

Editorial



Yet another year seems to have glided by and here we are with Christmas again.

I actually enjoy the Christmas and New Year period, because it has always been a time to do some reflecting on the past, re-energise, and start building a vision for the coming year.

I hope that this edition of QUEST will help you reflect on some of the great learning activities, your organisation has been a catalyst, sponsor or promoter of, that have occurred around the nation in 2004.

Being a member of ALA is about supporting a long term vision, and I think all of you who join and rejoin year after year understand that very well.

This edition highlights some realised visions and provides some pointers to those for 2005.

Seeing the faces of the winners and runners-up of our ALA National Awards makes one realise how important an event this is to showcase those who unassumingly work in our field and their dedication to their part of the adult learning environment. Remember, these winners and runners-up are nominated by others from the wider learning community.

Recognition for effort is also provided to the nearly 1.2 million ACE and other learners in our communities by Adult Learners' Week and Learn @ Work Day celebrations. I hope you will enjoy reading about some of the achievements of ALW 2004.

The ALA/ANTA Innovation Research Grant 2005 is available again this year and you can read how the Centre for Community Welfare Training (CCWT) grant recipients in 2004 put it to good use to advance learning opportunities.

Mention was made earlier to our realised achievements, but I'm sure you would agree that there is still much to be done to advance a learning society in our nation.

To this end Adult Learning Australia is seeking to generate productive debate and discussion around the broad issues of lifelong learning. To help do this we have appointed an ALA Visiting Research Fellow to prepare a consultative paper entitled Towards a Learning Revolution in Australia. This consultative paper is part of a process of providing a futures oriented position for lifelong learning in Australia through to 2010 and beyond.

ALA is aware that lifelong learning, now and into the future, will have different meanings to the many constituencies that we hope will choose to contribute to this discussion. The paper highlights some of the many drivers that link lifelong learning to the social, cultural and economic capital of this nation. I hope that this consultation process will bring forward a large range of options and insights which will advance the scenarios set out in the paper.

You are invited to have a voice in this discussion by visiting the ALA website to access the paper and make your contribution by responding to the questions posed.

You might also consider having a meeting with your local politician to discuss both the content of the paper and his or her responses to the questions. This will help you better understand where they are coming from, as well as helping us in our lobbying role with them.

Similarly, if you are establishing an ALA Network, you might choose to use the paper as the basis for a discussion group meeting.

Don't forget to feedback responses to the National Office so that these views can be incorporated into the building of the final document.

To conclude, this edition is the perfect place to say thank-you for your support and membership throughout the year.

It also provides me with an opportunity to thank the team at ANTA which has provided unwavering support for ALA over the years. Your support and initiative will be greatly missed after June 2005.

To our friends in DEST, the ALW State and Territory Co-ordinators and their committees, a special thanks. To the National Conference Planning Committee in South Australia and all those who were associated with the conference, "Thanks for making it such a success!"

Finally, the National Office extends our best wishes to you all over the coming Festive Season.

Ron Anderson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR