

EXCEL News September 2019

EMILY WINS SADA'S 'MOST VALUED YEAR 8/9 DEBATER' AWARD!

On Sunday 22 September, at the SA Debating Association's Grand Final Debates at the District Court, Justice Doyle presented our Year 8 Debater, Emily, with the SA Debating Association's 'Most Valued Year 8/9 Debater' Award. This is a real achievement as Emily only learnt to debate this year. Congratulations, Emily!

YEAR 8/9 EXCEL STUDENTS AT YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

On Monday 23 September, 22 Year 8/9 EXCEL students joined 110 Year 7-12 students from eight local schools at the second annual Youth Leadership Conference, run by the City of Tea Tree Gully Youth Leadership Team in the Golden Grove Arts Theatre.

The Conference began with a Video Effects Producer from Adelaide's Rising Sun Pictures movie studio, Ian Cope, inspiring students by showing the blockbuster movies their studio has produced, outlining the opportunities that exist in Adelaide for those interested in creating animation and video effects for films, and advising students to seek a career path in life that inspires them.

Then there was an ice-breaking get-to-know-you game of People Bingo, which encouraged our students to meet and mingle with students at other tables from other schools.

After a yummy recess of cupcakes, two of our GGHS debaters – Mia (Year 8) and Matthew (Year 9) – took part in the Secret Topic debate (after only 10 minutes' preparation) on the challenging topic: "We become most powerful when we give our power away." It was later announced that the affirmative team – Matthew's team – won the debate.

Then students looked at a list of 24 Character Strengths and identified the five that they believe they show most often. They were advised to 'build upon their strengths' when taking on leadership roles.

Then table groups got creative with craft materials in a 'Shape your Community' activity. Grace (Year 9) and Abbey (Year 9) took to the stage to present their table groups' creations to the audience. Grace's group's theme was 'Dream Big!' They created a family-friendly theme park, so that people could leave technology at home and ride in cloud-shaped Ferris Wheel carriages, 'dreaming big' with their head in the clouds. Abbey's table group's theme was 'Creating an Event'. They created 'Santa's Helpers', a Charity Carols Night, with free performances by local choirs and dance troupes donating their time, donated food, and gift donations - for children in hospitals and with mental health disorders and those without a family with whom to celebrate Christmas - under the Christmas Tree.



Emily, above, pictured with her award.





YEAR 8/9 EXCEL STUDENTS AT YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE CONT..

After a pizza lunch, students watched an inspiring video that emphasised that, even if you don't believe that you can change the world, it is important to "do something for somebody". This introduced a presentation by Jayne Shortt from St Vincent de Paul, who explained that Vinnies' main role is to "feed the poor, house the homeless and clothes those who need it". Students learnt how people come to experience homelessness through events like marriage breakdown and natural disasters, like bushfires. They learnt the surprising fact that 25% of homeless people are children and teenagers. Then students had to agree on which 3 of the things pictured – computers, mobile phones, purse/wallet, charger, school books, clothes, sleeping bags, keys, PlayStation, food, water, pets, medication – would be most important to take with them as they flee their home in a crisis. Jayne's take-away message was: "When you help someone else, you actually change their world."

Then a CTTG Youth Leader, Alysha, shared a personal example of how you can help someone. When her younger sister, Grace, had a brain tumour, Alysha not only shaved her head to raise money for her, but via a tweet, which led to thousands of re-tweets, she arranged a visit by Katy Perry to Grace's house when Grace was going to miss out on Katy Perry's Adelaide concert! Grace was 'Katy's biggest fan'. We saw a video of Katy Perry's visit to Grace's house.

After some singing and dancing to Cardio Karaoke, with Abbey, Claudia, Kiely, Lauren and Matthew representing GGHS on stage, current CCTG Youth Leaders, Trent and Hannah, talked about the Youth Leadership Program 2020.

All of our students agreed that the Leadership Day was lots of fun – and they learnt some Leadership skills too!

Sue Lyons
EXCEL Extension Learning Leader



Santas' Helpers' Creation, above

