



UNIVERSITY *of*
TASMANIA

Tuesday, 17 September 2019

Double joy for Children's University grads

Twins Milla and Tai Harris do not have many common interests, but they do share an enthusiasm for Children's University Tasmania.

Milla and Tai, 8, will be among several sets of siblings from Spreyton Primary School who will be celebrating their learning achievements at the Children's University Tasmania graduation in Devonport TODAY (**Tuesday, 17 September**).

"Milla and Tai are quite different, but Children's University is one thing they do have in common, which is great," said their mother Sarah Harris.

"When the program became available at Spreyton Primary earlier this year, we jumped on board straight away.

"They have really enjoyed it, and since trying on their gowns a couple of weeks ago they have been really excited about graduating."

Sarah said the twins' involvement had been great for the whole family.

"We actually did a lot of learning outside of school anyway, so it has been nice for Tai and Milla to be recognised for that," she said.

"But there are other things we would not have known about or had not experienced in the past which Children's University has introduced us to.

"University Open Day, for example, was something we hadn't been to before, but we all had a lovely time."

Children's University Tasmania helps develop children into adaptable, lifelong learners by providing quality learning activities outside the classroom, and thereby builds bridges to employment and higher education.

The program – which is offered by the Peter Underwood Centre at the University of Tasmania – is now in 47 schools around the state and has close to 900 active members.

It has outgrown the capacity of three graduations in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie each year.

As a result, in 2019 there will be two graduations held in Hobart, while Devonport will host its inaugural Children's University graduation today.

Children's University Tasmania was extended to 10 schools on the North-West Coast last year, courtesy of a \$350,000 grant from the Tasmanian Community Fund.

One hundred and sixteen students from six primary schools – Devonport, East Devonport, Hillcrest, Miandetta, Spreyton and Wilmot – and Devonport High School will graduate today.

A procession beginning at 2pm will pass through the Rooke Street Mall, ahead of the official ceremony at the paranapple convention centre from 2:30pm.

Peter Underwood Centre Deputy Director, Dr Becky Shelley, said Children's University graduations were wonderful events and it was fantastic for Devonport to be part of the celebrations this year.

"We would encourage people in the Devonport CBD today to line the streets and show their support for the children and young people who are graduating," Dr Shelley said.

"The experience of the Harris family shows that when children and adults learn together, they are both enriched by the experience."

Media opportunities:

Who: Children's University Tasmania participants Milla and Tai Harris;
Interviews: Peter Underwood Centre Deputy Director Dr Becky Shelley
0417 314 842

When: 1:30pm, TODAY Tuesday, 17 September

Where: Rooke Street Mall (Stewart St end)

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