

Victor Chang School Science Award Winners

The Victor Chang School Science Award, run by the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute, recognises secondary students who excel in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). More than 100 schools across NSW take part each year. In November 2025, Year 11 STEM Captains Amy Chen and Misha Sengupta were honoured with this prestigious award.

About Victor Chang

Victor Chang (1936-1991), a Chinese-born Australian cardiac surgeon, pioneered heart transplantation. He studied at the University of Sydney and worked at St Vincent's Hospital, where he established the National Cardiac Transplant Unit and developed an artificial heart valve.

In 1986, Chang was named a Companion of the Order of Australia for his contributions to international relations and medical science. He was tragically killed in 1991. His legacy includes the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute and being named Australian of the Century.

Award Citation – Amy Chen

Amy is remarkably passionate about STEM and eager to help others develop their interests in this field. She brings dedication to creating engaging activities that spark curiosity and innovative thinking in her role as STEM Captain. She was inspired to apply for the leadership role of STEM Captain by the Science Showcase, Meriden's annual science fair, where she could share ideas and encourage others to think creatively about solving real-world problems. Amy was the recipient of the Peoples' Choice Award at the Science Showcase for her project exploring Piezoelectric Stair Nosing to power lights on stairs sustainably. She achieved a CSIRO Silver CREST Award for this same project, demonstrating her creativity in research, Engineering, Science and Technology to solve real-world problems through STEM. Amy's dedication and enthusiasm is further evidenced by her formal studies in Engineering Studies, Design and Technology, Physics and Mathematics.

Amy is resolved to increase exposure to STEM and foster an inclusive community, particularly for those who may not initially see themselves as "STEM people." Her commitment to collaboration is evident through her three years working with Da Vinci Decathlon teams, achieving second place in the 2025 regional finals. Amy consistently excels in Science, Mathematics, and Technology, as demonstrated by her distinctions and high distinctions in the 2024 Australian Mathematics, ICAS Science, and Australian Geography Competitions. Furthermore, she earned distinctions in the Mathematics Challenge and Mathematics Enrichment Awards in 2023 and secured distinctions in the Computational and Algorithmic Thinking Competition and high distinctions in the Big Science Awards in 2021 and 2022. Beyond competitive settings, Amy readily takes initiative, whether it is mentoring younger students in our STEM Clubs or organizing peer assemblies and activities to celebrate STEM. Her peers respect her for her insightful contributions, willingness to listen, and ability to unite diverse perspectives, making her a natural and highly effective leader within our school community.



Amy Chen Year 12

Award Citation – Misha Sengupta

Misha demonstrates remarkable dedication to her role as STEM Captain, proactively organizing initiatives that encourage younger students to explore opportunities in Technology, Mathematics, and Science. Her commitment is particularly evident in her sustained involvement with our FabLab Club (Meriden's Founder club), for which she has earned two school pockets. Misha consistently achieves outstanding results through distinctions in the Australian Mathematics and ICAS Science Competitions in 2024 and placing in the top 25% for the Mathematics Olympiad in 2022. Misha is an intuitive and impactful leader who consistently seeks opportunities to guide and inspire others. As a key team member in high-stakes competitions like the Da Vinci Decathlon State Finals and Tournament of Minds, Misha proves her ability to collaborate effectively, motivate peers, and contribute significantly to shared success. She is not just a participant; she is a catalyst for engagement and achievement among her peers.



Misha Sengupta Year 12

Misha's experience in and enthusiasm for STEM makes her a fantastic role model for participation in clubs and cocurricular activities in her STEM Captain role. Having been an ardent student in STEM since year 7, Misha has participated in FabLab, Tech Club, Science Club, Tournament of Minds, and has chosen iSTEM and Design and Technology electives and engaging in UNSW Women in STEM and Academy for Enterprising Girls programs. These varied activities above and beyond the curriculum indicate her earnest curiosity in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics and personal experience which she draws upon when pioneering new STEM programs, which is recognized through her two STEM involvement pockets. Misha's commitment to a future in STEM is clear through her rigorous academic choices, including Chemistry, Physics, Engineering Studies, and Mathematics and she is a driving force behind STEM initiatives for our school community.

Mrs Alexandra Phillips

Coordinator of Learning Link – Innovation