

NATIONAL YOUTH SCIENCE FORUM 2023
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, MONDAY 5 DECEMBER 2022

Good morning to you all and I warmly welcome you to Government House. May I congratulate the Tasmanian Year 11 students participating in the National Youth Science Forum in January 2023.

I pay my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community and recognise their continued connection to land, sea, and waters. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I commit to a future that listens to and respects Aboriginal stories, culture and history.

May I acknowledge among us:

- Rotary Tasmania District Governor Bob Calvert
- Past District Governor Paul Grubb,
- Stephen Porter, NYSF State Chair
- Emeritus Professor Brian Yates, UTAS former Dean of Science
- Rosemary Anderson, President, Australian Science Teachers Association
- Selection Panel members

May I also welcome all the parents and friends, who have joined us today for this NYSF forum.

It is a considerable honour for the seven Tasmanian students selected for this prestigious national annual science, technology, engineering and mathematics experience hosted by the Australian National University. The students have been selected on merit from across Tasmania.

I invite you to express your congratulations to:

- Rori Coote, Ulverstone Secondary College [applause]
- Lucas Hetebry, Rosny College [applause]
- Sam King, Launceston College [applause]
- Benjamin Kings, Claremont College [applause]
- Tim Le, Elizabeth College [applause]
- Thomas Petty, The Friends' School [applause] and
- Caitlin Wilson, Geneva Christian College [applause]

The Year 12 Program began in 1984 and is carefully designed to develop and support your engagement in the STEM fields. Your Year 12 program gives you a unique taster of study and career pathways in science, technology, engineering and maths. You all meet real life role models and obtain hands-on experiences.

Your STEM Hubs, site tours, lab visits, and lectures will provide you with an enviable academic opportunity. The National Youth Science Forum is designed precisely to be a whole-of-life experience. And I understand that there is a terrific social side to it, as well.

I expect you have seen on the website some of the comments made by your 2023 Chiefs of Staff, Libby, Aadya and Isaac. I shall mention a few here, because, as former participants, their personal experiences can give you insights about the NYSF program.

So – Libby, who attended about four years ago, said: “Every day this program continues to influence my life in ways that surprise me ... My advice for all incoming NYSFers would be to go in with your mind and eyes open. It is best not to have too many expectations as each day will be a surprise!”

Aadya said: “There are few things quite as energising as surrounding yourself with people who care and want to do better by the world. NYSF is an exceptional opportunity to do just that: to learn from passionate people and to let yourself be excited by it ...

And Isaac said: “NYSF is one of the most fantastic, horizon-broadening, science-learning, friend-making, and fun-having programs that you will do ... NYSF is not something we can give to you, it is an opportunity you claim for yourself. So take it and run, in no time you'll be shocked how far you've gone!”

These are hugely encouraging testimonials. You will become part of a group of more than 12,000 young Australians experiencing the NYSF Year 12 Program.

Rotary has supported the NYSF since the very beginning. Today, Rotarians continue to support the NYSF Year 12 Program promoting opportunities in local communities, managing applications, selecting students, assisting with funding and fundraising for student fees.

May I acknowledge and offer my thanks to all in Tasmania’s Rotary District 9830 who support our Tasmanian students to pursue their academic endeavors in the STEM fields.

I also acknowledge parents for your encouragement and support, for what is a really significant achievement for a Year 11 student. I also note that our State has a notable NYSF presence, despite our comparatively small population.

I think it is time we all have a cup of tea and meet each other. I also invite you to look at some of our historic State Rooms. And, because you are all STEM students with a love of statistics, here are a few for you to absorb:

- The State Rooms are 165 years old
- There are 73 rooms in Government House
- The three chandeliers in the Ball Room each have four thousand one hundred pieces of glass in them
- The Government House Estate is 15 hectares.

We shall, of course, test you on all these stats before you leave.

Thank you!