



Focus on events and people in our community

A taste of higher education

MANNING Valley students got a taste of the wonders of higher learning during a big day of educational presentations at Chatham High School on Wednesday.

The school hosted 140 students for their Wow Day, a day of learning split up into nine education sessions of different areas such as agriculture, drama and art.

One of the nine featured a Dino Dig session facilitated by Newcastle University students, which focused on all things pre-historic.

The day was tailored for both primary school students preparing to enter high school, and high school students with aspirations of one day attending university.

Harrington Public School student Isabelle Knaack was one of the many primary school students who were experiencing what high school learning holds for her during her next six years of education.

The year six student immersed herself in the Dino Dig session and was proof of the old adage that you truly do learn something new every day.

"Something I didn't know was that to find out the length of the dinosaur's leg from toe to hip, you measure the foot and times it by four," she said.

"We also learnt about how their bones join together and why."

Of all the dinosaurs, Isabelle had a clear favourite.

"T-Rex, because nothing else tries to hunt it and it doesn't get killed."

Isabelle will start her first year of high school in 2015 and is already studying maths at a year seven level.

Taking part in the Wow Day gave her an experience of what to expect at high school, something she couldn't wait to experience.

"I'm looking forward to learning about marine life and hands-on things like cooking and woodwork," she said.

University of Newcastle's Kिरिलы Stokes helped to co-ordinate the Wow Day, and said it helped with the transition for students into higher levels of education.

"Chatham High School and the University of Newcastle are patron schools for the Aim High program and we've offered the activities as part of the high school's transition program," she said.

"We're exposing them to maths and science and current university students and we also had two scientists, an engineer, a psychologist and a mathematician hosting sessions.

"The program is about increasing the awareness and aspiration for higher education."

Chatham High School deputy principal Manfred Sonntag said the Wow Day was pivotal prepara-



Harrington Public School student Isabelle Knaack learns all about dinosaurs during the Dino Dig session at Chatham High School's Wow Day.

tion for the complete transition through a young person's educational life.

"What we're promoting is a transition from K-12 and to university, rather than being sepa-

rate, and introducing students to university when they're in years five and six."

Chatham High School plan to host their second Wow Day next Wednesday.

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