

## PLENARY

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### LES KIRKUP MEMORIAL PRESENTATIONS

This session commemorates Professor Les Kirkup for his influential work on inquiry learning. Inquiry learning has always been a feature of ACSME conferences, with many of us benefitting from Les' work and guidance. Les was the recipient of a National Teaching Fellowship in 2011 to pursue this on a wider scale with the project *Inquiry-oriented learning in science: Transforming practice through forging new partnerships and perspectives*. Further national recognition followed in his discipline, with Les winning the Australian Institute of Physics Education Medal in 2014.

Les aimed to make both lectures and labs interactive and inquiry-based, engaging students to think and learn, instead of adopting more traditional “cook book” approaches to science laboratories. He engaged students in groups to design and carry out investigations themselves. In this way, students from first year on experienced the joy of research themselves by learning through inquiry. He recently wrote a defence of the live lecture in Campus Morning Mail, where he argued for the value of live and participatory demonstrations that generated ‘engagement, involvement, exploration and explanation.’

Les was passionate about many aspects of teaching and learning. He was also committed to improving assessment and to supporting tutors and demonstrators. He will be much missed at ACSME for his lively engagement with a range of topics. Les was well known and respected for his ability to ask pertinent questions, maintaining his energy throughout the conference. We hope that this session, with a focus on inquiry learning, and future ACSME conferences will continue to generate such productive and good-humoured debate.

Proceedings of the Australian Conference on Science and Mathematics Education, The University of Western Australia, 28-30 September 2022, page 6, ISSN 2653-0481