

**NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK**

*Statement by Minister for Science*

**MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean — Minister for Science)** [12.15 pm]: I rise today to inform the house of the 2019 Premier's Science Awards winners and update the house on National Science Week. National Science Week is the biggest celebration of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM, in Australia. National Science Week is currently underway, with more than 1 000 events across the nation and hundreds of events in Western Australia. I was privileged to be a part of the National Science Week launch and opening ceremony in Western Australia—*Moonboorli (Beyond)*—on Saturday morning at the State Library.

One of the highlights of National Science Week is the annual Premier's Science Awards, which were held last night. The awards celebrate the outstanding scientific achievements that take place in Western Australia. I am pleased to advise the house that Professor Carol Bower from the Telethon Kids Institute was inducted into the WA Science Hall of Fame. Professor Bower has demonstrated lifelong contributions to STEM in Western Australia and was instrumental in uncovering the link between low dietary folate and neural tube defects.

This year, Western Australia was in the exciting position of having two Scientists of the Year, as Curtin University's Professor Phil Bland and Edith Cowan University's Professor Robert Newton were announced as joint winners. Professor Bland was recognised for his world-leading research into the origin and evolution of the solar system through meteorites, and Professor Newton was awarded for his research into exercise medicine in cancer suppression and treatment.

The Woodside Early Career Scientist of the Year award was won by Adam Cross for his work in transforming sterile mining landscapes into healthy ecosystems. Jessica Kretzmann was named ExxonMobil Student Scientist of the Year for her evaluation of new gene therapies that have the potential to revolutionise cancer treatment. Sharynne Hamilton received the inaugural Shell Aboriginal STEM Student of the Year award for her doctoral work to promote healing in Western Australian Aboriginal communities and for being a STEM role model for others in the community. The Chevron Science Engagement Initiative of the Year was awarded jointly to Astrofest and Perth Observatory, Gateway to the Universe. Through astronomy, these initiatives promote a culture in which people are excited about, and engaged with, STEM.

The Premier's Science Awards are now in their eighteenth year and are a fantastic way to showcase and celebrate our STEM community, which improves the lives and wellbeing of Western Australians. As Minister for Science, I am delighted to acknowledge the talented individuals and initiatives recognised last night and thank them for their remarkable achievements.