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## SA Principals recognised at the 2016 John Laing Awards

Five South Australian 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.

Lynne Symons, Frank Ali, Jayne Heath, Bernadette Lacey and Eileen Young all received the John Laing Award for Professional Development from Principals Australia Institute at a special presentation in Adelaide today.

- **Lynne Symons**, recently retired Principal and Education Consultant has been a principal for 24 years, leading professional learning strategies, leading to her most recent school Mark Oliphant College, being nominated as one of the 40 most innovative schools in the Australia in 2015. Lynne was nominated by the SA Primary Principals Association (SAPPA)
- **Frank Ali**, Head of Junior School, St Johns Grammar has made a significant contribution to the professional development of colleagues and aspiring leaders, through his mentorship and commitment to the Independent Primary School Heads Association Student Support Hub Group. Frank was nominated by the Independent Primary School Heads Association of SA.
- **Jayne Heath**, Director, Professional Learning Australian Science and Mathematics School (ASMS) is a highly engaging and effective educator who has positively influenced teachers across SA secondary schools in science and maths. Jayne was nominated by the SA Secondary School Principals Association (SASSPA).
- **Bernadette Lacey**, Principal, St Barbara's Parish School Roxby Downs has been a principal in remote SA, is passionate about distributed leadership within her schools and offers opportunities for teaching staff to build their confidence to lead. Bernadette was nominated by the SA Catholic Primary Principals Association (SACPPA).
- **Eileen Young**, Principal, St Mary's College Adelaide, has made a significant contribution to education in SA Catholic schools, using her leadership role to inspire others and build leadership capacity from a strengths-based perspective. She is a Strategic Advisor to the Director of Catholic Education SA (CESA), contributing to CESA's strategic plan 2016-2020. Eileen was nominated by the Association of Principals of Catholic Secondary Schools (APCSS).

Each of the recipients is an outstanding school leader and has made substantial contributions to education in SA 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, Catholic and Independent 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.

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“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.

**More information about the 5 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>

## **Media contact**

Gianna Ferrara  
General Manager, Marketing and Brand

E: [Gianna.Ferrara@pai.edu.au](mailto:Gianna.Ferrara@pai.edu.au)

P: 08 8394 2177

M: 0438 054 360

## **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

### **Lynne Symons - recently retired Principal and Education Consultant**

Lynne Symons was a principal for twenty-four years (1992-2016). This included being the principal of a special school, establishing the behaviour management school for South Australia (Bowden Brompton Community School), a girls' school and the foundation principal for eight years of Ocean View B-12 College.

From 2009 until 2016 she was the foundation principal of Mark Oliphant College B-12. (MOC). From Jan- August 2016, when she retired, Lynne was the Principal Leadership Consultant in the South Australian Institute of Educational Leadership within the Department of Education and Child Development, South Australia (DECD).

She has had a significant role in leading professional learning with principal colleagues since her initial appointment as a leader. She has spoken nationally and internationally at conferences as diverse as the International Conference on Maths Education to the National Early Childhood Conference.

The underlying theme of all presentations has been focused on improving learning opportunities for students through quality teaching. Her presentations have been on Visionary Leadership, Student Centred Curriculum, Re-Imagining Schools – school reformation, and Positive Education – the drip feed approach to immersion, the role and impact of Social Media/New Media, All About Space – the different contributors to improving outcomes – physical, virtual, professional & curriculum, Data – Sources, Issues and Mobilisation and the Future is Now – role of technology in educational improvement.

During the last 6 months whilst working as the Principal Leadership Consultant Lynne developed a professional learning program for partnership leaders and aspiring leaders called 'Narrative on Leadership, Leading Self and Leading Others.' During the last three months over 100 colleagues attended these workshops across SA.

It was through her work at MOC she made the most significant contribution. In 2012-13 the teaching staff at MOC were relatively inexperienced with over 50% in their first five years of teaching and over 70% in their first leadership experience. Capacity building through professional learning was a priority.

She successfully engaged teachers in thinking and talking about how to make learning better and hence improve student's achievement. One key strategy to build the capacity of the staff led to a series of structured ongoing professional learning events for educators from across Australia.

The school's mission statement became to "Make Learning Better" for all in this digital age to enable the development of high achieving students and staff. One of the key strategies of this mission was to host and facilitate professional learning opportunities of the highest order to develop not only the staff but also other educators.

These regular events included hosting a major annual two-day conference from 2013 to 2015 with over 600 conferees attending over the three years. International and national speakers included Stephen Heppell, Dan Haesler, Craig Smith (Autism Education). Lynne and her team also organised Open Days to enable staff to visit from other sites and organised Master classes across the five years including John Fleming (Explicit Teaching) Geelong Grammar (accredited training on Positive Education), Laura McBain (High Tech High-project based learning) Computer Science (R-10) @MOC and finally Social Media.

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The results of all this in terms of outcomes for students are well documented. The results for staff were:

- Five leaders leaving MOC to win positions as Principals (2 Secondary, 3 Primary). These join the other five principals that have come through my tenures (R-12, 2 Special and 1 Primary)
- Six other staff achieving promotion positions in other schools
- From 2013-2015 over 40 staff being selected through Local Selection processes to become members of other school staffs – this is an achievement that had hitherto never been thought possible that staff from category 1 schools could be so well sought after.
- In 2015 Ray Moss awarded first Lifetime Achievement Award at SA Public Education Awards and Emil Zankov being awarded secondary teacher of the year.
- Having two staff awarded Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher status (2015)
- Three staff awarded Apple Distinguished Educator status
- Six staff (R-12) were successful in being accredited through the Lead Schools program with High Tech High

In 2015 MOC was named as one of the 40 most innovative schools in Australia. This was largely due to the leadership of Lynne Symons and in providing quality professional learning opportunities for her staff and educators across Australia.

Lynne has also been committed to her own personal professional development through:

- traditional methods (Certificate in Management and Organisational Leadership, Team Leadership Trainer and Coaching Accreditation)
- using and promoting new media through my use of twitter (symolyn) and Facebook.
- successfully modelling the development of digital portfolios (websites) and blogging with her staff through developing a website [www.makelearningbetter.com](http://www.makelearningbetter.com) in which all of her presentations (PowerPoints, videos, podcasts) are housed and freely available for use by others. This complemented the work of the highly commended MOC website – [www.moc.sa.edu.au](http://www.moc.sa.edu.au)

## **Frank Ali – Head of Junior, School St Johns Grammar**

Frank is a longstanding Independent Primary School Heads of Australia (IPSHA) member for 29 years and has made a significant contribution to the professional development of colleagues, aspiring leaders and middle level leaders. This has included the organisation of conferences, leadership of special interest hub groups, mentoring new members and active involvement in the aspiring leaders' programmes.

Frank has been actively involved in the organisation of professional development through conferences and retreat weekends. Frank was a crucial member of the IPSHA Biennial Conference committee. This influential conference targeted the professional knowledge and understanding of Heads of Junior School and included several world class speakers.

Frank has also been a regular member of organising committees for the Victorian, South Australian and Tasmanian Retreat for over 25 years. In addition to the organisation of key note speakers, these Retreats have provided opportunities for colleagues to share stories, develop networks and increase their capacity to lead others. Frank's role in Retreats has enabled these outcomes.

Frank has been led the IPSHA Student Support Hub Group for over 20 years. This group includes middle leaders who have responsibility for student support in their schools. Frank has been an inspiring leader of this group and has worked tirelessly to ensure that all activities and meetings are engaging and relevant. In this role, Frank has listened carefully, identified needs and arranged professional development to support capacity building.

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A recent example of this approach is the organisation of Neil Mackay to speak to this group and key teachers about catering for students who have dyslexia. This is one of several professional development activities Frank has organised for staff of Independent and Catholic Schools.

Frank has been a member of the South Australian Executive of IPSHA and in this role he has actively sort out new members to provide support and advice. Even when Frank was not a member of the Executive, his natural propensity to support members has seen him contact new Heads and offer support.

There are many current Heads who have benefitted greatly from this approach and who still seek Frank out for advice or to share a concern.

Frank acted as an active, informed and empathetic member of our expert panel for aspiring leaders. This panel hosted three meetings for aspiring leaders that provided practical advice and solutions. The rich learning environment created by the panel ensured that these events were a great success and has assisted several of the aspiring leaders to successful transition into more substantial leadership roles.

## **Jayne Heath - Director, Professional Learning Australian Science and Mathematics School (ASMS)**

Jayne is a leader of learning. On a personal level, Jayne is a self-directed leader of her own learning which includes the acquisition of deep knowledge pertaining to instructional leadership, learning task and assessment design, growth mindsets and STEM. This is evident in her leadership of practitioner experience at Australian Science and Mathematics School (ASMS) which is highly regarded by her colleagues.

It is also strongly evident in the “outreach” work Jayne undertakes with leaders and teachers from other schools, who take up opportunities from the ASMS to engage in robust, professional learning programs that focus on inquiry-based pedagogies as a means of challenging and supporting students to engage in purposeful inter-disciplinary learning and assessment tasks (which seeks to deepen Maths and Science engagement).

Jayne is a born teacher and this is evident in her relational approach to leading the learning of her peers. This, together with her highly developed group and task processing skills, makes any workshop, forum or conference she is involved in highly engaging (as well as very effective).

As the long-time convenor of the Professional Learning committee of the South Australian Secondary Principals’ Association (SASPA), Jayne has been a key figure in planning the 2014, 2015 and 2016 annual conference. In addition to this cornerstone of SASPA’s professional learning work, Jayne has been a key member of the SASPA team that has developed and facilitated the 2016 aspiring leaders’ program, “Unleashing Your Leadership Potential”.

In these roles she has helped to build the capacity of other members of the team, and has focussed their energies to work together to manage the delivery of these complex professional learning programs.

The impact of Jayne’s work is profound. When you consider all of the teachers and leaders she has positively influenced through her work at the ASMS, and all of the leaders she has helped to develop through her SASPA professional learning work, she is clearly one of South Australia’s most precious educational leadership assets!

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## **Bernadette Lacey - Principal, St Bernadette's Catholic School Roxby Downs**

Bernadette Lacey is the current Principal of St Barbara's Parish School; the most remote of our Catholic Schools in South Australia. Her teaching and leadership career has been in the rural areas of South Australia, stretching from the Mid to Upper and remote parts of the state. This has included teaching in St James – Jamestown, Jamestown Community School, St Marks College Port Pirie and Snowtown Area School before being appointed to the following senior leadership positions in the Port Pirie Diocese:

- St Mark's College, Deputy Principal 1994 – 2000
- St Joseph's Parish School Gladstone, Principal 2000 – 2005
- St Barbara's Roxby Downs, Principal 2006 – 2012
- St Joseph's School Port Lincoln, Principal 2013 – 2015
- St Barbara's Roxby Downs, 2015 – current

In every leadership/principal appointment, Bernadette has made it a priority to keep her fingers on the pulse both within the parish and wider community. She leads by example involving herself at the local church level but also being seen engaging in local community events and issues. Her understanding and experience as a leader of small and larger rural Catholic schools is an invaluable asset to her fellow professional colleagues and teaching staff within each school.

Bernadette is a teaching principal, a critical element to the success of her developing beginning teachers into outstanding teachers and outstanding teachers into first time successful leaders. Her willingness to display good teaching, model and insist upon 21st century pedagogy has developed sound relationships with staff, students and community members.

Giving teaching staff the source of support and responsibility to be professional learners, develop their expertise and encouraging staff to network in areas of teaching and learning throughout their teaching careers has resulted in many teachers under her care develop into emergent leaders and first-time principals throughout South Australia.

Bernadette is passionate about the provision of distributed leadership within her schools and offers opportunities for teaching staff to take the reins of the school and build their confidence to lead. In consultation with staff, especially beginning teachers, Bernadette sets with them personal targets and they are provided with time to meet regularly with Bernadette to share ideas, engage in professional reading and dialogue and challenge their current thinking.

She demonstrates this herself by being involved in associations such as SPERA, SiMER, REFA and SACPPA. Recently, her professional development has included a study tour to Singapore, Instructional Rounds training and Understanding by Design training, all of which contribute to her leadership style that develops a rich learning environment in her schools.

Limited funding is the nature of the current educational setting and Bernadette makes it a priority to have thorough school plans that allocate resources to enhance student achievement and build school capacity. The tyranny of distance and remoteness in many of the rural schools where Bernadette has worked and in her current role at Roxby Downs, is not a barrier or disadvantage because Bernadette has an outstanding ability to be self-sufficient. She manages to attract quality teachers to hard to staff schools and along the way inspires many of these people to develop into future leaders in education.

Some of her professional development has included:

The AITSL Local Leadership program, Preventing Bullying in the Workplace, Restorative Practice, Dyslexia Workshop, SMART online training, Classroom Walkthroughs and Lesson Observations, Principals as Learning Leaders in Literacy, Trauma Sensitive Schools, Boarding

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Australia Conference – Engaging Generation Z, More Support for Students with Disabilities Initiative, Building positive partnerships within our classrooms.

She was also involved in Mining Minds BHP Project – a community sponsored project centred around improving student outcomes, Collaborative Teams that Transform Schools, Choose Maths – 5 Year national program, turn around public perception of maths as a career choice for girls and young women, Data Analysis for continuous School Improvement, Flipped Learning, ACPPA Singapore Study Program – Asia Education Foundation and Understanding by Design – An introduction to curriculum design.

## **Eileen Young - Principal, St Marys College Adelaide**

With involvement in Education for over 40 years, Eileen Young has made significant contributions to education in South Australia. In the past 12 years as Principal of St Mary's College, Franklin Street, she has been a great advocate for girls ensuring they have the benefits of a quality education and enhancing their choices in their tertiary studies.

Eileen exemplified the L5 framework through developing leadership through self and others ensuring access and equity are key drives in developing a rich learning environment. She has used her leadership role to inspire others and build leadership capacity from a 'strength based' perspective.

Eileen has developed a system-wide leadership perspective and has influenced a broad range of school leaders through the various roles she has filled. This was particularly the case in her responsibility for introducing 'Choice Theory' into CESA schools, leading to a change from behaviour management culture to a behaviour education culture based on 'Choice Theory' and restorative practices. In recent times she has continued this educative approach, not only within her own staff, but much more widely through her APCSS Executive role and presentations at national and international conferences.

Her role of Strategic Advisor to the Director of Catholic Education SA is an indication of the esteem in which Eileen is held, and also of her effectiveness in influencing her colleagues. Her work in this role formed the basis of the new CESA Strategic Plan 2016-2020.

Her commitment to contributing to the voice of school principals according to the L5 propositions, particularly

- Leadership is about influencing others
- Leadership builds professionalism and management capability

Eileen's career is indicative of her passion and drive to improve student outcomes across the Catholic Educations sector.

From September 1990- April 2004 she undertook various roles. These included, Senior Advisor Catholic Education Office Adelaide, where she was instrumental in developing system wide leadership perspective Eileen was also Indigenous Education Coordinator providing curriculum support to schools and support of the well-being of Indigenous students.

She was also the Behaviour Management Coordinator and through this introduced Choice Theory into CESA schools, changing a behaviour management culture into a behaviour education culture based on Choice Theory and restorative practices. Eileen also introduced the Development of Personal Responsibility Policy to replace the previous outdated Behaviour Management Policy. This included the delivery of PD to all CESA schools in behaviour education.

Eileen was also Senior Advisor Child Protection. She had oversight of the introduction of Police Checks and other Child Protection frameworks as a result of work with SAPOL/DECD and Church authorities in child sex abuse matters.

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During this period of her career she was also the Senior Advisor HR / Leadership. – Development implementing leadership development frameworks and appointment of school senior leaders.

Since July 2004 Eileen has been the Principal St Mary's College Adelaide. In addition to professional development of her own staff in restorative practices, enneagram self-awareness and behaviour management she also presented these concepts at various conferences and seminars. These included:

In 2014 in South Africa

- Edmund Rice Principals Conference Cape Town on Restorative Justice
- Various gatherings of Catholic Schools principals Johannesburg Restorative Justice
- Filmed for South African Catholic teachers' PD resource: The Catholic Institute of education presents "6 of the best" An Introduction to the Practices of Restorative Justice.

In 2015

- she was the Adelaide Keynote Speaker PERMA Conference Flourishing In Faith, at St Peters College.
- CESA Staff PD presentations across various Adelaide schools in Restorative Justice – Creating a School Model.
- Seconded part-time to assume role of Strategic Advisor to the Director of Catholic Education.

This responsibility involved interviewing the principals of CESA schools across the system with a view to understanding and shaping the leadership perspective on sustainability of schools, challenges and attitudes to ELCs, Year 7 Transition and school structures. This research formed the basis of the new CESA Strategic Plan 2016-2020.

In 2015-2016 Implementation Committee of Dominican Education Australia (DEA) assisting schools and boards in the transition to a Public Juridic Person governance model in the 7 Dominican entities of Australia.

This year Eileen has presented on restorative justice to DEPSLA and APCSS – Catholic secondary deputy and principals' associations.

- was on the Executive Committee of APCSS – developing the program for principals' meetings and PD and exploration of state and national issues.
- mentoring of system leaders in the pursuit of their development of leadership capacity and desire for change and transition to higher office.
- presentations at Leadership & Discernment program for CESA aspiring leaders.

Eileen Young is a very worthy recipient of the 2016 John Laing Award.