

CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

Tiffany Cox, GTANSW Bursary Winner

I was lucky enough to gain a bursary to attend the GTA NSW conference 2017 that was held at the Novotel Olympic Park. As I entered the building I felt sustainable professional learning was about to happen. The Novotel promoted a sustainable future: a fantastic venue for a Geography teachers conference.

As I entered I could see stalls of free resources being given out by the many exhibitors and it was like a small child entering a lolly shop for the first time...so many people to talk to... so many free and useful items and resources to make teaching Geography even more exciting.

I received water testing cups from Sydney Water, badges from Cool Australia, wooden USB sticks from Sydney Olympic Park, A Geography Skills Unlocked book from AGTA, and posters and stickers from the Murray Darling Basin Authority, to name a few. All I know is that my hands were full before the day began and with good stuff too!

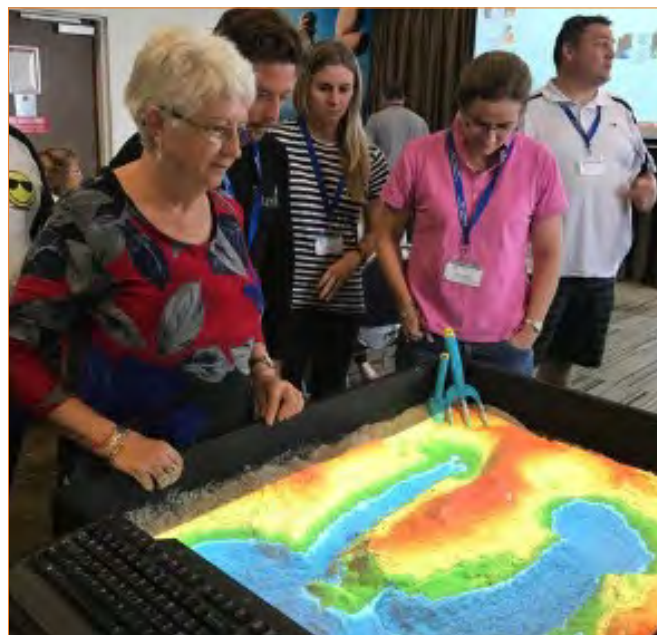
The key note from Dr Chris Sarra was inspiring, even though it did contain a lot of maroon coloured cane toads ... a bit of humour from Chris, a Queenslander. However, putting that aside his most inspiring message was this, "Honour the humanity in people and Let's get connected to 500,000 year history not just a two hundred year one!" Amazingly powerful!

Urban Growth presented the importance of Urban Renewal and Existing Urban Landscapes including three projects: The Bays Precinct, CBD and Western Sydney, facts sheet being available from Urban Growth. Cool

Australia then went on to talk about the resources they offer and emphasised the three P's – Planet, People, Profit – a framework for discussing sustainability



Signs promoting sustainability at Novotel, Sydney Olympic Park.



Teachers enthralled by the AR Sandbox created by Di Twomey and her team at Narara Valley High School and presented in two workshops as well as throughout the day.

We then broke into individual workshops: The first I attended was "Living Oceans: Action for Sustainability and liveability", an NGO in Sydney with a focus on plastic in the ocean and whale research. The second was on "Cocoa- chocolate supply chains and networks" with a recommendation to view the "Dark side of chocolate" documentary, leading me into the Formative Assessment in Geography workshop. I loved this workshop, learning about "Hinge Questions" and "Exit tickets: checking for understanding" – look this up on you tube for further information. I then attended the Masterclass on Liveability during which we looked at "Million Dollar Sales" – using the internet to show where \$1000000 houses sell geographically. I wish I owned one of these. Day one was completed with the HSC Review, a breakdown of the 2016 HSC Examination where the main message was to teach students to look and understand the directive terms. Day two consisted of the Dark Emu book talk by Bruce Pascoe showing evidence of Aboriginal agriculture, the Augmented Reality Sandbox, (which we have begun to make) and then the Environmental Change and Management and Human Wellbeing Masterclasses.

At the conclusion of the conference my head was full of ideas and my hands were full of resources. Upon returning to my school I have decided that all Geography teachers should attend this conference and be as inspired as I am.

Thank you GTANSW for renewing my passion for Geography teaching!