Drawing on bank of skills pays off

Andrea Johnston

ONE of Australia’s most senior chief executives gave two St Philip’s College students a boost when he congratulated them on their success in a recent business competition.

NAB boss Andrew Thorburn met Year 12 students Jethro Tessman and Jett Ashdale on Tuesday, along with their teacher, Jake Bailey.

“It was pretty cool. I didn’t realise we’d meet someone so high up in the business world,” Mr Ashdale said.

The pair spoke to Mr Thorburn about their part in the $20 Boss competition, which won them the title of Best Business Award in the NT contest last year.

They attracted the attention of judges with their boot camp, a fitness program for teachers, which they set up with another friend, Jake Bailey.

The trio raised $300, after starting with just $20, in the competition, which was developed by NAB in partnership with the Foundation for Young Australians.

“It’s great to see young people with energy and drive,” Mr Thorburn said. “The $20 Boss program gives them encouragement and a framework and I think they got a lot of pleasure out of getting their teachers to do burpees and sit-ups.”

Mr Tessman said: “To meet someone of such a high calibre and to hear him praise us on what we’ve done was pretty incredible.”

He gave us his business card.”

Business, enterprise and accounting teacher Susan McCowan said she’d pushed the students to get involved after winning a similar competition herself.

“Going away and being part of it, being selected and winning really instilled things in me that 15 years later I still carry with me,” Ms McCowan said.

Schools can register for this year’s $20 Boss competition by visiting www.fya.org.au/our-program/20boss.

Push for solar heats up

Tom Volling

A CENTRAL Australian renewable energy group has called on the Northern Territory Government to invest more money into solar following the Murray Inquiry’s recommendations.

Ron Goodin Power Station, which has units ranging from 28-49 years old, is spending $75 million to upgrade the gas-fired Owens Springs power station.

The $75 million investment was approved by the NT Government in February after a major blackout.

The engines, ordered in February, are being built in Austria and should be operating at the end of next year.

“Especially when our bank is focused on customers in very challenging economic times around the globe.

We feel concerned about that, but it’s a democracy and we respect that, and if the government of the day decides it’s necessary then we’ll co-operate fully.”

He pointed to the work of the Murray Inquiry which he said was “one of the largest inquiries into the energy sector in the past 20 years”.

“There were hundreds of submissions and nearly 50 detailed recommendations which are now being implemented,” Mr Thorburn said.

Asked if banks deserved the trust of the Australian people, Mr Thorburn said trust needed to be earned “every single day”.

“I’ve been in banking all my career, and banking and trust go together, and when you look at the strength of banking in Australia we feel this could be a serious distraction,” Mr Thorburn said.

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Jade Kudrenko said a majority of townsfolk supported solar energy.

“We are not over-investing in generation without having considered what the transition to solar energy will require,” Mr Marshall said.

“Excuses like solar is not cost-effective just don’t cut it... all over the world communities are already transitioning to renewable energy.”

In 2006 Alice Springs had two rooftop solar systems – there are now 200.

RePower Alice Springs called for immediate investment into improving battery storage to accommodate an increase in solar.

“The NT Government and Territory Generation cannot lock Alice Springs into another 25 years of gas generation without having considered what the transition to solar energy will require,” Mr Marshall said.

“Going forward, there is going to be growth in Alice Springs and growth in electricity usage.”

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