It’s been a while since I have written an article for the school newsletter and in that time much has changed. I am pleased to say that Physics and Chemistry now have a good range of excursions which are fun and also directly link with the curriculum we learn in year 11 and 12.

Stage 2 Chemistry

I want to use this opportunity to say in advance a big thank you to PowerWater for allowing Stage 2 Chemistry to tour the Ludmilla Waste Water Treatment Facility and the Northern Suburbs Waste Treatment Facility (next to Breezes ‘Sewerhead’); it’s going to be a great day out. We’re accompanied by PowerWater’s chief water engineer and his engineering team which helps to show students the kinds of careers available in engineering. Stage 2 Chemistry will also go to CDU at some point soon to experience a day’s experimentation with some of the CDU Chemistry department staff; they’ll use university grade analytical machinery and experience the facilities CDU has to offer if they’re interested in Chemical Engineering. My thanks to CDU for their ongoing support to Stage 2 Chemistry. We have a titration competition coming up in November; I’ve committed myself to performing ‘Let it Go’ from Disney’s Frozen at OCC talent quest if the students get a Gold or Silver medal and I’ll let the Stage 2 Class do my makeup before I perform. I’m afraid we’re not really at the point of having a relevant Stage 1 Chemistry excursion; I’m working on that one.

Stage 1 and 2 Physics

Stage 1 Physics will be off to Ranger Uranium Mine next month; it’s a long day but a great one. Hopefully we’ll have the chance to have a member of the mining engineering team available to chat to the students about the careers available in the mining industry. I never knew there was such a huge hole in the ground in the middle of Kakadu. My thanks to the whole Energy Resources Australia team for their ongoing support to Stage 1 Physics. Stage 2 Physics is off the Channel Island Power Station and one of Territory Generation’s electrical engineers will show them the ropes. It’s a great day and a chance to look really closely at the facility which generates the bulk of our power. Thanks to Territory Generation! Again thanks to CDU but this time it goes to the Engineering School as we’ll spend a day at CDU making our own individual electric motors and finish up with a pizza lunch and a chat with some of the CDU engineering students and staff about the great courses available at CDU. Sorry for the parents who want their kids to leave the nest; CDU does offer some great opportunities...

Stage 1 Chemistry Colouring In Competition

Congratulations to Summah Kidney who has, by popular vote of the Stage 2 Chemistry students, won the 2015 Stage 1 Chemistry colouring in competition. She has won a Curly
Wurly which she will get when I remember to bring it in. The Stage 1 Physics colouring in competition is yet to be judged.

**Keys to the future**

It’s fair to say that I along with my supervisor Samantha de Moor, as the teachers of senior science at OCC, we hold the keys to a number of exciting futures in science and engineering and I can’t forget the critical support that’s provided by the maths team too. Often it’s said that if you want to get a decent grade in science you should to another school but I don’t believe this to be the case. OCC sports small classes with a chance for students to study with more 1 on 1 time with the teacher. These subjects are often perceived as hard though they are... They are interesting and difficult, challenging and rewarding. Once immersed in the world of science you can never see the world you live in quite the same – and this is one of the most exciting things about teaching the senior science subjects. It’s a story; an interpretation of the universe and the living world we’re a part of and it’s vast, it’s overwhelmingly interesting and it contains infinite possibilities. The current year 10 mob need to think very carefully about the future they are interested in, the subjects they find interesting and whether or not they’re willing to do the hard yards to earn the grades. There’s a lot to learn, a lot to get your head around and certainly a bit of rote learning is necessary along with a big helping of practice, practice and more practice. Biology, chemistry and physics are subjects suited to that ‘holy grail’ of students; the self-inspired and self-motivated active learner who wants to know more and enjoys the chance to prove themselves through both their grades and their interest in the topic. Students need to have a reasonable grounding in year 10 mathematics too. Between Sam and I we can show them a world of possibilities and a new universal truth which can only be imparted through the lens of a fulfilling and inspiring senior science education. We’d love to have your son or daughter along for the ride!

Stage 2 Chemistry students judging the colouring in entries from the Stage 1 Chemistry students.
Winner of the First Prize – Summah Kidney

Winner of the Second Prize – Matina Kostopoulos

Winner of Third Prize – Ashley Roos