Media Release
Chief of Staff, News Directors
Monday, 4 September 2017

Next-generation bright minds showcase science and engineering innovation

Hundreds of aspiring scientists and engineers will soon descend on the University of Tasmania to present the culmination of months of experimentation and examination.

The Science Investigation Awards is an annual state-wide competition challenging students in years 5-12 to present a ‘hypothesis’ from the themes of physical sciences, agricultural sciences, marine, environmental, health and fitness and engineering.

After time in and out of the classroom testing theories, students will present their findings through written reports and displays at state-wide judging events.

North-West Coordinator Cate Rejman from the Cradle Coast campus said the competition, known in the region as the Science and Engineering Investigation Awards, provides an important learning opportunity for students in a fun setting.

“The awards offer students an authentic experience of being a scientist, with the judging process allowing them to engage with other scientists, engineers and industry professionals who volunteer their time,” Ms Rejman said.

“Projects are judged on a number of criteria including scientific thought, originality, thoroughness, technical skills and presentation on the day. Judges also take into consideration the ‘real life’ application of the investigation and outcomes.

“The depth and breadth of projects entered for 2017 is amazing at all year levels, and covers everything from the impact of oil spills on marine life to environments in which bacteria grow at the fastest rate, through to the effects of acid rain on fashion.”

Professor Brian Yates, Dean of the University’s Faculty of Science, Engineering and Technology, said the awards also encourage participants to start thinking about future opportunities and careers in the STEM disciplines.

“Students are invited to discover science and engineering, and beyond that, we hope they are inspired to start considering higher education in these fields, particularly as they engage with our campuses,” Professor Yates said.
“Earlier this year, Lachlan Dick, the 2016 Burnie Young Engineer, was placed first in the Tasmanian Science Talent Search, before being named as a finalist in the BHP Billiton CSIRO Science and Engineering competition, allowing him to represent Australia at the INTEL International Science and Engineering Fair in Los Angeles.

“We are proud to see that for many entrants, the awards are just the beginning of their academic journey and excitingly, Lachlan is now a first-year Bachelor of Science student with our institution.”

Each awards event is divided into a presentation day and an awards evening.

The competition is supported by local industry and community organisations which have generously donated cash prizes for each event. In the North-West, the awards are presented in partnership with the BIG Committee. The Tasmanian Women in Agriculture support the awards state-wide.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES:

NORTH
Tuesday, 5 September
9.30am – 1pm
Old café space and Sir Raymond Ferrall Centre, University of Tasmania
Newnham campus

Contact: Jessi Mostogl 0437 956 158

NORTH-WEST
Thursday, 7 September
9.30am – 1pm
Cradle Coast campus, 16 – 20 Mooreville Road, Burnie (Years 7 - 12)
Burnie Primary School, 15A Van Diemens Crescent, Burnie (Years 5 – 6)

Contact: Cate Rejman, 0407 112 090

For the first time in the competition, the Cradle Coast campus will host a public-viewing opportunity of shortlisted projects on Thursday, 7 September, between 2pm-5pm at Mooreville Road. Media representatives are also invited to the evening awards event, which commences at 6.30pm with 2016 Young Engineer Lachlan Dick to deliver a guest speaker address.

SOUTH
Thursday, 14 September
11am – 12.30pm
Activities Centre, University of Tasmania Sandy Bay campus

Contact: Dr Adele Wilson 0449 013 689

Information released by:
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