



THE WAY

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YMCA SPACE CAMP

Addison Evans-Wilkinson recaps his time at the YMCA Space Camp in Canberra.

YMCA Space Camp

By Addison Evans-Wilkinson

In the September holidays, I had the privilege of attending the YMCA Space Camp in Canberra. This was a five-day residential program where we got to learn all about space and meet real scientists including some who work for NASA. I made lots of new friends and got to experience a range of fascinating activities. On day one, we headed off to Tibindilla, to visit the deep space observatory, where we got to see the dish that broadcasted the first moon landing. Then we went to Mt Stromlo to look through several different telescopes such as, a solar telescope in which we saw a few sun spots on the sun, the MSAT telescope, through which we saw the moon, which looked like golf ball, and Saturn, which was absolutely beautiful.

Day two saw us heading off to UNSW to experience a cool aeronautics program in which we saw several ideas to get man to mars. We also got to test rockets and fin positioning on those rockets

by launching them and doing previous calculations of their expected height. On day three, we left the campsite for Geospatial Intelligence, which is a government authorization collecting rocks and meteorites for studying. They also work with public use satellites such as GPS and television networks. An exciting trip to Questacon was on the cards for that afternoon. Day four was 'Drone Boot Camp', in which we learnt about all the different types and sizes of drones plus the laws around flying drones, then we got to fly them. After lunch we went and began using a program similar to scratch, to program our own little robots to go up popcorn placed on a strategic line and return the popcorn to us. My group were the first to finish and we won a small bucket of chocolate-caramel popcorn.

Day five was the Space Camp Film Festival. I didn't get to enter the competition but the films that other students submitted were amazing. After that we had to say our goodbyes, receive our medals and gift bags and then leave.

Overall, space camp was an amazing experience, and I highly recommend it to anyone interested in space, robots or drones. It was so much fun and I got to meet new people and learn all at the same time.
