

## Primary Teacher Award

### Martin Ainsworth, St Andrew's Catholic College, Redlynch

Martin is an Englishman who came to Australia in 2003 to watch Australia get beaten in the Ashes. But it was Martin and Catholic Education who were the real winners, as Martin met, married and settled down with an Australian girl and Catholic Education secured the services of an exceptional teacher.

Martin is a passionate, experienced teacher who excels in all areas of his work. He shares in the learning journey with his class, whilst leading his team of dedicated Year 3 teachers as Year Coordinator in a Middle Leadership position; going above and beyond in his duty to support others.



He is a visionary who seeks to find solutions to problems he identifies. Of note, is the Bike Bus program which Martin established enabling students to learn how to travel safely to school on their bikes and thus gain independence and confidence. He also implemented significant changes to playtime routines, to maximise active participation for students; instigating a flipped morning tea routine, where students eat their fruit during class learning activities, giving them time and opportunity to access the oval at both morning tea and lunch playtimes. As an advocate and role model for fitness and active lifestyle choices, Martin has the students at St Andrew's running the Daily Mile; measuring daily runs, and endeavouring to run around Australia.

Having taught at St Andrew's for more than ten years, Martin has been involved in the Literacy Coaching committee, making a commitment to improving learning outcomes for all students. He has demonstrated particular passion for English, compiling units of work, sourcing activities and ensuring that all students in the cohort received rigorous English lessons. In his Literacy Coaching role, Martin has extended this support to teachers right across the Junior Years, to model, coach and team-teach explicit English lessons. Martin has been highly regarded in this mentoring role, with teachers eager to work with Martin to improve their pedagogy.

Martin takes the role of teacher mentor for student teachers seriously, spending many an afternoon sitting and going over work and ensuring that the next generation of teachers have the best grounding possible.

He is a compassionate and well-respected colleague who demonstrates a genuine care for the wellbeing of all students, parents and staff members. Martin demonstrates great passion for life and inspires his students to follow in Jesus' footsteps by being a role model in every aspect of his life.

## Secondary Teacher Award Andrew Dorahy, St Augustine's College, Cairns

Andrew is a giver of life who demonstrates an enduring generosity of spirit. As a teacher of religion and through his involvement in many pastoral care projects, it is obvious that Andrew is committed to gospel values of Catholic Education and his own faith.

Andrew's contribution spans a period of service of over 30 years. Most significant of these is his role as Head of Year 12, a position in which he has worked tirelessly for some fifteen years and which has provided stability



within the college. There are generations of young men who would regard their contact with Andrew as having had significant impact in their lives. This is experienced firstly in his passion for teaching and learning within his areas of expertise. His commitment to his students' understanding of the subject matter is exemplary and he willingly gives of his own time to assist students to succeed both academically and spiritually.

Andrew's consistency of message in terms of high standard and striving for excellence provide an example and a challenge to students. His inspirational talks enable a message to be delivered in a way that students find engaging, clearly understood and can relate to them easily. Year 12 groups, under his leadership, provide a 'big brother' relationship to the rest of the student body. In dealing with individuals, Andrew has credibility, with students finding him firm and fair in his role and seeking the best possible outcomes for them.

Andrew's generosity and commitment have been most evident in his support of the boarding and co-curriculum offerings of the college. His attitude of stepping in when something needs to be done saw him take on the extra responsibilities as Head of Year 12 Boarding Residence for an extended period due the Head's illness. This was done in conjunction with his day school role and teaching responsibilities without any thought of payment. Each week he runs an afternoon cooking activity for boarders and contributes to Rosies. Each year during the December holiday period, Andrew takes the college cricket team to the National Marist Cricket Carnival and in 2016 organised the hosting of this event by St Augustine's in Cairns. He gives of his holiday time for other excursions, this year the History Tour of Europe. As you can see Andrew's dedication goes beyond the wall of the classroom.

Andrew's weekly and annual organization of social events enhances staff morale and the sense of community that is enjoyed by staff. Similarly, his presence at College events see him appreciated and respected across the whole college community.

## Leadership Award

### Ida Pinese, St Stephen's Catholic College, Mareeba

Ida is an outstanding Leader and Principal. Her professionalism and tenacious spirit of excellence has directly contributed to the growth of St Stephen's from a small rural college to one which punches far above its weight in all aspects of school life. As the college has grown, Ida has ensured that it has retained a focus on the importance of being a family and maintaining an active part of the community.

Ida clearly articulates the school vision and expectations to all staff, students and families in a

manner, which motivates and calls people to action. She models the Gospel values in her relationships with all and is a great listener who always makes time to listen in a non-judgmental manner. Ida takes times to speak to families, understands each family's circumstances including family pressures or financial concerns and she discreetly does what she can to assist.

She thanks people, is humble, welcoming and compassionate. At the end of school terms, she hand-writes an individual message to each staff member. When students achieve in any aspect of life such as academic, music, sport or cultural achievements, Ida will write the student a card to congratulate them and then she goes to find them to deliver it. She phones parents of Year 12 students to congratulate them on their child's achievements.

She shows a great interest in the development of students as 'whole people' and attends college camps and retreats. Ida actually runs the school cross country with the students, attends extra-curricular events such as Lions Youth of the Year and Relay for Life, and she also teaches a class.

As a leader, Ida always leads by example. One of her mantras is "the standard you walk past is the standard you accept". She ensures that each day, particularly at lunch times, she walks around the college and engages with students and staff. She picks up litter and takes classes at short notice, as she does not expect others to do something that she would not do herself.

Extraordinary leaders like Ida are always professional and value the importance of demonstrating attention to detail. She gives others the autonomy to do their job and she builds leadership capacity within the school community. As a lifelong learner, she continually engages in self-reflection and professional renewal. Ida is an unpretentious, inspirational, caring Principal and person.



## School Officer Award

### Pat Findlay, St Joseph's School, Parramatta Park

Pat Findlay has been a school officer at St Joseph's for 26 years. During this time, she has encompassed the charisms of the Mercy Sisters. She is a person of faith, is of high moral character and demonstrates a firm commitment to Christian principles and values. Pat is an active member of North Cairns Parish.

As a member of staff, Pat demonstrates a willingness to contribute to the staff team by being faultless in her performance of routine duties and responsibilities. Always punctual and attentive to the tasks set before her, teachers are always assured that Pat completes these tasks competently, with confidence.

Pat has the utmost care and concern for the students in her care, treating each with respect. Students feel the genuine interest Pat has in their welfare from the strong relationships she has built with many. Pat foresees potential challenges within the school day and if she is unable to find a solution herself, will inform those who can solve the potential issue. This is done sensitively with discretion and professionalism.

Pat is a great asset to any class within St Joseph's. Over her 26-year career, Pat has worked with every year level including Prep and within the School Office and is always highly valued within a teaching team. Pat takes her role seriously and provides dedicated support to all students, especially those who do not always find learning easy or have additional learning needs. She is able to engage and encourage even the most challenging of learners. Pat's dedication to her students is evident in her genuine joy when celebrating the successes of her students with them. She is fair and consistent within her approach and is a very conscientious worker – often taking work home (even when told not to) when she sees a need.

Pat is aware of the needs of her colleagues, often providing a listening ear and practical support. When you are working with Pat you often do not even see a need as she has already noticed and acted upon it. Pat has taken on a role in the school's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary committee and is a wealth of knowledge and stories of the school.

Pat Findlay is a loved member of St Joey's school community. They appreciate her intuitive mind and spirit every day.



## Early Career Teacher Award

### Samantha Benvenuti, Good Counsel Primary School, Innisfail

Samantha is in her second year of teaching, and has already demonstrated exemplary skills in the classroom, works collaborative with staff colleagues, and has developed a respect from parents, as well as from the entire school community. It is the building of strong relationships that make Sam so outstanding.

Sam has a deep love of children and a passion for teaching which is evident in her approach to her

class duties each day. Sam is an excellent teacher who works on trying new ideas and theories to assist her students achieve their best in all areas of the curriculum. The students in her class have a zest for learning that has been instilled in them by her. Sam loves to share with staff the little 'magic moments' that occur and gets so excited, particularly when some of her verified students achieve major milestones in their learning. She offers her time to work with students before school and has developed an open communication system with parents and carers, and is only too willing to listen and act on issues raised.

What makes Sam also a stand out is how she juggles the schedule of being the wife to local police officer Constable Justin Benvenuti, a mother to 13-month-old son, Hudson, driving from Babinda to Innisfail each day and taking on a fulltime teaching load. Yet through it all she remains calm, professional, pleasant and organised.

In her spare time, she is studying to complete her Masters of Education through QUT, which she began in 2015 when pregnant with Hudson. Sam is also an active Touch Football player and is admired by many when she wheels Hudson to the fields at Babinda each Thursday night.

Sam is an active member of the Babinda Parish Community and makes time to attend Good Counsel Innisfail Parish liturgical events in her own time.

When asked at her interview last year how she was going to work out juggling a new born, teaching and married life, she simply and maturely responded, "I'm up for the challenge!"

Sam has an effervescent personality and is both adored and admired by all in the Good Counsel School Community. She has exceeded all expectations that are required of an Early Years Career Teacher.



## Volunteer Supporter Award

### Nick Hardy, Our Lady Help of Christians School, Earlville and St Monica's College, Cairns

Two separate nominations were submitted for Nick - one from Our Lady Help of Christians School and one from the St Monica's College Community.

Nick served the OLHOC school community as a parent volunteer from 2006 to 2016. In that period, he was a valued member of the School Board, the Parents and Friends' Association and was on the Diocesan P&F.

Drawing on his experience in the field of town planning, Nick had an integral role in implementing change. Of particular significance was his contribution to capital works at OLHOC where he took a leadership role with OLHOC's building and facilities masterplan and the negotiation with Cairns Regional Council with sharing land with the school. He was a passionate and articulate supporter of the Arts, Science and Technology and played a key role in many initiatives, including the robotics program, road safety program, working bees and tree planting initiatives.

He was a tireless advocate for the active engagement of parents in the school community and his hard work contributed to the success of many projects including the Art Show, the Cairns Festival Float, parent workshops and the Social and Emotional Learning program.

Nick has been a parent at St Monica's since 2014. He quickly identified that there was an ever-increasing issue of traffic management at the College. With the support of the P&F and the Leadership Team, he established a Safe Streets Committee. Since then the Committee has:

- Conducted traffic and student drop off and collection counts
- Surveyed parents and carers regarding their drop off and collection routines
- Conducted observations with the Police, Cairns Regional Council, Main Roads, Diocesan staff and the School Leadership team
- Conducted stakeholder meetings to increase the awareness and need for change
- Driven the outcome of joint funding for a designated drop off and pick up zone, which included agreement being reached on traffic flow, parking bays and road markings
- Created an informative video to educate the College community on Safer Zones.

Nick has been the main driver of the abovementioned, purely in the capacity as a volunteer. The result of this work has led to a much safer environment for the College community.

Ultimately, Nick is someone who works tirelessly behind the scenes. He is humble and not one for public accolades, yet he is generous in his acknowledgement of others. He is an example of the finest ideals that we would aspire to as members of the Cairns Catholic Education community. His dedicated and generous work, combined with the impact and length and breadth of his contribution over many years in two school communities make him a worthy recipient of the Docemus Award.



## Life Long Contribution Award Chris Chapman, St Augustine's College, Cairns

Chris Chapman has been an outstanding educator, leader and role model in Catholic Education in the Diocese of Cairns for over thirty years. His work at St Augustine's College during this time has always been characterised by personal integrity and faithfulness to Catholic values. Chris has performed many roles, including teacher, Head of Year, Deputy Principal Pastoral, Deputy of Staff and Director of Administration.



Marcellin Champagnat, the founder of the Marist

Brothers, was said to have a 'strong mind and a gentle heart'. This is also an apt portrait of Chris. Chris has an eye for the 'big picture' in his work which is complemented by an analytical mind, creativity and the practical ability to implement what he has planned. He has the strength to stand by his principles, challenging others when he sees a need to do so, always with the best intention for all concerned. The principle of fairness for all shapes Chris' approach to whatever he undertakes and engenders trust amongst those he leads. He also draws on his own depth of wisdom and intuition when problem solving and responding to complex issues. These capacities and leadership skills, along with an openness of mind, are the fundamental characteristics that have resulted in Chris' successful career as a school leader.

The defining feature of Chris' approach is the gentle manner in which he conducts himself in his interactions with others. Chris' friendly, gentle and respectful manner, endears him to others and has resulted in respect from staff members across the College. He is quick to notice when a colleague is having a difficult time and seeks to support that person in whatever way he can. He has a heart for others, especially those who are faced with more challenging circumstances than most. Chris is naturally inclusive of others, ensuring that all feel at home and that hospitality in its various forms is offered to each and every person.

Chris is a genuinely humble person, which is evident in his wonderful sense of humour. He never takes himself too seriously and is prepared to laugh at himself. This sense of humour brings a joyful spirit into the workplace and builds community.

Finally, Chris has a deep faith in God of which he has borne witness over such a long time to so many people – staff, students and parents. His consistent presence at the optional Wednesday morning Masses and student-led prayer is a shining example of his commitment to our core belief in a loving God.