

Community News

St Mary's stuns at UTAS science competition



Lucy Eade, from St Marys College, has designed a piece of technology which detects when a child's backpack is over the safe carrying weight limit.

ST Mary's College students have raised the bar at this year's University of Tasmania Science and Engineering Investigation Awards.

Year 10 students Sophie Williams and Lucy Eade have both produced projects dedicated to serving a higher purpose than just science inquiry.

Sophie, a fourth-time participant at the awards, has used her project to investigate the flooding in Hobart earlier this year.

"I was really curious to look into what happened to our ecosystems in the rivers surrounding Hobart after the flooding," she said.

Sophie has conducted a multi-stressor investigation looking at the effects of flood events on plant and fungi growth in rivers.

She tested combinations of light, salinity and nutrient levels to

test what in the river was most affected by the floods.

"The biggest effect was light because algae goes through photosynthesis, meaning it requires light to grow," Sophie said.

"When a flood occurs, there is a lot of sediment that goes into rivers and affects the ability of light to get through into the river.

"This means that photosynthesis cannot occur and algae in the river cannot grow.

"Because algae is at the bottom of the food chain, if it's affected, everything else in the river ecosystem will be affected."

Sophie hopes her work will show how flood debris needs to be cleared from rivers in order to keep their ecosystems operating healthily.

Lucy Eade has taken

a completely different path with her entry this year.

"My design is all about how children are carrying backpacks over the safe weight limit, and how this is having really bad effects on their health and body," she said.

"There is a lot of research into how children are getting bad back injuries and the impact on their spines because they are carrying backpacks over the safe limit."

Lucy conducted a survey within her school to see whether or not her peers were carrying overweight backpacks.

"I discovered that 87 per cent of the students I surveyed were carrying backpacks over the safe limit," she said.

Lucy has used this research to develop a prototype solution.

"I've developed a system which detects

when the weight is over the safe limit and informs the user whether or not the backpack is safe to wear," she said.

"The safe backpack weight is 10 per cent of your body weight."

Lucy has written up a design for her project and believes it could be beneficial technology for schools.

"With a budget and more expensive hardware, the system could be further developed for schools," she said.

"I think right now the most important thing is getting the education into schools around it.

"I was so surprised about the severe health effects from this and decided that something needed to be done about it."

Lucy's project has potential to be developed into a business of ground-breaking technology.



Photo credit: City of Hobart.

One person's trash is another's treasure

HOBART locals will have a chance to spring clean their homes and clear out unwanted goods for the upcoming Garage Sale Trail weekend at the end of October.

Garage Sale Trail is a weekend of garage sales across Australia, held on 20 and 21 October 2018.

It encourages people, businesses, schools and

community groups to give their unused goods another life instead of sending them to the tip.

It's a fun way to turn household clutter into cash and a great way to meet people in the Hobart community.

Last year, there were more than 15,400 garage sales held nationwide.

Sixty-seven per cent of people involved in the

event became more conscious about waste and their role in reducing it.

There are two ways to get involved in the 2018 Garage Sale Trail event – you can organize a Garage Sale Trail in your area or visit garage sales to meet people in your community and enjoy finding new treasures.

For more information, visit hobartcity.com.au/garagesaletrail.

CITY OF HOBART

2019 AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS NOMINATIONS

- Citizen of the Year
- Young Citizen of the Year
- Community Event of the Year

Do you know an unsung hero who has made a contribution to the community? Do you know a young person who is deserving of recognition? Has your club or association organised an outstanding event?

The City of Hobart invites nominations for the 2019 Australia Day Awards. The awards recognise outstanding personal achievements and contributions to the local community and an outstanding community event.

Entry Forms are available from the **Hobart Council Centre**, 16 Elizabeth Street, Hobart
Telephone: **6238 2100** or
Website: hobartcity.com.au/AusDayAwards



Entries close: Friday 19 October 2018

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