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CHAMPION COLUMN

Institute helps pave the pathway to success

SOUTH-WEST Sydney is the strongest growing region in western Sydney, with 32 per cent population growth since 1991 and an expected 200,000 new residents in the next 20 years.

However, the region has lower levels of knowledge occupations, and higher levels of trades, with less than half the proportion of the population having a degree compared with the Sydney average.

In the south-western Sydney region more than 60 per cent of students were of language backgrounds other than English, which also presents further challenges.

To address these social issues and give back to the local community, the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research's Pathways to Success program will assist high schools in Liverpool, Campbelltown, Bankstown and Fairfield from years 10-12

by giving them knowledge and hands-on experience to advance their careers in the field of health, science and medicine.

The program will promote medicine, nursing and medical research as career options. It offers specialised talks and career seminars with young researchers, medical professionals and nursing educators and vocational assistance.

Students participating in the Pathways to Success program are encouraged to enter the Science Poster Competition. Entries are open to year 9, 10 and 11 students who can base their posters on any science topic they wish.

Winners of each school will receive a \$50 gift voucher from the Co-Op Bookshop and the top five overall winners of the competition will have the opportunity to present their work in front of Australia's top scientists and medical researchers at the South West Sydney Annual research Showcase in June 2017.

Last year's winner of the poster competition from the Liverpool/Fairfield district was Maryam Al Wakeela (pictured left), a refugee who arrived in Australia just two years ago.

After attending a local high school, Maryam very quickly learned English and won the competition. She now intends to pursue a career in medical science.

Chief Operating Officer at the Ingham Institute, Associate Professor Greg Kaplan said: "As a community-driven medical research facility the Ingham Institute wants to encourage more students to take up STEM subjects to help build on the progress we have made to date."

More on Pathways to Success: inghaminstitute.org.au.

