

King David out of this world

AJN STAFF

SCIENCE students at The King David School are one step closer to Europe after being nominated to represent Australia in the 2011 International CanSat competition.

The international contest, held at a French military base in August, involves the group designing, building and programming a small-scale satellite that can fit inside a lemonade can.

“This ‘satellite in a Coke can’, better known as a CanSat, is then launched, either aboard a high-power rocket, or from a helium blimp,” physics teacher Milorad Cerovac explained. “At apogee, the CanSat is then deployed and commences its primary mission of measuring and transmitting data.”

Among the data able to be recorded is air pressure, temperature and humidity, all communicated

back to a station on the ground.

Students must then select a secondary mission for their CanSat to complete. These can include advanced telemetry, landing as close as possible to a designated landing site, simulating an exploration flight to a new planet, or terraforming.

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Milorad Cerovac

King David physics teacher

“Apart from the fun of seeing soft-drink cans falling out of the French sky, students and mentors have been

quick to accept the challenge of being the Australian representative in a contest which simulates an actual space mission,” Cerovac said.

In addition to the dedicated team of King David students, a group of graduates are acting as mentors, alongside Cerovac.

“For the mentors, the program provides an added opportunity to help out the current King David students.”

Developed by the senior science faculty, the program caught the attention of Dr Naomi Mathers from the Victorian Space Science Education Centre. Dr Mathers has also been assisting the group.

Sponsored by the Robert Feigin Memorial Scholarship Trust, King David’s co-curricular science programs provide students with unique opportunities to participate in cutting-edge science activities.