

SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS NETWORK JOURNAL



2019 Sustainability Symposium
Event Partner: SOMERSET COLLEGE
Jo Hetherington
Glowing Green Australia
Sam Booth



Sustainable
SCHOOLS NETWORK

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EVENT CALENDAR

MAY

13th - 2019 SUSTAINABILITY SYMPOSIUM

24th - Applications close for the Gold Coast
Schools Sustainability Awards

31st - Gold Coast Green Week starts

JUNE

2nd - Green Week SSN Presentation

Helensvale - Park Lake State School

4th - Green Week SSN Presentation

Currumbin - Mudgeeraba Special School

9th - GC Schools Sustainability Award

Ceremony

JULY

25th - Networking Night



2019 SUSTAINABILITY SYMPOSIUM

Igniting souls, inspiring change
A glocal event



CITY OF
GOLD COAST

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT **GOALS**

FEATURING

**MELATI WIJSEN, MOLLY
STEER, KAREEM EL-ANSARY &
HOLLEY SOMERVILLE KNOTT**

Workshops by local schools & organisations
Day session for students, tickets \$25 each. Evening
professional development dinner for Principals,
Teachers & Parents, tickets \$90
ssn.gcth@gmail.com for registration or buy online at:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2019-sustainability-symposium-tickets-56611252781>

13 MAY 2019

SOMERSET COLLEGE

The host of the inaugural 2019 Sustainability Symposium in South East Queensland, Somerset College is committed to a sustainable future. The College is renowned for facilitating large scale educational community events, what it is not so well known for is the various ways it practices sustainability...



In 2017 a new committee formed at Somerset College - the Sustainable Spartans. The College was however, practicing sustainability long before then. Over the course of its 37 year history, Somerset College has built its reputation on strong academic performance and as Deputy Headmaster Michael Brohier stated, *"Its the human relationships and connections that matter most"*. Although not viewed as a demonstration of social sustainability, rather just business as usual, Somerset College highly values its community and the partnerships they have developed. For example, Storyfest, formerly the Celebration of Literature, simultaneously focuses on developing literacy skills and breaking down attendance barriers by using its Literary Fund to sponsor disadvantaged youth. The College mantra: *"Personal success, Global Outlook"* drives the sustainability vision at Somerset.

The success of Somerset College students and staff has flowed from a tangible commitment to excellence and collaboration. Headmaster, Craig Bassingthwaighe identified, *"When we all work together, great things happen. There can be no greater call for collaboration than to ensure our world is sustainable"*. A key feature in the current Somerset College Strategic Plan: *Our Future*, is organisational sustainability. This commitment to sustainability relates to:

- the health and wellbeing of its social capital;
- developing further community partnerships to offer access to sporting grounds, sporting facilities and the performing arts centre;
- sustainable building design and resource management;
- a Foundation scholarship program; and
- sustainability being embedded from Pre-Prep to Year 12 in the International Baccalaureate curriculum.

Year 3 and Sustainable Spartans lead teacher Will Boston, highlighted the *"whole College is interconnected and working towards one mission... [which is] to facilitate student agency"*. For example, a Year 12 student-led initiative known as the Bounce Bags program had its fifth sewing bee in April, whereby students, parents and friends sewed for a purpose. Now part of the culture, landfill destined uniforms are sewn into bags and replace plastic bags at the Retail Centre.

The Sustainable Spartans committee starts in Year 3, and students as young as eight years of age monitor bins over lunchtimes to minimise contamination. The Primary Years Program (PYP) committee attended a Parents and Friends Association meeting to request funding for recycling bins which is an example of action-orientated and authentic learning. Due for release in Term Two, is the PYP committee

recycling depot supported also by parents and cleaning staff. In 2018 PYP students sorted excess stationary for a school in Mozambique and in 2019 have partnered with All Saints Anglican School to develop this program further.

At Somerset College, energy efficiency projects have been implemented, including a 200kw solar system; efficient irrigation practices are facilitated through upgrades to infrastructure, and due to the Middle Years Program (MYP) Sustainable Spartans advocacy the College is regenerating the Wyangan Creek to educate for biodiversity. Leading the way as the host of the 2019 Sustainability Symposium, Somerset College invites all Gold Coast and Tweed Schools to it's campus. Sustainability is a journey, not a destination, and Somerset College is clearly heading down the right path.



Be sure to get your tickets to the 2019 Sustainability Symposium and register to participate in the Somerset College workshop titled 'Youth Action Matters'.

"I feel that one of Somerset's main strengths is the never ending support that the school leadership and teachers give to students who want to make a difference. The IB philosophy is to encourage students to develop their own ideas about the world and have the courage to do what they can to bring about positive change - this can be applied to all aspects of sustainability"

- Noah Jay, Year 10 lead student MYP Sustainable Spartans.



#TAKE3FORTHESEA

Pictured: World Environment Day 2018, plastic bag installation created by the Sustainable Spartans



AN INITIATIVE OF



Entries close on the 24th of May, 2019
\$1000 main prizes for winning primary &
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sustainability program now



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SAVE THE DATE

OUR NEXT NETWORKING NIGHT WILL BE THURSDAY, 25 JULY 2019

Introducing JO HETHERINGTON

*The Director of Early Learning at
Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School*

Living at the Currumbin Valley Ecovillage, in a straw-bale home she built with her husband, Jo Hetherington is an example of what it means to be sustainable.

The house faces north to harvest the sun, catches the prevailing breezes to stay cool, features recycled and natural materials, solar power, rainwater tanks, old restored doors and windows. The walls are nearly half a metre thick covered with home-made lime render. A food forest surrounds the house with the first trees bearing crops of organic olives, mandarins, oranges, bananas, cassava, starfruit, limes, lemons, tangelos, grapefruit, grumachamas, jaboticaba, pineapples, and acerola cherries. *"The trees are growing so well, we are starting to pick and squeeze the lemonades and make delicious juices for the family,"* Jo said.

But Jo is more even excited about the opportunities at work where she is the Director of Early learning at Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School and the Coordinator of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program (SAKGP). *"This program has been fantastic and is inspiring students in so many ways."*

The SAKGP is one of Jo's favourite initiatives at Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School. It has been enthusiastically embraced by students, parents and teachers, and has won the 'Best School Garden award' twice. The garden started small and has built on its success, continuing to expand food production, shared table space, pizza ovens, herb and salad gardens. Jo says,

"The kids just naturally love spending time with the chickens, planting seedlings, harvesting food and generally caring for their gardens. They are fascinated with the native bees and watch them pollinate the vege flowers. They love checking for eggs and rounding up the silky bantams."

"Bee and butterfly attracting plants are popping up in other areas of the school, and were planning on putting in more edible fruit trees around the students play areas."

When asked about the importance of sustainability in education, Jo identified, *"We've got to inspire the younger generation into thinking about sustainability, understanding nature in a profound way and encouraging them to take the concept of sustainability forward into their lives. Then it is easier for them to understand ecological principles when they are adults, such as considering sun movements and the seasons in the design of our built environments."*

Another key interest area is 'Nature Pedagogy', an educational concept that encourages children's connection to the environment. *"I think this is an interesting and foundational pathway somewhat missing in education for a long time. Nature pedagogy inspires children to understand and relate to nature."*

Like others Jo's sustainability journey has encountered challenges but firmly believes Nature Pedagogy will overcome these barriers. Jo stated, *"There are powerful forces shaping our children into consumers, and these sustainable concepts and programs help to provide balance."*

In the future Jo will continue her educational sustainability pathway. Future projects include:

- expanding the Early Learning Centre's recycling waste system to a whole-of-school program;
- expanding food production throughout the School.

Jo explained, *"We've got to find a balance in our relationship with the earth, treat our home planet with care and reverence, so we ensure a future for our children and all the other species we share the planet with."*



Director of the Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School Early Learning Centre, and the Coordinator of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program,
Jo has been teaching in Qld and NSW for over twenty five years.

Sustainability has always been a part of her life, from helping her Dad build a mud-brick home when she was a little girl, going on family camping trips to exhilarating natural areas, or tending vegetable gardens.

Glowing Green Australia



Glowing Green Australia is an environmental consultancy company, specialising in environmental report writing, auditing, renewable energy advisory services, environmental education and facilitation of sustainable practices in schools.

As a Founding Partner of the SSN, Glowing Green Australia (GGA) are committed to helping schools develop and implement sustainability initiatives. According to Director Larissa Rose, *"Glowing Green Australia provides outstanding learning, engagement, education and consultancy services to support clients throughout their projects with us."* An integral component of their capabilities is to provide clients with concurrent environmental progressions, industry and regulatory requirements, whilst developing and delivering innovative sustainable approaches into business. GGA services and expertise are reinforced through extensive industry engagement and representative roles within environmental and waste management, across to education in sustainability through to reporting and assessment analysis.

Critical to the operations of GGA is their understanding that sustainability is an overarching concept. According to Larissa, *"It is imperative and crucial that the application of sustainability and inclusive practice of it has social inclusion, economic growth, environmental protection with long term vision of building an inclusive and sustainable resilient future"*. This path is not without challenges, particularly since GGA are working towards behaviour change and the rehabilitation of a landscape or regional ecosystem. Sometimes highlighting the importance for the change, the value of making that change and showcasing that on a micro/school level can be hard to get across when results aren't seen directly or in real time. GGA are committed to implementing their fundamental understanding that sustainability is a long-term deliverable.

Larissa identifies, *"We like to engage the narrative that we all have a large accountability role to support, enact, enable and drive change daily, and cumulatively at a personal, classroom, school level, which in turn supports the objective of change at a community, regional, national and global level. It is valuable and steadfastly important that we are embedding a sense of ownership, anchoring the support to create key deliverables of a sustainability education program."*

Glowing Green Australia helps schools understand that in time, the data taken from yearly operational management can assist with further instilling the results from the hard work, which in turn helps with the school to showcase the changes achieved via waste, water and energy auditing. In 2017, GGA commenced their most significant and impacting of projects. Driving Palm Beach Currumbin High School's (PBC) sustainability and environmental assessment program, GGA's work involved:

- establishing a sustainability committee and overarching vision statement for the school;
- embedded 11 call to action initiatives;
- conducted two sustainability audits on the operational management costs of the school, thereby establishing a benchmark for PBC to determine, assess and measure sustainability progression; and
- assisted PBC to understand the importance and value of

data to support the direction and transparency of outcomes, and is currently continuing with another audit.

Glowing Green Australia have some new projects for supporting sustainable practice and waste management solutions for developments on the Gold Coast, and for the environmental education and community engagement side of their company. Recently launched, GGA's 'I'm a Glowing Green Crusader' is a global social media program. This exciting environmental stewardship platform asks kids between 6-12 years old to nominate themselves or others who are doing outstanding leadership in their local communities and countries to make change and be recognised as the Top 101 Crusaders. According to Larissa, *"We see this as our duty of care to support, enact and drive change as well as showcase mitigation and adaptation community leadership of our local and global ecosystems."*

LARISSA ROSE IS THE DIRECTOR OF GLOWING GREEN AUSTRALIA, A GOLD COAST BASED ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANCY FIRM WHICH SHE FOUNDED IN 2010. HER WORK IN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND EDUCATION HAS BEEN COUPLED OVER THE YEARS WITH HER STRONG ADVOCACY WORK TO DRIVE CHANGE WITH THE USE OF SUSTAINABLE RENEWABLE FUELS THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA AND MAKE CONSUMERS UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCALLY PLANT BASED MADE FUELS.

LARISSA HAS SPOKEN AT THE UNITED NATIONS COP23, IN BONN GERMANY AND WILL BE SPEAKING AGAIN AT COP25 IN CHILE THIS NOVEMBER.



SAM BOOTH

Youth perspective

In 2018 Sam Booth sought opportunities to explore global connections and to represent Australia. The first experience was at an international debating competition in Japan, whereby he was returned as the 2019 Youth Ambassador. The second reinforced his understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals, and involved attending a five-day conference in Thailand. During this conference students from all around the world communicated only in Japanese about solutions to environmental issues, especially wastage. This year Sam has acted for peace and raised over \$500 for Syrian refugees, and is the 2019 Robina State High School Sustainabulls President.



Sam Booth is an inspiring young man ready to take action for a sustainable future. At Robina State High School there is a focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). In 2019, Sam's commitment to the SDG's has led him to form a sister school in Indonesia. The hopes for this program include:

- Both schools working together and encouraging sustainability;
- Raising enough money to plant 500 trees in areas close to the Indonesian school that has been devastated by deforestation and other factors;
- Ensuring a home for endangered species, especially the orangutan; and
- Educating local Indonesian people on the importance of trees.

Sam is looking forward to the long-lasting impact possible from a project like this and demonstrating, "The importance of people working together, especially schools".

The word 'sustainability' has great meaning to Sam, as he understands this concept to be a goal to work towards. Sam openly and honestly identifies he doesn't yet, "Live a fully sustainable lifestyle", but he doesn't intend to let that stop him trying.

Sam stated, "I want to encourage myself and others to work towards our actions not significantly impacting the environment. I think that sustainability shouldn't only be achievable by the more privileged people but should be made reachable for everyone."

As a lead student in the Robina State High School, Sustainabulls committee, Sam believes this platform allows him to encourage others to act on their passions and concerns relating to our world. The Sustainabulls doesn't solely focus on environmental sustainability, rather all SDGs. According to Sam this provides students with, *"A better understanding of the issues and makes us look at the solutions to the issues from many different perspectives"*. Importantly, Sam asserts groups like the Sustainabulls in schools give agency to students, so youth experience their voice matters.

Any path to change is encountered with obstacles, and Sam identifies there have been a few. Sam has found it frustrating when not everyone understands their individual impacts. Other challenges have included:

- Working around people's different attitudes;
- Progressing talk into action;

Nevertheless, Sam is hopeful for a sustainable future. Although he hopes he will make a positive contribution to environmental impacts and people's way of life he has turned his attention to developing countries. Through his engagement with the SDGs, Sam has realised the importance of working with people that don't necessarily have the resources or the understanding to easily approach issues like climate change. Sam's main hope for the future, *"Is that everyone will realise their individual impact and appreciate our planet."*

Sam will be presenting at the 2019 Sustainability Symposium dinner, sponsored by Cr. Hermann Vorster.



"I know I have and I think every other member as well has found that even our small group can make a huge difference in our own lives and that sustainability is an achievable goal"
- Sam Booth, Year 12 student, Robina State High School



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YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY IS INVITED TO THE

2019 SUSTAINABILITY SYMPOSIUM

MAY 13 2019 | MONDAY | SOMERSET COLLEGE

The inaugural 2019 Sustainability Symposium aims to connect Tweed and GC Schools in their commitment towards sustainability education. The three main objectives of the Symposium are: establishing a common language regarding sustainability, addressing the 12th sustainable development goal (responsible consumption and production), and building partnerships for sustainable education within our local region. Students, teachers and school communities are invited to learn, share & develop 21st century skills such as collaboration, communication, responsible citizenship and critical thinking. Day session for students, Water use and irrigation workshop for Grounds staff, Curriculum based workshop for teachers, Professional development dinner in the evening.

We are looking forward to igniting souls and inspiring change!

Thank you to our Event Partners:

**Somerset College and the
City of Gold Coast**

Thank you to our GOLD Sponsors:

**City of Gold Coast Water and Waste,
Griffith University, & Cr. Hermann Vorster**

Tickets are limited so secure your schools spot now by following the link to:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/2019-sustainability-symposium-tickets-56611252781>