



Rangi Ruru Girls' School

20 June 2013

International Future Problem Solving Winner Arriving Home Tomorrow

A Year 8 Rangi Ruru student has placed third in the world for her division in the International Future Problem Solving competition in the United States.

Megan Blackwood (12 years) represented both Rangi Ruru Girls' School and FPSNZ at the competition, the topic for which was the Global Status of Women.

Sue Williams, who coached Megan to her win, says the achievement is significant and she is immensely proud of Megan's success.

"The competition was fierce and Megan remained focussed and applied all of her learning to the problem posed, which was a scenario based on the topic and set thirty years in the future," she says.

FPS is an extension programme which this year has been running for one hour per week within class time at Rangi Ruru.

"The programme is exciting and challenging, with students working in teams of four or in Megan's case as an individual. Over the course of the year they are posed with different topics (one per term) and they love the challenge and working it through to an outcome," says Williams.

Megan is aware that snow is forecast for the region before she arrives home but has not given the potential problem any consideration, as far as possible airport closure goes.

"If we can't get in to Christchurch, maybe they'll divert us to somewhere warmer; I don't see any problem with that!" she says.

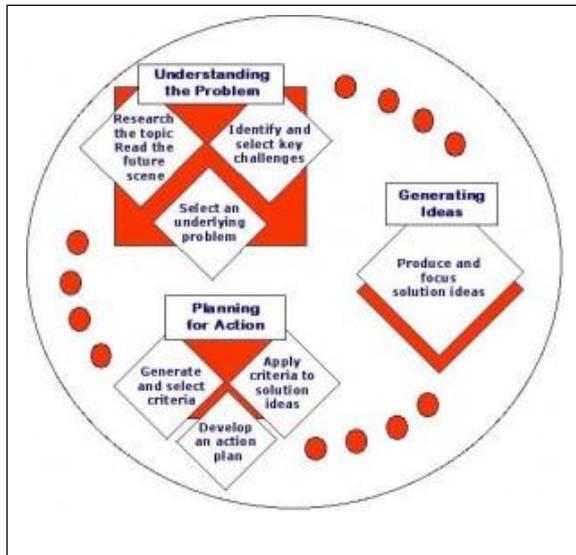
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For any additional information, please contact Ali Jones on 027 247 3112.

Note: Megan will arrive at Christchurch international Airport (weather permitting!) at 9.05am on Friday 21 June and will be met by a group of her school friends.

Background: The process of FPS is:

After researching the topic, students are presented with a one-page futuristic scenario, the 'future scene' which extrapolates existing trends and adds futuristic elements. They research the topic in depth, then learn and apply the six-step future problem solving process.



'It does change your view of the world. It makes you more world-aware. You read articles and people discussing the ethical dilemmas or robotics on the BBC website, and you can go, 'Hey, we've been through all of this already! I know what everyone is talking about' and you do become a much better thinker. – Senior Student

At Rangi Ruru, FPS is an extension programme that this year has been running for one hour per week within class time. The programme is exciting and challenging, with students working in teams of four or in Megan's case as an individual. Over the course of the year they are presented with different topics

(one per term). For each topic students research and then base their thinking around a futuristic, topic scenario.

The team completes a booklet per topic, in which they identify, analyse and then creatively solve problems posed in the scenario. As a coach I teach and guide the students as they master the skills and the processes involved. Each team/ individual booklet is then evaluated against booklets from other competing schools within New Zealand. The booklet completed towards the end of term three without teacher assistance and in only two hours, is the qualifying booklet for NZ finals. The National Final is held in Auckland early in term 4.

There are five topics available every year but most students will only research three of these. One topic is reserved for National Finals and the other is reserved for the International Competition. The topics are chosen from a world-wide ballot of FPS students. Topics are always based on current issues. Topics have included Nanotechnology, Freedom, Fads, Medical Ethics, Organ Donation and Entertainment.

Megan's booklet at the end of term 3 was selected so that she attended the national competition in Auckland last year. She went on to win the Individual Booklet in the Junior division of FPS.

Megan has been working on research and preparing for the International Competition with her coach Sue Williams since the topic was announced in term one this year. The topic was the **Global Status of Women**. The same process is followed at the International Competition. A lock up situation -2 hours to read the future scenario, follow the 6 step process and creative solve the problem identified. Megan came 3rd!