

Question on Notice

No. 1614

Asked on 13 September 2016

MS LINARD ASKED THE MINISTER FOR INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR SMALL BUSINESS (HON L ENOCH)—

Will the minister outline the benefits of the STEM.IAM program for students who identify as indigenous in the electorate of Nudgee?

ANSWER:

I thank the honourable member for this question.

Mr Wayne Denning, Birri Gubba man, Managing Director of award-winning Indigenous creative agency Carbon Media, and one of our inaugural Advance Queensland Digital Champions, approached me with an idea to encourage more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to study STEM at university. Wayne was inspired by the work of engineer, inventor, and Ngarrindjeri man, David Unaipon, who appears on our \$50 note.

Despite the talents and creativity of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders across Queensland, few attend university and even less participate in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) courses.

Advance Queensland and STEM.IAM aim to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students pursuing STEM at university through a coordinated program of activities to increase STEM engagement from grades 5 to 12.

Advance Queensland is proud to be a foundation sponsor for STEM.IAM. The Advance Queensland program will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through their participation in fun and engaging coding and robotics workshops, community-led coding clubs, and state and national coding and robotics competitions. The program will also deliver scholarships in ICT at universities, and professional development training for teachers, librarians and volunteers.

Students involved in the Department of Education and Training's Solid Pathways program will participate in STEM workshops at their camps and be encouraged to participate in coding and robotics competitions.

Councils will be able to apply for grants administered by the State Library of Queensland to deliver coding and robotics activities through Indigenous Knowledge Centres or public libraries. These grants will support projects delivered in collaboration with schools and community groups.

Young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families in Nudgee, and other communities, should talk with their teachers, schools, libraries and community groups to find out how to get involved in activities that are available both locally and across Queensland.

Most importantly, I look forward to seeing the positive impact of this program in helping inspire Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Queensland to build the skills and confidence they need to become future leaders in their communities and to contribute in the technology based jobs of the future.