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TAS Principals recognised at the 2016 John Laing Awards

Two Tasmanian school leaders have been officially recognised for their dedication and commitment to education and professional development in the annual Principals Australia Institute, John Laing Awards 2016.

Sally Gill and Gill Berriman received the John Laing Award for Professional Development from Principals Australia Institute at a special presentation in Hobart today.

- **Sally Gill – Principal**, Waimea Heights Primary School has developed the capacity of her school's leadership team through exemplary systems and processes. Sally was nominated by the Tasmanian Principals Association.
- **Gill Berriman**, - Principal, Rokeby High School has increased the percentage of students completing their Tasmanian Certificate of Education from her school leading to better student outcomes overall. Gill was nominated by the Tasmanian Principals Association.

Each of the recipients is an outstanding school leader and has made substantial contributions to education in TAS through strategic senior leadership roles over a considerable time. These leaders have been responsible for working with other senior educators to develop capacity in government schools.

The John Laing Awards acknowledge principals in every state and territory who demonstrate outstanding leadership in providing professional learning in schools. They celebrate the contribution principals make to support the professional learning and development of teachers and other school leaders.

"It is important to recognise and celebrate the role principals play in providing leadership and development in their schools and the wider community. Great schools have great leaders who inspire both their staff and their students every day. We are honoured to be able to run these awards every year, as they truly demonstrate the commitment made by our school leaders in educating students in primary and secondary schools across Australia.," said Paul Geyer, Chief Executive Officer, Principals Australia Institute.

Set up in 2004, the Awards honour John Laing, a former Tasmanian school principal who worked for PAI (the then Australian Principals Association Professional Development Council). He was the motivating force behind the innovative initiative in the early 1990s to bring principals together for national professional learning projects and programs to support their role as school leaders.

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More information about the 2 recipients are below. All are available for interview. Please contact Gianna in the first instance.

Click here for more information about the Awards:

<http://www.pai.edu.au/content/john-laing-professional-development-awards-2016>

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About Principals Australia Institute

Principals Australia Institute (PAI) is a leading national organisation providing quality professional learning, leadership development and principal certification to Australia's 9,500 school leaders. With an established network of locations in all capital cities and in regional areas, PAI delivers key programs to all schools and systems across Australia.

PAI also supports the social and emotional health and wellbeing of children in thousands of Australian schools through its delivery of the Australian Government-funded KidsMatter Primary and MindMatters programs.

Through its relationships and connections across the education sector, it assists school leaders to achieve the best possible outcomes for themselves, their staff and their students, through ongoing professional development and learning.

PAI provides leadership and advocacy to Government in the areas of school leadership, professional development and Australian Principal Certification to help raise the profile and reputation of principals in the community.

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Award Recipients

Sally Gill – Principal Waimea Heights Primary School

As a school principal Sally Gill has consistently demonstrated high levels of commitment to collaborative planning, development, delivery and facilitation of professional learning for her school and the education community more broadly.

Sally has led professional learning in her neighbouring cluster of schools including bringing the schools together for a whole day session with Brendan Spillane. This event fostered unity of purpose in the group; contributed to deeper relationships within teaching groups and across schools; and contributed strongly to a sense of shared responsibility for health and well-being. Sally's leadership in organising and then managing this event modelled the levels of care, concern and interest at the heart of Brendan's presentation.

Sally Gill has worked in the primary sector as a Principal for 11 years. She has focused her leadership on building the capacity of all staff and growing future leaders. She has supported others in developing strong networks and embraced other schools to co-learn by bringing outstanding educational presenters to our island state each year.

Her personal network has enabled her to use Tasmanian identities (ex-Premier David Bartlett; MONA Music Curator Brian Ritchie; ex-Vice Chancellor UTAS, Darryl Le Grew; economist Saul Eslake) to inspire and work with staff, focusing on the importance of their role in a child's educational journey.

Her inclusive support to develop future leaders both as a mentor and as enabler of external opportunities has been pivotal in her leadership of 21st Century learning. As part of the New Pedagogies For Deep Learning project led by renowned educator Michael Fullan the building of knowledge across her staff has made Sally's school a beacon in this context and one whose expertise has been shared across many schools. She has been a long- time committee member of the Network of Education Associations of Tasmania (NEAT) – a not-for-profit organisation with a history of support to professional associations through dissemination of information, delivery of professional learning programs, advocacy, and response to state and national educational issues. NEAT has a strong commitment to engagement in critically informed dialogue about education.

In her own school Sally embraces the skills and knowledge of the staff to build greater capacity, for instance giving all staff the opportunity to attend all ALEA literacy professional learning workshops, as part of working towards being literate in the Tasmanian context.

Her inclusive practice means that all her staff – education facility officers, support and administration staff AND teachers – all receive differentiated opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge as they all play important roles in the educational journey of our children.

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Sally has also worked closely with a small neighbouring early childhood campus to both mentor first-time principals and to win an innovation grant to support the close work and PL opportunities for teachers to work across campuses to further foster their growth in all areas of the Australian Curriculum, and to develop innovative pedagogy.

Under Sally's leadership the school culture has been transformed into a place of learning for all: a new staff member commented 'I have never been in such a school, where pedagogy is the main focus of all conversations!'"

Sally has been commended by her Principal Network Leader for outstanding work in developing the capacity of her school's leadership team through exemplary systems and processes. She has been closely involved in work in new pedagogies for Twenty-first century schools; and has been outstanding in enabling and supporting the work of other school leaders including through mentoring.

Sally's standing within the profession was recognised through her election to the Principal Advisory Group which designs and coordinates professional learning for all principals at forums held each term, in 2015.

Gill Berriman- Principal, Rokeby High School

Gillian Berriman has been principal at Rokeby High School for several years. Rokeby's ICSEA rating is around 840. The school was facing challenges on a number of fronts – including the prospect of closure.

The staff, with Gill's outstanding leadership, took collective responsibility to make a change to the circumstances of the school. Teams were established and the school began to connect with its community in earnest. Meaningful partnerships were established through the agency of the Beacon Foundation including with an engineering company and from there diversification and personalisation of curriculum gathered momentum.

The STEM agenda has been ramped up, the school has been a leading light in the Underwood Centre's Pathways to Success initiative, and many more students from Rokeby are completing their Tasmanian Certificate of Education – the completion percentages trebling in the last four years. Gill's commitment to her own professional learning and that of her staff has been a cornerstone of the improved outcomes for students. This has included Rokeby staff joining in professional learning communities with the neighbouring schools and secondary college to form a powerful learning alliance offering a range of courses for all students spread across each of the campuses.

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She has been a leader in learning in her own community and beyond, recently delivering the keynote address at the Peter Underwood Centre's symposium titled "Aspirations Matter". Gill's work in leading communities of professional learning is widely respected and impactful and makes her a most worthy recipient of a John Laing Award.

2016 Received ACEL Award for Excellent Leadership in Improving Student Outcomes