

## Science Teachers' Association of Victoria

### STAV Annual Report

1st July 2015 – 30th June 2016

#### President's Overview

##### Vision

Our vision for professional learning in science for all Victorian schools:

“Is to develop a science community growing together through collaboration, professional learning supported by conferences, workshops and events, partnerships with industry and the wider community through STEM and other innovations.”

##### Mission

Our Mission is:

“To represent and advance the collective voice of science educators that will shape and influence policy in all aspects relating to science education. We are committed to offering a range of resources and services that will promote quality science teaching and learning. We provide opportunities for all students to become inspired, engaged and excel in activities that promote scientific literacy including: science talent search, science drama and BHP Billiton national science and engineering awards.”

STAV is a non-profit organisation with its core business being membership and supporting Science Victoria, an entity established for the purpose of promoting science and science education. Science Victoria manages the following STAV activities: Conferences/Professional Learning, Science Talent Search and Science Drama, publications and other resources from STAV Publishing.

STAV is governed by a voluntary council which includes the following office bearers; President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. Council meets at least 4 times throughout the year as well as conducting electronic communication.

STAV is a member of the Australian Science Teachers Association (ASTA), a federation of national science teachers associations. We have continued to ensure that all activities conducted throughout the financial year were aligned with the STAV goals.

STAV draws its membership from educators across the Primary and Secondary sectors, Pre-Service teachers, researchers, retired teachers and individuals with an interest in science education. 2015 has also seen the establishment of the 2016 – 2020 STAV Strategic Plan, which provides a framework for STAV priorities. The Strategic Plan is available on the STAV website:

<http://www.stav.org.au/html/documents/20162020STAVStrategicPlan.pdf>.

The Victorian government has recognised the importance of supporting school communities for the STEM rich world that awaits their existing and future students through its 'STEM Strategy' which includes the Victorian Curriculum.

VCAA updates were provided throughout the year via our conferences.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the 2016 STAV Councillors, for their support throughout the year and for continuing to represent the collective voice of science educators across the state and nationally at the various round table discussions, council meetings and conferences. The 2016 STAV Councillors are as follows: Joanna Alexander (Blackburn High School), Alexandra Abela (Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School), Michael Rosenbrock (Wodonga Secondary College) Yuvadee Patchon (Lab Tech Quantum Victoria), Jacinta Greer (Ruyton Girl's School), Leonie McGlashan (Keysborough Secondary).

All councillors have renominated for the 2017 Council. I would like to acknowledge the work and effort undertaken by STAV Council throughout their term and sincerely thank all councillors for their contribution to the teaching and learning of Science, along with the STAV Secretariat led by Annette McKenna, Administration Manager and Suzanne O'Shannessy (Science Victoria) for facilitating professional development on behalf of STAV.

STAV is a not for profit member association and is governed by a Council and is supported by the paid STAV staff.

### STAV Publications

Publishing our quarterly editions of **Lab Talk and Let's Find Out** has continued to be a priority with most targets being met. Articles were sourced by regular and new contributors.

The monthly online publication **Contact** informs STAV members of professional learning opportunities and provides updates with events.

The **Trial Exams** are a valuable resource, supported by schools in preparation for the VCE Science. Trial Exams were issued on time to all schools purchasing the resource. We have continued to offer both a mid-year and end of year exam.

The **Science Coordinator's and Beginning Teacher's Handbooks** have been published.

### Conferences & Workshops

STAV members continue to have access to the largest number of professional learning opportunities offered by a Science Teachers' Association in the nation. The following conferences were hosted during the reported period:

**STAVCON** was hosted at La Trobe University and attracted 300 delegates. The keynote was delivered by Dr David Nayagam, University of Melbourne, Bionic Eye Institute and received excellent feedback.

The **VCE Conferences** were well attended with numbers higher for all three conferences than the previous year. The **Physics (294) and the PIGS (Physics in General Science 7-10) Conference (6)** with the keynote delivered by Dr Phillip Urquijo University of Melbourne held at Monash University on the 19<sup>th</sup> Feb commenced the series of conferences. The **Chemistry Conference 29<sup>th</sup> Feb (447)** with keynote 1 delivered by Associate Prof Spencer Williams, Bio21 and keynote 2 was delivered by Prof Andrea Robinson, Monash University. **Biology Conference 4<sup>th</sup> March (277)** with keynote presented by Dr Misty Jenkins, were hosted at La Trobe University.

The **Lab Tech Conference** hosted at Quantum Victoria attracted over 99 delegates. The emphasis was on supporting the teaching and learning of science and the keynote was delivered by Prof Andy Hill, La Trobe Institute for Molecular Sciences, La Trobe University.

**CONASTA 65 "Superheroes of Science- Unmask your potential"** was hosted in Brisbane at Somerville House, attracting delegates from across Australia. The robust program provided a diverse group of workshops and keynote speakers.

The **ICT/STEM Conference** attracted over 120 delegates from across all sectors with the keynote delivered by Prof Brian Boyle with the evaluations affirming the need to continue running the conference.

Dr Christina Hart delivered three **Physics workshops** (with one repeated) for Primary and Secondary teachers at STAV House and has continued to receive positive feedback.

Helen Silvester delivered four **Primary Science Workshops** at STAV House which were fully subscribed with very positive feedback.

## **Curriculum**

### **VCAA**

Updates on the new VCE Study Designs along with the new Victorian Curriculum (to be implemented in 2017) were provided to all delegates attending STAVCON and the VCE Conferences. Teachers had access to information via online sessions, face-to-face sessions and at the STAV Conferences.

### **Pre-Service Teachers**

We continue to engage with Pre-Service teachers informing them of the benefits of joining STAV as a beginning teacher, and having access to a community and collective voice that supports and influences the teaching and learning of science education both at a state and national level.

### **ASTA**

STAV continues to participate in the governance of ASTA through its representation on ASTA Council. STAV representatives (President and Vice President) have pursued the importance of ASTA having a prominent national presence to ensure consultation occurs in important initiatives such as the Australian Curriculum, STEM in schools and other projects funded by the Federal Government in which Victorian teachers can access. STAV representatives participated in two face-to-face Council Meetings (November and July) and 4 teleconferences throughout the year.

### **Social Media**

STAV Facebook and Twitter accounts have continued to promote events and share information to STAV Members and the wider community. We thank the continued diligence of our Social Media Liaison Officer, Carlie Alexander who has facilitated this communication with members.

### **DET**

STAV continues its dialogue with the DET representatives in seeking support for Professional Learning of Science teachers across the state along with the student extension initiative Science Talent Search.

### **Science Talent Search**

The STS Management and Committee along with Janice Teng have continued to support the STAV Science Talent Search (STS), attracting interest in all categories. In 2015 we had 2,054 student participants from 153 schools entered in the competition. The students, their teachers and families celebrated their achievements during Exhibition Day on 23rd November at La Trobe University. Victorian students entering the Investigations and Inventions categories had access to the National BHP Billiton Science and Engineering Awards. Two Victorian students, Jory Braun and Lawrence Pawar, were finalists in the Engineering Section of the Awards. STAV also had a teacher finalist, Helen Silvester, for the BHP Billiton Teacher Award. Science Drama Awards

The STAV Science Drama Awards did not run in 2016 and will be running again in 2017.

**National Science Week**

Schools continued to receive financial support to run programs during National Science Week in August. This year's theme was '*Drones, Droids and Robots*'.

**Financial Management**

The deficit of \$2,219 has been turned into a surplus of \$14,192.00. This affirms the commitment by STAV Council towards sound financial management and illustrates the effective strategies implemented by Council.

STAV continues to maintain a presence both at the state and national arenas and continues its work with the following partners:

Australian Science Teachers' Association (ASTA)

Deans of Science from the Universities of Victoria

Deans of Education from Victoria's Universities

Australian Academy of Science

Australia's Chief Scientist

CSIRO/BHP Billiton (Student and Teacher Awards)

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)

Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority (VCAA)

**Soula Bennett**

**STAV President**