

08 July 2026

Media Release:

Local students ignite their curiosity in science

Upper Hunter students bubbled with excitement at interactive science shows recently, exploring engineering, science and maths as part of the University of Newcastle's inspirational SMART (Science, Maths and Real Technology) program.

This science showcase forms part of a bigger tour visiting Upper Hunter schools over June to August including Singleton Public School, St James' Primary School, Muswellbrook and St Catherines Catholic College, Singleton.

The SMART program is jointly supported by long-term partners, Yancoal Australia's Mount Thorley Warkworth (MTW) and Ashton Coal mine operations.

The show's theme at Broke Public School was 'The Science of Space'. The students explored engineering, science and maths with interactive sessions involving a plasma globe, thermal camera and outer space volcano.

Students at Singleton Public School enjoyed the 'Forces in Action' show. It explored gravity, air resistance and spin forces in action involving a vortex cannon and mini rockets.

Megan Walker, SMART Program Team Leader, University of Newcastle recognised the excitement the visit brought to students.

"A passion for STEM starts at an early age. We want the SMART program to make science accessible, fun and relevant to help nurture the next generation of scientists, engineers and innovators.

"The hall was filled with cheers and excitement, which showed just how much the students enjoyed the experience. The budding scientists loved observing, predicting and participating in hands-on demonstrations that brought science to life.

"We would like to extend a big thank you to Yancoal for generously sponsoring this program and providing our students with this fantastic learning opportunity.

"We are committed to delivering high-quality, interactive science education that gives students the opportunity to explore, understand and to fall in love with the wonders of science," said Megan.

The SMART science shows are designed to captivate and educate primary school students, blending excitement with education in a way that resonates with young learners. Each show aims to be visually

stimulating and interactive, incorporating live demonstrations, audience participation and captivating explanations that make complex scientific concepts accessible and memorable.

The SMART team's approach is aligned with the K-6 Science and Technology syllabus (NSW), ensuring that its content not only entertains but also complements the curriculum.

SMART is one of the longest running outreach programs delivered by the University of Newcastle's College of Engineering, Science and Environment, alongside the Science and Engineering Challenge. SMART offers a variety of programs aimed at inspiring students to explore future careers in science and engineering.

MTW General Manager Cris Shadbolt was proud to help fund this incredible program for another year.

"The SMART science shows provide students with a fantastic opportunity to get involved in science and mathematics, and real technology related activities in a meaningful and hands on way.

"We are pleased to support a program that gets students excited about STEM at a young age, helping them open their minds to a career in mining and engineering," said Cris.

For more information, please visit: www.newcastle.edu.au/smart

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