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& Incorporating the PASTA Newsletter #12
This Issue

I was recently privileged to attend a two-day gathering of student participation support people from schools, systems and academia - a National Student Participation Support Group - convened by the Parliamentary Education Office in Canberra. It was both inspiring and frustrating as we talked about our common areas of interest, and grappled to achieve a common understanding of what we mean by student participation, why it is important, and the most important strategic directions to pursue.

A couple of strong ideas still resonate. Gael Litt from South Australia talked of the need to 'listen to the voices of students'. How simplistic, how timeless to think that there could be one 'student voice'. We need to acknowledge (and build on) the diversity of voices from young people, encourage discussion, but understand.

And Tony Knight from LaTrobe University argues for the need for a strong theoretical basis for student participation in 'students constructing knowledge'. As we discussed these ideas, we also saw the parallels with issues of active citizenship, in which we recognise that we live (work, teach, learn) in an 'imperfect democracy' both at a community and a school level - and that student participation in the exercise of citizenship is taking place in 'schools constructing democracy'.

The relevance of these ideas to others in the community did not escape us. We recognised the difficulty of teaching students about 'constructing democracy' and 'active citizenship' if we ourselves (teachers, parents, consultants, researchers, student administrators) are not active participants in this democratic struggles and explorations, both within schools and within society. The participation of student is not an isolated 'game' or 'learning pursuit', separate from all of our everyday concerns.

But the very fact that it occurs within schools - that it is student participation with which we are concerned - means that it is also recognised as a process of learning about the construction of democracy. This way of learning implies the ability to make mistakes, to take wrong turns and to reflect on and learn from those experiences together.

Perhaps the largest barrier to the development of student participation is the rigidity of being absolute sure we are right and 'they' are wrong. The pursuit of enhanced student participation is constantly one of questioning, testing, revising, learning and growing. It involves taking action, observing results, collecting data thinking about what happened, and revising the next action steps. That's not a popular notion, but it's the basis of the reflection that Connect encourages.

Roger Holdsworth

NEXT ISSUE: #118 - August 1999
Deadline for material: end of July
All young people in Victoria are invited to attend this special conference for the state. Friday, August 6 is the date for “Our Voice For Our Future”, the youth conference where young Victorians can have their say, and then go out and make something happen.

This conference, hosting over one thousand three hundred young people and more than two hundred support staff from schools and community organisations, is the chance to confront issues facing young people, and then do something about it.

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**Our Voice For Our Future**

_A conference for young people, managed by young people_

**August 6 1999**

_Melbourne Town Hall_

_Guest Speaker: Rod Quantock_

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**Issues for Young People**

The issues that will be faced at the Conference are Youth Homelessness and Housing, The Environment, Education, Sex and Sexual Health, Youth Suicide, Alcohol, Drug Abuse, Ethnic Diversity, Sexuality and Teenage Mental Health/Welfare.

Participants will be taken through three stages of discussion. Representatives from relevant community organisations will be on hand to answer any questions throughout the day. The **first stage** is exploring and understanding the issue. **Secondly**, participants will begin drawing up recommendations to be sent to all levels of government and distributed to schools, community organisations. **Finally**, participants will be given the opportunity to design and manage their own project solution, or they may prefer to join an existing project in that field managed by one of the present youth based organisations.

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**Student Participation/ State-wide SRC Conference**

There is another part of the conference, running at the same time, that will be focused on student participation in secondary schools. Students will be working alongside staff and professionals in the field of student participation exploring complex issues in relationships between schools and students. We hope to achieve some plan from which to begin enhancing active student participation in schools. Proposals will be presented for a system of networking Student Representative Councils across the state in one organisation.

_The conference is not a political forum nor a political lobby group. Government representatives will be present at the conference, along with people from the Department of Education, community welfare groups, youth organisations like the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, Scouts Australia, The Girl Guides and over a hundred more._

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For more information, or to register for “Our Voice For Our Future”, contact:

_David Mould, Conference Manager_

_(03) 9499 2755_

_22 Menzie Grove_

_Ivanhoe 3079_

_e-mail: commanderwolf@hotmail.com_

_“Our Voice For Our Future” is a creation of the Eastern Region Student Council. Auspiced by the Youth Accommodation Coalition and Sponsored by the City of Melbourne._
The Fifth National Student Participation Conference (NASPAC V) was held in Hobart in early April. An initial report was included in Connect 116. A small group of student participants from two states got together after the Conference and reflected on the event:

**NASPAC V REVISITED**

The joint issues of tokenism and student apathy quickly became the big discussion at NASPAC V that yielded interesting results. Student apathy and tokenism were identified as being keenly related, in that Student Participation is often treated as a minor function within the school and given little respect - and then it is no wonder that students are cynical about participation. Students' rights and abilities are not widely recognised in the school community, resulting in an enhancement of the tendency to view student activities outside the classroom as relatively unimportant.

Participation and support from staff was identified as a large factor in reversing this trend. If both some students and some staff can become motivated about student participation, then genuine steps can be taken to achieving some enhanced level of recognition within the school. If only one of these groups is interested then it is unlikely to get very far.

Students raised the need to focus on compromise between staff and students as oppose to direct conflict in situations. Tokenism was acknowledged not as the sole reason for an evident trend of student apathy, but as a very large element in determining the attitude schools form toward their student leaders, and thus how student behaved, in accordance with expectations.

The attitude of schools toward students was identified as a key element in furthering student participation within schools, and the biggest stumbling block to gaining any recognition as a active and functioning section of the school. However, and interestingly, it was the student participants who emphasised the point that it is also largely the responsibility of the student body to initiate changes and give the school staff valid reasons for changing their attitudes towards genuine student involvement in real activities around the school and in the community. Workshops revolve around this theme generated creative proposals for student bodies to begin working in that direction.

Suggestions mostly focused on 'getting the Principal of the school on-side' before initiating projects. Different approaches were canvassed ranging from the direct to the cunning, and a involvement, as a central element, the necessity of showing the Principal what the benefits of student participation were to him or her in particular.

In addition to SRCs, several different modes of prefect systems were outlined in a range of schools, and there were even examples where there was no student 'leader' system at all. The continuing debate over appropriateness of representa...
continued. Perhaps the time of prefects, appointed by the school, is coming to an end? Or at very least they should not be given the role of representing the student body without students deciding, at least in part, who their representatives would be. It was stated that whilst in theory it is better to have students determining their own representation fully, practice has shown that this often leads in a downward spiral to inactive SRCs, and irresponsible but popular students chosen to hold position. Sometimes, a level of staff intervention was desirable.

There was a very strong push to ensure that student participation evolved beyond ‘fundraisers’ and ‘sausage sizzles’ to a situation of students taking active roles in determining issues of curriculum, policy, school environment and facilities. Without this, the SRC is treating itself in an extremely tokenistic fashion, and is little more than a lunchtime club.

However it was also recognised that Student Representative Councils are not the pinnacle of student participation; it was important to recognise that there are many other avenues towards increasing students’ participation which are also valuable, in areas of school and personal development. It was harder to define what student participation meant in these terms, and whose job it was to see that all sorts of participation are fostered and encouraged.

Each student left the conference inspired to participate in their school and community. This was not solely achieved by a couple of motivational speakers in order to leave every one on a high, but was also a result of high level discussions on complex issues. By not ‘dumbing down’ the content, each participant developed some genuine solutions from their involvement. This was the biggest source of feeling motivated and empowered.

The participants got a lot from this Conference, but those who were unable to attend are probably in no better position now than before. The conference had no focus on how to get this information to others. It would be excellent if others could be a part of it all, perhaps through a NASPAC V report being circulated with a more comprehensive set of ideas.

Every minute of the time we spent together was great fun, and in some ways we could learn more from a social chat outside the conference. The social aspect does not detract from the content of the conference but in fact adds to the gains. The stronger the purpose of the event, the stronger the relationships between the people and the greater the achievements. Over just three days, friendships were forged that will endure, and which also lay the groundwork for an excellent network of SRCs, individuals and organisations.

David Mould (Victoria)
Melissa Manley (Victoria)
Jenny Nam (NSW)
Phillip Nam (NSW)
Paralowie R-12 School (in Adelaide's northern metropolitan area) is tackling attendance problems by giving students a sense of ownership of their school.

The school has done away with the traditional student representative council (SRC) and has put in place a student forum which gives every student in the school an opportunity to have their voice heard.

According to head of middle school Gael Little, the school is ensuring students' needs are being met and it is hoped that this will keep more students at school.

"We looked at the trends in attendance and one of the approaches was to have a supportive school environment which was safe but also where students connect with the school," she said.

"Students feel more valued because they are more involved in decision-making, so they are more likely to attend school."

Year 10 student Lee Karsen said each home group had a representative on six different committees. Issues of concern are brought up in class meetings and a representative will take the issue to the relevant committee. Each committee also has a representative on the core team.

Gael said neither the committees nor the core team were exclusive. If a student misses out one semester, they can take part the next semester. "The reality is, if you want to be part of the core team, its constructed so you are able to," she said.

Lee's classmate, Catherine Rankin, said she didn't get into SRC, but she easily became involved in student forum. Because she wasn't from a Paralowie feeder school, she didn't know any other students when she began high school, so no-one elected her to the SRC. "SRC was a popularity contest," she said.

But to be a representative on student forum she had to write an application or do an interview and was accepted on her merits.

Applicants are chosen by both staff and students. Lee said students whose only involvement in student forum was in their home group meetings still had their voice heard. "Their comments are followed through," he said. For example, students expressed a need for more bike racks. The suggestions went through the forum procedure and actively worked to change things about their school they didn't like or were more tolerant. "We now know how hard it is to get the uniform changed so, instead of fighting with the teachers, we work it out," she said.

Teachers also used student forum to get feedback about the running of the school. Student have commented on curriculum what makes a quality teacher and a quality student, subjects an opportunities to participate.

The school's passport program - a two-day conference easing the transition from primary school to high school - came about through student forum.

While Lee and Catherine say they have never 'wagged' school they can understand why some students would want to. "School has to be fun to attend," Lee said. "There has to be a lot of practical activities and hands-on stuff. I should connect with your life a bit more."

Lee believes student forum meets these criteria.

Kirsty Mudge from Xpress, Vol 2 No 7, 3 June 199
"When students share in deciding things they will work and learn better"

This article outlines how we promote Student Participation at Paralowie and the means by which our students contribute to the continuing development and improvement of our school.

Student Participation has been recognised by the school community as a focus in promoting and developing in our students, skills which will enable them to become active participants in their school and in the wider community, when seeking employment or entrance to further study.

**Skilling**

We believe that the process of skilling is one which starts in the early years of schooling and continues through to the senior years.

We focus on developing and promoting participation skills such as:
- communication
- cooperation
- collaboration
- problem solving
- leadership
- democratic decision making

These essential skills are key aspects of the curriculum we offer our students at Paralowie R-12 School.

**Participation across the school:**

**Junior, Middle and Senior Schools**

Student Participation has always been an important feature of school life at Paralowie.

In the Junior School, class meetings and highly effective SRCs have enabled our young students to have a say in their classrooms and the programs that are now in place for them. Many new initiatives and programs have been the result of ideas and discussions that originated from our primary classes.

The successful development and implementation of the Middle School 'Student Forum' in 1996 was the result of recognising the need for young adolescents to have a valued voice in both the running of the school as well as an input into the curriculum options that were being made available to them. Regular class meetings, student run assemblies, participation in Open Night and Orientation programs, student representation on School Council and the establishment of various forum committees, will continue the forward movement of this forum.

The Senior School which has increasingly promoted career pathways for our students, whether they be into the workforce, or entry to further education, has recognised the value of promoting the ability of students to develop participatory skills. Senior School students need to be valued as student leaders of the R-12 school and therefore need to be acknowledged as such. We have a responsibility to provide these students with opportunities to fully develop their participatory skills.

**Success through participation**

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June 1999
Class Meetings

The establishment of regular class meetings provide opportunities for students to express their ideas and discuss issues at class level. Class meetings are an integral part of student participation at Paralowie R-12 School.

Why do we have class meetings?

Class meetings:

- give students the opportunity to develop and practise skills in responsible decision making and problem solving;
- enable students to experience and develop effective meeting procedures and the skills needed by Meeting Officers;
- provide a venue where students can be consulted and actively involved in the decision making process for class and school issues;
- allow students to contribute to the management of their time at school and to take risks;
- help students to develop a strong sense of ownership and self worth by empowering them to be in control of their own lives;
- develop strong class cohesion and a caring and trusting relationship between teacher and student;
- provide students with access to information about democratic decision making on a wider level and participation in this process to create change.

Paralowie R-12 School
Whites Road, Paralowie 5108 SA
Phone: (08) 8258 3055; Fax: (08) 8281 5859

A Commitment from the School

Innovative programs that support student achievement and success, have long been associated with Paralowie.

Our student participation programs have been recognised as good practice on a local and state level.

The appointment of a Coordinator in Study Participation R-12 has enabled us to continue to focus on student participation as a whole school program.

Key staff involved in this program include:

- Teachers;
- R-12 Student Participation Coordinator;
- Primary and Secondary Counsellors;
- Members of the Leadership and Admin Team.

We will continue to:

- promote curriculum continuity (R-12) in the personal development programs that operate;
- link Student Participation to the Statement of Profiles and SACE Curriculum;
- ensure that student participatory structures are in all classrooms;
- enable students to participate on all whole school decision-making groups;
- continue to development of representative forums in which our students can discuss issues;
- provide training and development for teachers and students so as to promote student participation initiatives;
- provide our students with opportunities to practise and further develop their skills in this area.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION STRUCTURES

Class Meetings of Home Classes

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Achievement for all
PASTA NEWSLETTER
# 12 - June 1999

PASTA is the acronym of the Professional Association of Student Representative Council Teacher/Advisors. Founded in New South Wales, Australia, in February 1995, our Association exists to support in whatever ways possible those who work with and support programs of student participation, representation and leadership.

SEE OUR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION AND APPLICATION FORM IN THIS ISSUE

PASS THE PASTA

This edition of the PASTA Newsletter is the 'Clarion Call' for all supporters of student participation, leadership and representation to throw their active support behind PASTA to ensure that the current progress of all our projects are accelerated towards our achievement of a 'Citizenship Olympiad' for the new millennium and a National Australian SRC Parliament to meet for the first time in our nation's capital Canberra, on the anniversary of Federation in 2001.

The second SRC-USA Tour Delegation leaves on the 23rd June, 1999 to represent Australian SRCs at the 63rd NASC National Conference and 1999 USA National Leadership Camps. The NASC National Conference this year is hosted by Roseville High School in Minneapolis, Minnesota and the National Leadership Camps are once more held at Lake Tahoe (Nevada) and at Outlaw Ranch, Custer (South Dakota).

Again, we congratulate Ken Page (Gorokan High, NSW) and his wife Sue Page (Narara Valley High, NSW) for successfully putting this year's SRC-USA Tour together and for preparing PASTA's successful application for support and 'Official' NSW Department of Education and Training approval for this year's 1999 SRC-USA Tour to be given "officially approved NSW Department of Education and Training Excursion status". A special thanks must be extended to Allan Arkins, Principal of Gorokan High School (Central Coast, NSW) for sponsoring our application and for nominating his school as the official 'Host School' for this and all future SRC-USA Tours.

PASTA wishes to thank especially NSW Department of Education and Training Assistant Directors General Alan Laughlan and George Green for their assistance and support and for the offer of thirty relief days to assist in part, the NSW SRC Adviser Tour Delegates' leave requirements. PASTA will approach, over the next few months, all other State and Territory educational authorities to secure similar levels of commitment to ensure that all future SRC-USA Tours become increasingly more proportionately representative and accessible to students as well as staff SRC Adviser representatives from all school SRCs throughout Australia.

To promote the proportional representative nature of our next 2000 SRC-USA Tour to San Francisco, we will be distributing SRC-USA tour delegate quotas to each of the States and Territories of Australia and the tour quota will be kept in place until the end of the month of November 1999, when any State quotas not taken up will be distributed to the States and Territories indicating greatest interest.

At this stage, the 2000 SRC-USA Tour State and Territory quotas (assuming the current USA allocation of 30 Student Delegates from Australia) would be as follows: NSW: 10; Victoria: 6; Queensland: 4; Western Australia: 2; South Australia: 2; Tasmania: 2; ACT: 2; Northern Territory: 2. (Quotas based on 1998 Secondary Student numbers from the ABS.)

National recognition has also been awarded to our 1998 SRC-USA Tour Delegation who were invited to a Federal Parliamentary Reception to be held on Wednesday the 9th June, 1999 in Canberra. The invitation was extended to our SRC-USA Tour Delegation by the Minister of Education and Training and Youth Affairs the Hon. Dr. David Kemp MP and his Parliamentary Secretary the Hon. Trish Worth MP. PASTA congratulates, once again, our history making 1998 Inaugural SRC-USA Delegates.

continued page 11...
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AND ADVISER PARTICIPATION: AN EDUCATION IN LEADERSHIP

SRC Leadership Tours of the USA that our Association is now organising annually are excellent opportunities for both students and advisers to discover the wealth of resources available there and also to make valuable contacts with people and organisations with a lengthy and distinguished history in this field of education. The tours include a major national student and adviser conference, special purpose summer leadership camps, visits to schools in various states and opportunities to learn about the varied historical, cultural and economic situations of a diverse country.

Tours are fully supervised by experienced advisers within our national association and are open to students and recognised teacher advisers in all states and territories and in all systems of education. They always take place from late June through late July in order to fit in with the major northern summer leadership activities available to us. Successful applicants are viewed as international representatives of Australia and are expected to continue their active involvement as citizens of their schools and their communities upon their return.

PASTA's main aim as a registered non-profit educational association is to encourage and develop opportunities for leadership, representation and participation. At present the focus in these tours is on upper secondary students (Years 9 - 12). However, our long-standing affiliation with the Division of Student Activities (DSA) of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) will enable us in time to also access their middle level activities and include younger students as well. In all cases, the support of a delegate's Principal and parents is mandatory. Our hope is that the school's student representative council and the equivalent District and State body would also be supportive.

In 1998, for the first time in the 67 year history of Student Councils in the USA, an Australian representative group participated. The major activities are organised by the National Association of Student Councils (NASC) and the National Association of Student Activity Advisers (NASAA), both of which are branches of the NASSP. It remains an unique annual opportunity to develop and promote the many valuable curriculum aspects of SRCs and student activities in our nation's schools. As a result of the overwhelming success of that first tour we have a guaranteed quota of up to 30 students we are able to take to the National Conference. This is more than that given to over a third of the individual USA States.

The main purpose of the 1998 trip was to attend the 63rd National Student Council Conference organised by NASC and Derby High School in the Derby/Wichita area of Kansas. Our students also attended one of two separate week long Leadership Camps run by NASC and travelled widely. The 1998 trip focuses on Roseville High in Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota. In 2000, Monte Vista High in Cupertino, California will be the host school. North Carolina will be the national focus in 2001. Educational and travel opportunities available to each year's touring group will be centred around the respective region when the Conference is held.

The curriculum of these events focuses on communication skills, project planning, meeting skills, leadership development and organisation techniques. They provide participants with an opportunity to acquire leadership skills and experience personal growth, enabling them to successfully serve in their leadership and representational positions. They address multicultural awareness, conflict resolution and the following skills areas: goal setting; organisation, effective meetings time management and planning; group process, team building and behaviour observations; problem solving, decision making, styles of leadership and needs analysis; communication; evaluation; self awareness and motivation. 1500 students and 500 SRC Activity Advisers from all USA states, Canada, Puerto Rico and Guam attend the National Conference. For the first few years our group has and will make a major presentation to all 2001 participants promoting the Sydney Olympics, the Paralympics and, most significantly for the development of citizenship education, inviting people to come to Australia to be part of the first ever International SRC Conference which we have initiated. We are coordinating this with the University of Newcastle (Central Coast Campus at Ourimbah) Sydney University and the NASSP in the USA. We welcome such involvement from any organisation or Government department in any part of Australia.

The 1st International SRC Conference is scheduled for mid to late December, 2000. We are seeking sufficient support from government, business, media and the community that this major event can be promoted as a most worthwhile part of the cultural Olympics events and as a major stepping stone on the road to active secondary student representative involvement leading up to the centenary celebrations of the Federation of Australi
the following year. Amongst the highlights will be special recognition of 1000s of volunteer citizen workers, youth and adult, Australian and international, through our unique Community Service Certificate Program, the CSC.

The USA trips are a vital link in developing our young leaders to take their invaluable places as part of an informed and skilled citizenry as well as promoting Australia to the rest of the world. Eventually we hope to be able to send up to 50 students, representative of all parts of the country, to continue the international linkages now being established and a separate contingent of truly representative students from a proposed national student representative structure to an "International SRC Olympiad" to be held once every four years at each successive Olympic city. Your positive support of these interrelated projects in whatever ways suit your needs and aspirations and capacities is most earnestly sought.

Charles L. Kingston
Vice-President, National & International Affairs of PASTA
Adviser to SRC 2000 SRC International Conference Coordinator of Central West, NSW CSC (Community Service Certificate) Project

Pass the PASTA ... continued from page 9

The NSW Department of Education and Training has also offered their assistance in helping to host and support the First International SRC Conference. The new dates are now from the 13th to 17th December, 2000, the last week of our school term, to better fit in with the Australian school year and afford our SRC delegations from overseas both a cheaper time to visit (than during the Olympics), and an opportunity to leave their winter for our Australian summer.

PASTA extends an invitation to every secondary school in Australia to nominate and to elect an SRC delegate to represent their school at our conference and to come to Sydney to both join us in this history-making event and to meet with and work with other young SRC student representatives from all over the world. The key outcome of this 'Olympiad of Citizenship' First International SRC Conference, apart from prioritising world focused youth issues and action plans to address identified needs, is to prepare for the Second International SRC Conference to be held in Athens in 2004.

Ralph Murray

SRC AMERICAN TOUR 1999

As we did with the first group who went to America in 1998, we asked the 1999 delegates to give us an idea of why they felt that they had to be involved in this experience. Here are their responses:

Neil Pharaoh
(year 10, Alfred Deakin HS, ACT)
I believe that students and their ideas are a vital part of the success of a great school, a great community and a great country. That is why I applied to go to the US, to help myself, my community and my country become a better tomorrow! The trip itself I believe will provide an opportunity for students to discuss real problems and find real solutions, and in the process make themselves and others better people. The student conference and leadership camp, I hope will be amazing, and the skills which we shall all come back with are almost endless, learning to deal with people better, as well as the greatest skill of all, learning to deal with somebody with a conflicting or different view, and making a win-win situation out of it! What I have done so far in relation to the trip has already taught me a lot. I have learnt to better deal with people, achieve and set goals, and plan better time usage. Hopefully I will become a better person because of it! For all of you out there thinking about the 2000 trip, do it! I have not even gone, yet the experiences and fun we have had so far are amazing and to everybody's betterment!

Jessica Scott
(year 11, Forster HS)
Last year I attended the 1998 NSW SRC State Conference. It was a fantastic experience which I thoroughly enjoyed. Besides discussing many controversial issues, I met some of the most inspiring, confident, fantastic people. From State I also found out about the PASTA organisation and the opportunity to take part in a Student Leadership Course to be held in America. When I found out that I had been accepted I was ecstatic. So far I have got so much out of this, and I haven't even stepped on the plane yet! It has really made me realize how close my friends are and how supportive my family is towards

June 1999
me. They have been so supportive helping me raise the funds. The community has also been fantastic and I really do appreciate everyone's support. There is just so much I am expecting to get out of the trip: meeting many new people to share friendships with and learning about different cultures; building personal skills through group discussions and learning ways of improving schools in the District; growing as a person through experiences and developing knowledge. On return I am looking forward to sharing what I have learnt with my school. It is just so amazing - the thought of what we are going to get up to. It is going to be one action-packed month. I already know that it is going to be one of the best times of my life, filled with many unforgettable moments. I can't wait!

Belal Hamdan  
(year 12, Granville Boys HS)

In 1997 I was informed of the 1998 National Student Leadership Conference by a letter that I received. I was so excited. I wanted to be one of those students to attend. I had written about 10 entries as to why I should be the one to represent my country before I came up with one that I was happy with. I was notified that I was attending in January. While I was unable to attend then because of financial difficulties, I was reconsidered for the 1999 trip. The 1999 National Leadership Conference is an event that I really want to attend. I have great knowledge about SRCs in our country because of the many conferences I have attended. I would like to share this knowledge with other people from around the world, especially the Americans, since SRCs originated in their country. I also want to learn more. How is the SRC run in their schools? What are our weaknesses and strengths compared to theirs? And many more which I hope to achieve out of this trip. As one of the 20 students to attend this once in a lifetime experience, I have become aware of the difficult task of fundraising. I have also learnt of the commitment made at school in order to attend the trip (especially for a year twelve student). I really am looking forward to this once in a lifetime experience, especially after meeting the lovely people who will accompany me on this trip. I hope to be able answer any question dealing with leadership or basically SRCs.

Nicole Symonds  
(year 11, Gorokan HS)

I applied for the trip because I am sure it is a great opportunity to explore USA and to learn about a different culture and, although I believe they are not much different from us, going overseas is exciting anyway. I thought about the experiences I would gain and that they would far outweigh the disadvantages of going (like missing school and having to catch up on the missed work on return). So far it has been an experience on its own to have to raise $6000 in a short amount of time. The people I have met and talked to already have been great. I now have a different outlook on my local community and each day was amazed with the support that I have received and people's generosity and wonderful positive comments about the youth of today. It has been a great pleasure for my family and myself to have had this experience. Not all grown ups have a narrow opinion about today's teenagers. I think that the leadership training that I will receive will be a great advantage to pass on to my peers and other SRCs throughout my local area. I am looking forward to the types of information I will be obtaining from other students, not only the USA kids, but the other Aussies I will be travelling with. The team spirit and togetherness that will occur should be a great bonding lesson and I hope to form many new and long lasting friendships from this trip. There are many lessons that we will learn from this trip such as living with, caring for, and learning with 22 other people. The independence away from my family and such a long break will be a different experience for me. Dealing with all my new adventures will again be great learning. Speaking and being involved with so many people at the conference etc will be a experience that I am sure will stay with me for a long time. There are so many things, hopes and experiences that I am sure I will gain and learn from a great trip like this that it would take me pages to write them down. Excitement is preventing this. Words actually are failing me.

Lana White  
(year 10, Greystanes HS)

There were many reasons behind my application for the PASTA 99 SRC tour to the USA. A lot of them have changed since my application was accepted. I suppose that I first applied as a challenge to myself - to see how far I could succeed within myself. Also to represent my country and peers and hopefully bring back useful information and ideas to my school and local community. I thought that I would gain skills while I was over there. Some of the skills that I thought that I would gain included self-esteem, punctuality, people skills and of course, leadership skills. I still very much believe that I will, if I haven't already, improve those skills through the trip. Except now I have already learnt a lot more than I ever imagined could be learnt. I have never left Australia yet and I already feel as if I know the people on the tour as good friends. I have felt like I am a part of a very important and productive group that will go far in life. I have learnt through these people more than just leadership or teamwork skills. I have learnt invaluable life lessons. Who else at the age of 16 would have known the ins and outs of international travel and long distance correspondence? What school teach practical skills that can be directly applied to life, no matter what line of work you wish to pursue into adulthood? This trip has made me begin to develop a network of lifelong dignitaries and friends. I have had to learn how to talk to people in order to get publicity and sponsorship and to raise community awareness. Even at the age of 16 the trip will be something that I look back on in 30 years time and say "that trip I took in year 10 changed my life". I have learnt to become more tolerant of people and understand that people have the abilities and their disabilities: to encourage and nurture their abilities while improving their disabilities. I sincerely believe that my school and community will benefit from this trip through improving the ideals of teamwork and leadership in today's youth. The trip and its organisations are owed a huge thanks and congratulations by NSW school student. Even if they don't know it yet, the trip has been a domino effect. And everyone will gain.

Dominic Wates  
(year 10, Willyama HS)

I live in Broken Hill, which is a half an hour drive from the South Australian border, far far Western New South Wales. I've been part of the SRC since my first year at Willyama High School. I attended the 1998 State SRC Conference in Sydney representing the Broken Hill District. This gave me an insight into real power: students and how we were not just being ignored but were being listened to at a big level. In 1998 I was on the State SRC Working Party. While I was on the Working Party a number of members told me about a group called PASTA who were organising for a group of SRC students to fly over to America to be part of an International SRC Conference. When received an application form at the conference, I thought what an opportunity to be able to represent your country at an international conference, to be able to see how SRCs work in the United States and to meet the other participants involves. The skills I have learnt just so far has certainly paid off. Sponsorship from clubs and businesses have led to speeches and presentation dinners, for example continued page 21
Newsflash!!!

A DECEMBER 2000 CONFERENCE

The dates of the 1st International SRC Conference have been changed. The Conference will now be from Wednesday 13 through Sunday 17 December 2000. As you would recall, the Conference was going to be held in between the two Olympic Games in October. However, as the Organising Committee's planning progressed, it became clear that hosting the Conference later in the year would be a much better option. There were a number of reasons for this postponement, not least of which was the predicted difficulty faced by delegates in securing flights and accommodation in Sydney during what will no doubt be a very busy time in the Olympic City. In addition, many of our overseas contacts (as well as those in Australia) expressed their support for the alteration, stating that it would be easier for them (both advisers and delegates) to secure time off school to attend.

Before some of you raise your hands in protest, please note that the Organising Committee understands that these new dates will not suit everyone — it is highly improbable that ANY date chosen will satisfy the hundreds of prospective participants. However, after critically assessing all of our options, we have reason to believe that a change of date would help ensure that the Conference is indeed the best possible.

The Conference Organising Committee is placing a great deal of emphasis on ensuring that this event is indeed as international as its title proclaims. So far our quest to inform people around the world of this exciting initiative have been rather successful. Our aim is to secure delegates from every country on the planet and we are well on our way to achieving this goal.

As you have probably gathered from past International SRC Conference 2000 Bulletins, we have quite a strong support base in the United States and Canada. Amongst the people from other countries who have also expressed interest in the Conference is Oliver Shalala, an Engineering student from Zambia who is now working voluntarily as our African Coordinator on the International Steering Committee. Others helping to create interest abroad are Mushe Namukuka, also from Zambia, Duangtip Surintatip from Thailand and Julia Chan from Singapore. In Europe, Hanne Johnsrud from OBESSU, the European student network featured in the February Connect, Stewart Hay from the Shetland Islands, Saskia De Groof from the University of Brussels in Belgium, Michael Hanisch in Germany and Jove Jankulovski, *EARN co-ordinator for Macedonia.

The last two are contacts made possible through Aussie students Cherie Wilson and David Carter. Our Electorate based Committee in Alstonville NSW (thanks to Tony and daughter Heidi Glesson) is currently firming up contacts in Oceania with New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Fiji all expressing interest so far and Aida Bunyan at Kogarah High in Sydney is developing her Philippine connections. Cherie, David, Heidi and Aida are all veterans of the 1998 USA PASTA SRC Leadership Tour. The Coordinating Committee encourages you to contact us if you have connections elsewhere overseas and would like to help by developing their interest in the Conference further.

It has become somewhat of a truism that the best form of publicity is word-of-mouth. I urge you to get in touch with as many people as possible and let them know about this Conference. It is obvious that the greater the montage of people we are able to assemble at the end of next year, the better the Conference will be, in that participants will be better equipped to develop effective solutions and initiatives, by drawing on the variety of backgrounds and cultural experiences of those present.

Anna Samson

SPEAKING OF THE WORLDWIDE WEB, PASTA IS NOW ON IT

Our site has 14 pages of information on all our projects as well as our constitutional aims, membership info and linkages to other sites, including our international affiliations in North America and contacts elsewhere abroad. It also includes internal linkages to the relevant e-mail addresses of PASTA personnel whom you might wish to contact directly while still on-line.

http://hsc.csu.edu.au/pta/pasta/

To make joining PASTA easier, the 'How To Join?' page includes a membership form accessible (through Adobe Acrobat Reader) which you can print and send to us. Soon there will also be attached subpages with application forms for SRC 2000, the USA Trips, the CSC and other things.

Simply use the PASTA URL:

http://hsc.csu.edu.au/pta/pasta/
REPRESENTATION

REPRESENTATION IS THE KEY TO CONFERENCE SUCCESS

Representation is the key to this exciting new concept in student council meetings - an international one. The process of representation - speaking and acting for others - is at the core of the Sydney 2000 SRC International Conference. All other issues - (what you representatives talk about) are negotiable. That you come and go as representatives is negotiable. In your coming (see delegate application form) you need to identify for us the group you will be representing. In your going, you must go to spread the messages to many many more.

As a 'representative' conference (really two conferences in one, both student and adult advisers) all delegates will need to be elected or selected to represent a constituency. This could be the student council, the school, a youth action group, the district, a community volunteer group working with secondary education, an adviser association, a government department or a media outlet. You will be expected to articulate the voices and to carry back to those people to your community and to your participating recommendations and actions undertaken there. All such recommendations will then be presented to the United Nations and other relevant bodies by representative delegates elected by you at what has then become your Conference.

In Australia, student councils as a whole, are well researched and known as 'Student Representative Councils' as 'SRCs' for short. The PASTA President and Co-Founder Ralph Murray writes: "In this act of representation there is no more imperative. If elected, YOU as representatives are obligated to articulate the collective opinion of others and to express the majority view in deference to personal beliefs and opinions. This Conference is an opportunity to participate and to encourage the development of the more imperative implied in assuming the role of an elected representative.'

In the Australian context, 'secondary school' includes all those with students in the age range from 11 to 18. Thus, schools in various cultures known as 'midd' schools, junior high schools or senior high schools are welcome to send representatives along with more broad based comprehensive high schools that cover a six year range. Adults who work with these ages, and in particular student activity and student council advisers are warmly urged to come help develop and model this representative skill so crucial to our democracies.

A LETTER TO AMERICA (AND CANADA TOO)
(with apologies to Alistair Cooke)

Dear Colleagues, Distant Friends and Compatriots in Student Activities,

That's right. Compatriots. It's stunning San Francisco, with its clanging cable cars and its golden gateway to a glorious harbour, that still sticks in my memory as my fond native city, in the Golden Gate Bridge. We have the 'Golden Arches' down under but certainly not the Golden Gate, San Francisco. Did they ever bring back the ferries back? Sydney has them. In abundance. And the plane Ralph Murray has to whisk you out through Sydney Heads into the Pacific Ocean... Hey folks, it's on the EAST COAST! That'll take some adjustment and then on to his beloved Central Coast... Well, you'll just have to come down under in December 2000 and find out from the real natives.

The gum trees in Australia are fine, though redwoods they ain't! You call them eucalyptus, not gums. Over 28 years here and I still occasionally think I should be chewing on them. Just like our real koala bears do.

You can see them too in Sydney. Along with the Harbour Bridge. You can climb to the tip of it now to see the magnificent view. It'll cost you about $100. But the Aussie dollar is worth only about 64 cents American. You'll get value for money when you and your students come here for the SRC Conference in December 2000.

That's another difference we have. Student Councils here are called SRCs - for Student Representative Councils. That's why we're sending our reps over to you every year. We thank you for this opportunity. We welcome it. We challenge you to take up another one. We feel passionately that you need to be part of the very first International SRC Conference - 13-17 December 2000 - forever hereafter known as 'SRC 2000'.

The Olympics and Paralympics - in September and October respectively - are serious business. Our goal is serious too. An SRC Olympiad goal - a high profile, issue-orientated, representative international event for highlighting student representation and citizenship. And - for why not? - calling attention to our worthy roles as advisers in developing it. The goal is to do it, not just in Sydney, but to do it every four years in conjunction with the Olympics.

We as a Professional Teacher/Advisers Association (PASTA - with many active student members also) hope that enough of you will engage your own personal and legendary activism, persuade and enlist your community, trigger that fine sense of pride in your state or province and harness the awesome strength of your national structures to bring not just you and us, but a real community of nations together in Sydney in the Year 2000. Not just to the sporting games, but for our own citizenship olympics as well.

It's a long way, but it's worth it. After all, the extra time you'll take getting here will be made more fascinating by trying to figure out how people actually drive all that time on the wrong side of the road.

You won't find kangaroos in the streets. You won't find Paul Hogan - he lives now in LA. But you will find me. As hundreds of other compatriots who originate in Australia, the multicultural population has now evolved. Mostly you'll find real old - innovative, full of real commonsense and especially - replete with good will. Like true student adviser and student leader everywhere.

I sincerely hope this year's 63rd NASC Conference in Minneapolis, your 2nd NASAA Conference in Chicago, and the rest of your many state events will be as successful. The kind of success that, with your help, will make the 1st International SRC Conference (December 2000 - remember?) one we all will never forget. Until that is, the next one it has started. You need to be here to be there.

Yours Warmly,

Charles Kingstone
Vice-President, National / International of PASTA
and fellow colleague of NASC / NASA

PASTA Newsletter - Supplement to Connect
"SUMUH DOWN UNDUH"

It has become our duty to announce that the dates for the 1st International SRC Conference have been moved to 13-17 December 2000. This shift however is not because it would make it easier for our international delegates to attend, as is rumoured; but because we just couldn’t keep the magic of an Australian summer secret from the rest of the world (shame on us).

As delegates to the conference, you are all invited to share this wondrous time with us, the Australian organisers and delegates. You are especially invited to share the rare treats provided by Sydney and the Central Coast of NSW at this time of year.

Let me take you on a journey; through the eyes of a 'local'; to some of the exquisite morsels on offer during your visit. Let’s start with the conference venues.

The first part of the conference will be held at Sydney University. This is the oldest university in the country, built in the finest traditions of old world education, with all the facilities one could ever require, and an atmosphere of timeless veneration, from the bells of the clock-tower across to the great hall.

The second part of the conference will be held at the Ourimbah campus of Newcastle University. This is one of the freshest and most friendly of the modern universities of Australia. Recently opened, this university was engineered to exceed the highest environmental and aesthetic standards and in real life it has surpassed even these. Ourimbah is a word from the language of the first inhabitants of the area. It means ‘place of learning’.

The schedule for the conference allows for some time to explore the surrounding areas, and no doubt many will wish to come to our shores early, or 'hang about' afterwards. It would therefore be remiss of me not to describe some of the attractions that are available outside of the Conference.

For those exploring Sydney, a harbour cruise is really something that should be made time for. Whether just a quick trip on the ferry to Darling Harbour or Meriton or something more decadent, you will be amazed by this unique geographical wonder. Imagine spending an enchanting evening on board the famous floating restaurant, the pastel hues of sunset playing across the sky and city whilst you enjoy arias sung by some of Australia’s finest opera singers. (Or, if your tastes run away elsewhere, check out Sydney’s great jazz or rock scenes.)

See the renowned Sydney Opera House, or the Sydney Harbour Bridge (affectionately labelled “The Coathanger”) in all its splendour. Go one better. Climb to the top of it (guided tours only recently became possible) and view the glorious panorama below. (Perhaps) even ‘marvel’ at the architecture of East Circular Quay.

At Ourimbah, you are only a short trip from the wild wilderness of the Great Dividing Range - the hauntingly beautiful Blue Mountain. The resplendent beaches of the Central Coast are the finest in the world, and the warm waters of the Pacific have a lure all to their own. Whilst up that way, a trip to the Hunter Valley is a must. The Hunter provides some of the finest wines in Australia as well as having some of the most picturesque landscapes around.

But what of the timing? Why December? This is the real secret.

An Australian Christmas is something that must be experienced at least once in a lifetime. Imagine spending the day relaxing by the sparkling waves of the world famous Bondi Beach. Imagine the sand, surf, and mouth-wateringly fresh seafood, plucked gently from the pristine waters of Sydney Harbour, sautéed to perfection, and imagine washing it all down with sips of a wonderful Chablis, from a frosty cold glass.

Stay longer - for New Years Eve - and you will be particularly rewarded. Watch the ‘Coathanger’ - indeed, then entire Harbour, come alive with fireworks of truly Olympic proportions. Be in the unique position of toasting the real new millennium 18 hours before those at home. Though people will have doubtless partied the year before as well, they’re sure to do it all again for the real thing as we launch into 2001 and the Centenary of the Federation of Australia.

It, like the Conference will be a once only event.

But remember, nothing can compare, no nothing can compare, to the warm, friendly people you will meet everywhere in our great nation.

You’ve simply got to come.

Greg Arrow

AUSSIE ON THE BARBIE:
ONE OF THE 10,000 MINNESOTA DREAMS

Our 1999 USA SRC delegates will have ample opportunities to promote SRC 2000 amongst our North American colleagues in June and July. Informally they will be wearing their six different easily identifiable Aussie t-shirts (those they don’t trade away in Minnesota that is), their distinctive Akubra style hats and of course their smiles as they meander through the Midwest and scamper around the East Coast with their New Jersey colleagues.

Formally, the 63rd NASC Conference includes three workshops on our International Conference, two other student ones on ‘What It Means To Be an Aussie’ and ‘Schools Down Under’ and a further adviser session on the CSC. In addition, our delegates will be on stage once again during the 4th General Session, replete with Aussie images and tuneful lyrics. BUT this time - unlike last year - they will be joined there by Rocco Marano, the Director of the whole Division of Student Activities show and others as the Sydney event is formally linked with NASSP as a joint venture.

During the Minnesota Conference and throughout the rest of the trip, extra copies of this Bulletin and the rest of Connect will be on display and distributed by our representatives to further spread the ‘Building A Better Today’ theme.

Charles Kingston

June 1999
RED LIGHT - STOP! RIGHT HERE!!
READ THIS!!

RED - YELLOW - BLACK - BLUE - GREEN:
The Olympic Ring Colours.

STOP - CONSIDER - TALK - WRITE - ACT:
The SRC Olympics Challenge.

RED: Stop and read this draft program.
YELLOW: Consider your needs and hopes for this conference.
BLUE: Talk till you are blue in the face so you become a delegate.
BLACK: Write to us with your suggestions for issues/topics/projects/speakers/formats and offers of help.
GREEN: GO FOR IT!!!! Offer to present, perform or help organise with us.

ONE WAY OF MAKING IT SURE IT HAPPENS:
1. Fill out the preliminary application form (obligation free!) in this SRC 2000 Bulletin.

TEN WAYS OF DOING IT!

HOW TO PRESENT WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER:
1. Run workshops on one issue (or a successful project) or roundtables (more informal discussions led by you or your group) Could be one hour, an hour and a half or extended over two hour sessions on two days.
2. A marketplace for school, country, state and project displays
3. Exhibit halls for businesses, educational groups and volunteer organisations
4. One of several general session keynote speakers or a member of panel sessions (young people especially need for both of these)
5. Be in a formal debate, a live Hyde Park style speaker’s corner (or a continuous video replay)
6. Be a facilitator for interactive (general discussion and ‘getting to know others’) groups.
7. Performing art, dance, music and drama presentations (could be as part of a General Session or as one of many groups performing for smaller audiences)
8. Write and/or graphically design your contributions in time to get them in the Conference resource papers
9. Go one better and be part of the computer, newsletter or radio teams at the Conference itself
10. Offer to join the programming committee!

Preliminary Days:
Monday-Tuesday, 11-12 December 2000
Sydney University
• Pre-arranged early arrivals and accommodation assignments
• Meetings as notified (eg Conference Committees, International Steering Committee, Presenters and Performance group practices as needed)
• Set-up of displays, exhibits, resource material by presenters

Conference Day 1:
Wednesday, 13 December 2000
Sydney University
“Celebrating Our Cultural Heritage”
• Registration, Workshop Presenters, Advisers’ Orientation Meetings
• Exhibits, Campus Tours, Internet Centre, International/State and Display Rooms Open
• 1st General Session: Official Conference Opening
• 2nd General Session: Keynote Addresses: “Tolerance and Acceptance in an Increasingly Globally-Integrated Society”
• Roundtable Discussions - Multiculturalism, Racism and Young People
• Workshops and Roundtables - The Cultural Identity of Young People
• International Buffet
• Cultural Showcase (highlighting country/state/cultural groups)

Conference Day 2:
Thursday, 14 December 2000
Sydney University
“Challenges Facing Young People in the 21st Century”
• Day Registration and Interactive Group Meeting
• Exhibits, Campus Tours, Internet Centre, International/State and Display Rooms Open
• 3rd General Session: Prepared Debate (Topic open to ideas at this stage)
• Youth Challenge Workshops (youth suicide, unemployment, poverty, sexuality and sexual health, homelessness, violence and crime, public space, recreation and entertainment, public education, drugs, child exploitation, illiteracy, feminism, fundamentalism, sexism, ageism. Let us know those of most interest. Add your own to this list.)
• Travel to and Tour of Sydney Olympic Site at Homebush
• Parade of Nations and States - Candlelight Ceremony
• Evening at Darling Harbour, Harbour and City Tours, etc

PASTA Newsletter - Supplement to Connect
Conference Day 3:
Friday, 15 December 2000
Central Coast Campus;
University of Newcastle
"The Environment: Preserving Our Future"
- Travel by ferry & bus - Sydney Harbour to Central Coast
- Visits to Old Sydney Town and Australian Reptile Park
- Meet Central Coast host schools/tours of Campus
- 4th General Session: International Panel: Young People and the Environment (People - especially young people - who have worked to protect their environment to share with practical solutions to problems and how they have sought their implementation. Let us know those environmental issues and projects of most interest. Add your own.)
- Workshop and Roundtable Issues arising from the Panel (Delegates encouraged to think about how they can become involved with existing environmental campaigns or develop their own.)
- Voting on priority issues for Day 5 student forum
- Students Dinner with families/schools and social (dance) or rock_concert on Central Coast
- Advisers wine tasting; Issues and action forum dinner

Conference Day 4:
Saturday 16 December 2000
Sydney University
"The Media, Political Process and You"
- Mid-morning start: Day Registration and Interactive Group activities
- Internet Centre, International/State and Display Rooms Open
- 5th General Session: Keynote Addresses - Parliaments, Power and Profile: How Can These Be Made Real For Representative Young People
- Workshops: Getting Things Done and Influencing Others (active citizenship through voluntary action, starting a newspaper, conquering the air waves, setting up an SRC or similar structures, lobbying, starting an action group, how to get into and survive parliament, Let us know those of most interest. Add your own to this.)
- Preparation for Day 5 Forum
- 6th General Session: Special Presentation of Community Service Certificate Awards
- Afternoon Entertainment/Performances Refreshments
- Student night with host families
- Adviser and Committee Night On The Town or Banquet

Conference Day 5:
Sunday, 17 December 2000
Sydney University
"SRCs Furnishing Their Home in the Global Village"
- Day Registration / Internet Centre, International / State Rooms Open
- Interactive Groups: Discussion of Forum process and possibilities
- Roundtable Discussions/Formation of recommendations/resolutions and brainstorming possible SRC activities (including the launching of an International SRC Conference Committee responsible for co-ordinating organisation of future conferences and the carrying of the international SRC activity/activities to Athens in 2004 and beyond.)
- SRC 2000 STUDENT FORUM ("THE MAIN EVENT")
- Action Group Sessions (Aim: to action plan each project)
- 8th General Session: Action Group Plenary (Action group representatives present outcome of deliberations; Delegates from other groups have chance to sign up for more than one activity.)
- Close of Conference

Overall Conference Theme:
"Student Representative Councils: Building A Better Today"

June 1999
SRCs AROUND THE WORLD

1999 CADA CONFERENCE

On Tuesday March 9th 1999, the President of PASTA, Ralph Murray, and I boarded a plane for Los Angeles, California. We were bound for the annual California Association of Directors of Activities (CADA) Conference. This is a gathering of 1800 Activities Advisers from all over California and the western states of the USA. This year's conference was entitled: 'Upon a venture to the new Millennium'.

Upon our arrival, we were met by the CADA President, Lynette Hovland and Vice-President, Cal Meek. The Conference began on Wednesday with a 'blast off' by the 'father' of the American Student Leadership movement, Dr Earl Reum, and the fast-talking Mike Smith. These two gents inspired all who attended and set the tone of the Conference. For the next four days, there was a huge smorgasbord of sessions, presenters and workshops to attend. I have collected a range of materials presented at these sessions and donated them to PASTA for distribution to PASTA members. (If you would like a detailed listing of these resources, contact Charles Kingston, PASTA VP - National/International.) Sufficient to say that the range and depth of activity information and skill exhibited was outstanding.

Some of the points learnt from the conference that you may find interesting are:

- there is an activity advisor in every school in the USA on a reduced period load, to coordinate activities and to take student leadership classes (leadership is a curriculum choice);
- these activities are extremely diverse, from the Prom, Homecoming, cheerleader training, school spirit building, academic rallies, elections, community activities;
- CADA itself has a corporate manager who is in charge of CADA Central, the overarching organisational body. He is a businessman, not a teacher;
- the CADA Conference is privately funded by industry organisations, who benefit from school business ie Coke, Pepsi, Hard Rock Cafe, school fund-raising organisations, school yearbook manufacturers, school tour operators, book-sellers, rings, caps, gowns and even reunion organisers. There is a large exhibition centre where these retailers vie for business;
- CADA is the leading US Conference in size and prestige. It is an extremely professional and slick organisation. It has a history and an ethos which rewards service ie life membership, Hall of Fame, Jack Moore Award;
- Student Leadership in the US is a business with a circuit of professional speakers, books, TV, video. With 4 million students just in California, there is the critical mass necessary for money to be made;
- Activity Advisers train students in Leadership skills and theory in an incredibly diverse way, although the extent to which they address critical issues in schools such as violence, drugs, guns, suicide and gangs varies widely from state to state and community to community;
- American schools are facing exactly the same problems as Australian schools: private school funding, media beat-ups on public schools, low teacher salaries, overwork and stress. There are huge social and economic problems left for schools to deal with;
- Australia has a long way to go to catch up to the networking and structural efficiency of the American system. Our professional association (PASTA) and our educational departments in each state must form closer working relationships to develop together a leadership strategy and program for all our students;
- Both Ralph and I were fortunate enough to be given a table at the 'Meet the Pros' session to promote the Sydney 2000 First International SRC (Student Representative Council) Conference. We had an enormous reaction, plenty of support and offers of help. However, as with their own conferences, they expect to be flown in and looked after. It is just the way they are used to working.

THE WORLD WANTS YOU

These columns will only be as interesting and useful as YOU make them. So far we have covered many aspects of the USA and Canadian scene, with some information also on Denmark. Connect #115 (Feb '99) carried elsewhere much more information than we can put here about OBESSU - the Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions. But what of your region of the world? In upcoming editions we would like to highlight Africa, Asia, Latin America, the rest of Oceania. Anywhere!

We can only do so with your input. Anything received will be credited and the resource information gathered be available as a supplement for the SRC 2000 Conference. Write now. Right!
A Californian delegation organised by CADA is definitely coming to Sydney and you can expect them to be the best of the best. Next year’s CADA Conference is in Sacramento between March 1 and 4, 2000. If you would like more information on the 1999 Conference, you can contact me on pking@lisp.com.au

I would lastly like to thank Phil Boyle who provided my airfare to Los Angeles. Phil speaks all over the USA to thousands of staff and students each year and has numerous books and videos published. He is also a fantastic bloke. I would also like to thank Peter Cahm of CADA who coordinated our VIP treatment in LA. If there is one thing CADA does exceptionally well, it is hospitality. Peter is a past CADA President, member of the Hall of Fame and current Legislative Advocate. Peter will be coming to the Sydney 2000 Conference.

Peter King
PASTA Vice-President
Principal, Ungarie Central School, NSW

CONTACT DETAILS
For further information or offers of assistance in this International SRC Conference and its future development, enquiries may be directed to:
Sydney 2000
First International SRC Conference
c/o Charles Kingston
1 Gladstone Street, Bathurst NSW Australia 2795
Phone: (02) 63322603 Fax: (02) 63322302
E-mail: ckingston@interact.net.au
http://hsc.csu.edu.au/pta/pasta/

PASTA Internet Site ... from page 13
The address used in the April article of Connect - http://hsc.csu.edu.au/pta/members/pasta.html - will also get you to our Home Page through the Joint Council of Professional Teachers’ Association site. Going this way enables you to go back and access other information about Joint Council activities - eg other professional associations, HSC on-line, professional development activities etc.

Amongst the professional development activities Joint Council lists are SRC 2000 and our annual overseas tours, both of which are excellent in-service opportunities for teachers and advisers as well as students.

We welcome suggestions from you for improvement to the site. Any new material or enquiries should be directed to: Charles Kingston, PASTA

THANKS: The PASTA Internet Site was made possible through the cooperation of Charles Sturt University (Bathurst, Wagga and Albury campuses - NSW) and the Joint Council of NSW Professional Teachers’ Associations in conjunction with the voluntary technical assistance of Chris O’Rourke, a former Drama teacher and SRC Adviser now with his own web design and publishing company. Its site address is:
http://users.netwit.net.au/moo/

If you wish to contact Chris for assistance with your site needs, his e-mail address is: moo@netwit.net.au

NASAA NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY ADVISERS

"Stepping Out to Activities That Are First Class" is the theme of the 1999 National Association of Secondary Activity Advisers (NASAA) Second Annual National Conference being held in Chicago, Illinois, USA from 4 - 6 November. If you are an adviser to any school student activity, a principal or other executive and are seeking support and resources for your program this is a wonderful professional development opportunity.

PASTA is affiliated with NASAA as well as its older cousin, the National Association of Student Councils (NASC). For the first time, the promotional brochure speaks of the opportunity to "interact with colleagues from across the US, Mexico, Canada AND Australia". It says they (now we) are facing the same challenges in their schools.

To meet some of these, the more than 30 workshop topics include: building budgets, conflict resolution, consensus building, diversity, leadership Class, peer leadership program, legal issues, public relations, team building and recognition programs for students and staff, amongst which PASTA’s innovative CSC Program to recognise voluntary contributions to our communities is an outstanding example.

If paid before 1 August, registration cost for NASAA Members (in Australia through PASTA membership) is US$225, for non-members US$305. It increases by $25 if postmarked later. This cost is separate from hotel and travel expenses. You/your school/your department can obtain registration forms and more information on this and other international activities by contacting PASTA VP Charles Kingston at the contact addresses in this SRC 2000 Bulletin.
APPLICATION TO ATTEND/PRESENT AT THE
1st SRC INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE - SYDNEY 2000

NB: By filling in this application, you are helping us to organise this Conference. It does not yet obligate you to attend. It is a step in that direction - a more specific expression of interest than those circulated before. Formal registration forms will then be sent to you in due course.

Tick whichever applies in the questions below. Add explanatory material as indicated.

Registration fees for this Conference are Australian $500 (c. US$320) for all delegates. This is comparable to those for similar functions in North America, Europe and elsewhere. Wherever possible, delegates should seek to be funded by the group they represent and its wider community. If attending as an adult adviser, seek funding as a professional development activity.

Registration includes all Conference needs for the five days from time of registration except housing for adults. Students will be hosted by families in the Sydney region. Adult registrants outside the Sydney metropolitan area will be sent a list of recommended hotels or alternative group accommodation. They will need to make their own bookings unless separate arrangements are made with the organising committee, including any prepayments required. Day registrations at reduced rates may be available if Conference numbers allow, but this will not be known until two months before the Conference.

Further questions? E-mail: kkingston@interact.net.au or write to the postal addresses as indicated in this and all publicity.

SECTION II:

For those applying to present a workshop, make a presentation, do a performance, have a display, present in the Exhibit Hall etc:

F. I/Our group (cross off whichever does not apply) wish to apply to do a presentation on the theme of:
   [ ] 1. “Celebrating Our Cultural Heritage” (Day 1)
   [ ] 2. “Challenges Facing Young People in the 21st Century” (Day 2)
   [ ] 4. “The Media, Political Process and You” (Day 4)
   [ ] 5. “Building A Better Today” (Overall Conference Theme - could be any day)

G. How many people would likely be involved in doing your presentation or performance? .......

H. How many of these will be secondary students at the time of the Conference? ........................

I. How many of these presenters are intending to apply to be delegate representatives also? .......

(NB. It is not essential to do so at this time but if the names of other presenters are known at present, please list them on a separate sheet. Before final confirmation in June 2000 - prior to finalising the Conference program - we will need to know this information.)

Upon confirmation of your application, a more detailed form will eventually be sent to you for mutual exchange of further details.

SECTION I:

FOR DELEGATES TO THE CONFERENCE

A. I .........................................................
   wish to apply to attend the above Conference as a:
   [ ] 1. Student Representative
   [ ] 2. Adult Representative
   [ ] 3. Committee Member

B. The name of the group I will represent is

C. My position in or role with this group is

D. My/our contact details are as follows:
   1. Mailing Address: ........................................
   2. Phone/Fax and E-mail (if available): ...........................

E. I/We DO/DO NOT (cross off whichever does not apply) wish to apply to do a presentation.

F. Please examine the draft program and send us your suggestions for the issues, resources and types of sessions you would like to see at this Conference.

J. The type of presentation or involvement I am/we are proposing is: (You may tick more than one area as long as details of each appear on separate sheets)
   [ ] 1. Workshop for student delegates
   [ ] 2. Adviser Program Workshop
   [ ] 3. Roundtable Discussion
   [ ] 4. Performance (indicate clearly what type - dance, music, drama, other - in description below and whether intended for Conference General Session or smaller scale audience)
   [ ] 5. Participant/s in panel
   [ ] 6. Participant/s in debate
   [ ] 7. Speaker at General Session
   [ ] 8. Facilitator of interactive workshops (non-issue-oriented, getting to know you sessions)
   [ ] 9. Have a static display (that can stay up unattended throughout the Conference)
   [ ] 10. Have a display stall (rotated so as to talk to people throughout the Conference or during breaks)
   [ ] 11. Have an exhibit in the Exhibit Hall: especially for but not restricted to businesses, volunteer organisations and government departments (applies to Days 1, 2 & 3 only)
   [ ] 12. OTHER (please describe): ............................

K. Details of your proposed presentation:
   1. Suggested Title: ...........................................
   2. Subject of Presentation: .....................................
   3. People likely to be involved: .................................
   4. Estimate of time needed: ....................................
   5. Space/technical requirements: ..............................

(Use separate page for details.)
continued from page 12...

sometimes after receiving my sponsorship letter the business or club would invite me to ‘sell myself’ before considering a donation. This developed my public speaking skills.

Lauren Rose
(year 11, Alstonville HS)

After counting down for seven months, it’s hard to believe there is only about 40 days to go until the wait is over. My expectations of the trip are pretty high... I hope to learn a lot about myself, my country (and leadership), and a lot about Americans and their country (and leadership), as well as taking the opportunity to meet other students from Australia and all of the States of America. I first considered applying for the trip when I saw the excitement of the 1998 delegates who had obviously had the ‘time of their lives’. They came home inspired beyond belief, with so many happy memories and stories that sounded terrific. They had all gained leadership and communication skills as well as in responsibility. So I decided to apply... The experience of applying for this tour was interesting in itself. To explain who I was, and why I wanted to represent my country with a bunch of other Aussies that I didn’t know; to tour a country full of new people, cultures and ideas; all this to trip organisers that I didn’t know was a real challenge. I’m sure that this was a very small challenge compared to what is to come. Upon return from the States I hope that I will have developed many skills that I will be able to use throughout the rest of my life - meeting new people, thinking on my feet, being able to express myself clearly and assertively, as well as many others that I probably won’t even realise that I have gained. I hope to return full of enthusiasm with many new ideas that will help other students in my school, district, state and country. I’m sure it will be an awesome experience, one that I will remember for the rest of my life.

Paul Zammit
(year 10, Blakehurst HS)

It started about 8 months ago at the SRC state conference when I first met a lot of the people going (Hayley, Jay and I think it was Cherie). Well they were in my group and at one stage or another it was brought up and I thought: ‘Hmmm doesn’t sound that bad. Nahh, too much hassle, but it would be a great experience, if I could go...’. From State SRC camp I developed a friendship with Brianna Pollock who was also keen on going on the trip. We got talking and she convinced me to send in an application. I sent it in just before I was to be off to the US for Basketball. At that moment I wasn’t as hyped, thinking just about that trip. Even before all of this I hadn’t really travelled very much and going to the USA for Basketball was such a great experience that when Ken rang me to see if I was still going to come I was rapped. This time it’s a more real life experience.

The other trip was fun but I’m not good enough to play in the pros, so this is going to help me more in school and in the future. The people on the trip are probably the most motivational bunch of people I have ever met. They are all leaders in their schools and communities. Just by being with such a great bunch of people has made feel so happy. Just to think I will be living with them for a whole month... Hopefully some of their magic rubs off on me... My school, especially my SRC, have been all for me going. They are continually saying: “LET’S FUND-RAISE SO WE CAN GET RID OF HIM FOR A MONTH.” Things like this just make me want to go out and see what I can give back to them more than anything. Their support has been great. When I was talking to the guys that went last year they said that SRCs over there are like so popular and everything. It would be great if I was able to make my school realise that SRC actually does something! This is also a motivation. SRC has been great for me. It has given me opportunities to meet people, develop friendships and to get confidence in myself that wasn’t there before. The list goes on. NOW IT’S PAYBACK!

Lisa Bolland
(year 12, North Sydney Girls HS)

When I first found about this trip I immediately dismissed it as too expensive, and too exclusive for me. I couldn’t imagine myself representing Australian students at the NASC conference, let alone raising the $6000 to get there! After the NSW State Conference in August, I met people who had been on the trip last year, and saw how inspired and enthusiastic they were; obviously this trip was pretty special. I got all the information and thought about it a couple of times, but still didn’t apply. After a few months, I found that a lot of my friends from State Conference were applying, and had been accepted. I began to think that maybe I could do it too... so I applied, and after weeks of waiting, I got that amazing phone call telling me I had been accepted!! I applied to go on this trip because it is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to represent youth from all over our great country, and share our experiences and ideas with American students. We will learn so much more about SRC and how to improve student leadership from the overseas delegates, and make many great new friendships. As well as improving my own leadership skills, I will bring back knowledge and ideas which can help my school, school, district and State SRCs, and also the young people in my community. So far I have learned that if you want something really really bad, then you can do anything to get it. In my case, raising the money was a difficult task, especially with my HSC this year, but I was so determined to get there and reach my goal that with a lot of effort and help from my peers, ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE, and now I am going to the USA!!! Meeting the other delegates was cool, and although we come from different cities all over NSW and the ACT, we became a team instantly, bonding

June 1999
together with a common dream and the will to make it happen. When I return I hope to benefit community organisations in my area, and bring back innovative ideas about SRC and student leadership to my school, district and state so that the amazing experience of USA 99 is shared with all students in my state. I also hope that I will be more motivated and inspired, and when this year is over, I hope to help PASTA get the International Conference happening in 2000, and also work with SRCS in my area, as well as helping private schools establish and maintain effective SRCS (they are really missing out!). Other than that, I am almost bursting with excitement, counting down the days, hours and minutes until we leave!! I can't wait to fly over the ocean, ride a yellow school bus, see the Americans taste Vegemite, sunbake in Flawai, shop in New York, see the toilets flush clockwise, swap t-shirts with other states, meet all the people I have been writing to in Bordentown and Roseville, taste a REAL American hot dog, teach Americans about AFL, netball and cricket, make new friends and have the time of my life!!!!!

Rebecca Heinrich
(year 11, Carlingford HS)

Late last year I was fortunate enough to attend the NSW SRC Conference where I met a bunch of the SRCers who went to America on the 1998 PASTA USA Tour. After hearing of their experiences, learning from their knowledge, being motivated by their excitement and seeing the way this trip has changed their life, I realised this was an opportunity worth chasing - that it was a once in a lifetime chance to improve my skills in student leadership, motivation, teamwork etc and thus I would not only be able to improve myself but bring back knowledge to filter back through the levels of SRC to benefit everyone. Since being accepted onto the team going on this tour, I have not only met 20 of the greatest people who have a passion for student leadership but I have learnt to be determined whilst trying to earn the $6000 to be able to participate in the tour and always be motivated to continue trying. Constantly working with other people to try to create workshops and presentations to take to the US with us has also improved my ability to work as part of a team. When I get home from the US in July I hope I will not only have had a great trip but my knowledge with regards to student leadership and SRCS will have been greatly increased. I hope to have learnt new skills in leadership, motivation, teamwork, communication etc and have gained new ideas which might be able to be used in Australia. I hope that the info we gather in the US can be used to benefit SRCS all over Australia.

Katherine McCormack
(year 11, Ulladulla HS)

When I met the delegates from '98 they gave me inspiration because I learnt so much from them, and I wanted the chance to do the same for other student leaders - along with the opportunity to have the greatest month of my life, learning the most amazing things to make myself a better leader and role model. I hope I can represent the Australian students the same way and bring home some positive inspiration to those around me.

Lezette Cowan
(year 11, Maitland HS)

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity from which we are all going to learn. The 1999 American SRC Tour for me is going to be full of great memories, and all delegates involved are going to form very long lasting friendships with each other whilst travelling round the USA. I am hoping to gain useful information on anything that can help improve the organisation and running of the SRCS within the schools in my area. I am really looking forward to undertaking the learning processes of leadership. Hopefully I can then apply that knowledge to anything. It will be of great personal benefit to me in the future. I am also hopeful that the valuable and useful information, which we will obtain, will be able to be passed onto our fellow students and will be of great help in developing our leaders of the future within not only the SRC but also the whole school community. You can only get out of something what you are willing to put in. The opportunity to visit the White House and the United Nations together with other major institutions such as the Smithsonian is worth the trip on its own. The last few months have been great, as I have already made valuable new friendships, which I will keep for a long time. Sponsors were sought with a good response coming as well as valuable feedback. By keeping in touch with the other delegates going, I have picked up so much that is happening around the basis of the trip. All the delegates are so friendly and eager to participate in the organisng functions. I am most of all hopeful to have a great time sharing different cultures with other delegates from over all America. This trip means a lot to me, as I am about to represent Australia in something I have grown a real love for, and that is the SRC.

David Moylan
(year 11, Wyndham College)

I have been participating in SRC for the last three years and was this year elected president of Wyndham College, the State's first senior college to form a collegiate group. I found out about the American trip through one of my peers. She attended last year's conference in Kansas and came back to school high on life. Her high rubbed off on the rest of the school. This boosted school pride and brought about a much more effective SRC. Not only did we all get a boost out of her experience, but we learned a lot about how to organise a conference, management and self-esteem. This had a very big impact on me personally as I was preparing for my school certificate. Unlike last year's delegate from my school, I will be representing four schools - Wyndham College, Quakers Hill High, Seven Hills High and Riverstone High. When I return from my trip I hope to do workshops in all four schools on what I actually have learned. I already feel as though I have learned a great deal as the sum of $6,000 was a large cost to meet. Raising this money gave me the confidence to go out into the work force to look for sponsorship. It also gave me experience in speaking to the heads of companies and I learned good employment skills. Not only do I now appreciate how lucky I was to meet the cost requirements but I am more determined to go and learn what there is to learn and bring this back into the school community.

Rebecca Engelen
(year 11, Barrenjoey HS)

I applied for the trip as I thought it would improve my leadership skills and I hoped that through this I could benefit others as well. I would hope to gain many friends, more experience in leadership, obtain more of a grasp of American culture and their school life as well as learn new ways to help SRCS in Australian schools. Hopefully, through being able to give a report at the NSW State Conference this year we will be able to spread the information. I hope to make a report at my District meeting and try to attend school meetings of all the schools in my District to conduct workshops.
Who makes the Student Representative Council?

One of the presenters at the recent NASPAC conference held in Hobart was Dr. Jacqui Triffitt, a sport psychologist working in a private practice in Hobart. She obtained her Ph. D. in Clinical Psychology at the University of Tasmania, and is currently the Consultant Sport Psychologist with the Tasmanian Institute of Sport. Dr. Triffitt has worked with a number of individual athletes and teams across a variety of sports from State to Olympic level. She enjoys working in this area because it means working with athletes who are motivated to achieve and who are prepared to make the commitment and take the risks needed to achieve success at an elite level. She drew on her experiences to present the following scenario for the students at the conference to discuss.

A SRC of six members needs to be chosen from the following list of candidates. You are looking for an energetic group of students with new ideas. One of this group will be the chairperson of the SRC. Choose your chairperson and candidates, giving the reasons why your group chose or excluded candidates.

1. Been on the SRC for past three years. Member of the drama group. Well-liked but can become bossy and temperamental. Likes to do things their way. Can become too focused on one issue. Very motivated and gets things done. Been on lots of committees.

2. First time been interested in the SRC. Plays in the school band. Has bagged the SRC previously saying that it doesn’t seem to work and is not representing the students very well. Has some good ideas about how things can improve but tends to talk about things rather than put them into practice.

3. First time nominated for SRC. Very sociable. If you want to know what is going on at school and the latest gossip then this is the person to talk to. Good communicator and gets on well with a wide range of people. Liked by the teachers. Good sense of humour. Has a lot of potential academically but spends too much time socialising. Often late for meetings and at times unreliable.

4. Has strong opinions and believes everyone should support their ideas. Difficulty listening to other people and hearing their ideas without interrupting. Has lots of energy. Has great written and organisational skills. Tends to be critical of anyone who doesn’t pull their weight. On previous SRC committee. Been the centre of many disagreements within the SRC.

5. Very busy. Likes to be involved in lots of activities and on the go. Currently captain of the basketball and debating team. Very active in the community. Head Prefect. Has been on SRC before but needed to resign because of other commitments. Would like to be involved this year as this is their last year of school but would like some flexibility if they did become involved in SRC as may not be able to attend all meetings. Well-liked by fellow students and teachers.

6. Previous member of SRC. Very strong view on teachers and educational system. Feels that many teachers are authoritarian and inflexible and reluctant to consider change. The school system is inflexible, poorly resourced and bureaucratic. Not a favourite amongst the teachers but respected because voices their opinion and also offers alternative ways of doing things. Good problem solver but at times lacking in diplomacy. Good at delegating responsibility.

7. Has lots of creative and progressive ideas. Has won numerous school prizes. Artistic and musical. Has ideas. Likes to keep to self. At times lacks confidence to let opinions or ideas be known to others. At times needs to be pushed as easily distracted by other things. Has been encouraged by parents to be a part of the SRC for the first time.

8. Previous member of SRC. Always first to put their hand up if something needs to be done. Recently having relationship problems and problems at home. Been very active with the SRC and been a driving force behind lots of changes at school. Would like to be involved but at the moment others are concerned that they may have too much “on their plate”.

9. Has a history of getting into trouble at school and has been suspended from school on two occasions. The last suspension has hit home and they have made a decision to put some energy in a positive direction. Has lots of academic potential but tends to get bored in the classroom. Good sportsperson having represented Tasmania in judo. Good team person. Never been on a SRC but would like to give it a go.

10. Good worker. Has a tendency to talk about people behind their back rather than being upfront about opinions. This has caused some problems between other students. Has ambitions to be chairperson of the SRC and believes they can do a good job given the fact they have been involved in the SRC for two years and have been instrumental in making positive changes in the school. Good relationship with teachers and headmaster.

(PASTA would like to sincerely thank Dr Triffitt for giving her time and for allowing us to publish this worksheet)

June 1999
Membership Form

What does membership of PASTA offer you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership (includes subscription to Connect magazine)</th>
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<td>Area of Particular Interest: Primary, Secondary, Tertiary</td>
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<td>Other (please specify):</td>
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Please check your credit card number before sending this form.

- [ ] Visa
- [ ] Mastercard
- [ ] Bankcard
- [ ] Other (please specify)

- [ ] Credit Card
- [ ] Bank

Please delete my credit card for the amount of $________.

OR

I enclose a cheque for $________ made payable to PASTA Inc.

[ ] Institution $100
[ ] Concession $25
[ ] Student $25
[ ] Other $25

[ ] Overseas $50

I am members of:

- [ ] PASTA Inc.
- [ ] NSW Department of School Education
- [ ] Employing Authority

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I wish to apply to join/renew my membership for the year ending 30th June, 1999

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

Signature:

Date:

Note: Please check your credit card number before sending this form.
The student-focused school

My hope for the future of secondary education lies in student-focused schools in which students are encouraged to take an active role in their own education. The role of the school is to facilitate the needs of the student in a positive environment.

What is my concept of a student-focused school?

- **Flexibility in subject choice and timetabling is instituted by the school.** Instead of limiting the options available to students as the 'revised' HSC has done, we should aim to constantly broaden the scope of education and cater for the needs of all students. This can be done through schemes such as Joint Secondary Schools TAFE and Pathway programs which allow students to accelerate or accrue individual subject units towards their HSC.

- **Extracurricular activities are encouraged and accredited by DET.** These are recorded on School Certificate and HSC report cards. These activities are highly valued by students. Debating, acting, sport and music, for example, are activities which will keep students viewing schools as fun, enriching places to be. The learning which takes place through these activities is rich and varied.

- **An innovative approach to discipline and welfare is promoted.** I believe a strong link needs to be acknowledged between the way discipline is administered at school and the way students will view the school. All students accept discipline as necessary and should be consulted in the formation of discipline policies. Those students who are often disciplined should be precisely the students involved in this discussion. The problem is, it is far easier to get the successful, well-behaved students onto SRGs. Unfortunately, many school executives have veto rights in SRC elections to ensure any student with poor grades or behavioural problems cannot serve. Student leadership in schools changes and develops students. Essentially, SRGs and other such bodies allow students to question their place within the school community. Many (perhaps most) students view themselves as bound into a system of rules and restrictions. Therefore many behavioural problems at school are a form of rebellion. This frustration needs to be channelled into something constructive, thus changing the way students view themselves in this educational framework. Through giving students credit for being problem-solvers, leaders, questioners and generally able human beings, a dignity is restored to them. Student with behavioural problems should be given power to change their environment into one in which they feel an important and valued member. We can make students feel important and valued by allowing freedom and change. By incorporating the suggestions and values of students into the structure of the school, the executive can work with students rather than against them.

- **Dynamic and explosive civics education courses are implemented from Years 7-10.** The notion of civics education is incredibly exciting. Students do question the society we live in and do have a concept of themselves as citizens. However, this notion of citizenship seems to be a different concept to that which our parents' generation holds. To many teenagers, experiences of the State have not been positive and their view of society reflects this. I believe a civics education course should teach students about the structures in place for the government of our community but also allow students to decide for themselves about their relationship with the State. In short, a conservative civics education course will have a negative effect. Civics education is a chance to debate how our community functions, how it should function and the powers and positions we hold within society can be redefined not as a source of authority, but a marketplace of ideas struggling for power. I believe this to be a concept students will relate to and be inspired by. Students therefore should play a large part in the development of the curriculum, so it will be relevant.

Ariane Welch
Ex-student Caringbah High School
NSW SRC member 1996-97

reprinted from Inform (DET, NSW) 21 April 1999

June 1999
On October 24 of this year one of the most amazing youth conferences ever held will begin in Hawaii. (Not a bad place for a conference!) The Millennium Young People's Congress (MYPC) will bring together young people from all over the globe from Burkina Faso to China to Yemen and Australia. Yes that's right, two young Australians will be representing Australian young people at this fantastic global congress.

MYPC is the Young People's Earth Summit, which will set the priorities that the globe should focus on to ensure sustainability for all life on the planet for the next thousand years. The Congress will produce a report with the priorities that young people believe should be focused on by all governments. This report will be presented to every Head of State as well as to Heads of international organisations such as the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The United Nations Youth Association of Australia (UNYA) is the association responsible for organising Australia's delegation to the MYPC. The process for deciding which Australians attend MYPC is one that is being replicated around the world. Each country must have a national consultation, where young people from that country are consulted on what priorities they believe are important to form a sustainable planet. The idea is that the Congress report will be influenced by the culmination of a process involving as many young people from around the world as possible.

The Australian national consultation will be the United Nations Youth Conference, organised annually by UNYA. This year it is being held in Melbourne from July 4-11 and will be opened by the Foreign Minister, The Hon Alexander Downer. It is attended by over 100 of Australia's most outstanding senior secondary school students. Delegates to this conference have been selected from UN Youth Conferences in every state and territory of Australia. UNYA sends invitations to most schools in Australia to attend the state/territory UN Youth conferences and in Victoria, almost 500 attended on the last weekend of March.

UNYA is a non-profit community organisation, run by youth for youth. It educates fellow young Australians about the United Nations and international affairs. UNYA runs conferences for young people, visits schools to directly educate students, represents youth to the Australian government and provides opportunities for young people to attend international conferences. There is a Division of UNYA in every state and territory and the best way to become involved in UNYA is to attend the state/territory UN Youth Conferences. Otherwise, you can e-mail the National President at ahudson@ugrad.unimelb.edu.au or unya@geocities.com

Andrew Hudson
MYPG: Greetings and Update

This greeting from the Hawaiian Millennium Host Committee outlines what is happening in Hawaii in preparation for the Congress. Here is what the Committee has to say:

ALOHA! MYPG activists and organizers around the world.

We are glad to be able to share with you the excitement building around hosting the Millennium Young People’s Congress. Hawaii is ready to welcome the youth Delegates and young activists with open arms. We have been working hard over the last year to prepare to make this an extraordinary event. The State of Hawaii and the City and County of Honolulu have both been very supportive of making this a productive and memorable Congress. But the list of supports and contributors doesn’t stop with them. The whole community is actively involved in gearing up for your arrival. Here are some of the latest developments in Hawaii:

On the first day of the MYPG, regional dialogue sessions will be held at the Hawaii State Capitol. This is the building that houses the State of Hawaii government and where all of Hawaii’s laws are debated by the legislators before they are signed by our Governor. Each day the MYPG will be opened and closed with different cultural ceremonies that reflect the diversity of Hawaii’s cultures.

Over 100 families have opened up their houses to host two or three Delegates and young activists during the Congress. And more are signing up daily! Expect to stay with a friendly family during your time in Hawaii and learn first hand about our unique traditions.

Eastman Kodak has offered to mail a camera to each MYPG participant around the world so they can take pictures of the “priorities” in their country before they leave for Hawaii. Eastman Kodak will also develop the film for us. A picture is worth a thousand words, and their generosity will let you visually share with your peers from around the planet what you are concerned about.

Over 100 high school students have joined the Millennium Youth Stewards volunteer team to make sure that the MYPG runs smoothly and problem-free. They will be greet the international participants at Honolulu International Airport, staff the MYPG sessions, shepherd mentors, and assist the Delegates and young activists with any problems that may arise.

Atlantis Adventures, a Hawaii-based adventure company, will host the MYPG participants at Sea Life Park on Friday, October 22nd, for a day of learning about marine sustainability, aqua-culture technology, and oceanic and dolphin research. Sea Life Park is a marine institute located at Makapuu Point, on the Southeast shore of Oahu. It is also a very popular site with visitors, who enjoy the marine shows and large reef tanks that let you learn about the ocean and all of its creatures without getting wet!

We are very close to securing a piece of land on the foot of Diamond Head crater (Hawaii’s most famous landmark) for the Peace Garden. Co-sponsored by Hawaii Rotary Clubs and Youth for Environmental Service, MYPG participants will spend two days transforming this plot of land into a tranquil and beautiful Peace Garden to commemorate the Millennium Young People’s Congress. If you haven’t already, find out how your local Rotary Club can help with your national efforts around the MYPG. The President of Rotary International, Carlo Ravissa of Italy, will be attending the MYPG as a mentor.

Kiyoshi, a famous Japanese artist, will be donating his time and talent to create a unique work of art for the MYPG. When you check-in at Honolulu International Airport, there will be a blank piece of canvas that all of the MYPG participants will sign their name(s) on. During the week, Kiyoshi will transform all of the signatures into a beautiful mural that reflects the themes of the Congress.

Sprint, an American long distance phone company, will give each MYPG participant a phone card so they can call home and tell their family and friends what a wonderful time they are having working with young people from around the world at setting the priorities for the next millennium.

The support in Hawaii for the MYPG is tremendous! Everyone is very excited and eager to welcome young people from all over our planet to undertake such an important mission. Thank you for all of the hard work you are undertaking in your countries around the world. Together, we can rest assured that the MYPG will be a spectacular, progressive, thrilling, and amazing time.

Aloha

Millennium Host Committee
The Student Representative Council at Mentone Girls' Secondary College in Melbourne is made up of 84 students (representatives and vice representatives) from each year level.

Our main function is to improve areas of the school that the students aren't happy with, and to fundraise for school equipment - at the moment auditorium seating for our gym. A new program has been introduced this year in which the SRC President and the College Captain are in charge of College assemblies. They alternate, and one will MC the assembly, while the other presents a story of student interest.

The SRC also provides a neutral territory where the younger students can interact with the older students, and where everyone's ideas are heard and considered.

Our aim is to organise activities for the school and the students. Each year we organise at least four casual days on the last day of each term. We also organize a 'Footy Day' for the students (and teachers), football clinics, a student/teacher football game, and a team coin trail in which students place coins in front of a sign of their favourite team - the longest trail wins. We also organise sausage sizzle for fundraising.

We sponsor a child in Thailand; the year sevens, under the supervision of the year twelve organise various fundraising activities to raise money for World Vision. This year we have organised a cake stall, a jelly bean guessing competition, a lucky dip and lucky bottles. We are hoping to raise at least $350.

Each year the year 10 and 11 students organise a year 10 dance. They arrange for food, drinks, a DJ and tickets. It is usually held in term two or three.

We are also organising for the Red Cross Blood Bank to come to our school in term 3, to promote community involvement from the students, teachers and members of the community.

Karishma Segra:
ksegran@mentone.gsat.edu.au

Our Future - Our Way was an inter-SRC conference for Victoria hosted at Balwyn High School, in July 1998. Participants voted resoundingly to continue and strengthen networking across SRCs and to see a regional SRC established.

Why? SRCs often cannot reach a level of strength beyond a certain point until they come into contact with new possibilities and new opportunities.

The Eastern Region Student Council is the product of this conference. Pioneered by Balwyn High School SRC, it has now grown into an independent organisation creating opportunities for SRCs to speak with each other. Monthly meetings are arranged to allow SRC members to share their experiences and to tap into resources that the Region can provide. Adults are welcome to these meetings, but only able to speak when given permission to by the students.

The underlying philosophy is that skills that strengthen SRCs cannot be handed down by staff members or ex-experienced students as effectively as they can be learnt from talking with other SRCs.

Now a year old, the Eastern Region has grown in its original objectives. Still a forum to air problems and seek ideas from other SRCs, it also completes a few other functions:

- Constitutional writing and reviewing assistance;
- A network of one hundred community organisations, youth based groups, Government branches and other relevant organisations. These can be called in as guest speakers or to provide support for activities;
- Training days run for SRCs;
- Regional forums;
- Conferences;
- A library of resources from lots of different organisations;
- A regularly updated list of all the other events an opportunities in which to become involved.

The region now sees itself also as an organisation to open up many opportunities for involvement across Victoria for SRCs and individual students.

The Region is still relatively young, but growing. With a large library already, enormous support from other organisations and the greatest resource in abundance students' experiences - the region has shown that little effort is required to keep the network strong when student are keen to see their student organisations grow. Turnout at each meeting are not as high as would be hoped by this stage, but there is always enough to hold an in dept discussion about student participation.

Elections were held in late April, where the two ex-students retired from their positions as managers and current students from SRCs took over.

The Eastern Region Student Council is a good example of students managing their organisation independently, and doing it successfully. For students by students, and it works.
Children and Media: Image, Education, Participation

The 1999 Yearbook of the UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen focuses on examples of media education and of children's participation in the media from different parts of the world. Sections of the Yearbook deal with Children's Access to Media and Media Use, The Image of the Child in the Media, Media Education, Children's Participation in the Media (the longest section of the Yearbook) and International and Regional Declarations and Resolutions - Children and the Media.

Excerpts from Connect are featured in the 'participation' section and provide information about print, radio, CD and video projects that have been featured in these pages. But there are also many other fascinating accounts from the use of the internet to 'an Indian Wall Magazine for Working Children'.

Copies of the Yearbook (ISSN 1403-4700; ISBN 91-630-7875-9) are available from:
The UNESCO Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen, Nordicom, Göteborg University, Box 713, SE-405 30 Göteborg SWEDEN. Tel: +46 31 773 10 00; Fax: +46 31 773 46 55
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STUDENT PARTICIPATION
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To join: Send an e-mail to: <majordomo@edna.edu.au>
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Contact: ACSA, PO Box 331, Deakin West ACT 2600
THE DEMOCRATIC CLASSROOM
Theory to Inform Practice
Art Pearl and Tony Knight

This volume asks the reader to take a fundamentally different look at a full range of educational issues - curriculum instruction, discipline, administration and management, research and evaluation, and local versus central control. It evaluates theory in education.

The gist of the authors' argument is that today's difficult problems cannot be solved without a democratic process and actually become worse the more the education of the public is 'dumbed down.' Essential to the resolution of such problems is a reconstructed school that prepares all students to become effective problem solvers and informed and responsible democratic citizens. Such a school needs to be informed by a comprehensive general democratic theory that has four requirements: knowledge should be universally provided to enable all students to solve general recognised social and personal problems; students should participate in decisions that affect their lives; clear specified rights should be made universally available; and encouragement should be given for success in all of society's legal endeavours.

Throughout the book are detailed descriptions and analysis of each of the four requirements. Suggestions provide teachers, parents, students and policymakers with ideas of where to begin and logic for reforming action.

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(03) 9489 9052 or (03) 9344 9637

OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

Australian:

Ethos P-6 and 7-12 (VASST, Richmond, Vic) Vol 7 No 1, Term 1 1999: Civics and Citizenship Education
Network of Community Activities (Surry Hills, NSW) Annual Report 1999
Rights Now (National Children and Youth Law Centre, NSW) May 1999
Students Decide (Parliamentary Education Office, Canberra, ACT)
YACSAround (YACSA, Adelaide, SA) May/June 1999
YACVicBites (YACVic, Fitzroy, Vic) May 1999

International:


Communication Research Trends (Centre for the Study of Communication and Culture, St Louis, USA) Vol 18 (1998) Nos 2, 3
Leadership (NASSP-DSA, USA) Vol 27, Nos 8, 9; April, May 1999

Documents

The documents listed in this column are of general background value. A photocopy is available for research purposes. The length and cost (to cover copying and postage) is listed. Please order by code number.

A full, computerised index of these documents is now available from Connect for $3; this can be accessed and printed by topic, key-word etc or simply sequentially.

Code Description/Pages/Cost
456 Symposium: Taking Seriously the Students’ Agenda for School Improvement (Margaret Maden and Michael Johnson, Centre for Successful Schools, Keele University, Keele, Staffordshire, UK) (8 pp; $1.00)
457 Consulting Students as Key Witnesses in School Improvement: How Radical is Their Advice? (Jean Ruddock, Homerton College, Cambridge, UK) (5 pp; $0.90)
458 Schooling for Democracy through Student Participation: Key Issues (Sieve Wilson, University of Western Sydney, Nepean) (7 pp; $1.00)

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Students Decide

The new Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) publication 'Students Decide' profiles inclusive student decision making models in four primary schools: Thanwa Primary School (ACT), Greta Public School (NSW), Immaculate Heart of Mary School (Tas), Morisset Primary School (NSW). By arrangement with the PEO, a free copy of this publication is enclosed with this issue of Connect for all current subscribers.

The PEO plans a similar publication highlighting practices in some secondary schools. For further information on this and other PEO resources, contact the Parliamentary Education Office (Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600) on phone: (02) 6277 3147; fax: (02) 6277 5775; internet: http://www.peo.gov.au

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Miscellaneous Resources:
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