

ON YOUR MARKS: TOP HSC STUDENTS HONOURERED ON TUESDAY

Premier Kristina Keneally and Minister for Education and Training Verity Firth congratulated 119 outstanding students who achieved first place in HSC courses this year.

The students, who came first in 111 HSC courses, were today recognised at an award ceremony at the Australian Technology Park in Sydney.

This year, 69,261 students sat the HSC, the largest group ever to complete Year 12 in NSW.

Some remarkable stories of this year's list of HSC first place winners include:

- A student who has been blind since she was five and completed her HSC with special Braille papers;
- 22 students from regional areas;
- Three students achieving first place in two courses;
- Two students who are only 15 years old; and
- First-ever first place awards for new HSC subjects – Automotive and



Eleni Asimakopoulou and Cathy Mountoulas

Electrotechnology.

"Each year when HSC results come out, we see a wide range of students from schools right across the state achieving at the highest levels," Ms Keneally said.

"Regardless of where you live or what school you attend, the HSC provides a real opportunity for students from all walks of life to achieve.

"We can all take pride that we have a system where hard work and achievement is recognised and rewarded, where

every student has the opportunity to achieve their goals.

"I'd like to congratulate each and every one of these students for their fantastic results."

This year's outstanding students are from schools across Sydney and regional NSW, including the Illawarra, the Hunter, Canberra and the Blue Mountains, as well as Albury, Bowral, Cobar, Dubbo, Gosford, Goulburn, Henty, Kiama, Lismore, Nowra and Wagga Wagga.

Minister Firth paid tribute to the important role students' teachers and families played in their success.

"They have been the guides for many students on this journey and it's a pleasure to thank them for their support and commitment," Ms Firth said.

Results are available since Wednesday by Internet, telephone and SMS text message from 6am tomorrow.

"Tens of thousands of HSC students are expected to view their results within hours of the services opening," Ms Firth said.

"The pre-Christmas release of results allows all students, including those in rural or remote areas of NSW, to access their HSC results as early as possible."

Students can access their results:

- Through the internet service at www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

- By typing in their student number and PIN

- By pre-registering for the SMS service. Students need to text-message their student number and PIN to 0427 659 900. A return text message to the student confirms they have registered for the service and the results will be sent to their mobile phone at approximately 6am on 16 December

- By using the automated telephone service. Students call 1300 669 248 and follow the voice prompts. They will be given information about the cost of the call and asked to enter their student number and PIN.

A range of support services is also available since Wednesday to provide advice to students.

Students with inquiries about their Higher School Certificate results can ring the HSC Examination Inquiry Centre on 13 11 12 for the cost of a local telephone call from anywhere in NSW. The Department of Education and Training will offer a free Careers Advisory Service for all students via telephone 1300 300 687 or e-mail careers@det.nsw.edu.au.

Junior literary giants

LEWIS Carroll had Wonderland and J.K. Rowling had Hogwarts.

Now, a group of budding writers from Connells Point Public School are working towards literary legacies of their own.

The school had the highest number of finalists in St George and Sutherland Shire for the recent Sydney Youth Writing Competition, and the four students hope to make writing a career.

The inspiration for their entries came from a mixed

bag of sources - from the Victorian bushfires, to tigers, nightmares and pollution.

"When you can't say something, it is good to write it down," Year 6 student Bernice Chung said.

Her classmate Jade Fodera said the competition gave students a chance to show their writing skills outside of the classroom.

"I love writing, I want to do it for my whole life," she said. The four students had their work published in a



Write stuff: Budding authors Madeleine Maganas (left), Jade Fodera, Ashleigh Ford and Bernice Chung.

book called Shadow and Rock, a collection of this year's best entries.

Bernice said they were all proud to see their work in print. "Some authors have to

wait until they grow up a bit before getting their book published," she said.

Picture: Chris Lane
BY Alicia Wood

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