Duke of Edinburgh Award 2013

The Duke of Edinburgh Award is an international leadership in action program. It is all about personal challenge, fun, adventure and a chance to learn new skills whilst helping others.

This Award program was established at Swansea High School by Mrs Hine in 2007 and to date has involved over 150 students graduating with either their Bronze or Silver Award. The leadership program motivates young people to set challenges for themselves and pursue a physical recreation activity, learn a new skill, volunteer in the community and complete two outdoor adventures.

The adventurous journey section of the Award involves students meeting regularly and gaining new skills in outdoor education areas such as navigation, map reading, wilderness first aid, planning and preparation for expeditions, group management and team building skills. These training days are crucial in building confidence and capacity amongst participants.

Swansea High DOE program is coordinated by staff members Mr Jason Tait and Mr Michael Casey with support from Miss Olivia Thompson. These staff members have a passion and enthusiasm for the outdoors which they have passed on to participating SHS students. Mr James Norman our school Chaplain is also a strong supporter of the adventurous journey section of the award, assisting with training, providing transport and coordinating activities when on camp.

Fundraising by award participants with some financial support from the P&C has assisted with the purchase of 15 new backpacks and personal safety and navigational equipment.

Participants enjoy one overnight hike to complete their adventurous journey award. Students experience hiking in Dharug National Park, located near Wiseman’s Ferry. Students camped at the Mill Creek and Ten Mile Hollow campsites and walked the historic Old North Road which is the original convict built road between Sydney and Newcastle.

In 2013, 20 students successfully completed their training and qualifying expeditions in gaining their Bronze Award. 2013 also saw a number of participants successfully fulfil the requirements to complete their Silver Award. The camps were a great success whereby students demonstrated their skills in navigation, leadership and teamwork.

The popularity of the DOE program will continue into the future, providing opportunities for SHS students to acquire and develop new skills, use their initiative to problem solve and improve self esteem. It is hoped that these qualities assist SHS students become more confident and capable community members.