

**Commonwealth Bank
Teaching Awards**

Here's
to great
teachers

Teaching Fellows



The Commonwealth Bank Teaching Awards are prestigious new national awards established to recognise and reward outstanding teaching and school leadership.

The Awards have been created through a partnership between the Commonwealth Bank and Schools Plus, founded on both organisations' strong commitment to advancing education in Australia.

Today, we are thrilled to introduce the 12 teachers and school leaders who will become our inaugural Teaching Fellows.

Their exceptional teaching and leadership skills are transforming the future for their students, particularly in some of Australia's most challenging and socially diverse communities.

As Teaching Fellows, these leading educators will receive world-class professional development opportunities and funding for a significant project at their schools. They will visit Singapore to observe its high-performing education system, and engage with leading education experts throughout the coming year.

This unique Fellowship program is designed to celebrate the important work teachers do, and build a national community of education change-makers who will inspire and influence practice in classrooms across the country.

Congratulations to you all!

Sharyn Angel

**SHAILER PARK STATE
HIGH SCHOOL (QLD)**

Sharyn Angel began her career in 2001, juggling full-time teaching with training for the Olympics in Hammer Throw – she was ranked 4th in Australia at the time.

In 2015, her passion for teaching led her to the role of Deputy Principal at Shailer Park State High School, where in just two years, she has transformed the school's performance.

When Sharyn arrived, literacy was a notable concern, with the school underperforming significantly in reading and writing. Sharyn's work has increased the percentage of students who perform at or above the minimum standard in writing from 54.2% to 96.4%.

As a result, Shailer Park has been approached by Griffith University to participate in a research investigation led by Professor Donna Pendergast into the teaching of reading, writing and literacy education at the school.



Chad Bliss

**THE CANOBOLAS RURAL
TECHNOLOGY HIGH SCHOOL (NSW)**



When Chad Bliss was appointed Principal of The Canobolas Rural Technology High School, he was presented with a number of challenges, including a low socio-economic area, low literacy and numeracy levels, poor attendance and high suspension rates.

To re-engage students, Chad employed 'Design Thinking' strategies to identify the root causes of the issues students were facing. Chad and his staff then used these learnings to develop innovative programs to support student wellbeing, increase learning engagement and equip students with the necessary skills to secure jobs or go on to tertiary education.

These initiatives have improved student behaviour, decreased unexplained absences, increased numeracy and literacy levels, and been shared with schools across the country.



Shanti Clements

BEAUTY POINT
PUBLIC SCHOOL (NSW)

The daughter of a refugee who knows the challenges facing students from low socio-economic and multicultural backgrounds, Shanti Clements has always been a strong advocate for social justice, equity and excellence for students and teachers.

Shanti has channelled over 23 years of experience working in the field of education, personal development and leadership research into the transformation of Beauty Point Public School. Since her appointment as Principal seven years ago, her passion and dedication has helped Beauty Point Public become one of the highest performing schools in Australia for NAPLAN results.



Leah Crockford

BERRY SPRINGS
PRIMARY SCHOOL (NT)



Faced with a disengaged school community, a lack of cohesion between school and home, and alarming NAPLAN results, Principal Leah Crockford knew that to make a difference, she had to change the school’s culture and approach to learning.

To improve student outcomes, Leah focused on existing strengths at the school and worked to reduce its weaknesses. She replaced staff who did not share her values and commitment to taking things forward, and introduced real-life learning by taking students next door to the Territory Wildlife Park for classes.

After targeted professional development, a new whole-school approach to teaching and learning, and a culture change process, the 2015/2016 NAPLAN results saw Berry Springs Primary School students achieving above the expected achievement trajectories nationally.

Michael Devine

WESTERN PORT
SECONDARY COLLEGE (VIC)

Since being appointed Principal of Western Port Secondary College in 2014, Michael Devine has been integral to lifting student engagement levels and improving student learning outcomes.

Michael initiated and led the establishment of programs to target disengaged students and broaden opportunities to remain in education that have seen school retention from Years 7 to 12 increase by more than 25%. Under Michael’s leadership the school has focused on targeting learning growth, which has led to significant improvements in NAPLAN data and VCE median study scores.

Michael is a strong advocate of public education, whose passion is leading schools in low socio-economic communities.



Wilbur (Charlie) Klein

TJUNTJUNTJARA REMOTE
COMMUNITY SCHOOL (WA)



At the end of 660 kilometres of dirt road east of Kalgoorlie, Wilbur (Charlie) Klein leads one of the most remote community schools in Australia.

Challenged with high staff turnover, a transient student cohort, behavioural management issues and his own professional isolation, Charlie developed long-term strategies for students and staff to learn in different ways. His approach has given students, teachers and the broader Aboriginal community remarkable opportunities to engage in learning outside the school.

An articulate advocate for Indigenous learning excellence and a devoted professional, Charlie is having a positive impact on the whole school community.





Dr Sarah Mathews

**BRISBANE BAYSIDE
STATE COLLEGE (QLD)**

In 2008, Dr Sarah Mathews took a big risk, leaving behind her 17-year career as a scientist to become a high school maths and science teacher at Brisbane Bayside State College.

Through her analysis of NAPLAN trends, Sarah observed that many students had limited numeracy ability. This led her to develop a numeracy committee that introduced the evidence-based practice of 'numeracy moments' – a program that enriches mathematical thinking by incorporating mathematics into real-life situations.

Since the launch of the initiative in 2013, there has been a marked improvement in students' problem-solving and reasoning skills and a significant improvement in the College's NAPLAN numeracy results.

Lesley Mills

**TABULAM PUBLIC
SCHOOL (NSW)**

A passionate leader and visionary, Lesley Mills is Principal at an isolated community school with an 80 per cent Indigenous population.

During her time at Tabulam, Lesley has collaborated with local elders and community members to establish an outdoor learning area and Cultural Centre to support inclusive learning programs in Aboriginal Education. These programs have worked to increase engagement in learning and an awareness of Aboriginal culture for all students.

Throughout her career, Lesley's outstanding leadership skills have been transformative, positively impacting learning experiences and performance for students and staff alike.



Dr Christine Roberts-Yates

**MURRAY BRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL -
DISABILITY UNIT (SA)**

No one can attest more to the value of Dr Christine Roberts-Yates' teaching methods and position as one of Australia's leading disability education pioneers, than the students enrolled in the Murray Bridge High School Disability Unit.

Since beginning her role as Manager of the Disability Unit, which educates students with moderate to severe intellectual and multiple disabilities, Christine has introduced a technology-rich learning environment, including socially assistive robots. She has established work experience placements, school-based apprenticeships, small business enterprises and animal-assisted therapy, resulting in students maximising their learning potential and transforming the unit into one of Australia's pre-eminent disability educational settings.



Craig Skinner

CALISTA PRIMARY SCHOOL (WA)

Since commencing as Principal of Calista Primary School in 2013, Craig's passion for achieving positive outcomes for both students and staff has seen the school community transform from significantly underperforming in NAPLAN testing to achieving higher than the national average. Introducing teacher mentoring programs, a reinvigorated curriculum and the creation of an on-site child and parent centre have been instrumental in delivering this outcome.

The school has significantly lifted both numeracy and literacy results. It has one of the highest progress and achievement levels compared to similar schools across Australia and most recently, was appointed as a Teacher Development School in recognition of its achievements.

Belinda Wall

WOONONA HIGH SCHOOL (NSW)

Belinda Wall has been working in public education for 25 years. Since her appointment as Principal at Woonona High School, she has transformed the school by developing a culture where teachers are active learners – reflecting on their practice, sharing their expertise and improving their teaching.

Belinda's leadership and courageous decision-making has led to an impressive shift in community attitudes towards the school, with increased enrolments and more engaged students.

As a result, students of Woonona have greatly improved in their academic performance, with 85 per cent of HSC students going on to tertiary education and 15 per cent into employment in 2015.



Eddie Woo

**CHERRYBROOK TECHNOLOGY
HIGH SCHOOL (NSW)**



YouTube sensation Eddie Woo is an inspiring teacher at the forefront of school-based integrated science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education.

Eddie has been instrumental in innovation and inclusion at the school by developing mentoring programs, facilitating grants and developing community initiatives and is also reaching out to regional and remote students.

As a result, the school has quickly gained a reputation as one of the most innovative and successful comprehensive high schools in the state.

Now in his fourth year at the school, Eddie has significantly improved the learning performance of his students in the suite of mathematics courses offered and transformed the subject into one of high attraction and excellence.

Highly Commended Finalists

Rodney Mackintosh
MALIBU SCHOOL (WA)

Natalie See
HILLTOP ROAD PUBLIC SCHOOL (NSW)

Michelle Sheu
CHEVALLUM STATE SCHOOL (QLD)

Stuart Taylor
RIVERSIDE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE (QLD)

Justin Veitch
ST PAUL'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL (TAS)

