

ZONTA CLUB OF HOBART INC
RECEPTION TO MARK UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR
WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SCIENCE
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
DRAWING ROOM, WEDNESDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2024

Good evening, everyone, and a very warm welcome to Government House for this reception to mark United Nations International Day for Women and Girls in Science. We shall also present awards on behalf of the Zonta Club of Hobart.

I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose Country we gather, who flourished on Country as part of the South-East Nation of Aboriginal people. We honour them, and today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community, as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their enduring culture and continued connection to land, sea, and waters.

The existence of international days predates the establishment of the United Nations. The UN has embraced them as a powerful tool to raise awareness of issues that the General Assembly considers important.¹ This year is the 9th International Day for Women and Girls in Science. It is held on 11 February. It was instituted to recognise that 'full and equal access to, and participation in, science, technology and innovation for women and girls of all ages is imperative for achieving gender equity and empowerment'.²

Zonta International is an organisation that stands for women's rights. One of the ways that Zonta expands opportunities for women and girls is through international education programs. The Zonta Foundation supported an International Women in Technology Scholarship in 2019 and 2021. In 2022, the International Board voted to continue the Scholarship. It was subsequently named the Zonta International Women in STEM Scholarship. Recipients receive US\$5000 from Zonta International

¹ <https://www.un.org/en/observances> accessed 5 Feb 24

² <https://www.un.org/en/observances/women-and-girls-in-science-day> accessed 5 Feb 24

to further their study at a tertiary level, mostly as postgraduates. In 2023, some 30 women from 20 countries were awarded Scholarships to study mathematics, computer science, engineering, psychology, and biology, amongst other specialisations.

Zonta Hobart also recognised the need to support women earlier in their studies to enable them to be eligible for tertiary grants. So, Zonta Hobart has provided funding for an annual scholarship to enable a student to complete pre-tertiary units that may lead to further study and a career in STEM.

I congratulate all involved with Zonta Hobart, and especially this scholarship. It demonstrates that you are working to improve the lives of girls and women.

We are here to celebrate the International Day of Women and Girls in Science and to award the scholarship. We shall also award certificates recognising the finalists in the scholarship selection process.

David ...

[OS invites Zonta President Jill Taylor to present recipients to HE]

On conclusion:

Let's have another round of applause for our wonderful recipients.

And now, I invite you all to join Don and me for some refreshments.