

Monday, 30 January 2006

SA's 'CHAMPIONS OF SCIENCE' SPEARHEAD GREENFIELD VISION

World-leading scientist, and 2006 Honorary Australian of the Year, Baroness Professor Susan Greenfield has returned to Adelaide to unveil her future vision for science in South Australia following her time as Adelaide Thinker in Residence.

Premier Mike Rann joined the Baroness and other influential leaders for the release of her report.

“These leaders have been strategically chosen by Baroness Professor Greenfield to champion the progress of each of the ten key initiatives outlined in her report,” says the Premier.

“Individually they are champions of their own fields and they can apply their expertise, passion and experience to become SA’s ‘Champions of Science’.

“The ‘Working Implementation Group’, chaired by Robert Champion de Crespigny, will meet three times a year on his returns to Adelaide.

“They will help implement their respective initiatives within SA by lending their endorsement for funding opportunities and other promotion to assist.”

Initiative

Bragg Initiative

Oxford Centre for the Science of the Mind

James Martin 21st Century School

Science Outside the Square

Twinning Teachers and Scientists Program

Women in Science, Engineering & Tech.

Health and Community Services

Continuing Training for Teachers

Australian Science and Media Centre

Science Infrastructure and Research

Champion

Robert Champion de Crespigny

Prof. Marcello Costa, Chair SA Neuroscience Inst.

Mike Rann, Premier of SA

Melvin Mansell, Editor of The Advertiser

Prof Richard Head, Dir. CSIRO Preventative Health

Prof Caroline McMillen, Pro VC, Research, Uni of SA

Monsignor David Cappelletti, Chair Social Inclusion Board

Jane Lomax-Smith, Min for Ed & Children’s Services

Mr Peter Yates, MD Allco Equity Partners Ltd

Prof. Max Brennan, Chief Scientist South Australia

SA universities also support the initiatives outlined by Baroness Greenfield and are working together to implement them.

“Susan Greenfield is driving a transformational change of science and how it’s viewed in South Australia and I am pleased that she has confirmed an ongoing relationship with our State, despite this official conclusion to her residency,” says the Premier.

Baroness Greenfield says “Many of the ideas contained in the report have already been translated into practical initiatives, with many more in the pipeline!

“Everyone has worked as a team on this report and have all made a valuable contribution towards making my Residency live up to its original brief of enhancing life in Adelaide, - in this case, of

bringing a new science dimension to places, to people, and in ways that hadn't seemed possible before."

Baroness Greenfield also notes in her report that: *By attracting scientists to South Australia and by retaining the brightest and best who are already here, not only will South Australia perpetuate its image of being an intellectual hub for the rest of the country but be seen to be part of a far-sighted global vanguard embracing the advantages of science and technology industries for the increased prosperity of all its citizens.*

Robert Champion de Crespigny says he's pleased to continue his work with South Australia as Chair of the Bragg Initiative and support Susan Greenfield's ideas and recommendations.

Key elements of Baroness Greenfield's report include:

- Identification of significant opportunities to leverage corporate support nationally and internationally through the work of the initiatives' Champions;
- Opportunities identified for scientists to get involved in media, education and health; assisting SA to become a national centre for public promotion of science and helping attract scientists to SA;
- Suggestions for smoothing the path between academic research, intellectual property issues and commercialisation as a way of creating wealth for the State and scientists themselves;
- A vision for future infrastructure investment that can help SA attract funding and talent;
- Opportunities to link with Baroness Greenfield's high profile activities in the UK including;
 - SA becoming an international partner in the James Martin 21st Century school (which has a budget of US\$100 million);
 - SA neuroscience ethics and philosophy researchers working with the Oxford Centre for the Science of the Mind;
 - Incorporate the activities of the Royal Institution into future science infrastructure investments creating a 'Ri Down Under'.

There have already been significant impacts for science in SA since Baroness Greenfield's departure last year. These include:

- AusSMC opens;
- 10 SA students attend the Royal Institution's Christmas Lecture series and a host of science excursions in London;
- 15 scholarships awarded to SA teachers and educational personnel to undertake inaugural Graduate Certificate in Neuroscience. Course developed by three of our Universities (first collaborative course of its kind in Australia);
- Nine SA science teachers undertook a national tour of CSIRO preventative health laboratories in four capital cities for professional development and extension of Twinning program;
- Leadership position created within Dept of Ed & Children's Services to co-ordinate SA involvement with the Institute for the Future of the Mind at Oxford University.
- Completed the first Science Outside the Square winter events program, which included a presentation at a Port Power football match.

Baroness Greenfield's residency was from June – August 2004 and July – August 2005. Her report is available at www.thinkers.sa.gov.au