La Trobe University in Melbourne recently wrote an article entitled ‘Soft Skills Help you Achieve’ (https://www.latrobe.edu.au/nest/soft-skills-help-you-achieve/) and referred to passion, resilience, empathy, curiosity, innovative thinking, cultural intelligence, personal judgement, collaboration, communicating and influencing as skills that are needed to face challenges in our ever changing workforce. All these skills are essentially ‘people skills’ and unlike ‘hard skills’, which are tangible, measurable, and specific to certain vocations, these softer ‘people’ skills are needed in all careers, they are transferrable, and are becoming more and more important. To successfully complete an adventurous journey, these skills will all be used, more often than not multiple times without the participants even realising.

Contd. on page 2
“You know I’ve gone to bed before at four am because of assignments but I’ve never actually woken up at four, to leave by six and honestly, it’s not a great feeling. It takes forever to get out of bed and feels so bad, but after a while of being awake it’s not completely terrible” (Gold Duke of Edinburgh participant discovering her resilience)

The International Duke of Edinburgh Award is a fully inclusive program aimed to equip young people for life and work, their hashtag for 2019 being #worldready. Open to people from 14 years through to 24 years, they can choose to do their Bronze Level or progress through the three levels of Bronze, Silver and Gold. Each level has four sections; Recreation, Skill, Voluntary Service and Adventurous Journey. Within the Adventurous Journey section they complete a practice and qualifying journey for each level. The Bronze being a 2 day journey, Silver a 3 day journey and Gold a 4 day journey.

Stanley River Environmental Education Centre (EEC) started offering weekend Duke of Edinburgh Adventurous Journeys back in 2016 and since then, we’ve watched youth from Kingaroy, Brisbane, Tweed Heads, Toowoomba, Miles and even Karratha in Western Australia challenge themselves in unfamiliar environments. In small teams they plan and prepare menus, equipment, navigational routes and emergency response plans for a multi-day journey that they then conduct. Within each level, both the practice and qualifying journey need to be of the same mode but in different locations to enhance their learning opportunities.

“Learning everyone’s strengths and weaknesses makes for a very unified group and enjoyable memories” (Addison – Gold participant on practice journey)

Watching a young person shine with pride when they’ve cooked their first meal on a trangia, calculated the correct distance for their canoe journey, discovered an animal that they’ve never seen before and want to learn more about, or made it up that steep hill on their mountain bike after walking up the last 3 hills, all demonstrate a range of skills previously identified. For Stanley River EEC, helping facilitate a sense of adventure, self-discovery and a deeper understanding of the environment and our great outdoors is why we do what we do. Watching them walk away with an enhanced willingness to apply their newly uncovered skills and perspectives to the next challenge is simply amazing.

So, at the start of this trip I was rushing for it to be finished because I barely knew the people. But the others were okay, but really different from the small country town I come from. And it’s still strange, but I’ve grown kind of fond? Like, cos there’s only four Dukes participants and it’s not like there’s really a choice to become more than acquaintances. I kind of like the atmosphere.” (Gold participant on Day 3 of practice journey)

In 2019, Stanley River EEC will facilitate a total of twelve Duke of Edinburgh Adventurous Journeys both during the school weeks as well as on weekends and holidays. From hiking to canoeing to mountain biking, we will give youth a wide range of opportunities to explore South East Queensland. And in very exciting news, we have 2 participants who will have completed all 3 of their adventurous journeys (Bronze, Silver and Gold) with us by the end of this year.

Article contributed by:
Andrea Newton
Teacher
Stanley River EEC
Runaway Bay Sport and Leadership Excellence Centre (RBSLEC) brings together school captains from 12 Gold Coast primary schools for the 2019 Leadership Summit.

The Summit was a huge success with school leaders hitting the ground running with raft building and discovering their personality traits through the Australian Identities program.

The session was guided by the RBSLEC curriculum framework of communication, attitude, resilience and reflection (CARR) and aligned to the National Curriculum.

Further learning experiences consisted of guest speakers, indigenous awareness and GRIT activities. After 2 days, the captains presented an impact story for their year as school captain. Representatives from each school attended to share in the student growth, learning and success.

We use ‘yarning circles’ as a reflection practices so students listen to each other and respect all views and ideas.

Article contributed by:
Correy Chiappetta
Leadership Coordinator,
Runaway Bay SLEC

Sunshine Coast EEC welcomed the arrival of the new school year with some staff opting to rendezvous for a few early morning board meetings at the pristine Mudjimba Beach. Teachers were joined for a surf each morning by Unit Support Officer Michael Fry and Caterer Kerrie Bradshaw.

The meetings provided a fantastic introduction for new and returning staff and an easy means of ensuring optimal health and wellbeing upon return to work after the Christmas Break, in readiness for what will be a busy year ahead.

After trading waves in the clean and glassy conditions on offer, staff headed into the office at Maroochy Wetlands Sanctuary for mandatory staff training and professional development essential to the Centre’s operation for 2019.

Principal Trent Webb, Head of Curriculum Tina Kuskopf and Teacher Dan McNally welcomed back Jonathan Foley who returned from teaching at Northern Peninsula Area State College in Bamaga and Richard Fagg, who again joined the teaching team for 2019. The Centre also welcomed Glen Murphy who transferred from Noosa District SHS.

All Teachers and Support Staff are currently enjoying working with local and Brisbane schools across the Sunshine Coast and at the Centre’s Sunday Creek Campsite.

Article contributed by:
Glen Murphy
Teacher,
Sunshine Coast EEC

Pictured above at the conclusion of a productive Board Meeting from left to right are: Richie Fagg, Glen Murphy, Trent Webb, Dan McNally (and son Otis), Kerrie Bradshaw, Jono Foley and Michael Fry.

Photo: F. McNally
The Boyne Island Environmental Education Centre had the privilege of organising and facilitating the inaugural Stem camp for local Indigenous students in Gladstone. Monadelphous were the chief partners providing funding for the camp to go ahead contacting CQUniversity to facilitate the camp. CQU approached the Centre and we were able to put together an engaging, authentic learning experience in the realm of STEM.

Our program ran over 5 days with a theme of ‘Green STEM’, that is STEM in our environment. Students incorporated technology, design and critical thinking processes, mathematical thinking, science about the world around us and deep reflection upon Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island perspectives.

Students explored the science of fire, cool burning, carbon banking and bush tucker while making fire to cook their damper. Indigenous Astronomy helped explore the science of the night sky. Mangrove environments were explored and data collected of species variance and abundance along with human impact while conducting transects and aerial environmental monitoring with a drone.

Students tested water using industry grade multi-probes and analysed the health of our water ways. Plankton was collected and analysed under microscopes showing the microscopic world in our oceans. A day over at Facing Island highlighted the fragile ecosystems present and how the tangled web of organisms interact. Indigenous middens took students back to a time of ancestors. Students had a day at CQU’s STEM Central, a purpose built STEM facility to engage in a range of activities. They were able to see the operations of a real life laboratory and research space looking at sea grass.

Throughout the week students completed a group project on iMovie on iPads to portray their experience bringing in an element of Arts and higher order thinking skills of creativity. Parents, partner stakeholders and schools were invited to see their final projects at the end of the week. A busy, exciting, innovative, successful camp empowering extraordinary minds!

Article contributed by: Michael Gabriel
Principal
Boyne Island Environmental Education Centre
One of the first items on the list of requests from the team at Amaroo EEC, when I arrived as principal in July 2013, was “We need a classroom”. After several attempts to convince our Regional Facilities Managers that the current 6m x 6m ‘classroom’, which is smaller than a standard classroom, was not suitable to provide quality educational experiences for 55 students each day, it was time to take an alternative approach.

An application to the Smart School Subsidy Scheme was lodged and accepted in 2017; however after the tenders were received we found the budget was not sufficient to accommodate our requirements, so we were fortunate to receive supplementary funding plus allocate extra funds from our own budget to progress with the construction of our Eco Classroom.

The goal was to create a building that could walk the talk of environmentally sustainable design and in the process achieve a 6 Star Green Star rating through the Green Building Council of Australia, which is world’s best practice in environment design and as built (https://new.gbca.org.au/green-star/rating-system/design-and-built/).

The Eco Classroom has:
- the highest rating of insulation in the ceiling and walls;
- passive airflow through cross ventilation (it will never need to be air-conditioned);
- natural lighting through south facing dormer windows;
- orientated north for maximum solar efficiency;
- 7 thermometers in the floors, walls, ceiling and classroom for temperature recording;
- water treatment system that will enable the recycled water to be used on our grounds;
- upcycled exterior sink bench made entirely from recycled materials including timber for a local dairy farmer who was a student at the Kleinton State School which is now Amaroo EEC;
- recycled verandah support posts from a demolished Army building in Oakey;
- the piece de resistance is the western wall which is made of rammed earth from the local area; and,
- there is also a solar hot water system and a 5-6Kw solar Photo Voltaic system installed on the north facing roof, plus Tesla battery storage.

With this new solar system plus the existing solar systems and battery storage for our pilot Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicle and other solar PVs we aim to be carbon positive by feeding electricity into the grid. When funding is available there will be a wind turbine and weather station installed on either end of the pitched roof.

All these devices will have their data displayed through an online data dashboard so everyone can see what the Eco Classroom is doing in real time.

The total value of this facility project is approximately $500,000 and we are extremely grateful to all the funding sources. We are aiming to officially open our Eco Classroom on World Environment Day, which is Wednesday 5th June 2019.

Article contributed by: Cam Mackenzie
Principal
Amaroo Environmental Education Centre

2019 OEEC Staff Conference
Guest speakers, workshops, field trips & great conversation.

Dates: Monday 24th June 3pm – Thursday 27th June 3pm.
Venue: Paluma EEC, near Townsville
Cost: $300 per participant (not including accommodation and field trips)

For more information see the back page of this newsletter or contact Sheryl Johnson @sjohn555@eq.edu.au
New Work Skills Crew At Numinbah Valley

Environmental education centres have developed considerable expertise at targeting resources and developing partnerships. Due to limited staffing and resourcing we often have to think outside the box in order to achieve better outcomes for students. A good example at Numinbah Valley EEC over the years has been to utilise Green Corp, Green Army and more recently, Work Skills Groups to assist in grounds improvements and revegetation work.

A new group recently began their 6-month placement at Numinbah on 18th March. The group of 9 participants will work under their supervisor, Roger Morris, at Numinbah Valley EEC for 2 days/week, Camp Bornhoffen (a PCYC facility further up the Valley) for 2 days and with Queensland Parks for their 5th day each week.

Through this project the participants will be exposed to different sites and personnel, and develop a wide range of skills to improve their employment prospects in landscaping, horticulture, nature conservation and bush rehabilitation industries.

The aim is to assist all participants in finding full-time employment at the culmination of the project.

Tasks for the group at Numinbah Valley EEC will include assistance in grounds improvements at the centre and revegetation work at a number of other sites.

These include a SEQWater site on Hinze Dam reachable only by canoe, an area of National Park estate recognised as particularly high conservation value and our ongoing community revegetation site at Numinbah Hall.

In return for their hard work, participants will receive valuable interaction and encouragement from our staff, spin-off educational benefits from association with our site and time spent in a great outdoor environment. Meanwhile, students attending Numinbah will benefit as all of these sites are visited as part of ongoing educational programs. A win/win association for all involved.

The Numinbah Valley Conservation Training and Employment Project is administered under the Skilling Queenslanders for Work – Work Skills Traineeship program. Under this program participants are paid a small wage and a full-time supervisor is provided to run the program. Transportation of the group is provided in a minibus, with collection of our group occurring at Nerang train station, enabling participants to travel from further afield. Lodgement of the application and project coordination is conducted by Envite Environmental.

Article contributed by:
Jim Rebgetz
Principal
Numinbah Valley EEC

Grounds Improvements
@ Columboola

Columboola EEC were the lucky recipients of a Smart School Subsidy Scheme grant in 2018. This has led to the biggest infrastructure project the Centre has seen since our Amenities block construction in 1994.

The placement of permanent shelters over our tent accommodation provides a number of benefits, most notably providing a weather proof sleeping area, extending the life of our tents, and allowing an extra 300 plus square meters of roofing for rainfall catchment.

Given the limited rainfall we receive, as well as a drier than usual summer, this extra water catchment will reduce some of our reliance upon Columboola Creek or grounds water and allow for further garden areas to be planted.

We have also added to our high ropes challenge course through the addition of a Giant Swing and Leap of Faith. These two extra elements allow us to provide challenge-based activities across larger age groups.

With the help of Yancoal we have also been able to install some shade coverings over our existing static ropes course. This shade structure reduces student exposure to direct sun light and helps to reduce temperatures for those using the ropes course.
On the 30th of January, all Centre staff went on a trip to the Ration Shed at Cherbourg, west of Gympie. See the annotated photos for some revealing details. Thanks go to Lynn Chapman for coming with us and sharing her personal stories.

Thanks also goes to Lisa Cattanach for organising the trip. Lisa’s Aspiring Leaders project last year was to create opportunities and touch down points to allow the non-teaching staff to gain knowledge and understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander perspectives. This has supported them in their roles at the Centre and given them a greater understanding of how these perspectives are embedded in all that we do. Our reconciliation journey continues.

“I’d highly recommend this trip to other Centres.” - Deb Ledger, Acting Principal, Bunyaville EEC.

Left: Indigenous peoples were forcibly removed from their communities from all over Queensland and taken to Cherbourg.

There was still a residing Superintendent until as late as 1986.

Right: The Ration Shed where ‘inmates’ were given weekly rations e.g. 1 cup of flour, sugar, tea and rice per family member.

Left: Julie accepting her ‘Permit’ giving her permission to visit from 10am - 2pm. Thank you (from the foreground) Bronwyn, Aunty Vera and Cassie for sharing part of our State’s history.

Right: The Superintendent monitored the movements of every inmate strictly. Couples needed permission from the Queensland Government to marry.

Right: Lynn Chapman in the foreground sharing her knowledge and her experiences.
We have continued to offer our smaller and more remote schools the opportunity to engage with renewable energy resources through our Energy Matters tours.

Each year Columboola staff, supported by the Tooshey Forest EEC Green Energy Lab, load up and hit the road travelling to remote schools like Dirranbandi (800km round trip) and Thargomindah (1500km round trip).

These day incursions to the school allow us to see a fair bit of our region, but also creates opportunities for some of our smaller schools to get together with their neighbours for curriculum-based learning days.

Article contributed by:
Will McElroy
Teacher
Columboola EEC

Barambah Environmental Education Centre welcomes a new member to the teaching team, Rachel Kim. She is currently in her third year of teaching after completing her studies at USQ Toowoomba in Bachelor of Education - Primary in 2016. Rachel commenced her career as a Primary School Teacher with year 5 at Pittsworth State Primary School and a Science teacher at Wellcamp State School in 2017. In her first year of teaching she embedded outdoor learning within the school environment in Mathematics and Science.

Rachel grew up on a small hobby farm, located 16 kilometres west of the Toowoomba City Centre. She spent most of her childhood outdoors riding horses, bushwalking and swimming on her parents’ farm.

After a year of teaching in the classroom she found an opportunity to travel and teach Outdoor Education in Europe. She applied for a six-month Outdoor Education Diploma. Her application was successful, and she travelled to Germany to begin her training for the summer season.

At ‘Camp Europe’ she worked 14-16 hour days 7 days a week with large groups of students (40-500) aged 7-17 years old. At the centre there were over 150 outdoor educators. Their duties ranged from activity instructors, cleaners, kitchen hands, directors, night duty monitors, counsellors, first aid officers, equipment maintenance and grounds keepers.

In September 2018, Rachel returned to Australia to teach in a classroom setting as a relief teacher for Term 4. Then she was given the opportunity to join the Barambah Environmental Education team. Over the last 7 weeks Rachel has learnt a lot about the outdoor education industry and she is excited to continue to grow and learn with experienced senior teachers. Barambah EEC is a beautiful place with supportive and welcoming staff who create an incredible work place and learning space for students who visit Barambah EEC.

Article contributed by:
Rachel Kim
Teacher
Barambah EEC
Moreton Bay EEC hosted the incredibly talented teachers from the Indonesian Ministry of Education Centre for Development and Empowerment of Teachers and Educators this month. Two groups joined us out on Moreton Bay (Quandamooka):

1. Specialist STEM Educators.

The MBEEC brief was to assist with building participants’ understanding of Australian STEM Education; immersing them in a high quality school setting exposing them to innovative approaches to STEM education, and enabling participants to observe and reflect on curriculum approaches, specifically critical and creative thinking, in our setting to achieve high impact teaching and learning.

Through marine science and STEM approaches, the enthusiastic and passionate guest teachers experienced our pedagogy including:

- Connection to place by immersing the teachers in Moreton Bay and all that this area of international significance has to offer.
- Hands-on experiences by measuring numerous variables before conducting plankton trawls examining the hidden life within the bay and setting up Baited Remote Underwater Videos (BRUVs) investigating fishery resources.
- Critical and creative thinking skills throughout the day demonstrating thinking that is productive, purposeful and intentional, and responding to challenges of the 21st century.
- Authentic partnerships, which enhance our offerings. These include universities, Marine Parks, National Parks, CSIRO, and Port of Brisbane to name a few.
- Alignment to the Australian Curriculum and highlighting support and resources that support teachers and students that engage in program with Moreton Bay EEC.

Heartfelt thanks to Sheryl Blanchard (Program Officer, UQ ICTE), Klaus Grossenholz (Manager, Program Operations UQ ICTE), Sheila Maulita (Project Manager), Tina (expert interpreter) and Bev for chaperoning. We love opportunities to highlight MBEECs work Inspiring Champions for the Bay. Come back anytime!

Article contributed by:
Di Aylward
Principal, Moreton Bay EEC
Outdoor & Environmental Education Centres

Conference 2019
Leading Learning Outdoors & for the Environment

Focus Areas
⇒ Green means go – positive futures for environmental and sustainability education
⇒ Getting out there – leading learning outside of the classroom
⇒ Leading the way—creating the leaders of tomorrow

Dates: Monday 24th June @ 3pm—Thursday 27th June @ 3pm

Venue: Paluma Environmental Education Centre (near Townsville)

Cost: $300.00 per participant
(Accommodation is additional—$60 if staying at Paluma EEC. Field Trips are additional $45 or $110)

Key Note Speakers, so far...
⇒ Claire Dunn (Author of “My Year Without Matches” will explore rewilding and links to education)
⇒ Dr Paula Peeters (Nature Journalling — Australian Nature meets science and art)
⇒ Sam Steadman (Multiple Adventurethon champion & Director of Outer Limits)

Plus Environmental and Outdoor Recreation focused workshops, an Environmental Field Trip around Townsville or an Outdoor Recreation Field Trip to Magnetic Island, Dinners, Conversations, Prizes and more ...

Speak to your Principal about your Centre’s attendance at this event.
More specific program information will follow.