



MY TOWN



Sponsor

The science of battling coal mine pollution

AUGUST 17, 2016 | 166 |



- Chantal Lanctot is a finalist in the 2016 [Women in Technology awards](#) in the PhD Career Start Award, awarded to PhD students working in IT or life sciences. The student must be in their final year of PhD or have submitted their PhD after 1 January 2016.



Tell us about yourself and what you do?

I have been working and studying in the field of environmental toxicology for the past 7 years. I got into research because I have a keen interest in understanding how pollution resulting from human activities influences the natural environment. Before moving to Australia, I completed a BSc with Honours and MSc in ecotoxicology in Canada, where I studied the effects of agricultural herbicides on the expression of genes involved in amphibian metamorphosis. For the past three years I have been working towards my PhD at Central Queensland University, where I explored the impacts of coal mine wastewater to native animals and developed new approaches for toxicity testing that considered behaviour as an endpoint. In general, I am really motivated by the opportunity to apply innovative tools and technologies to advance the field of environmental toxicology, and hope to continue in this area of research after completing my PhD.

What impact do you hope your work will make on the world?

I hope that my research will contribute towards a knowledge base that will help promote responsible water management in areas where the environment is at risk from pollution, and hope that this will lead to the establishment of better policy and practices in Australia and internationally. Ultimately, I hope that my research will help protect freshwater resources and wildlife that are currently under threat from expanding industrial activities.

Why do you love being in this field?

Research is very different than most other professions, and offers a great deal of freedom in how you focus your time. As an environmental toxicologist, I get to pursue questions that I'm really passionate about, and that will hopefully contribute towards better environmental management. There are countless questions as a scientist, and the job is therefore always exciting because I am constantly faced with new challenges and opportunities.

Why is it so important for women in technology to have visible role models and mentors to look up to?

Despite the efforts put into closing the gender gap in technology, there are still far fewer women in the field, particularly in high-level positions. Working in science and technology can be extremely competitive, and it is therefore important to not only have strong role models and mentors that inspire and give women confidence to follow their passion, but who can provide valuable guidance and career advice about how to navigate early career stages. Increasing the visibility of successful women will certainly continue to inspire more women to pursue scientific careers.



Join in this month's community assignment

MyBT Gold Coast is where you tell the news. Do you know of a great event someone you know done something great? Is there a dodgy pothole in your street? Do you know of a great restaurant? Tell people about it by clicking on the "write a story" tab at the top of the **doesn't matter how long or short post, help others by sharing your experiences.**

Your favourite moments

What's the best beach on the Gold Coast? Is it Kirra for the surf? Currumbin for its family friendly? Or Coolangatta for ice cream? **Everyone's got a favourite share yours with the Gold Coast here.**

My Calendar

| « AUGUST 2016 » | | | | | | |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|----|--|
| M | T | W | T | F | S | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | |

MON **Gold Coast Eisteddfod**
22 July 28 @ 9:00 am - September pm

Is there a lot of cool tech advances going on in the Gold Coast?

Yes, definitely. From my own experience, over the past 2.5 years I have been working at the Smart Water Research Center located on the Gold Coast, which is a state-of-the-art facility equipped with a range of specialised equipment for cutting edge research in water management, technology and sustainability. Diverse multidisciplinary research is being carried out on a wide range of topics, ranging from ecotoxicology studies assessing animal behaviour to projects developing cellular bioassays that provide toxicity estimates for sea turtles. Other research is aimed at improving sewage treatment technologies and on discovering new chemicals that might have useful medicinal properties. The diversity of innovative research is really quite amazing.

What's next for you?

I recently submitted my PhD thesis, and am now seeking a post-doctoral position in a research-intensive environment where I can continue to develop my profile as an environmental scientist. My long-term career goal is to one day manage my own research group, where I can continue to be involved with cutting-edge research and progress the field of environmental toxicology by using new approaches to address important questions.

Outside of work, what are your hobbies and passions?

Whether it's for business or pleasure, I love to travel. I love everything about travelling – experiencing different cultures, meeting new people, exploring unique places, trying new things (especially food), I even love planning and organizing trips.

- Do you know someone deserving of recognition? Why not write about them? Submit your story by clicking on the 'write a story' tab above.

Give your rating: Average: 4.6 stars from 5 ratings

3 comments

ME

MH [Mary Hall](#)
I am so impressed by your dedication to improving the environment we live in Chantal. I hope you win!
4 days ago (0) · (0) [reply \(0\)](#)

DV [Dr. Vance](#)
Wonderful news, and of course I hope you get it!
5 days ago (0) · (0) [reply \(1\)](#)

CL [Chantal Lanctot](#)
Thanks Vance!
5 days ago (0) · (0) [reply \(0\)](#)

Talk of the Town

- Under pressure: I'd just hit the love of my life - My BT Gold Coast
- The science of battling coal mine pollution - My BT Gold Coast
- Why a Taiwanese Kiwi moved to the GC - My BT Gold Coast
- Human Resources – the profession built on shifting sand - My BT Gold Coast

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|-----------|--|
| WED 24 | Surfers Paradise Beachfront Markets August 24 @ 4:00 pm - 9:00 pm |
| THU 25 | Bingo August 25 @ 10:00 am - 1:00 pm |
| FRI 26 | Surfers Paradise Beachfront Markets August 26 @ 4:00 am - 9:00 pm |
| FRI 26 | Gold Coast Show August 26 @ 9:00 am - August 9:00 pm |



Who's saying what a...

Gold Coast

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Smiling speed signs are slowing us down

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