



Young Women in Sciences



An event for female secondary school students across the Western Downs Region who are studying or interested in pursuing a future in Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM).

Wednesday 14th August, 9.00am—12.30pm
Chinchilla State High School.

Coordinated by **Zonta eClub of Queensland** and **Origin Energy**. Proudly supported by the **Department of Education, Chinchilla High School.**



Guest speakers

Dr. Karen Massel

Dr Karen Massel is a strong advocate for the benefits of biotechnology and GM plants for sustainable food uses. She is a Research Fellow in the Centre for Crop Science, Qld Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation at the University of Queensland (UQ). Karen began her scientific journey through attaining an Honours BSC in Pharmaceutical sciences (Genomics) from the University of Ottawa where her honours focused on the impact of RNA stability in cold-treated wheat seedlings. From there Karen joined UQ to start her PhD in developing and optimizing biotechnological tools in sorghum to understand food and feed quality. We are really pleased to have Karen share her study and learning journey to share the vital role that gene editing technology will play in climate –proofing future crops to protect global food supplies.



Allison Zeller

Allison is an accomplished finance professional with a diverse background in taxation accounting, systems, and data analysis. She grew up in Chinchilla and has since gained extensive experience in the oil, gas, and local government sectors. Currently, Allison serves as a Finance Business Partner at Origin Energy, where she excels in budget development, cost analysis, and financial forecasting.



Guest speakers

Allison has successfully developed and implemented financial tools and processes that enhance budget tracking and decision-making capabilities. She also held the position of Engineering Data Analyst at Origin Energy, providing critical support for engineering systems and developing analytical reports to improve data management.

Her academic credentials include a Bachelor of Commerce with a major in Accounting. She is also a Certified Practising Accountant (CPA) and holds the PRINCE2 Foundation in Project Management and ITIL Foundation Certificate. Allison is also proficient in a wide range of software tools, including MS Excel, Power BI, Tableau, and SAP.

Allison is a strong advocate for young women in STEM professions, actively encouraging and supporting their growth in these fields.

Thank you to Mr. Rob Burke, Principal, and Ms. Jackie Beck, Head of Maths and Science, Chinchilla State High School for their support and enthusiasm with hosting the event.

Thank you also to Dr. Ansmarie Van Erp and other Members of the Zonta eClub of Queensland for their support. **Many thanks** to Origin Energy for their ongoing commitment, sponsorship and involvement. Thank you to CS Energy for their support with travel of guest speakers.

Finally sincere thanks to all of our guest speakers for their passion and drive to foster and encourage Women in STEM and leading the way to inspire others, particularly in our regional and rural communities.

Guest speakers

Shanece Blake

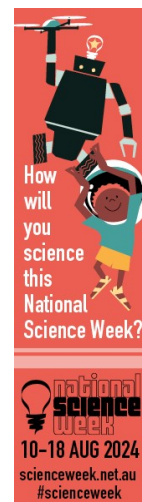
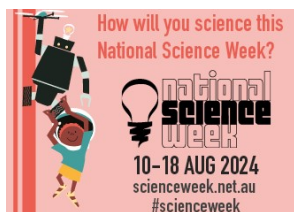
Shanece grew up in Biloela and has had extensive career opportunities which involved work exposure to government roles, such as visiting the Australian Defence force and the Federal Police Academy in Canberra.



This helped influence Shanece's potential future career pathway of becoming a police officer, however this later changed.

Throughout her schooling, she had played netball, and enjoyed Sports carnivals.

Despite her exposure to government roles and liking to fitness, Shanece had gained an interest in the mechanical field after studying engineering in grade 12. After graduating grade 12 Shanece accepted a 4-year Fitter and Turner apprenticeship at Callide power station where she is currently working and completing her trade.



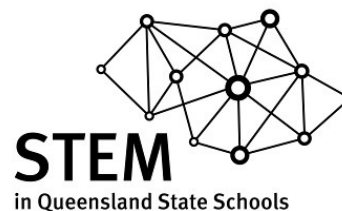
Guest speakers

Cameron Obst

Cameron is currently a Multi-skilled Operator, at Origin Energy's Condabri site. Cameron grew up in Chinchilla. He enjoyed many STEM subjects at school and he was awarded Senior Dux of Chinchilla State High School in 2004. Cameron went on to university to study engineering, but after his first semester he decided that it wasn't for him. Cameron decided instead to complete an apprenticeship as an electrician. He went on to complete other trades as an Instrumentation Technical and also a Water Treatment Operator.



In his spare time, Cameron designed and built his own two-seater aeroplane, which he used to set a new Australian record in a charity fundraiser for the Royal Flying Doctors Seervice (RFDS). Cameron also holds an Instructor Rating and volunteers as a flight instructor, with plans to start his own flight school in Chinchilla ater this year.



Guest speakers

Dr Alice Twomey

Alice is an interdisciplinary Postdoctoral Research Fellow who models ocean and inland flows through wetland areas to identify opportunities to improve hydrological connectivity of mangroves, saltmarsh and seagrass.



As an ecological engineer, Alice aims to improve the prediction, design, and restoration of coastal ecosystems, providing guidance for conservation decision-making and engineering. Alice's research interests include identifying and predicting hydrological restoration opportunities for coastal ecosystems and utilising coastal and marine ecosystems as nature-based solutions for coastal protection. Prior to academia, Alice worked as a consultant drainage and coastal engineer on small and large-scale infrastructure projects. Alice is an Engineers Australia Chartered Environmental Engineer and Civil Engineer and an Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

