IT IS ROCKET SCIENCE!
TEACHERS RETURN FROM JAPAN BURSTING WITH IDEAS

On Saturday 26th June 10 educators from six Australian states made their way to Japan for a week of professional learning in space education. The group consisted of primary and secondary teachers; teachers from rural schools; teachers experienced in on-line learning; experienced space educators and teachers keen to learn; and above all the group was open to new ideas and the opportunity to collaborate with Japanese educators. This event was made possible thanks to funding from the Australia Japan Foundation through the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the support and generosity of the JAXA Space Education Office, and the support of the Australian Science Teachers Association, the Engineers Australia National Committee for Space Engineering and Questacon.

The group visited Tanegashima Space Centre and walked on the launch pad, Tsukuba Space Center and saw a Kibo module in the clean room, and visited Sagamihara where the Hayabusa capsule is being analysed. The group worked with the JAXA Space Education Office, Japanese scientists and engineers and Japanese teachers and have come back bursting with ideas for new educational materials. For more details visit http://www.vsse.vic.edu.au/it-is-rocket-science-teachers-return-from-japan/

APRSAF WATER ROCKET EVENT AND POSTER COMPETITION

In November 2010, the Asia Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF) will be held in Melbourne. This event will be co-hosted by the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR) and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and promotes collaboration between the regions space agencies. To support the objectives of APRSAF, and promote awareness of the benefits of space technology, the APRSAF Space Education and Awareness Working Group established a poster design competition for students aged 8 to 11 years, a Water Rocket Event for students aged 12 to 16 years, and an Educators Workshop to be held in association with the Water Rocket Event.

A National Competition will be held to select a student and teacher from each Australian state and territory to attend the APRSAF Water Rocket Event and Educators Workshop. Thanks to the Space Policy Unit and the Engineers Australia National Committee for Space Engineering all travel, accommodation and meals will be provided. Additional places are available for Australian teachers wishing to attend the Educators Workshop.

*Applications close Friday 22nd October 2010*

In celebration of APRSAF, and the International Year of Biodiversity, students between the age of 8 and 11 are invited to design a poster based on the theme: “Space Technology to Help the Earth”. A Power Point Presentation has been prepared to assist teachers to introduce the topic and stimulate discussion. *posters must be received no later than Monday 11th October 2010*

For more information about these events and competition guidelines please refer to the Competitions section of the VSSEC website.
BOOKINGS OPEN FOR FREE VSSEC ENGINEERING & SCIENCE CAREERS EXPO

Thursday 19th Aug 10:00am – 3:00pm

Explore study and career options; hands-on activities; speakers program. Visit www.vssec.vic.edu.au for full details.

VSSEC / ENGINEERS AUSTRALIA PARTNERSHIP TO HELP STUDENTS “DISCOVER ENGINEERING”

Discover Engineering: the Engineers in Schools Program, was established by Engineers Australia, Victorian Division to connect students with practicing Engineers in their classroom and help students understand what a career in Engineering can offer. VSSEC and Engineers Australia, Victorian Division have joined forces to ensure students and teachers get the maximum benefit from this program. VSSEC will train the engineers in strategies for effective science teaching and embed the Discover Engineering program within its Mission to Mars, Mission to the Orbiting Space Laboratory and new Robotic Mission to Mars programs.

This joint program promotes the practical nature of engineering through hands-on learning and helps science teachers articulate the difference between a career in science or engineering. Engineers who support this program can claim the training program as part of their Continuing Professional Development.

The first training session will be held on Tuesday 10th August at VSSEC. Engineers from ALL disciplines are needed! For more information, to register as a Discover Engineering volunteer, or to request an engineer to visit your school contact Sandra Perrett, Engineers Australia Youth Programs Coordinator SPerrett@engineersaustralia.org.au

APPLE APP TO HELP TEACHERS DELIVER STANDARDS-BASED ASSESSMENT DATA

ALL In Learning www.allinlearning.com has developed a FREE Apple App that helps teachers plan and document lessons:
- Model and track instruction
- Capture formative assessment estimations in the context of instruction
- Equip teachers with instruction and assessment teaching notes
- Record real time student observations and evaluation
- Manage collaborative learning activities.

Using the iPod Touch/iPhone/iPad, teachers can deliver frequent and simple standards-based assessments to the entire class, groups within the class, or individual students either asynchronously or synchronously. ASSIST enables teachers to collect results to questions and upload the results for aggregation and review. The App takes into consideration Bloom’s Taxonomy, 21st Century Learning and the E5 Instructional Model.

US AMBASSADOR VISITS VSSEC

US Ambassador Jeffrey Bleich visited VSSEC on the 23rd June to present the “New Era of Discovery” exhibition in recognition of the Centre’s ongoing collaboration with the United States. The Ambassador toured VSSEC and discussed the importance of engaging students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics from an early age, and was impressed by the hands-on nature of the programs and the use of technology.

VSSEC’s collaboration with the United States continues to grow. In 2009 VSSEC was accepted as an Assoc. Member of the International Space Education Board (ISEB) which formalised the collaboration with NASA Education. In the education sector VSSEC has been working with two leading US Education organisation, McREL (Mid-continent Research in Education and Learning) and ASCD (Association for Supervision and Curriculum).

For full stories and more news visit www.vssec.vic.edu.au. For immediate updates subscribe to our RSS feed or join us on facebook or twitter.

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