

Off to Harvard: Public School principals win awards

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Congratulations to three public school principals granted scholarships at the Public Education Foundation's Proudly Public Awards ceremony on 15 May held at Sydney Town Hall.

Their scholarships will send them to Boston to participate in a short professional education program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Ann Caro (Lithgow High School), awarded the Harvard Club of Australia Principals' Scholarship, said she was thrilled to be chosen and was extremely excited to be given the opportunity to take the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Leadership: An Evolving Vision course.

"It should be really inspirational to meet interesting people and challenge my perceptions of leadership," Ms Caro said. She hopes the experience will improve her leadership skills. "I really want to build sustainable and embedded practice [at the school], and build the capacity of leaders, and all staff, at my school to maintain focus on the school's context and enable student success, the core of our business."



Under Ms Caro's leadership, Lithgow High School's HSC results have improved, increasing numbers of students are going to university and suspension rates have fallen. The school has developed a wellbeing centre, providing onsite mental health and other social support.

Jesmond Zammit (Gorokan Public School), awarded the Public Education Foundation Principals' Scholarship, said he applied for a scholarship because the opportunity to develop his skillset and network with principals from around the world was really appealing.

He is looking forward to completing the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Improving Schools: The Art of Leadership course. "I'm hoping to learn all sorts of things to refine my practice and leadership, and establish a professional relationship with Harvard."

Mr Zammit has steered the school in collaborative practice, innovative use of technology and improved student outcomes in reading and literacy.

Karen Duncan (Harrisdale Primary School, Western Australia), was awarded the The Teachers Mutual Bank Principals' Scholarship.

Ms Duncan is set to join in the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Leadership: An Evolving Vision course. The founding principal of a four-year-old school (the fastest growing school in Western Australia), Ms Duncan

said: “We have to keep re-articulating our vision, so the title of the course attracted me.

“I think being amidst 150 other leaders, sharing ideas, learning current educational practice and theory, and having difficult conversations will help me keep focus on where we are going as a school.”

Harrisdale Primary School has 14 graduate teachers on staff. “I’m keen to give back to a career that has given me a lot. I’d like to see what other schools are doing. We have mentors [for the graduate teachers] but I’m interested if there are more ideas out there,” she said.

Federation is a premium partner of the Public Education Foundation and sponsored two award categories:

- The NSW Teachers Federation Primary Scholarship provides support and encouragement for public primary school students entering year 2 in 2019, throughout their time at primary school.
- NSW Teachers Federation Awards for HSC Excellence recognises the achievements of students from NSW public schools who have come first in their subject as part of their Higher School Certificate.

— Kerri Carr