

## College Newsletter

14 – December – 2011, Volume 4, Issue 3

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### Important dates:

**14 December**  
Pick up Reports

**21 December**  
College Closes

**6 February**  
First Day of School  
Yr 11

**7 February**  
First Day of School  
Yr 12

**8 February**  
Yr 11 Diagnostic  
Testing

### Principal's Report

I can't believe it has come to the end of our first year and for our students they are half way through their college education. This newsletter is a celebration of this amazing year.

To start a new school is a privilege for everyone, not just me as principal. For our staff and students, learning and teaching in a new environment with state of the art facilities has been an extremely rewarding experience. Students and staff are to be congratulated for their maturity and adaptability in settling in to the environment so quickly.

During the year our students have excelled in many areas: Science, Engineering, Mathematics and IT competitions; Hospitality students winning medals in the Culinary Competition; Arts exhibitions and our very first drama performance Urbs Urbis, in September. Our active student leadership team certainly contributed to the establishment of college traditions and student engagement activities. I also

congratulate and thank the many students who have represented the College in academic, sporting and cultural pursuits.

As you are aware all staff at Gungahlin College are hand picked for their individual skills, knowledge and areas of expertise and this staff have proven to be the best staff I have ever worked with. This year Peter Smythe was awarded the Microsoft Innovative Teacher of the Year award and Lisa Pluis received an ACEL award for Leadership in Science. The administrative and support staff have been second to none in making our college what it is today.

To end the year our staff are working extremely hard finalising student scores and grades, undertaking professional learning and beginning the preparation for 2012 classes. Sadly we will be saying farewell to two staff members Xueying Zhang and Elena Vasilef, and I wish them all the very best in their future teaching careers.

2012 brings enormous growth to the College. As Year 11 students move into Year 12, we are



expecting an additional 400 students into Year 11 and one class of year 10 students into our selective Science Maths and Related Technologies (SMART) program. All up our school population is expected to be around 800 students. I have appointed 30 additional teachers and 6 support staff, all highly skilled in their areas of expertise.

Thank you to our students, staff and families for making Gungahlin College the flagship school it is within its first year.

I wish you all a safe and festive Christmas break.

Gai Beecher

Principal



## Arts Year in Review

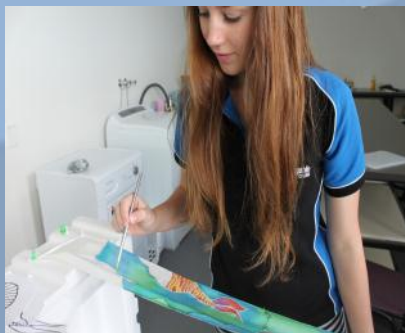
Recently we were asked to reflect on the year that is winding to a close; both achievements and challenges. In the ensuing conversation we were all amazed by how much has been achieved by the staff and students of the Arts in the first year of Gungahlin College's operation. Here is the year in review:

- Excursion to Sydney and workshops at Sydney Dance Co and NIDA. Not to mention the theatre treats of "The Business" at Belvoir St and "Mary Poppins" at the Capitol Theatre.
- Excursion to National Portrait Gallery for visual art, photography and ceramics students.
- Excursions and connections made with the Ceramics Department at ANU for ceramics students.
- Limelight performances including: Ashleigh Leach, Phoebe Highfield and Brooke Rowe selected for the Dance Intensive, Jak O'Brien for the Drama Intensive, "Urbs Urbis" selected in the drama category and two films from media students from Gungahlin College.
- Student work selected (12 pieces) from textiles, ceramics and photography for the College Express Exhibition at Belconnen Arts Centre, December 2011.
- Gungahlin College Dance Festival piece chosen for the Dancefest Media Launch and two groups performed hugely successful dance pieces for the Dance Festival.
- Student exhibitions at the NAB Bank Gungahlin throughout the year.
- "Urbs Urbis" production showcasing the talent of our drama and music students.
- Visual art and photography work displayed throughout the College.
- Gungahlin's Got Talent performances throughout the year starting with the first performance in G week on the outdoor stage.
- Art and photography exhibition in the theatre foyer in Week 17.
- Film, music, drama and dance showcased at assemblies.
- Music gigs and drama performances at lunchtime indoors and outdoors.
- 'Rubber Duckie' entertainment and Open Day entertainment contributions.
- Remembrance Day ceremony – music students singing Advance Australia Fair.
- Students operating the theatre for productions and assemblies.

PHEW! It's been a big, successful year with one of the great highlights being the smiles on the faces of the Arts students when they know they have done their very best. Thank you to all of our supporters in the school community and the wider community; collaboration and support in the Arts is vital. We are very excited about next year and have some wonderful plans but as we're still in the early phases of planning we're keeping them to ourselves at the moment. We can tell you that Douglas and Shannon will be joining us in the Arts Faculty to teach photography, visual arts, media and drama. We're very lucky to have such talented teachers joining our team. Finally, thank you to all of our wonderful students in the Arts who have connected, learnt and achieved working to the highest standards.

Have a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us in the Arts and get excited about 2012!

### A Photographic Year in Review for the ARTS





## English and Humanities Year in Review

It has been an amazing year for English and Humanities in 2011, the first year of Gungahlin College. As a faculty we have achieved so much and learnt even more!

Being the largest faculty, with the most classes offered across a range of subjects, we had an enormous task to deliver quality educational experiences in English, History, Global Relations, Psychology and Sociology. At the end of 2011, I can proudly say that Peter Anderson, Emma Butt, Nicole Downes, Sarah Dyball, Jane Southerton, Maria Stewart and Ben Williams provided intellectually challenging, academically rigorous and highly enjoyable classes to over 320 students!

In our first year we offered units to cater for a wide range of interests, skills and abilities. Students were able to search for Arthur in Mediaeval History, discover Socrates in Global Relations, unravel the teenage mind in Psychology, examine social norms in Sociology and be terrified in Gothic and Modern Horror. Through these amazing experiences, students got a glimpse of the myriad of educational opportunities offered through our faculty and talented teachers.

Learning was not just confined to the classroom and college, students were also given a range of learning experiences that had real world connections. We sent students to debating competitions at the ACT Legislative Assembly, they participated in the Constitutional Convention at the Museum of Australian Democracy, visited the Australian War Memorial, participated in experiments conducted by a PHD student from the ANU Psychology School, saw a variety of plays and films to complement set texts and listened to a range of guest speakers. Our philosophy is that learning experiences can be found in a range of places and with a range of people and every opportunity should be taken to provide such experiences.

With every learning experience, we also learnt a lot from our students! They provided invaluable feedback for our class content and teaching practices and lasting memories to ensure that learning was a reciprocal experience. The exchange of ideas allowed a student to be a teacher and a teacher to be a student, the arrangement providing a rich and deep learning experience.

2011 was a year of establishment, learning and growth for teachers and students alike. It saw the beginning of a quality learning environment that is the most advanced secondary college in the ACT. It has the promise to be a premier college that offers students every opportunity to achieve whatever goals they may have. However, for all of its successes, 2011 was just a glimpse of what can be achieved in English and Humanities at Gungahlin College and we look forward to the challenges, accomplishments and experiences that the future will bring.

The English/Humanities Faculty wishes everyone a happy and safe Christmas and New Year and we look forward to working with you all in 2012!

### A Photographic Year in Review for the English/Humanities



## Languages Year in Review

On November 11 the Italian and French language classes went to an Italian restaurant in Kingston called La Rustica with Signora Vasilef. The students experienced a wide variety of Italian dishes and culture as well as sharing time together outside school.

The students were able to taste the traditional gourmet flavours of Italy, including various types of pizza, lasagne, gnocchi and a variety of pastas. After a very filling lunch, the students also went to an Italian owned Gelateria and they also experienced an exciting variety of pure Italian gelato.



It was a very cultural day for the students and they had lots of fun being together and spending time outside school. The students also enjoyed socialising with their lovely language teacher and thought it was a fantastic way to see their favourite teacher off.

We wish Signora Vasilef best of luck for the future.

By Keisha Berkman

### Chinese Excursion

On September 29 the Chinese class went on an excursion to Asian Café in Civic in the Melbourne Building. The interior was modern Chinese style and the service was authentic. We ordered hot sizzling tofu, honey chicken, Shandong chicken, Beijing Duck and fried rice. All were delicious. We also played a table game and everybody had a great time.

Reported by Hansol Kim, Rachel Ryu, Dahyun Kim and Palang Anivan.

### Honours

Congratulations to Hansol Kim for gaining the first prize in the 2011 ACT Mandarin Presentation Contest. Other winners include Rachel Rye (second prize) and Dahyun Kim (third prize). On 4th November, they were awarded the certificates and prizes at The Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning in Stirling and celebrated their achievement with students and teachers from the other thirteen ACT schools. Thank you to Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Australia for organising the ACT Mandarin Presentation Contest. Well done to all these students and to all other Chinese students who entered this contest.

Reported by Xueying Zhang (Chinese teacher)

## A Photographic Year in Review for Languages



## Physical Education Year in Review

### Sea Kayaking Camp

During the first week of November a group of 12 students embarked on an introductory sea kayaking expedition from “The Bay”. All our provisions were packed aboard our kayaks and we headed out toward the open sea in search of some whales that had been spotted. No luck for us with our search but we stopped for lunch on a beach in Culburra National Park where some helped themselves to fresh oysters off the rocks. The remainder of the trip was spent discovering the Clyde River where we found our camp spot for the night on its banks in the National Park. After some evening fishing we started up our camp fire for the night which was enjoyed by all. The following day was spent continuing upstream towards Nelligen where we encountered many sea eagles and other wildlife. A great two days on the water for everyone, thanks to all involved.



### White Water Rafting

Early in November a group of 12 students embarked on an adventure to Penrith for a Wake Boarding and Rafting experience. Our first stop was the Cables Wake Park where students could have a go at knee or wake boarding. The morning proved to be a great experience for all, with some pushing themselves out of their comfort zone for great rewards. We then headed to the White Water Stadium for our afternoon session. We were lucky enough to have the river to ourselves so plenty of time was spent in the “wave” which supplied our entertainment for the day. Students were challenged to stay in the boat with most of the group not succeeding and having a sudden swim! After the fun of the rafting we drove to Bents Basin Nature Reserve where we camped near the Nepean River. We managed to avoid the thunderstorms which rumbled around, and spent the night around the glow of the fire. Another beautiful day greeted us and we headed off to conquer wake boarding again. Two days of fun in the sun were had by all.



## A Photographic Year in Review for PE





## Science Year in Review

### Honours Lecture with Professor Mahananda Dasgupta

Two dozen of Gungahlin College's brightest young scientists were given a golden ticket into the brilliant world of particle Physics. Professor Dasgupta, head of the Particle Physics division of the ANU, presented a seminar to the Year 11 Science honours and Physics students. With the assistance of one very original slide show, Professor Dasgupta led the youthful scholars into the amazing and complex areas of her research. Brushing over impressive subjects like "Nuclear Fusion" and "Quantum Tunnelling", the room was truly abuzz with sound of mental gears turning. Professor Dasgupta's presentation made for one mind boggling afternoon, certainly one that will be remembered fondly by Gungahlin's young scientists.

Written by Jak O'Brien (Science Honours)

### Questacon Schools Training Program

Congratulations to Cori Allum-Walsh, Antonio Tamayo, Jennifer Bourke and Tanvi Acharya for successfully completing their assessments for the 2011 Questacon Schools Training Program.

Since March, Cori Allum-Walsh, Antonio Tamayo, Jennifer Bourke and Tanvi Acharya have completed fourteen two hour evening sessions in which they have received training in the Questacon exhibitions and in customer service, science communication through show and talk development and occupational safety and emergency procedures. Following these sessions, students then began forty hours of on-the-floor volunteering. This involved working independently in the Questacon galleries explaining science to the general public.

### Dr Brian Schmidt Questacon Lecture

On the 17 of November 2011, Nobel Prize winner Dr Brian Schmidt gave his valuable time to present his findings at the Australian National Science Centre, Questacon in Canberra. He presented his research live at the theatre, and several schools all across Australia and NZ also participated via video link. The presentation fascinated and inspired all students and he encouraged students to learn in fields they enjoy and thought this was the key to success. The live video of this amazing presentation can be found at [www.questacon.edu.au/live](http://www.questacon.edu.au/live).

Written by Blaire Song (Physics)

### Nature of Ecosystems excursion to CSIRO with Ian McDonald

Gungahlin College is committed to forming links with scientists with a view to broadening and deepening science education. A key element to this is our participation in the "Scientists in Schools" program run by the CSIRO, and students of Environmental Biology were the first to benefit from this partnership this term by attending a talk by PhD student Ian McDonald at the CSIRO Discovery Centre. Ian's work involves using cutting-edge, environmentally friendly technology to control rabbit and kangaroo populations – a topic relevant to all Australians. Students were not only able to see the "real-world" impact of the topic they are currently studying in class, but also benefited from a tour of the research facility itself, and a glimpse into the exciting life of a research scientist.

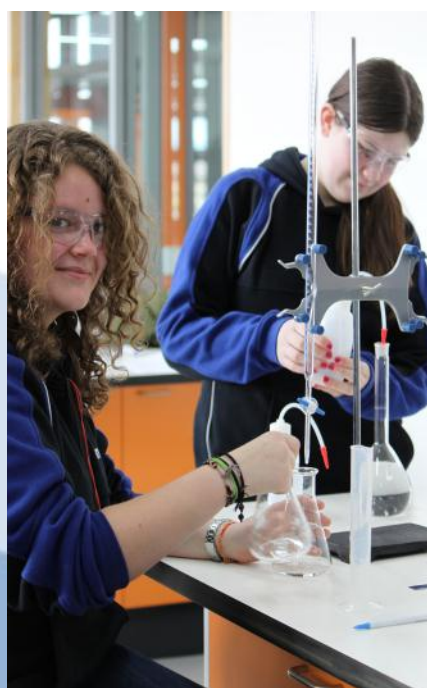
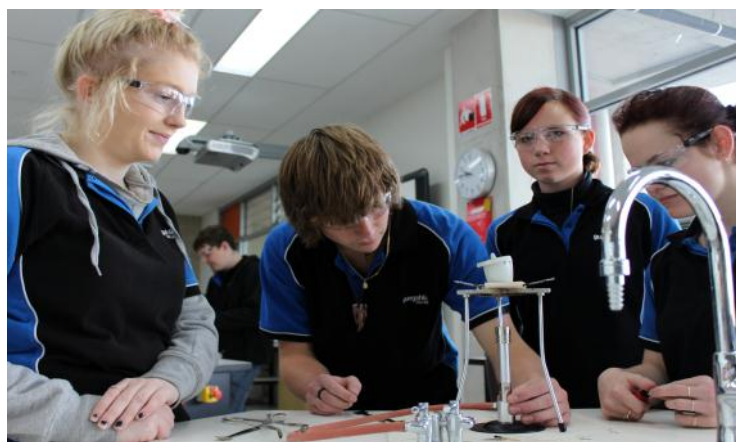
### NYSF

Jennifer Bourke has been invited to attend Youth Science Forum 2012 at the University of Western Sydney, Hawkesbury Campus from the 18th-20 January 2012. The purpose of Youth Science Forum 2012 is to provide a unique opportunity for talented students to meet with peers who share similar interests and talents. Students will participate in a series of activities, aimed at further developing knowledge and skills related to Science, communication, team work and leadership.

### Rio Tinto Big Science Competition

Congratulations to Tara Dehm and Nayomi Lecamwasam for gaining Distinctions and to Nicholas Adams, Celine Anderson, Harrison Thiele and Matthew Watts who achieved credits in this competition.

### A Photographic Year in Review for Science





## SOSE Year in Review

What a huge year of achievements with our students and community partner! Highlights include:

UBS Leadership award winner Sahar spent an all-expenses paid week in Sydney.

Student success in the Economics and Business Studies National competitions.

Local business guest speakers from Zambreros, Coffee Guru, McDonalds, Fujitsu, Flight Centre (Gungahlin), Office of Regulatory Services, Café Migliore and a site visit to Jamison Travel.

Local business excursions to the Market Place and the "G".

Community Services class had many visiting small children and babies as part of the Children's Play unit.

Successful completion of fifteen structured work place learning experiences in Childcare and Business Services leading several students into School Based Apprenticeships in Business Administration.

Lawyers from AB Vincent Northside Solicitors generously gave their time to visit the Legal Studies students and tell them all about what it's really like to be a lawyer.

Visiting speakers from Chartered Accountants.

Excursions to the ACT Magistrates Court, Daryl's Den (Holt), and of course, the Marketplace and the "G"!

Teams of students got to invest a "virtual" \$50,000 over two 10 week periods of time on the Australian Stock Exchange as part of the ASX competition. They found out first hand just how easy it is to make (and lose) their money!

Community Awareness Fundraising via a cake stall, duck race, sausage sizzles and the first annual Gungahlin College Talent Quest - over \$1200 was raised and presented to Daryl's Den, part of the National Brain Injury Foundation, to assist people suffering from acquired brain injury. Talent quest guest judge David Shillington (Canberra Raiders and Australian Rugby League player) enjoyed watching and hearing the talents of Gungahlin College students and staff!



### A Photographic Year in Review for SOSE





## Technology Year in Review

What a year this has been! I thought I would reflect on how far we have come and on some of our achievements throughout the year.

When we first arrived at the College at the start of the year we were amazed at the wonderful resources we had in the Technology faculty – now we are amazed at the quality of work our wonderful students have produced using our resources! We have come from humble beginnings and have produced great things. Here are a few of our highlights:

We now have two fully functioning workshops – one for wood and one for metal. Shannon has done a great job of leading students in this area and we have seen many quality toolboxes come out of the workshops. It has been exciting to see the development of students skills in these areas and the increasing complexity of the projects that they have undertaken.

The Design and Technology class has produced items from the concept stage and their work has included research, design, production and evaluation. We have seen tape dispensers, desk caddies, children's toys and chairs being designed and produced by these students.

Graphic design students have tackled some real world tasks designing T-shirt logos, magazines and business logos. There were some exciting suggestions made for naming our hospitality café and a decision on which to use is yet to be made.

Textiles students have studied fabric colouration, made cushion covers and various garments. The highlight of the year would have to be the wonderful newspaper fashions the students made and paraded on Open Night. They really displayed their creativity and learnt a lot about fitting and shaping garments through this exercise – and the results were truly amazing. Graphic and Textile students have benefitted from Keturah's expert guidance, skill and creativity.

Hospitality has come a long way from our first practical lesson where we only had knives and chopping boards to use! We have had students win medals in the ACT Culinary Competition, have run weekly cafes and the highlight would have been the evening restaurants the students ran as part of their assignment. Hospitality students are working in industry during week 18 on structured workplace learning placements.

Congratulations to Nick and Muhammad who were awarded the Technology Community awards for 2011.

Sue O'Connor

### A Photographic Year in Review for Technology





## **A Final Word from the Associate Principal...**

### **2011: The First Year 11 for Gungahlin College**

From that warm February morning, when the staff and students of our school gathered for the inaugural Year 11 photograph, Gungahlin College has been a hive of activity. During this time teachers have toiled to transition students into the senior secondary setting and utilise the amazing resources our new College facility offers. As the school year wore on students were exposed to a range of learning opportunities across a broad curriculum which was supported by increased use of ICT and highly competent teachers.

It has been an amazing journey; we started with 308 students and without a Gym, Library or Courtyard but everyone just took it in their stride, proud to be part of a brand new school. We have had numerous special events, official openings, special visitors, competitions, performances, art exhibitions, talent shows and even our first home game in inter-college sport. All through this our students have participated, competed, helped out and we have celebrated these achievements.

It has indeed been a year of firsts and one unexpected first, for 2011 anyway, was to have two Year 12 graduates, Frances McNair and Mateus Viana Dos Santos. These two students came to me late in the enrolment process and had already commenced Year 11 at their previous schools. As it didn't seem likely that they would graduate in 2011 and they seemed committed, I enrolled them. Well they proved me wrong, thriving in our learning environment especially the Theatre, as they are both talented actors and musicians, they accumulated enough additional points to graduate. Congratulations Frances and Matt.

For our current students who will be moving to Year 12 next year now is the time to reflect on their achievements so far. It is important to assess goals for the coming academic year and make the relevant adjustments if necessary. Both myself and our career and transition staff, will be working early in the new school year to offer and provide advice to students so that they can experience the best individual outcomes when they complete Year 12 .

Regards

Craig Edwards

Associate Principal

Year 11 2011

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