



AMSSA Report June 2018

Welcome to the AMSSA June newsletter. Thank you to the schools who have contributed articles and photos for the newsletter. It is great to see schools who have not contributed previously sending in contributions.

All schools would have received by email the Registration Booklet for the AMSSA Student Conference which will be held in Perth from September 22 -26, 2018. The theme of the Conference is "From Humble Beginnings" and the conference planning committee have put together a program which will engage, challenge and inspire our students from Mercy schools across Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

The Registration Booklet is also available on our website:
amssa.mercy.org.au

I encourage all Mercy schools to send two students from either Year 10 or Year 11 to the Student Conference. AMSSA subsidises the Conference financially to assist schools in supporting students to attend.

At the Biennial General Meeting in August 2017, it was decided to engage with Fraynetwork Multimedia to develop resources for our members in Mercy schools. This project is now underway and the AMSSA Executive is working with Fraynetwork to bring this to fruition. As the project unfolds, we will be able to update you on what is happening.

I wish you well for the remainder of the term and for a relaxing and refreshing holiday break.

Kitty Guerin
AMSSA Executive Officer

CATHERINE MCAULEY COLLEGE BENDIGO

The Commencement of Catherine McAuley College



We commenced 2018 as **Catherine McAuley College** with a new visual identity, website, social media, stationery, signage and with all new students wearing the new CMC uniform. With the support of Mercy Education Ltd (MEL), the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia & Papua New Guinea (ISM PNG) and our local Mercy Sisters we received consensus for our Junortoun campus to be re-named '**Coolock**' and the Barkly Street campus to be '**St Mary's**' once again, the name by which it was known from 1897 to 1983.



Brian Turner, Principal, spoke at Opening Mass about the change of name in the context of the story of Catherine McAuley, the Sisters of Mercy and our history. He recalled that at the Opening Mass in 2016 we celebrated 140 years since the Mercy Sisters arrived in Sandhurst. In 2017, it was announced that we would be transitioning to our new name. The beginning of 2018 is another significant step in our history.

Our identity is now a better connection to Catherine's story; to distinguish what we stand for, to establish and genuinely adopt the story of the Venerable Catherine McAuley and to celebrate the ongoing

role that the Sisters of Mercy have held in our community for generations.

It is about knowing the Mercy story and charism and animating that story in our lives. If there was ever a time when we all need strong associations, stories and values steeped in the Catholic faith and tradition to help guide us, it is now.

Landmark Opening Mass



The very first Opening Mass for Catherine McAuley College was held with reverence and spectacle. The transition to the new identity was beautifully illustrated with all the Year 7s wearing the new uniform. As will be tradition, they were welcomed to the community by entering the Sacred Heart Cathedral side-by-side with the Year 12s commencing their final year.

The Eucharist service was shared with the whole school community, many Sisters of Mercy from Bendigo and beyond and the Mercy Education Board of Directors and Executive staff. Bishop Leslie Tomlinson DD led the celebration of Mass with concelebrant priests from the Sandhurst parishes. It is always memorable to be a part of a congregation of over 1500 celebrating a special Mass.

It was a special moment when the student leaders were commissioned, including a declaration of their resolve to serve and lead our community in the spirit of Mercy throughout 2018. The Bishop blessed the students, asking that they endeavour to shine as a symbol of Christian leadership in our community.

Beautiful music was performed by the combined choir of staff and students. Many students had an integral role in the celebration

through readings, prayers and reflections, making the occasion especially memorable.

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THE MERCY WALL - A NEW FEATURE AT CATHERINE MCAULEY WESTMEAD

Catherine McAuley Westmead has installed a fifteen metre 'Mercy Wall' on the school grounds as a reminder to students and staff of the Mercy values of the school.



The Wall was the idea of two staff members who designed it as part of their participation in the Staff Mercy 5 Formation Program. This program is a joint initiative of the Parramatta and North Sydney Sisters of Mercy and the five Sydney Mercy secondary schools. The program is a year-long program and each year two staff members from Catherine McAuley are chosen to take part. It allows them to engage with their Mercy colleagues to help to better understand the history and traditions that stem from the Sisters of Mercy.



Mrs Taryn Grima and Mrs Jessica Muggleton chose the Mercy Wall installation as their project as part of the program as it was a way to bring Mercy and the school values to the forefront of the minds of staff and students as they walk around the school campus.

“Through our research with staff and students it became clear that everyone in our community considered Mercy as a value; however we wanted to ensure all of our school values, that we live out every day, are remembered by our students”, says Taryn. “The external wall of one of our buildings was our canvas, being a large blank space. In addition, this area is at the heart of our school, and visible from many areas. It is a high traffic area and we wanted our project to be enjoyed by all staff, students and visitors”.

Taryn and Jess used the idea of a scrabble board to display the six values as it is symbolic of the values intersecting and branching off one another. “Our final design ensured that Mercy was at the centre of the display as it is the centre of what we do and who we are”, says Jess. “We hope that this Mercy Wall brings our school values to the forefront in a more visible way and makes them part of our everyday language within the school”.

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Project Compassion Fundraising at Catherine McAuley Westmead

Catherine McAuley Westmead seeks to develop in their students an awareness of those in need and encourages active involvement in social justice initiatives.



This year the Caritas Australia Project Compassion Appeal was no exception with students actively fundraising through a number of imaginative ways as they joined with their fellow Homeroom students.



The students washed cars, baked cakes, organised carnival games, ran an Easter egg guessing competition, ran an art competition, brought in coins for a coin trail, made soda and ice cream floats, served international foods and sold pancakes, to name a few.

Homeroom Teachers worked with their students to raise funds with the school community supporting the initiative by generously purchasing and participating in activities. In total the school raised in excess of \$7000 for the Caritas Australia appeal.

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Celebrating Harmony Day at Catherine McAuley Westmead

Harmony Day celebrates Australian multiculturalism, based on the successful integration of migrants into our community and was held on Wednesday, 21st March 2018. It is a day about inclusiveness, respect and belonging for all.



At Catherine McAuley Westmead the school celebrated Harmony Day with the student leaders organising a number of activities. Orange was the colour chosen to represent Harmony Day. Student leaders gave out orange ribbons to every student for them to wear in their hair, on

their wrist or on their uniform. Students were also encouraged to bring in cultural foods for a shared lunch with friends and cultural music played over the speakers during lunch.

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DAMASCUS COLLEGE STUDENT RAISES HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS THROUGH SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Year 10 student Hannah Farhall participated in the Western Bulldogs Leadership Project last year and has this year, taken the next step to be involved in the Western Bulldogs Social Enterprise Project.

As part of the Leadership Project, Hannah was one of 150 students who took part in the 6 month project where they participated in a range of interactive activities, camps and developed a social justice project that raised awareness of homelessness in the local community.

2018 is the first year of this innovative new online social enterprise project, that sees a group of 15 students participate in projects that make money in a socially responsible way.

Hannah said that she really enjoyed the Leadership Program last year, which has now led to her volunteering to participate in this new project to help make a difference in the community.

"I really enjoy being a part of this new project, as I get to make a real impact, raise awareness of homelessness and I learn skills in how to be a leader. I also get to meet and interact with a wide range of people from around Western Victoria, where I learn about them and the impact they are making in their communities," she said.

Hannah's Social Enterprise Project is 'Socks of the West,' where she works closely with two other students, and part of the project led them to making a successful pitch to the Western Bulldogs Administrative Board for approval to move forward with the project, and for financial sponsorship.

This sponsorship has allowed the group to manufacture and design their own socks, and for every pair sold they donate a pair to the

homeless in the community.

“We will soon be launching a website to promote ‘Socks of the West’ and hope to be able to promote the socks at AFL games with the Western Bulldogs,” she said.

At the end of the six month project, the student group will present the impact of the project to the Administrative Board, where they hope to continue this after the conclusion of the program.

Hannah loved the experience so much that her twin sister Megan is now part of the 2018 Leadership Project.

The Western Bulldogs Leadership Project began in 2013 offering unique opportunities for young people to build confidence, make new friends and develop skills that will enable them to become future leaders in their community.

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MARIAN COLLEGE CHRISTCHURCH

Caritas Challenge Embraced

Recently students from Marian College and Catholic Cathedral College in Christchurch, New Zealand, joined together for the fifth year in a row to take part in the Caritas Challenge.



After Opening Mass celebrated by the Colleges' chaplains, Fr. Edwin and Fr. Phil, the students formed into teams to construct shelters out of cardboard and whatever they could come across. In the evening, the students played games and learned about the important work of Caritas Aotearoa (New Zealand)



After a beautiful night vigil held in front of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, students returned to their shelters for the night to experience what is reality for around 80,000 homeless New Zealanders.



After morning prayer, students went out into the community for a day of service at Nazareth House, John Paul II Centre, St. John of God Hauora Trust, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Living Springs, Te Rangimarie as well as a beach clean-up.

A participating student gave the following feedback about this year's challenge:

"Folding baby clothes was a significant experience as it made me realise how generous people are."

The Caritas Challenge offers students a profound lesson in compassion for hardship experienced by others, the importance of service and gratitude for the blessings they already have.

Students from Marian College and Catholic Cathedral College joined more than 8,000 Catholic school students around New Zealand to help raise awareness and funds for Caritas Aotearoa. This year the focus for the challenge is women's livelihood organisation, HamahonFeto Timor (HAFOTI) in Timor - Leste.

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MERCEDES COLLEGE

Family history inspires Madeline Year 9



Madeline Gardiner recently returned from Vietnam after being selected to attend the 2018 Premier's ANZAC Student Tour. The study tour commemorated a century of service by conducting historical inquiry into Australia's military involvement in the Asia region following World War II, as well the 50th anniversary of the Tet Offensive, and the Battles of Coral-Balmoral.

Madeline's inspiration for her application came from her history classes and research where she discovered information about her great grandfather's involvement in World War 1. She found that her great grandfather's perseverance to survive helped her with her 1000 word essay on the topic, "the type of character trait sustained in adversity".

Following her success at being selected for the tour she met with her grandfather from Queensland who shared with her his memories of his return to Vietnam where he served during the conflict. In April, together with nine other WA students, they visited important historical sites including Ho Chi Minh City, Vung Tau, Long Tan, Hoi An and Hue before attending the Anzac Day commemorations in Hanoi.

Approximately 60,000 Australian ground troops, air-force and naval personnel served in Vietnam between 1962 and 1972; 521 died as a result of the war, and over 3,000 were wounded.

In a letter to the Premier, The Hon. Mark McGowan thanking him for the opportunity Madeline said; "the travel experiences and research allowed me a deeper insight into my own grandfather's tour as a helicopter machine-gunner in Vietnam. One my most rewarding experiences on the tour was arriving in Ho Chi Minh City and experiencing the rich cultural history the city had to offer. My involvement in overcoming my own personal fears in going through the tunnels showed me how resourceful the Viet Cong were, and learning about a different perspective of the Vietnam War.

From Hue I learnt about the Battle of KheSanh and the Demilitarised Zone, including the "Highway of Horrors", where many innocent civilians lost their lives. These highlights resonated with me on an intellectual level so that once again we do not repeat the mistakes of the past."

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MOUNT LILYDALE MERCY COLLEGE STUDENTS TRAVEL TO JAPAN



This April, four lucky Year 9 students from Mount Lilydale Mercy College (Ava Bartusch, Emma Di Paolo, Connor Taylor and Stephanie Martinez) were sponsored by the Hakuho Foundation to take part in a rigorous two-week program in Tokyo, Japan. Fourteen schools from around the world were selected from a staggering 84 applicants - we were thrilled to be one of the schools chosen to take part. Throughout their tour they communicated using the common language, Japanese, and immersed themselves in Japanese culture. The four students also did several presentations on MLMC and the Yarra Valley and introduced Aussie rules football to the world.



Starting in mountainous Nasu, a town in Tochigi Prefecture, the students experienced a cultural exchange in a traditional Japanese-style hotel. The four entertained with renditions of Mike Brady's iconic footy songs Up There Cazaly and One Day in September and they were overjoyed to have their photo taken with Hiroshi Hashiguchi, with the Hakuho Foundation manager donning his new Western Bulldogs polo shirt.

Student-led activities were organised by Year 9 students of three Japanese junior high schools — Tama, Mishima and Koriyama XaverioGakuen. They also experienced a Japanese traditional hot spring and a visit to the Trick Art Museum.

Staying at the National Olympics Memorial Youth Centre in Tokyo, the students were close to the prime attractions of Tokyo such as Harajuku, Shibuya, Yoyogi and Shinjuku. On their free day, the MLMC students escaped to Ikebukuro, Asakusa and the Tokyo Skytree. The students were able to appreciate all that Tokyo had to offer and adored its bustling high-tech streets. During this time, the students learnt about Japanese religion, experiencing the differences between Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines. They also visited NHK Studio Park, where they experienced real-life TV sets, could read the news and experience how television is broadcast.

Japanese language lessons conducted by the talented teachers of the Japan Foundation helped prepare the students for their school and homestay visits. At the school visits, the MLMC four presented confidently about our College, speaking in Japanese to introduce our school to the world. They experienced Japanese school lunch, called

kyushoku, and participated in many classes. They also advertised the Yarra Valley in traditional Japanese style at a cultural session called, Chindon-ya (or in English a Japanese marching band).

The homestay experience immersed the students in Japanese culture and everyday life, giving each of them an experience they will never forget. "We were able to learn so much about the Japanese culture and traditions and are very appreciative towards our homestay families for this opportunity," the students said.

At the final ceremony of the tour, the students had to make a presentation in Japanese about a discovery that they had made on the trip — the characters and mascots of various companies, regions, animations and so on are everywhere. The presentation also highlighted the link between the Shinto religion and the many Gods they believe in.

The students later said: "We are very grateful to have been able to travel to Japan, as we were able to have many wonderful experiences. We made many friends from around the world and learned lots about Japan. It was amazing in Japan and we all hope to go again."

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OUR LADY OF MERCY COLLEGE BURRANEER

For many years OLMC Burraneer has been involved in support of the Fistula Hospitals in Ethiopia.



Our connection began with one of our ex students, Mrs Mary Ann Ayers speaking to us about Dr Catherine Hamlin and her work.

The stories of hardship of the Fistula patients really touched our girls and we wanted to help. Although funds are needed, we wanted to do something directly for the patients.



We now have been knitting squares and as well as making bracelets to send to Ethiopia for over ten years. Girls, Mums, Aunts and Grandmas have all contributed. The Mercy Action Group then assist with the assembly of the squares and embellishing the blankets with embroidery.

Our blankets are taken to a variety of hospitals in Ethiopia and Tanzania (administered by The Barbara May Foundation and the Catherine Hamblin Foundation).

To our great delight Mary Ann always returns with wonderful photos of the girls and babies with our blankets and gifts. They all look so appreciative and happy.

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OUR LADY OF MERCY COLLEGE PARRAMATTA

Mercy Girls Participate in Centenary of Anzac



On March 25, 2018 Mercy Girls were part of a program marking the Centenary of ANZAC.

Soil will be gathered from 1670 sites around NSW, including from here in Parramatta, to rest at Hyde Park War Memorial.

Mercy Girls collected the soil alongside The Hon. David Elliott MP, Minister for Veterans Affairs, playing an important part in this historic occasion.

Ex-student Wins Silver Medal at the Commonwealth Games



During April, ex-student Alexandra Hulley won a Silver Medal at the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast.

Alexandra graduated from the College in 2015 and was the Sports Leader in Year 12.

She competed at the state, national and international level in Hammer Throw while she was studying at OLMC.

The College community is very proud of her wonderful achievement.

At an assembly in May, Alex presented a plaque to OLMC, thanking the College for their support and encouragement over the years.

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THE BRADBURY CLUB AT SACRED HEART COLLEGE GEELONG SETS NEW WORLD RECORD

The Bradbury Club (STEAM club) and the entire cohort of Year 7 Students at Sacred Heart College in Geelong recently set a new Guinness World Record for the longest model of DNA. The model was constructed using coloured rope and clothes pegs over a two-day period, and when fully extended, reached a length of 61.377 metres.



The project was confirmed by Ray Dunn, a certified surveyor and then verified by two independent witnesses. When submitted to Guinness, they confirmed that the model had indeed set a new world record, surpassing the previous record holders from Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada by almost 18 metres. The sequence of bases in the DNA model was based on the MC1R gene, which influences red hair colour in humans.

Led by Head of Science, Dr Adam Cole, the activity was performed to raise awareness about the increasing relevance and importance of genetics in our daily lives. Not only do genetics encode how to build and maintain our bodies, but recent breakthrough technologies have made it possible to predict the types of diseases we will develop, when we will develop them, and which types of medicine are best suited to each individual person (personalised medicine). Beyond healthcare, DNA sequence information can also be used for insurance and employment purposes, possibly even dating.

Thanks to CRISPR technology, we may soon have the ability to edit/change our own DNA, heralding a new approach to treating (even

curing) diseases. Therefore, learning about genetics at school has now become even more important.

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ST ALOYSIUS COLLEGE ADELAIDE

Reconciliation Week

Numerous Activities!

Throughout Reconciliation week, St Aloysius students involved themselves in numerous activities surrounding social justice for Indigenous people. Sorry Day marked the beginning of our Indigenous focus, with a walk through Tarndanyangga to show solidarity with Aboriginal Australians. At lunchtime, the girls formed the word “Yakalya” the Kurna word for “Sorry” to commemorate this national day.



On Monday, girls from the Pipalyatjara exchange attended the Reconciliation Week breakfast, where they could hear from a number of inspiring Indigenous speakers and broaden their perspectives on Australia's first people. That same day, students were invited to our reconciliation tent. Our display encouraged them to learn about significant Indigenous Australians throughout history.



Later in the week, the school's ATSI students assisted artist Chris Crebbin in the painting of our four square courts using traditional Indigenous patterns and symbols. Finally, a cupcake stall topped off the week whereover \$400 in funds were raised to support the purchasing of dialy sis machines in rural Indigenous communities. Overall, the week was an enriching opportunity for students to grow and learn about the important and ongoing role of Indigenous Australians in our country.

Ms Harper Robb
STUDENT WELFARE SUPPORT ASSISTANT

Reconciliation Week in the Primary School

All primary classes acknowledged Reconciliation week in their classrooms in a variety of diverse ways. Through literature, art, song and language students have had the opportunity to engage and develop their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture and history.

As part of the Foundation History unit on Families, Reception students explored stories from 'The Dreaming' and learnt how these stories are used to convey history and culture within Indigenous families and communities.



"Year 3VM discussed the importance of Reconciliation Week and through the symbol of a hand, wrote about why it is important to work together and what they can do to treat everybody equally and fairly."

"Year 1 students used Discovery tables to enrich their inquiry learning and demonstrated their understanding of the Aboriginal Flag through collage."

Through out the first half of this term,the Year 6 classes have been studying Indigenous Art, learning that spiritual connections to nature and land make up a significant proportion of Indigenous Artworks.

To coincide with National Reconciliation Week, 6MH focussed on learning about the Kurna region of the Adelaide Plains and one of its important Dreaming Stories that tells the story of Tjilbruke, an important Creation Ancestor in the Kurna Dreaming. Researching notable symbols used in Indigenous Art, such as; waterholes, walking tracks, emu tracks, campsites, fire and other important natural

features the students in 6MH incorporated these into their Artworks to tell the Dreaming Story of Tjilbruke.

Ms Viviana Graney

COORDINATOR OF TEACHING & LEARNING R-6

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SANTA MARIA COLLEGE

Farewell to Sister Marg

Santa Maria College was established in 1938 by the Sisters of Mercy, and for 80 years we have been blessed with having Sisters on staff as principals, teachers and boarding staff. Today marks a very significant and sad day in the history of the College as Sister Marg Lipsett our only remaining Sister of Mercy on staff retires.



Sister Marg commenced in our Boarding Community in 2001 as a Housemother in Ursula House caring for our boarders, before becoming a pastoral assistant in the College community providing support for staff, students, and families. Sister Marg has shared many

stories, laughter and wise words with our staff and students during her 17 years at the College.

Sister Marg was born in Perth, the third of four children and attended St Joachim's, now called Ursula Frayne College. From her first day of school as a six-year-old seeing the nuns, she dreamed of becoming a nun. Sister Marg joined the convent at Mercedes College at 16 years of age and was professed as a Sister of Mercy at age 19. She has dedicated over 60 years of her life as a Sister of Mercy. In Sister Marg's words "She has always been grateful for the life she's had and the vocation she chose".

Sister Marg is a woman who strongly reflects our Mercy values of service, justice, and compassion. She spent many years as a teacher including time as Principal at St Anne's Catholic Primary School in Harvey and as a teacher in schools in Belmont, Redcliffe, and Kalgoorlie. Teaching has given her much joy in her life. Sister Marg is not afraid to speak her mind and will often ask the hard questions that others avoid!

Sister Marg's presence at the College has been a gift to the College community, and her contributions are valued by many. We wish Sister Marg well and hope she enjoys time to relax and as Catherine McAuley would say, time to enjoy "a good cup of tea".

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A Sea of Pink

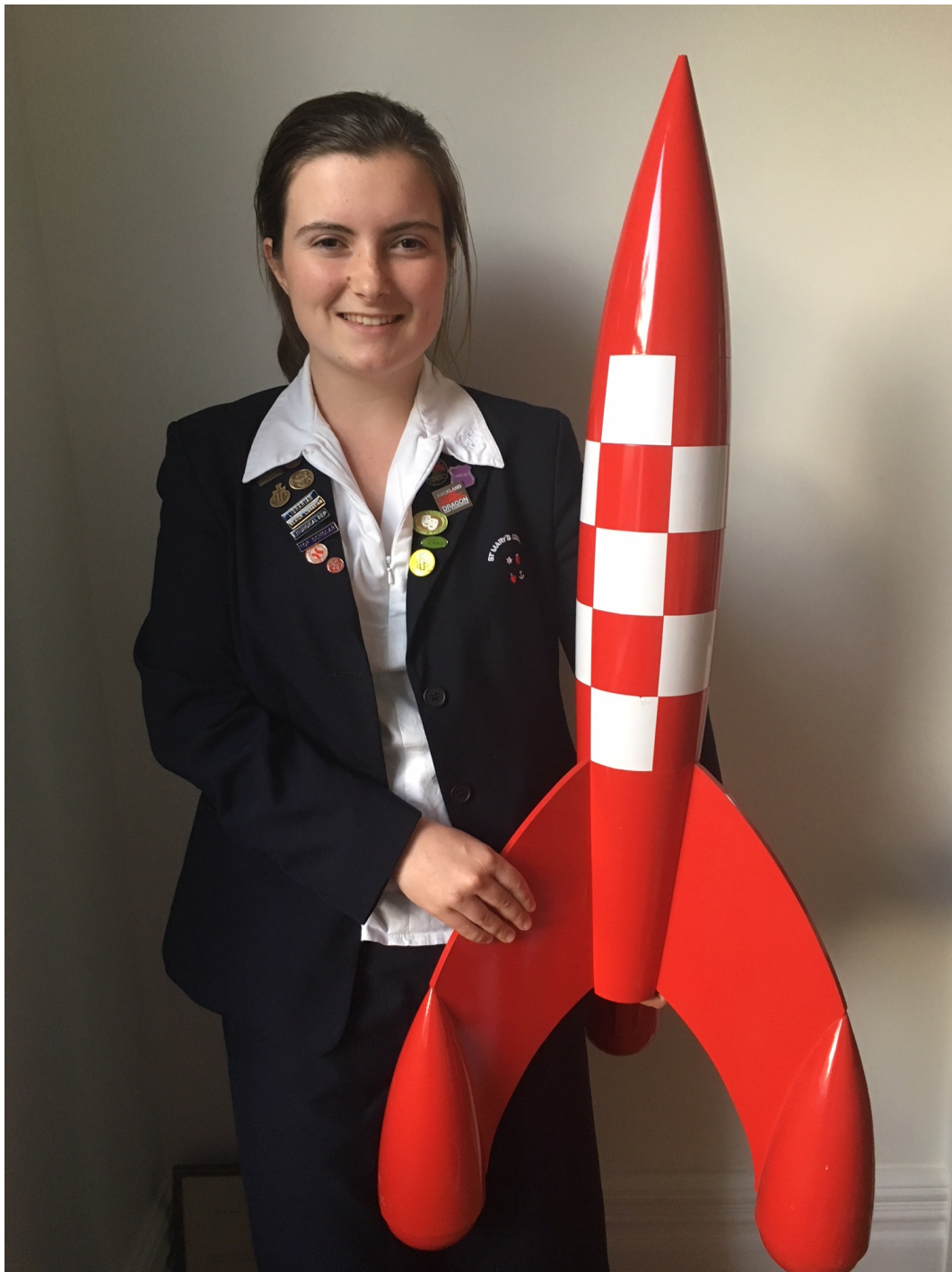
Santa Maria College was a sea of pink today as students and staff dressed up to raise awareness of girls' education around the world. Yesterday, Year 12 students visited every Homeroom to talk about the lack of educational opportunities of girls and women in many countries. Our girls were also reminded of the incredible education opportunities they have here at Santa Maria.



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ST MARY'S COLLEGE PONSONBY

Sarah Poulter is Shooting for the Moon!



St Mary's College student, Sarah Poulter, has been selected by the Royal Society Te Aparangi to attend the United States Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama this July. Sarah underwent a rigorous application process, and we are extremely proud of her for achieving an opportunity as rare as this.

The week-long Advanced Space Academy Program is an immersive experience in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Trainees undergo a range of authentic astronaut training exercises through a hands-on program designed to promote space science and exploration. They will also learn about the mental, emotional and physical demands astronauts' experience through specific exercises and engineering challenges; all culminating in a simulated space mission.

Sarah's Physics teacher, Sheherazad Bhote, supported Sarah during the application process and encouraged her to apply, "Sarah is an intuitive physicist with a natural ability in Mathematics. She worked very hard on her application and was one of only four students selected to receive funding for this opportunity. This trip will expose Sarah to new and challenging experiences, as well as like-minded individuals to broaden her horizons. Well done Sarah!"

With outstanding results in both Mathematics and Physics, Sarah's application was always going to be well received by the Royal Society. The St Mary's College staff, students and wider community would like to acknowledge and congratulate Sarah for her wonderful achievement and we wish her all the very best!

Jacob Sheehan
St Mary's College Ponsonby

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AMSSA Staff Conference

August 8 – 10 2019

Monte Sant'Angelo Mercy College, North Sydney

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