

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Tuesday, 23 August 2016

Showcase of scientific minds in state-wide student competition

Hundreds of young aspiring scientists are ready to converge on the University of Tasmania for a prestigious competition this week.

The annual Science Investigation Awards challenge Year 5-12 students to investigate a scientific hypothesis of their choice from one of the following themes: Agricultural Science, Engineering, Environmental and Marine, Physical Sciences and Health and Fitness.

After many months of experimentation and putting theories to the test, the competition culminates in three judging events in each region of the state, where the students present their projects as individuals or in groups to academic and industry experts.

Jeannie-Marie LeRoi, Manager, Community and Student Engagement within the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Technology, said the awards were designed to encourage students to further study science, while also inspiring them to consider a career in the discipline.

“Students will be engaging with representatives from industry, education and research, allowing them to gain insight into a world of career opportunities which stem from science,” Ms LeRoi said.

“This year there are almost 50 schools participating state-wide, a substantial increase from last year which shows the interest from students and teachers is growing. Beyond that, there has been a substantial level of continued community support, particularly in the North-West where the awards originally began.”

Professor Brian Yates, Dean of the University’s Faculty of Science, Engineering and Technology, said the awards allowed students to discover the diversity of science, and that a number of participants had gone on to make their mark on science nationally and overseas.

“The awards are a wonderful way of recognising the science projects of school students from across Tasmania. These students have developed really intriguing

research questions and they have put a lot of work and time into their scientific investigations which will be visually presented through reports and posters,” Professor Yates said.

“Last year we saw Hannah Sutton, a 2015 Science Investigation Award winner, securing first place at the BHP Billiton Science and Engineering Awards for her project indicating a chemical from the skin glands of tree frogs could be used as a possible treatment for Alzheimer’s disease. A 2014 Science Investigation Award winner, Melissa Gerwin, placed second in the national competition for that year, and both have gone on to represent Australia at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel ISEF) in the USA.”

Each judging event or ‘presentation day’ is followed by a public awards evening.

The Science Investigation Awards are presented in partnership with the BIG Committee (North-West program) and the Tasmanian Women in Agriculture (North, North-West, and Southern program).

The awards are also supported by individual and business sponsors, who have generously donated cash prizes.

MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES:

NORTH

Thursday, 25 August 2016

9.30am-1pm

The Academy of the Arts, University of Tasmania Inveresk campus

NORTH-WEST

Thursday, 1 September 2016

9.30am-1pm

University of Tasmania Cradle Coast campus

SOUTH

Thursday, 15 September 2016

9.30am-1pm

Activities Centre, University of Tasmania Sandy Bay campus

For more information on the day contact:

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