



St Joseph's Primary School students Hoanj Kape, 12, and Jorja Badman, 11, attended the Bright Future STEM program at the WA School of Mines yesterday and received insights from Gold Fields St Ives' Erin Stormont and David Nixon. The Australian Resource and Energy Group event aims to spark interest in STEM subjects among schoolchildren in an effort to avoid skills shortages in mining in the future. **REPORT PAGE 8** Picture: Tori O'Connor

Nurture STEM to grow more jobs for future

Jason Mennell

Sparking interest in STEM subjects at an early age could be key to avoiding skills shortages in the resources and energy sector, the Australian Resource and Energy Group (AMMA) says.

The group yesterday offered Kalgoorlie-Boulder primary school students the opportunity to learn how classroom theory translated to skills in the workplace.

The Bright Future STEM program has been developed to engage 9-11-year-olds to provide an insight into how science, technology, engineering and maths could be used in practical applications in the real world.

Held at the WA School of Mines, the program gave students from four Kalgoorlie-Boulder primary schools the opportunity to learn

from role models and try hands-on activities.

AMMA director of operations Tara Diamond said to meet future employment demands, it was vital that the industry sparked children's curiosity in STEM subjects at an early age.

"We know in the energy and resources industry the study of those STEM subjects are so crucial, not just to our operations today but our operations in the future," she said.

"Making those links to the real world compared to what you're learning in the classroom is so important to spark that curiosity.

"To make those links — well why am I doing this and what has this got to do with me and what am I going to do with that?"

"We have all asked ourselves

those questions.

"It gives them a range of insights into science, technology, engineering and maths and how the study of these subjects relates to real-world jobs in the resources

and energy industries." A resurgence in the mining sector has created more than 1000 job vacancies in Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

Mining companies are struggling to attract skilled workers to the region, and that was highlighted this week by nickel miner Western Areas, which flagged a growing skills shortage in the resources sector.

Ms Diamond said it was important that industry took responsibility for nurturing interest in STEM subjects at a young age to alleviate future shortfalls arising from a boom and



Licensed by Copyright Agency.
You may only copy or
communicate this work with a
licence.

bust cycle.



St Joseph's
students Ella
Trail, 11, and
Pippa Malec, 11,
with Gold Fields
St Ives
exploration
geologist Dana
Kowald.
Picture: Tori
O'Connor