

July 2016

Australian ambassadors embark on space adventure

Two ASG students and a teacher who is dedicated to ensuring young people are equipped with STEM skills are about to embark on a week long journey, sponsored by ASG at the U.S Space & Rocket Center in Alabama.

Abby Mather, Christopher Gallen and 2015 ASG National Excellence in Teaching Awards (NEiTA) recipient Drew Roberts will be the only Australian representatives to attend International Space Camp. They'll take on challenges such as simulated space missions, rocket launches and also step into the shoes of an astronaut.

The invite only camp is held each year to encourage international cooperation, with students and educators from at least 10 different countries attending from Saturday 9 July, 2016.

Abby Mather from Concordia College in South Australia was selected by ASG from a very competitive and talented pool of students, who applied for the Space Camp challenge.

"Learning more about the universe, and researching other planets and galaxies is something I would love to be involved with one day.

Reaching new heights and revealing the unknown for the benefit of humankind resonates with me and I am extremely keen to learn more about NASA's research into climate change and fresh water resources."

Christopher Gallen from Aquinas College in Western Australia says he has always been fascinated by space and the amazing physics and forces acting in our universe.

"To get the chance to experience what it is like to work as an astronaut or aerospace engineer with world leading technology is a dream come true. I have always loved science and I even remember the joy of building little rockets in year two and competing against my classmates. I plan to study engineering at university and have often thought of specialising in aerospace."

ASG NEiTA recipient Drew Roberts, a teacher from Emmanuel Christian College, has been busy making wooden fridge magnets from Tasmanian timbers, in the shape of koalas and kangaroos, as prizes when they present their quiz on everything Australian.

"Abby is going as a koala bear, Chris is going as a lifeguard and I'm taking on a bushranger theme, so I'll be in some stubbie shorts, a singlet, flannelette and wearing a hat with corks hanging from it."

Mr Roberts who teaches secondary school students, chose to attend Space Camp instead of receiving a \$5000 ASG NEiTA professional development grant.

“Just being able to experience a once in a lifetime opportunity and to be able to take that back and share with the students will certainly be fabulous. With STEM growing in our schools, being able to implement some of the NASA material will certainly fit into what we are doing.”

Mr Roberts says the focus on science, technology, engineering and maths is more important than ever before.

“In a fast changing world we need to be able to design solutions to problems and I think when you’re working in that STEM environment, it gives you that opportunity to be able to do it. I think traditionally we teach in silos a lot and students don’t see how one subject actually relates to another subject and so STEM intertwines all of the subjects together, which is really powerful.”

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For further information or to arrange an interview with Drew Roberts, Abby Mather or Christopher Gallen contact:

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Editors notes:

The Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) is a member owned organisation, helping to create educational opportunities for children. ASG has been helping families and their children for more than 40 years. During this time, more than 520,000 children have been enrolled with ASG and more than \$2.3 billion in education benefits and scholarship payments returned to members. For more information visit: www.asg.com.au.