Grand Prix Robotics competition to be held in August at Bentley Park State College. In addition to this, they have been working with Adobe to schedule a number of workshops in the area.

Townsville Chapter is hosting the State Conference on 23-25 September this year. It will be held at St Margaret Mary's College. This is shaping up to be a great event with some excellent workshops locked in already. In preparation for this, the chapter has a wide range of activities scheduled to whet the appetites of the locals. People can select from a couple of Apple workshops in July, Adobe workshops in August, and the possibility of a Robotics event in the near future as well. In addition to this, Townsville will be embarking on their first TeachMeet event on 28 July following a similar process to that used successfully by Gold Coast Chapter.

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Distance education head scoops award

CAIRNS School of Distance Education's Department for Information and Communication Technologies head, Leigh Howser, has been awarded the Australian Council for Computers in Education and Australian Computer Society Educator of the Year award.

It is a national award that recognises the importance of Australian teachers' work that significantly contributes to the use of information and communication technologies in schools.

"This award was a surprise and an incredible honour," Ms Howser said.

"I simply love what I do." The CSDE school community is well aware of Ms Howser's love of ICT. News about the latest courses, software and gadgets is excitedly shared, and she keeps everyone enthusiastically learning with her many ICT support programs for students, staff and home tutors, along with boot camps, rural and remote road trips, ICT Little Girls' Day Out, TechIT Outback and roadshows.

Ms Howser skilfully attends to the ICT challenges of providing innovative distance education to CSDE students throughout Queensland, Australia and across the world.

When the Educator of the Year award was being judged and announced, Ms Howser was on an IT road trip visiting Cairns School of Distance Education school community groups in rural areas of Queensland.

Her next travel plans will



PASSION FOR TEACHING: Cairns School of Distance Education's Leigh Howser has been recognised.

include accepting and celebrating the honour at the Australian Council for Computers in Education national conference.

Ms Howser leads the ICT at Cairns School of Distance Education, and is the eLearn mentor, Adobe Education trainer and Adobe campus leader.

This year, she was elected

as the Far North Queensland professional development co-ordinator and state board member of the Queensland Society of Information Technology in Education (QSITE), after winning the 2014 QSITE State Site Educator award.

"I'm fortunate to have the opportunities to work and be supported innovatively at

CSDE, and through the ICT educators' network of QSITE," Ms Howser said. Cairns School of Distance Education principal Andrew Oliver credits Ms Howser's talents, professionalism and passion for encouraging and supporting all learners in the school community for the world-class ICT innovation embedded in the school.

Rockhampton Chapter has had a busy start to the year with their Interactive Learning User Group workshops. These are set to continue throughout the rest of the year. In addition to the ILUG workshops other planned activities include professional development sessions at the upcoming Principal's Twilight Conference.

The **Toowoomba** Chapter kicked off this term with an online professional development session in the form of a webconference with Julie King, sharing the latest information about the Digital Technologies Curriculum. Next term sees the RoboGals event followed soon after by a Maths and IT professional development activity in conjunction with USQ.

The **Sunshine Coast** Network has been very active with a range of professional development activities focusing on developing teachers' knowledge of the Digital Technologies Curriculum. This has been made possible with a Google Grant that they were lucky to pick up. Activities are planned throughout the rest of the year.

Gold Coast Chapter have been exploring new ways of running professional development activities. They are now up to their fourth TeachMeet event with a fantastic array of topics being explored each time. More recently they held a family day where students were teaching their parents how to use MineCraft. This was quite successful and has given us all food for thought.

The **Brisbane** Network has also been busy with a program of professional learning activities on offer for members. These include activities focusing on the effective use of iPads, and an Introduction to Scratch. Coming up in the next term are two great opportunities: a Lego Robotics workshop and a Digital Technologies Forum to be held at QUT.

And finally, the **ACCE2016** Committee is well and truly in the throes of planning for the national conference from **29 September – 2 October**. This is an excellent opportunity for you to attend a national conference in the Sunshine State. Call for papers and early bird registrations will start to appear in the next few months – keep an eye out on the lists, twitter and our facebook page for these.

In the meantime:

- Mark the dates in your calendars
- Submit your PD request to the budget committee at your school
- Consider presenting a workshop – get your ideas together
- Join in on the ACCE PLN Google Hangouts with Roland and Amanda

We are looking forward to welcoming you to Brisbane in 2016