

Herd on the Terrace – Centre ROCS

As published in The West Australian, 27 February 2019, by Peter Williams

Some lucky kids from Kent Street Senior High School were the first to drive a simulator of a CAT 994H wheel loader at Roy Hill's remote operations centre near Perth Airport yesterday.

Fortunately, it weighed a good deal less than the 196-tonne real thing.

WesTrac chief executive Jarvas Croome was there to donate the simulator to Roy Hill's ROC-Ed learning centre that helps teachers provide a practical edge to maths, science, geography, and business studies for Years 8 and 9 students.

The simulator is just one of the activities for students who spend half a day getting a feeling for modern mining.

WA Chief Scientist Peter Klinken loved the increasingly high-tech direction of our mining industry. "Lots of stuff like drilling holes and putting explosives in is now going to be automated," he said.

The move to automation may have disappointed some of the more adventurous hands-on type students but they were polite enough not to show it.

Klinken said ROC-Ed would help change a disparaging perception that WA has a simple "dig and grow economy – we do rocks and crops." Suzy Urbaniak, who won the Prime Minister's prize for excellence in science teaching in secondary schools in 2016, has taken her classes to ROC-Ed since it opened two years ago.

The former geologist is now looking to expand her approach to the teaching of science with resource industry-based projects beyond Kent Street, starting in Tom Price.

With Peter Milne and Stuart McKinnon



Kent Street students Ezekiel Carpio, Emma Jones and Yana Shepherd. (Photo credit: The West Australian)