

Winners Announced: Retirement Commissioner's Schools' Competition Sponsored by Armstrong Jones

7 September 2000

James Hargest High School of Invercargill has won the overall prize in the Retirement Commissioner's Schools' Competition sponsored by Armstrong Jones.

Winners were announced at an awards ceremony at Parliament today hosted by the Hon Steve Maharey, Minister of Social Services and Employment.

Members of the winning team, Steven Sutton, Christopher Walsh, Helen Lindsay and Scott Donaldson submitted an assignment in which they had to consider New Zealand's ageing population and its likely economic, social and political impacts. Once the team had identified the key issues they developed a long-term retirement income policy for New Zealand which had to be fair, sustainable, affordable and have their community's support.

The Chair of the Judging Panel Angela Foulkes said the judges felt the team from James Hargest High School deserved the top Award because they demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the needs of their local community and wider New Zealand.

"As one of my fellow judges said, this team seemed to have an instinctive feel for the issue and the work they had done."

"We were hugely impressed by the quality of all the entries from schools. And those who are winners in all categories of the Competition are to be congratulated on their remarkable achievement." said Ms Foulkes.

Retirement Commissioner Colin Blair congratulated all competing students for their commitment to the challenge posed by the assignment, and said they had helped to improve understanding of retirement income issues in their school communities.

"As a result of the competition we have a significant number of students, and their local communities, who are much better informed on the issues. I'm sure they will now be more interested in participating in the future debate on this topic. That has to be a healthy outcome."

Paul Butler, judge and Chief Financial Officer with Armstrong Jones also praised the initiative as a positive way to engage younger New Zealanders in the issue.

“Ultimately, the most important thing is for all New Zealanders to focus on this issue – earlier rather than later. And to get everyone thinking of retirement in terms of ‘lifestyle change’ – not ‘survival’.” said Mr Butler.

For further information:

Liz Read

Communications Manager

Office of the Retirement Commissioner

Tel: 0-4-499 7396