

## QAGTC 2016 STATE CONFERENCE SCHEDULE WITH SESSION DETAILS – SATURDAY 19<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2016

### SATURDAY – OPENING AND KEYNOTE - 9.00AM – 10.20AM

#### Keynote Session – 9.15 AM to 10.20AM

*Young Gifted Children and the First Year of School - The GTK Experience*

**Cathie Harrison**

My research with young gifted children and their families indicates that the first experiences of school can be pivotal for young gifted children as they critique and evaluate the nature and possibilities of this new learning environment. Is school a place for thinking, creativity and curiosity, big questions, grand ideas, theories and possibilities; a place where children can spread their wings? Or is starting school more about conformance and compliance, rules and repetition. In this presentation I suggest that the latter can lead to gifted children withdrawing and retreating from others and the curriculum in a process that might be described as 'reverse metamorphosis'. In order to address such an outcome I worked with the NSW Department of Communities, experts in the field and early years teachers to develop GTK or Gifted and Talented Kindergarten. GTK is a resource informed by my experiences with young gifted children and their families which is designed to assist teachers to identify and support young gifted children from minority populations in the first year of school. The results of the project suggest that when teachers are more aware of the nature of giftedness and learning they can provide educational experiences which enable gifted children and their peers to stretch their wings and fly. Professional learning in relation to gifted education, relevant resources and permission to be creative with curriculum is fundamental if we are to empower teachers across all levels of schooling to implement meaningful play and learning experiences and involve children in creative investigations and deep thinking. Such experiences provide differentiated curriculum which engages, extends the learning and motivation of gifted children and facilitates positive interactions and attitudes to learning throughout their years at school.

(65 min)

### MORNING TEA – 10.20AM to 10.45AM

#### Morning Sessions – 10.50 AM to 12.25PM

**1. Working together for better outcomes for Gifted Children**

**Cathie Harrison**

Children who are gifted can be characterised by distinctive behaviours and by particular learning and socio-emotional strengths and learning needs. A collaborative response is essential for effective identification of giftedness, comprehensive documentation and for determining responsive curriculum planning in the early years. Appropriate responses to giftedness can best be determined when children, families and educators seek out ways in which they can work together. This has significant implications for playing and learning at home and in learning contexts. In this presentation participants will explore the nature of giftedness, with particular focus on the early years and consider ways children, parents and teachers can work together for better outcomes for all. (80 min)

#### Morning Sessions – 10.50AM to 11.35AM

**2. "Let's Solve It!": A Student Case Study**

**Trishelle Grieves**

In the 21st century, there is a contemporary drive and emphatic responsibility for educators to develop students' abilities to solve complex and multidimensional problems that will challenge them in our increasingly diverse world. The "Let's Solve It!" case study examines the use of the Maker Model of Differentiation (Maker, 2010) and implementation of the DISCOVER (Discovering Intellectual Strengths and Capabilities while Observing Varied Ethnic Responses) Model (Maker & Schiever, 2005) and TASC (Thinking Actively in a Social Context) Model (Wallace, 2012) of teaching and learning in developing a differentiated curriculum and assessment for an early years gifted student. It used a variety of subjective and objective measures including observations, interviews, checklists and diagnostic assessments to record the student's conceptual knowledge in mathematics. The data collection indicated the need for curriculum modifications and deliberately designed investigations focusing on the problem-solving and reasoning mathematical proficiency strands of the Australian Curriculum. The results of the study indicated that the modification of content, process and product principles and implementation of chosen teaching learning models and activities enhanced student engagement and improved development and application of higher-order problem solving and reasoning skills in Mathematics. (40 min)

**3.**

(40 min)

**4. Models of Success: Queensland Academies**

**Kathy Mackie**

The Queensland Academies are three selective state high schools, catering for students in Years 10 - 12. These have been operational since 2007 and include the Queensland Academy for Science, Mathematics and Technology (at Toowong), the Queensland Academy for Creative Industries (at Kelvin Grove) and the Queensland Academy for Health Sciences at the Gold Coast. Our Partnerships Online and Young Scholars Program is a teaching and learning strategy for highly capable year five to nine students within mainstream schools across Queensland, creating a sustained Partnerships Schools network that responds to the needs of Education Queensland's Framework for Gifted Education. This presentation will outline the experiences of the Queensland Academies in meeting the needs of these students, including Dr Mackie's research within her Fellowship at the Smithsonian Institute. This includes the implementation of a range of cultural, university and industry partnerships and how these partners contribute to a unique pedagogy that supports the academic and holistic needs of these students. This creates a "new landscape of learning" (Bentley, 1998) that extends beyond the classroom, promotes active citizenship, through a "participatory" culture (Jenkins, 2006) of learning through networked collectives (Thomas & Brown, 2011). (40 min)

**5.**

(40 min)

## Morning Sessions – 11.40AM to 12.25PM

### 6. *The Rambler: Gifted boys write a journal of opinion.*

**Nicholas Green**

The Rambler Journal of Opinion is a Yr 8 and 9 enrichment option within the Excelsior gifted education program at The King's School, Parramatta. It is vital that programs for gifted students are qualitatively different from classroom offerings and that sufficient challenge is presented. Socio-emotional development of gifted students must also be gained through school programs. Current research indicates a decline in literacy standards in Australia.

The Rambler Journal addresses each of these areas of need. Boys write an opinion piece of 800 to 1000 words and also edit and critique team members' articles. Topics are chosen by each author and promoted to the group for selection and fine-tuning. Group cohesion is critical and the quality of the finished product unites the writers with a sense of purpose and belonging. The Rambler is a prime example of successful gifted education programming for high school boys. (40 min)

### 7. *Instrumental Music Programmes and their effects in Qld Public Schools*

**John Tucker**

Students involved in Education Queensland's Instrumental Music Programme are provided with an opportunity to extend themselves in The Arts through learning a musical instrument through group instruction. The Instrumental Music Programme in Queensland was unique in its establishment, commencing in 1971, and it continues today to provide students with unique musical opportunities. Although the programme is inclusive and delivered across the whole state, it is pertinent to attest, that students who display giftedness benefit enormously from the challenge of learning a musical instrument and developing their appreciation for the performing arts, in particular understanding and performing music.

It can be postulated that it is common for students who remain in an Instrumental Music Programme continue with success high level academic development, and benefit socially and emotionally in a developmental way. Evidence will be provided to expound the notion that there is little impact for students in the primary sector of education and also that the continuation of high academic achievement and musical development is possible in the secondary sector. The social and emotional benefits also correlate with the whole person development and the involvement in the Instrumental Music Programme. (40 min)

### 8. *Collaborative Learning with Parents*

**Julia Bailey**

QAGTC North Branch committee identified that many parents were feeling frustrated by the void between their own knowledge of giftedness (despite a range of intuitive understandings) and what their child requires to be understood/ provisioned for in the school setting. To support parents to advocate for their child in a productive, informed and credible way, in 2015 the QAGTC North Branch trialed an approach that allowed parents to engage in bi-monthly study groups on giftedness. Using clearly defined protocols, along with the six GERRIC modules, each session involved the pre-reading of a module before participants came together to respond to each one. Participants engaged in a reflection process at the end of each session allowing the facilitator to collect data on the impact this approach was having. Due to its success, in 2016, this model is being innovated upon (pre-reading followed by study group) whereby North Branch members are sourcing contextual journal articles of interest allowing them to facilitate a session for other parents. This presentation will include the outcomes of this project and how it can be transferred to any school/ branch setting ready to open up the conversation of giftedness. (40 min)

### 9. *Acceleration: Is moving ahead the right step?*

**Nancy Wines**

Is educational acceleration the ogre that educators and parents sometimes allege? Come along to an evidence-based research summary on possibly the single most contentious issue in gifted education. Look at the facts and the myths, and hear about some real life accelerants and their experiences. (40 min)

## LUNCH – 12.30PM – 1.10PM

## Afternoon Session – 1.15PM to 2.00PM

### 10. *Feeding More Than Just the Minds of Gifted Children*

**Sue Stevens**

Sub-optimal health, erratic energy levels, behavioural issues, sensitivities, friendships and peer groups can complicate navigating schools and testing for gifted. Parents and caregivers can feel that much of this is out of their sphere of control.

Accommodations required for gifted children may be hit and miss and sometimes down to luck but a sound nutritional basis is within our control, particularly in the younger years. Good nutrition is important for all children but do gifted children have additional nutritional requirements? This question will be addressed along with issues of food selectivity, food avoidance, food sensitivities and moral standings on certain foods as well as the potential for foods to exacerbate unpredictable behaviours. This presentation will assist in ensuring adequate nutrition around these obstacles.(40 min)

### 11. *Teach Them How To Think*

**Leanne Riley**

Gifted children, like all children, need to be taught the tools necessary to expand their ways of thinking. Kingston State School has embraced the need to teach 'Thinking Tools' to all students.

We have up skilled our teachers in this area, as well as developed a program for students performing above year level expectations. Kingston Striving Stars is a STEM based program and is one of the platforms for identifying academically gifted children.

- We will share our clear identification processes, the 'Thinking Tools' program, as well as our Kingston Striving Stars program. Recent data, including Naplan upper two band data, has shown significant improvement. We will also share feedback from staff, students and parents giving a clear picture of the impact these programs have on the whole school. (40 min)

### 12. *Blended Learning - The Virtual Classroom*

**Jan Johnson**

Meeting needs of all the learners not just the ones with their hands-up. Blended Learning links alongside The Flipped Classroom approach which is a reversal of traditional teaching where students gain first exposure to new material outside of class, usually via reading or lecture videos, and then class time is used to do the harder work of assimilating that knowledge through strategies such as problem-solving, discussion or debates. (Vanderbilt University, Centre for Teaching). Blended Learning mixes traditional teaching with the

online world to create an environment for introverted, extroverted, shy, traveling and gifted learners to ask for help/have virtual conversations and rewind, pause and fast forward the teacher. (40 min)

**13. What really works for Gifted Education: Home schooling  
Cassandra Creighton**

I home school my son who has never stepped inside a classroom. He has a bespoke education, created to work for one child only. After years of researching and trial and error we are in a wonderful place where my child's needs for intense intellectual stimulation are being met. Although I had never encountered anyone who home schooled and my family was sceptical, I realised when my child was young that a mainstream education would never be enough. Never enough time to immerse fully in a latest obsession be that astronomy, Greek Mythology or the Lord of the Rings. Never enough to accommodate his asynchronous development and his ability to work five years or more above age grade. Never enough to help him gently learn the complexity of relating to others. I would like to share how I manage to provide my child with a quality education and help him develop the social and personal skills to remain a happy and curious child. I will briefly discuss the elements of our home schooling day: online gifted classes, lessons with like-minded professionals, facilitating social interaction and ways to find intellectual peers. Join me to learn how Home schooling really works for gifted education. (40 min)

**14. Round Table Q & A Session- Parents' and Teachers' Perspectives  
Natalie Yeates, Tammy Blythe, Margaret Berry, Jennifer Johnson, Erin Nilan, Gwen, Shahram Dana**

This Q&A session will explore a number themes around "what really works for gifted children" drawing out the parent perspective and the teacher perspective.

Four parents from QAGTC South Branch will share their experiences of what has worked to keep their children happy and engaged in life: two parents have students who have been accelerated in school, one parent has experience in home schooling and one parent has experience from a US gifted program and is starting his journey in the Queensland system.

Two teachers and a school principal will discuss their experiences of supporting parents and their children in their journey to find what really works for gifted children.

Areas of discussion will include: environmental factors influencing responses to learning in home and school settings and the different experiences that parents have in navigating the social-emotional intelligence and development of their children.

The Q&A session will allow the audience to pose questions and provide feedback from their experiences in "what really works for their gifted children". (40 min)

**Afternoon Sessions – 2.05PM to 2.50PM**

**15. Smorgasbord: providing a range of options for Gifted Students  
Michelle Juratowitch**

John Feldhusen introduced the concept of providing a 'smorgasbord of options' for gifted students, from which their appetites, needs and interests could be met. Nancy Robinson later developed the concept, outlining a smorgasbord of accelerative and enrichment educational options available for gifted students. Despite decades of research and advocacy, many gifted students are provided with few opportunities to adequately address their intellectual, academic, social and emotional needs, leaving students hungry for more. Chronic deprivation of appropriate challenge, stimulating provisions and interest-based learning opportunities results in intellectual and educational malnourishment and psychosocial stress. Parents and educators, concerned about the needs of gifted students, are often uncertain about what provisions would be most appropriate for gifted students

This presentation explores a smorgasbord of educational provisions that can be offered in schools and accessed through community resources to provide for a range of gifted students, according to their needs.

Educators and parents: come and fill a plate with tastes from this smorgasbord of options for gifted students. (40 min)

**16. Improving writing outcomes for gifted boys – from theoretical findings to practical strategies that work  
Jasna Poeszus**

Why does the motivation to write decline in gifted boys between years 4 – 6? This was the driving question behind eighteen months of a school-based action research investigating teacher's writing practices and the improvement of student writing outcomes. Findings from the literature reviews not only affirmed that current researched based strategies taking place in the school's teaching and learning effectively increased student writing outcomes, it provided additional innovative strategies for future implementation. More significantly the study highlighted the influence of achievement goals on creativity in writing and student motivation. In this work shop discover how significant teacher attitude during explicit writing instruction can influence natural talent, motivation and creativity in gifted writers. Learn how different goals, attributions, and beliefs about intelligence, success, failure, effort, and ability play a distinct role in improving outcomes, particularly in light of the pressures of NAPLAN in years three and five. The presenter will provide evidence based practical suggestions on programming for the teaching of writing, demonstrating the effect size and outcomes of these strategies after a twelve month period of implementation. (40 min)

**17. Building Gifted Children Who Really Work  
Anni Gold**

It is so easy to throw out glib phrases that sound like we are meeting the needs of all students in our classrooms. We speak of modified curriculum, differentiating, of nurturing talents, of grouping like-minded students together, of acceleration, of extra-curricular programs. As teachers we devote so much time to all of our students. Much of social media is full of teachers who say that they have given, and given, but can give no more. But, what if we gave students the tools to support themselves to greater heights? Gagne talks about the importance of catalysts. We know the power that we have. We develop the environment that students experience. How often do we hear that children need to build their resilience and perseverance? What if there was a way that we could build the intrapersonal strength that would ensure students become rulers of their own destinies, not just this year, but for the rest of their lives?

This presentation outlines the way that one teacher has developed an environment and a nurtured a mindset amongst her students that seems to be working, providing parents and teachers alike with practical ideas that are easily transferable to any classroom. (40 min)

<p><i>18. Bringing Them up Gifted and Talented: A Parent's perspective</i>  <b>Mr Maynard Victor M. Erece and Dr Josephine Ana Soberano Borja-Erece</b></p>	<p>Jozef Maynard Borja Erece (LIB, GDLP, Solicitor) at 18 is Gifted and Talented. He is documented as the youngest ever Law graduate in Australian history and the youngest solicitor in the entire Southern Hemisphere. He also holds a third degree black belt awarded by the World Taekwondo Federation, is a semi professional basketball player with multiple awards and championships, holds the current Acceleration Australia's vertical jump record for 17 year olds, an orchestra level violinist and a champion chess player. Maynah Josephine Lourellen Borja Erece at 14 is a ballerina, Taekwondo enthusiast and model student. She is twice gifted with moderate to severe hearing loss. The presentation will talk about raising exceptionally gifted and talented children from a parent's , educator's and medical perspective, the challenges and stumbling blocks faced by educating them in New Zealand state and state integrated schools, Australian Catholic schools and what adjustments were needed to be done to continue university study in Australia. The presentation will share unique, personal insights and life lessons learned in order to create an atmosphere of continued excellence in the journey to develop the many gifts and talents of exceptionally gifted and the twice exceptional children. (40 min)</p>
<p><i>19. So if my child is supposed to be gifted- why are they not doing better in school?</i>  <b>Geraldine Townend</b></p>	<p>One of the many causes of school underachievement is poor academic self-concept. Academic self-concept informs success in school and even goes on to inform success in career and in life. The current research shows that academic self-concept for gifted and twice-exceptional students is influenced by variables in their environment. This presentation will present some insights for parents and teachers to help gifted students improve their academic self-concept. (40 min)</p>
<p><b>Afternoon Sessions – 2.05PM to 2.50PM</b></p>	
<p><i>20. Identification Methods and Factors Explored in Gifted Underachievement Research</i>  <b>Sabrina Blaas</b></p>	<p>Gifted underachievement has been an ongoing concern for many as it negatively impacts gifted students' academic outcomes, mental health, and life opportunities. To address this issue, policy makers and schools need to be well informed as to how gifted underachievers can be reliably identified, and what factors are associated with gifted underachievement. This presentation is based on my current research on methods used to identify both gifted students and gifted underachievers in gifted education research. The presentation is based on a systematic literature review which explored studies published between 2005 and 2015, and examined the factors associated with gifted underachievement. Findings reveal that the methods used to identify gifted students and gifted underachievers differ widely, and that research into gifted underachievement tends to focus on individual student factors (e.g., motivation, attitude, and self-efficacy) to the neglect of home, school and community environments. (40 min)</p>
<p><i>21. Tournament of Minds - Really Working With Gifted Kids Globally</i>  <b>Kath Underhill</b></p>	<p>Australia's original Creative and Critical Thinking program has been around for over 28 years, and is now attracting students and teachers from other countries around the globe. This hands-on workshop will outline the key benefits of this program for teachers and students, and highlight some of the recent innovations to the program. Attendees will be enlightened and entertained with this presentation, and will be totally engaged in a taste of what students wholeheartedly enjoy each year. As Queensland is host to the Australasian Pacific Finals this year, 2016 is an opportune time to find out more about TOM! (40 min)</p>
<p><i>22. Data Focussed Conversations</i>  <b>Sue Prior</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Data focussed conversations is one way that schools can explore what works for individual students who are gifted and talented in order to support optimal learning.</li> <li>2. Developing a range of support tools including video to show what this conversation might look like is one way Brisbane Catholic Education is meeting teachers' professional learning needs and informing practice.</li> <li>3. The implications for students who are gifted is that a range of data is considered in order to achieve more personalised and targeted learning. (40 min)</li> </ol>
<p><i>23. Depth and Complexity in the Curriculum for Gifted Students</i>  <b>Mirella Olivier</b></p>	<p>With thousands of students participating each year, the Days of Excellence programs are satisfying the multiple, specific needs of gifted students through a variety of characteristics that define its learning profile. Its unique nature in the spectrum of offerings for gifted students is provided by its structure, content, approach, audience and specialist staff involved, and it is reflected in it not overlapping, but complementing perfectly the school offering. This poster will attempt to explore some of these characteristics, with a focus on the depth of learning and complexity that it achieves. The poster was created based on the data provided by the program evaluation questionnaire administered at the completion of each program. (40 min)</p>
<p><i>24. Gifted children with learning disability – why aren't we spotting them earlier? And why is some of the so-called 'research' just throwing obstacles in our way?</i>  <b>Carol Barnes</b></p>	<p>If you've been wondering whether your intellectually gifted child's, or your patently clever student's, chronic academic underachievement might be due to a learning disability or just 'something else going on', then this session is for you. After a general introduction to 'twice-exceptional' children (the two exceptionalities being the giftedness on the one hand and the 'something else' on the other), this presentation will focus on the myriad of unnecessary obstacles and hollow excuses which sometimes get in the way of identifying twice-exceptional children early enough to begin to address, remediate or treat the second exceptionality. Such specious and distracting excuses include: "It's just an overexcitability" or "It's just a visual-spatial learning style" or "It's just asynchronous development" or "It's just a case of multiple intelligences" or (worst for all...) "It's always better to try all the evidence-free commercial 'remedies' or 'cures' or diets or vitamins before seeking professional medical or allied health advice". This informal and interactive session will draw on participants' experiences - all the dead-end rabbit holes that you've explored before identifying the true cause of the underachievement – and you'll benefit from listening to the stories of others who've been wherever you are now on your gifted journey. (40 min)</p>
<p><b>Conference Close – 3.45PM Followed by QAGTC General Meeting – 3.50PM to 4.30PM</b></p>	

# About the Presenters

## 1 and Keynote Dr Cathie Harrison

Dr Cathie Harrison is a Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood Education at the Australian Catholic University in Strathfield, NSW and an adviser to the children's television program Play School. Cathie is the author of the books *Giftedness in Early Childhood* and *Young Gifted Children: Their Search for Complexity and Connection*. Her research interests include play and learning in the early years and young gifted children.

## 2. Trishelle Grieves

Trishelle Grieves is a Primary Teacher with 17 years' experience. Having obtained a Postgraduate Degree in Gifted Education, she is currently the Support Teacher: Gifted Education in a Brisbane Catholic Primary School. Trishelle is passionate about supporting and catering for the needs of gifted students and assisting classroom teachers to provide relevant and differentiated learning opportunities in the everyday classroom.

## 4. Kathy Mackie

Dr Kathy Mackie is Manager of the Queensland Academies and leads the Young Scholars and Partnerships online programs. She was a 2015 Smithsonian Fellow, researching the potentials of cultural partnerships within the education sector - with a focus on STEM/ STEAM based learning.

## 6. Nicholas Green

Nicholas Green is Gifted Education Co-ordinator and works with high school boys at The King's School, Parramatta. He has taught in independent girls' and boys' schools and government co-ed. He has qualifications in technology education and gifted education and is currently preparing a PhD thesis examining the role of teacher feedback in developing numeracy skills and the psycho-social drivers of student success.

## 7. John Tucker

John is a musician and educator in Queensland. He holds degrees in classical music performance, as well as a Post Graduate Diploma in Education and a Masters Degree. John has worked as an instrumental music teacher, class teacher, Head of Department and Deputy Principal.

## 8. Julia Bailey

Julia Bailey (BTeach, MEd, GEM) is the President of the QAGTC North Branch. Currently in the role of Deputy Principal, Bardonia State School, Julia more recently was engaged as a Regional Gifted Education Project Officer across the Metro Region. Julia's interest in supporting parents and educators derives from her own pathway of challenges and successes in parenting gifted children.

## 9. Nancy Wines

**Nancy Wines** is the Gifted and Talented Coordinator at a school in NSW. Nancy has over 16 years' experience as a Drama and Literature Teacher as well as a TESOL specialist in the UK, Dubai and Australia. Nancy has completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Secondary Education and a Certificate of Gifted Education at UNSW and she is currently finishing a Masters in Gifted Education. Nancy recently joined the QAGTC Gold Coast Branch committee and is a mother to two gifted children who keep her on her toes.

## 10. Sue Stevens

Sue is a mathematics and science teacher of long standing. She has recently completed a Masters in Human Nutrition (Deakin) to complement her masters in gifted education (UNE) to allow her to pursue her passion for enhancing learning outcomes and reducing behavioural aberrations through sound nutrition.

## 11. Leanne Riley

Leanne Riley is the Deputy Principal at Kingston State School and is passionate about gifted education. With a gifted son, she understands the importance of ensuring staff have a thorough understanding of the pedagogy required when teaching gifted children, along with the need for parents to be actively involved in their children's education. At Leanne's past four schools she has implemented gifted identification processes, STEM based enrichment programs and conducted quality learning opportunities around gifted education for staff and parents. Kara Steers is the Master Teacher at Kingston State School and is passionate about the pedagogy of teaching thinking skills. Kara has developed a whole school 'Thinking Tools' program, as well as taught the Kingston State School Striving Stars program. Kara is a mentor and coach to teachers, assisting with the curriculum and pedagogy needs when teaching higher order thinking skills.

## 12. Jan Johnson

Jan Johnson, Masters in Guidance & Counselling, Dip T, Certificate in Gifted Education (Gerric), GEM

I love to build pathways where previously there were brick walls.

## 13. Cassandra Creighton

Cassandra Creighton is a home schooling mother. She volunteers on the committee of QAGTC Gold Coast and with the Home Education Association (HEA). Cassandra has a Master of Science from Wollongong University and is currently enrolled in a Bachelor of Applied Physics (UNE). She is active in the home schooling community and is passionate about being a life-long learner.

## 14. Robertson State School Discussion Group

Tammy Blythe has a son who is 4 years old and has been accelerated from Prep to Year 1.

Natalie Yeates has a son who is 6 years old and has been grade skipped.

Gwen has a son who is 10 years old and is being home schooled.

Shahram Dana has a son who is 5 years old who was identified and participated in the gifted program in North Western University Chicago. They are new to the Queensland system.

Erin Nilan is an experienced classroom teacher of one of the above gifted children.

Jennifer Johnson is a Master Teacher and Gifted Education Coordinator at a school where students are accelerated and grade skipped.

Margaret Berry is the QAGTC South Branch President as well as the Principal of Robertson State School.

### 15. Michelle Juratowitch

Michele Juratowitch is Director of Clearing Skies and provides consulting, professional development, counselling and project management services. She works with gifted students, their parents and teachers; undertakes research; has worked extensively in schools; lectured in postgraduate Gifted Education course and been involved in a range of GERRIC programs. Michele was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to study the counselling and intervention needs of gifted children; is co-author of *Make a Twist: Curriculum differentiation for gifted students*; developed and manages STEAM Residentials for gifted girls.

### 16. Jasna Poeszus

Jasna Poeszus is currently the Coordinator of Gifted & Talented Programs P-6 at The Southport Preparatory School on the Gold Coast. With a passion for finding individual strengths in all learners regardless of their learning diversity, she began her career as a Primary school teacher in 1988 in a special education setting in Devonport Tasmania. After moving back to Sydney her career spanned across a variety of roles including Primary School Teacher across years K-6, Executive Teacher (Welfare), Family Support Officer with Lifestart Early Intervention; Integration Advisor (Curriculum) for the NSW Department of Education Northern Region, Assistant Principal and Education Consultant (Diverse Learning) for the Association of Independent Schools. Her most favourite role of all is, and always remains being a mother of two beautiful girls and wife to husband Tim. She holds a Diploma of Teaching (Primary); Bachelor of Education (Primary); Masters of Education (Special Education) and Certificate of Gifted Education, and has spoken at a variety of conferences both Internationally and locally.

### 17. Anni Gold

Anni Gold has parented and been parented by gifted people. In late primary school she met "that teacher who changed her life". She went into education hoping to be "that teacher" for others. Anni has taught in a variety of schools across QLD and has an ongoing interest in gifted education. She has a Certificate of Gifted Education and is currently a full time Year Three Teacher.

### 18. Maynard Victor M. Erece and Dr Josephine Ana Soberano Borja-Erece

Mr Maynard Victor M. Erece BS Biology, Grad Dip Teaching (Sec) Formerly the Dean of Senior School and Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator @ St John's College, New Zealand, he is currently the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator @ St. Augustine's College, Australia; teaching Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Science, Mathematics and HPE at all levels from P - 12.

Maynard's work in developing the Gifted and Talented program in New Zealand was highly praised by the Education Review Office (ERO) in New Zealand and was viewed as a model program.

Dr Josephine Ana Borja- Erece, MD, FRACGP, BS Biology (cum laude), PGDip HSM (Massey)

Former Psychiatry Registrar at Waikato Hospital and former Head of the University of the Philippines Medical and Dental Unit, she was a former University Lecturer and partner in Radius Health, Waikato, New Zealand (now Tui Health). Josephine graduated from Primary school and University as Valedictorian. She currently works as a medical contractor for Primary Health in Springfield.

### 19. Geraldine Townend

Doctor Geraldine Townend has over a decade of experience in the field of gifted education, with expertise in the area of twice exceptionality. She is now a research fellow at the Griffith Institute of Educational Research. Her research interests focus on supporting gifted and twice-exceptional students to aspire to their potential in education, which includes the development of positive academic self-concept. Her research findings indicate that there are several sociological and psychological influences on academic self-concept, including a social comparison theory, and she is particularly interested in the interaction between teachers and their students.

### 20. Sabrina Blaas

Sabrina Blaas is a PhD student at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane. Her research interests include gifted education, social-emotional wellbeing, underachievement, equality in education and education policy. She has experience teaching in the early years schooling system as well as at ESL schools. Sabrina has published in the Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling in 2014.

### 21. Kath Underhill

Kath Underhill- A teacher for over 30 years has a passion for challenging every student to realise their true gifts. Having been State Director for TOM QLD for many years, Kath considers programs such as TOM offer the opportunity for all "gifteds" to produce and create in a safe, but stimulating and limitless environment.

### 22. Sue Prior

Sue is the Education Officer Curriculum (Gifted Education) for Brisbane Catholic Education. She is an elected Australian delegate to the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children 2015-2017 and part time PhD candidate at ACU.

### 23. Mirella Olivier

Dr Mirella Olivier is a teacher currently completing her PhD in Gifted Education. She is also the Director of BRAINways EDUCATION (organisation offering programs for gifted children), and a mother of two highly gifted children. Mirella's first degree is in Medicine, and she also completed her Masters of Health Sciences, with focus on Sports Medicine, specifically on elite athletes.

### 24. Carol Barnes

Carol Barnes is an Honorary Visiting Fellow at GERRIC within the UNSW School of Education, and vice-president/parent support group convenor of the QAGTC Gold Coast Branch. The mother of two gifted university students with disability, Carol is also national coordinator and Sydney meeting convenor for GLD Australia, a not-for-profit online learning community/support group focussing on gifted children with learning disability.