Fostering the talent of our valley's youth

SEPTMBER is Rotary Youth Month and for Taree North Rotary this is proving to be a time for fostering the talent of the youth in our valley.

At the dinner meeting held earlier this month, the club hosted the first round of a public speaking competition.

Three students, all from Chatham High School, competed.

The first speaker, Samantha Hamilton chose the topic: Environmental Tribalism. A Dubbo native spoke on the Gongski Report and Cecilia Sendah named her speech, 'The Truth about Boat People'.

Samantha will now progress to the cluster round to be held later in the year.

The district public speaking competition is sponsored by Actually Travel 196 based in Newcastle and Armidale which will provide return air travel to New Zealand during 2014.

The winner will be hosted by Rotary families while in New Zealand.

The same evening the club also celebrated the centenary of the Taree North Rotary Club, following her acceptance of a student, as a student to the 2014 National Youth Science Foundation. Jessica will attend session C to be held in Canberra from January 20 until February 1 2014.

Jessica is a year 11 student at Taree High School. She undertakes advanced English, advanced math, chemistry, biology, PHYS 1A, modern history and extension English.

She enjoys reading, cooking, public speaking and debate and for fun, Jessica dances with the Carcoar School of Dance and has done so for 10 years.

She loves to play the saxophone and clarinet and is a member of the MNS band, 'Rockers' and participates in the school band in both dance and instrumental.

She also has a keen interest in creative and performing arts.

Singing-wise Jessica plays in the Taree and District softball competition. She works part-time as a pharmacy assistant at Chemmart, is a qualified peer literacy tutor and does volunteer work as a year seven peer support officer.

Her favourite hobby is a combination of biology and chemistry.

She sees her profession somewhere in the health professions.

This year the NYSF program requires Jessica to attend an orientation in October in preparation for the Canberra experience in February.

She is also required to develop a CV and an application for her 'dream job'.

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