Western Heights College

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Monday 10th June       Queens Birthday Public Holiday
Wednesday 12th June    GAT compulsory for every student studying a VCE unit 3 & 4
Friday 14th June       Assessment & Reporting Day - Students not required at school
Monday 17th June       Start of Semester 2 at the Quamby Campus
Friday 28th June        Last day of Term 3 - Semester One reports distributed at 2.30pm

Learning is our core business. Feedback from families clearly indicates that your child is trusted with us to equip each of them to develop learning dispositions, knowledge and skills that will enable them to actively participate in and influence their world.

The learning program at Western Heights College is designed to activate student voice in learning. We know through research that real learning occurs when students are engaged in a learning task that is relevant to them, has authenticity and develops skills that are transferable to other contexts, and requires them to engage in higher order learning skills.

There is a simple but clear distinction between ‘doing’ and ‘learning’. Evidence of learning is that students should be able to articulate what they have learned.

In discussing learning, as examples, students will often say ‘I am doing research’, ‘I am doing this maths’ task’ or ‘I am reading’. In order for students to consistently reflect on and articulate their learning, it is important that both at school and at home we consistently challenge learners to respond at this level.

In talking to students in their communities or classes, it is wonderful to hear and see the excitement of students when they have worked through the questioning as opportunities to clarify and confidently explain what they are actually learning.

In preparation for the Semester 2 program, at the professional learning day on May 8th, staff worked in a number of teams planning some of the intellectually demanding tasks that will contribute to your child’s Semester 2 assessment.

These tasks are designed as culminating opportunities for students to provide evidence of their learning, including responses to feedback, during the learning sequence and will again have a significant role in informing the Term 3 round of Student Led Conferences and Student/Parent/Teacher conversations. Students in Years 10-12 commence their Semester 2 studies on Monday June 17th.

An assessment and reporting day is scheduled for Friday June 14th. On this day staff will work both independently and in teams on each student’s Semester one report. It is worth reminding that while these reports are summative in that they identify where each child’s learning is based at a particular point in time, they reflect the outcomes of formative learning opportunities or feedback that students have received during their learning.

The reporting structure for students in Years 7-10 will be different from previous years with the move from VELs to AusVELS. Details will be provided with each report.

While it is frightening in some respects to consider that we are thinking of 2014 student programs, I am keen to communicate that staff have commenced significant planning and preparation for 2014.
Course book revision and design, led by Kym Tyzack (Learning and Teaching Leader), Kerrie Hammond (Transitions and Pathways Leader) and Academic Panel Chairs means that handbooks are nearly ready for the information sessions and course counselling, course selection and course confirmation processes which are scheduled in the college calendar. Dates for these are available through the campus calendar and further information regarding these processes and timelines will be communicated in a timely manner.

I take this opportunity to detail the ‘Mentoring in a Virtual World’ program which is soon to be formally launched. The aim of the program is to engage all Year 11 students in seeking post Year 12 satisfactory destinations.

We are aware through longitudinal data that Year 12 students whose destinations do not include further education or training are at risk of long term unemployment. In the college data source 2011-12 we identified that approximately 50% of the graduating Year 12 cohort do not include further education or training in their pathway.

To address and support a range of opportunities for pathways discussions, the college successfully sought funding at the end of 2012 for a virtual mentoring program. In essence, each of the 2013 Year 11 students will be connected with an adult mentor in a virtual space within an online learning community who will support students to a pathway which includes further education and training post Year 12.

Access to funding has enabled the college to introduce this program with training for mentors and opportunities also to formalise ‘real time’ mentoring. This program is underpinned by Western Heights College’s commitment to engaging with the community and developing industry partnerships.

We are encouraging members of our community to participate in this program. Should you be keen to participate or seek further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Year 11 students will soon have more details to share with their family.

Tami O’Hare
Associate Principal

YEAR 9 SCIENCE

It was pleasing to see nine Year 9 students and a significant number of later years students participate in the Big Science Competition last week. This is sponsored by Rio Tinto and requires students to answer a series of questions on a wide range of areas of Science. Students were required to use their problem solving skills.

Science Talent Search is run by the Science Teachers’ Association of Victoria (STAV). Science Talent Search has a partnership with the national BHP Billiton Science Awards. The STS theme for 2013 is A Century of Australian Science. This year six Year 9 students have registered in a range of categories. The closing date for completed entries is 26 July. The range of our student entries covers the following sections: - Creative Writing, Photography, Video, Computer Programs and Experimental Research.

Judging Day will be in Melbourne at a number of different schools on August

We look forward to seeing the quality work of winners of all the different sections. Any student who is interested in the Science Talent Search next year especially in sections such as Experimental Research, Inventions, Working Models and Games should start thinking about their topics and talk to their teachers. Sometimes it is good to get results for the Experimental Research project over a number of seasons. Students wishing to enter the BHP Billiton Science Awards must register for Science Talent Search in the Experimental Research and/or Inventions Sections.

Year 9 students will be going to the Forensic Science Activity at Deakin University, (Waurn Ponds Campus) on Monday 17th June. This is an activity run by Deakin University each year to encourage students to apply their logical thinking and science skills as a forensic detective. Students will perform experiments based on a forensic case scenario and try to determine “who done it?” There are limited places available for this activity so it is important for students to bring your $5 to school as soon as possible.

June George
Year 9 Mentor

AFLOI - TOUR OF INDUSTRY SITES.

On 30 May Patrick Laupert and I met at the Geelong train station with the rest of the AFLOI scholarship recipients. We then departed on a bus, to arrive at Lyondell Basell (Geelong Plant) - the global leaders in the polypropylene production industry. When we arrived we had a brief meeting about the company overview and values. We then were led into a safety induction where we had to wear fire resistant suits, chemical retardant footwear and head protection gear. When the tour began we were led around the site by the lead engineers of the plant. We learnt about the process by which polypropylene is manufactured. After the tour concluded we headed to the next site.

The next industry tour was at Boundary Bend Limited, the Australian leaders in olive oil production. BBL accounts for 65% of the extra virgin olive oil production in Australia. When we arrived we were briefed and given a hair net before we entered the factory. We were led around by the manager of the plant. He showed us around the factory from where the olive trees are nursed, to where the oil is bottled and labelled and to where the raw oil is stored in many millions of litres.

The next industry site just happened to be around the corner; Air Radiators. We were once again briefed and inducted to the site. The tour included the full site from where the physical radiators are cut and folded to where they are assembled, tested and painted. We learnt about the different roles performed by engineers that are on-site. The site manager welcomed us to come back to do some work experience with the team.

Overall the day was fantastic. We learnt about the future opportunities in the engineering and manufacturing industry and gained valuable life skills along the way.

Year 9 – AFLOI Recipient
Matthew Kinnia
It sometimes seems that a teacher’s work is spread across past, present and future moments in time. The present is focussed on planning and delivering learning that meets our students’ needs at both a cohort level and individual level. This requires the collection of data followed by analysis and discussion in order to plan purposeful, contemporary learning. Day to day decisions about the setting up of the space, the allocation of learning resources and staff are all in the mix. Evidence of students’ learning is collected for feedback and assessment. The present demands a ‘hit the ground running’ approach to every new day. There is always a sense of urgency to get started so the learning can begin.

At the moment the past is also being delved into as we reflect on our students’ progress and begin the reporting process. Reports are written as part of a learning continuum and are therefore don’t belong to the past but nonetheless this is a time of reflection on our student's progress and it must be said, on our own. Reflection and re-evaluation are key elements of being a teacher.

The future is overlaying our work at Western Heights at the moment. As we plan our curriculum for 2014, teachers are reviewing and evaluating past course offerings in their subject areas and using student learning data, evidence-based research and extensive consultation to propose new offerings, refine existing ones and to make recommendations about some of the structures that will assist the delivery of our purposeful, contemporary learning program. The course handbooks are the evidence that students and families will see of this work.

The handbooks and selection process will once again be available online but also as personalised hard copies. The personalised pathway process students will undertake will feature in the Later Years and iNine handbooks. Year 10 is to be included in the 2014 Later Years handbook in recognition of the close ties this year level has with VCE and VET programs and opportunities.

It can be very frustrating for students to find themselves in a subject that isn’t the right fit and valuable learning time can be lost while adjustments are made. Please mark the following dates in your calendars to ensure you have all the information you need to support your child find a course that fits and that places them on a pathway that plays to their strengths, skills and interests.

2014 Year 9 — Wednesday Aug 14
2014 Year 10 — Wednesday Aug 7
VCE, VET, VCAL Pathways Fair — Wednesday Aug 14
(Parent/Teacher/Student conversations will also be held for all current Year 10, 11 and 12 students on Wednesday July 24)

Kym Tyzack
Learning and Teaching Leader

This week, Year 8 students were fortunate to host visiting author Richard Harland. Richard has been a writer for many years and his latest three titles; World Shaker, Liberator and Song of the Slums; have seen his profile rise dramatically. The reason they have been so popular is that they are written in a style called “steampunk” which means the setting is 19th century in the age of industrialisation and steam engines, with a fantastical, modern twist. Richard spoke of his childhood which was full of imaginative play, later developing into storytelling and his writing career. Cameron Platt of 8C was one of four students who were lucky to win free, signed copies of “Song of the Slums”.

Any other students who would like a signed copy of “Song of the Slums” can do so by paying $15 at the Vines Road Library by Tuesday 11 June.

Susan Harrington
Vines Library

COLLEGE ABSENCE LINE
If your student is going to be absent please phone the College absence line.

5277 9793

Kym Tyzack
Learning and Teaching Leader
**YEAR 8 BOYS’ FOOTBALL**
On Tuesday 21st of May the Year 8 boys went to Erwin Reserve and played three games. For our first game we played against Belmont High School and had a great first half and the scores were level at half time. We had a “not as great” second half and lost the game by thirty points. For our second game against Grovedale College we had a pretty appalling game losing by about sixty points. We had a two hour break between the second and third games so for our efforts Miss Aitken and Mr Fehling thought it would be good to go to Maccas for lunch. In the third game we played against Surf Coast Secondary College and were very even for the first half. In the second half we had just that little bit more run and won the game by about forty points. Thanks to Miss Aitken, Mr Fehling and the Year 9 coaches for a great day.

*By Aydin Dalipi*

**YEAR 8 GIRLS’ NETBALL**
On Tuesday 21 May the A and B girls’ netball teams competed at Life Be In It in South Geelong. The A team played first against Grovedale College. The score was 9 to 20 (they lost). Then they played Oberon HS and won 13 to 12 in a really close game. Then they played Surf Coast SC and smashed them 34 to 1.
The B team played and lost to Belmont and Grovedale College but won against Oberon HS. Unfortunately none of the teams made it to the grand final.
Good job girls!

*By Jaymie-Lea Whiteside*

**YEAR 8 BOYS’ SOCCER**
On Thursday 23 May the Year 8 boys went to Myers Reserve and played three games. In the first game against Belmont High School we had a bad first half. We conceded three goals and we scored one. It was a better second half with us scoring two goals and they scored one. We played Grovedale College for the second game. It was a convincing seven to two win. Matt was going for goal and the ball deflected off a Grovedale player’s back and Western Heights scored a goal! In the third game we versed Surf Coast SC and in the first half we scored four goals and they scored one. In the second half we scored three and they scored one. Thanks to Mr Travers and the Year 11 coaches Slade and Liam.

*By Lachlan Birthisel and Mathew Alsop*

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Good job girls!

*By Jaymie-Lea Whiteside*

**YEAR 8 PERFORMING ARTS**
Some of Year 8 students went to the Geelong Performing Arts Centre (GPAC) for a tour. We saw the parts of the stage and seating in the Playhouse Theatre. Then we went to the Drama Theatre with another stage that was very different. It was there that we played a game where you had to stop one person sitting in a chair. There would be one empty chair while the others stopped them by sitting first which would leave your seat empty. It’s harder than you think. After we played that we used the chairs to make three scenes. Then we put them together and acted them out as one. We were shown a short video called ‘The Wild Things’. We each took a part of it and acted it out. It was the end of the day after that so we all went back to school in the bus.

*By Stephen Boserio 8C*

On Tuesday 7th May we went to GPAC. We went into the Playhouse Theatre and then went into a smaller theatre, the Drama Theatre. There we worked on being a team by making a story with three different scenes. We then looked at an animation of “Where the wild things are.” We got into groups and acted out a scene of the story for each group. I really enjoyed it and wish we could do something like that again.

*By Kate Law 8C*
The GAT (General Achievement Test) is an essential part of the VCE assessment procedures. All students enrolled in one or more VCE Unit 3 and 4 sequences must sit the GAT. The General Achievement Test is a test of general knowledge and skills in:

- Written communication
- Mathematics, science and technology
- Humanities, the arts and social sciences.

Although GAT results do not count directly towards a student's VCE results, they play an important role in checking that school assessments and examinations have been accurately assessed, and in determining Derived Examination Scores. So it is important to sit the GAT and do as well as possible on all parts of it. The following link will take you to FAQs about the GAT:


This link can also be accessed from the WHC homepage under the VCE/VET/VCAL tab.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Looking for something FUN for you children during the July School Holidays?

YMCA GEELONG VACATION CARE has what you’re looking for, and so much more!!!

For more information visit our website:
www.geelong.ymca.org.au
or come and see us for more information