



AMSSA Report March 2017

Welcome to the first AMSSA Newsletter for 2017. When I sent out an email recently asking for articles and photos for our first newsletter, I did not expect, but I am delighted with such an excellent response. So many schools have send in articles and photos covering a huge range of topics from the special events at the beginning of the school year, immersion experiences, social justice activities and new innovations/projects in schools. Please keep the articles and photos coming and they will be included in a future newsletter.

On behalf of the AMSSA Executive, I welcome new leaders and staff to our Mercy schools across Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea in 2017. I particularly welcome Kerrie Fraser, Principal of Mercedes College in Perth who is replacing Rosa Speranza on the AMSSA Executive for 2017.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Rosa Speranza for her commitment and contributions to AMSSA from 2009 to 2016. In particular, Rosa has ensured through her hard work and organisational skills, and in collaboration with her colleagues the success of the Mercy Student Conferences from the first one held in Perth in 2011 to the Student Conference held in Auckland in 2013 and the first stand-alone Student Conference in Melbourne in 2014. Rosa was also of assistance to the organisers of the Student Conference in Sydney in 2016. We all wish her well as she takes on a new role at Santa Maria College, Attadale.

You will have received the brochure for the Mercy Staff Conference which will be held in Melbourne from August 3 – 5, 2017 at the Catholic Leadership Centre. The brochure will also be on the website.

The theme of the Conference is “Sustaining the Spirit of Mercy” which takes up the challenge of following on from the Jubilee Year of Mercy announced by Pope Francis in 2016. I encourage all schools to send staff to the Conference.

The organisers have worked hard to ensure a stimulating and challenging range of speakers and workshops. I look forward to meeting you at the Conference.

Kitty Guerin
AMSSA Executive Officer

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PROJECT NEXT GENERATION – EDUCATING FOR CHANGE IN MT HAGEN AND GOROKA

Being inspired by this year's School theme, Opening Doors of Hope, the All Hallows' School Social Justice Captains named the 2017 whole School project, Project Next Generation.



The focus of our fundraising efforts this year is to support Mercy Works initiatives in the Mt Hagen and Goroka regions of Papua New Guinea. At the launch, the captains outlined the aims of the project emphasising that there is an urgent need to support drop in centres for information, referrals and support as well as human rights

awareness raising days related to issues of domestic violence, health, anger management and substance abuse.

Funds raised will also assist with staff training to facilitate a number of social welfare programs.

At the launch of the project, the Social Justice Captains reminded the students that as one of our nearest neighbours, Papua New Guinea has the worst health status in the Pacific with 40% of the population living on less than \$1 a day. On the UN human development indicator scale, it is one of the lowest in the world being 157 out of 187.

It is also a country of a rich and diverse cultural history where many people are working for enduring change which will continue to build vibrant and healthy communities.

At a recent School Assembly, Sister Ailsa Mackinnon rsm, Executive Director of Mercy Works addressed the students about the intended outcomes of the project and wished the School community best wishes in their endeavours.

We look forward to a very generous response from the many student and parent initiatives during the year and we are confident of every success in meeting the goals to bring about improvement and change for the better.

Mrs Angela O'Malley
Director of Mission

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DAMASCUS COLLEGE STUDENTS PAMPER RESIDENTS AT NAZARETH HOUSE

Every year more than 15 students from Damascus College join a Pamper Session Program where they visit Nazareth House once a fortnight during the school term, to spend time with the elderly residents for a pamper session.

Whilst there for the one hour session, senior students take part in a range of pamper activities including: painting the residents' nails,

escorting residents to dinner or simply sitting with the residents and having a friendly conversation.

Teacher and program organiser, Patricia Brown said that some of the residents do not have regular visitors, so the student pamper sessions can be their only one-on-one visitor for the fortnight.

“As a Catholic school, Damascus College is committed to social justice and encourages an attitude of action for social justice and community service. This unique program also benefits the students as it gives teenagers the opportunity to make connections with the elderly, which is an important life and social skill.”

The Pamper Session Program began in 2014 when students attended a conference in Melbourne as part of the Seeds of Justice, Mercy Education Program. Students visited soup kitchens, nursing homes and homeless shelters, and returned from this experience wanting to make a difference locally in Ballarat.

Staff of Damascus College generously donate the products used within the program, such as nail polish, nail polish remover etc.

The Damascus commitment to helping others in the community, is put into practice in several ongoing activities at local, national and international levels as part of the College's Christian Personal Development Award.

STUDENT RECEIVES SILVER AT U15 VICTORIAN CYCLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Year 7 student, Shannon Craggill has been cycling for only 3 years, and she recently received a silver medal at the Under 15's Women's Victorian Criterion Cycling Championships, on Sunday 26th February at Geelong.

Shannon, a member of the WestVic Academy of Sport, loves to compete in both track and road cycling. She travels to Melbourne 3 times a week for training, with a variety of Melbourne cycling clubs, this is true testament to her passion, skill and commitment to the sport.

Shannon aged only 12 years old, will compete this weekend at the U15 and U17 Victorian Junior Club Team Championships at Preston, and also looks forward to racing in Adelaide on 8-9 April at the Wirtgen Central Junior Tour of South Australia, and in Canberra at Australia's Premier Junior Tour, the Peter Blackshaw Junior and Womens Tour, on 28-30 April.



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**JAMES SHEAHAN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
ORANGE
SPONSOR CHILD FUNDRAISING EVENT**

'The Compassion Child Sponsorship Program' aims to release children from poverty in Jesus' name. They provide opportunities for people to sponsor children all over the world in an effort to ensure they have a brighter future.

James Sheahan Catholic High School has once again, taken this opportunity to change the life of three young children. The school's year groups have united to sponsor three children from Indonesia, Guatemala and India.

Last year the students of James Sheahan raised over \$2300 and this provided the sponsor children with all they needed for the year, with a special focus on education. The program offers more than just a financial connection, it provided the opportunity for the James Sheahan students to see the direct impact their generosity is having.



The sponsor children send photos and letters to inform of their progress and the Sheahan students reciprocate with pictures of the fundraising activities, prayers and thoughts. These incredible acts of generosity and kindness will change not only the sponsor child's life, but also the lives of the Sheahan students.

The impact of the program can be seen from the quotes from our students:

"Today we donated money for our sponsor children, I think this is an amazing thing that our school has done. Hopefully Sheahan can make a difference"- Emily Pell

"Today was a great day for the James Sheahan community, everyone worked together to achieve a common goal and help the less fortunate"- Ethan Kennedy

"We have all felt privileged to give someone in need money to help their education and well-being for this year."- Bella Stoyles



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MARIAN CATHOLIC COLLEGE GRIFFITH

Marian is a vibrant faith community engaging with Jesus and His message. *Living faith*, is asked of us by Christ. Having a heritage from the Sisters of Mercy and the Marist Brothers, proclaiming our faith draws upon the model of His Mother Mary, to be courageous, active and inclusive to ensure our motto, The Way, The Truth and The Life, is the best expression we can be as a person and as a community.



Student learning and academic growth has been strong within our senior students. Prominent analyst of NSW Catholic school HSC data, Dr John De Courcy has indicated that Marian Catholic College 2016 HSC results continued to show marked improvements with 75 % of all results falling the tops Bands 4 to 6. In fact, 41% were Bands 5 or 6. A remarkable achievement in itself but reflective of four years of deliberate focus on lifting student achievement through improvements in quality teaching and learning linked with student support and high expectations.

Our next focus is to apply similar rigorous analysis and application to improve the quality of literacy and numeracy teaching in the junior years. This has already commenced with students attending after school writing sessions designed to improve the quality of extended student responses in essay writing. The Catholic Schools Office Wagga Wagga are supporting this initiative by resourcing our school with extra funding enabling Marian College to be confident in achieving its goal next year and beyond.



Preparing students for the challenges of a dynamic, interconnected world where knowledge comes from a wide range of sources, requires a far different learning model than what we have used in the past. Learners work collaboratively and lessons are not teacher centred and knowledge is generated not just delivered. To enable learning to be flexible and collaborative, new learning spaces have been created through the purchasing of new furniture throughout many classrooms and open spaces, giving a fresh look to many rooms.

Alan Le Brocque
Principal
Marian Catholic College, Griffith

COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM RECEIVE NATIONAL AWARD

Under the guidance of “Pastoral Care Worker” Sue Hone; the “Community Action Team” is a group of student volunteers who worked together to reduce the inequalities and injustices that they identified within their community.

The team successfully completed activities which provide practical support or financial assistance therefore increasing the social and emotional well-being of those directly impacted. The TEAM cooked on a roster basis for a mobile kitchen (CAREVAN) which provided not only a nutritionally balanced hot meal but also opportunities for socialisation within a lower-social economic community.



The team facilitated an activity to compile kits which contained the basic personal hygiene items required by those who found themselves either homeless or at risk of homelessness. The "I CARE KITS" were distributed to homeless people, displaced people or those in our local community experiencing hardship or financial distress.

As the name suggests the kit symbolises that someone does indeed care and each kit contained a personal message of support written by the team members. Members of the team have found the experience to be extremely rewarding and now have a better understanding and awareness of the community they live in and the confidence to identify issues, plan a course of action and implement a program or activity to reduce the impact of poverty.

Marian Catholic College COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM are recipients of the 2016 Connections Uniting Care Anti-Poverty Award and a grant for \$2500. The Anti-Poverty Awards recognize the many young people passionately working towards tackling inequality and injustice with Australia and abroad.

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STUDENT APP HELPS HOMELESS TO CONNECT

With STEM at the forefront of learning in schools, it was pleasing when students from Mercedes College took out first place in the STEM "Game Changer Awards" held at St Mary's on Saturday (26 November).

The Game Changer Awards are held to inspire STEM Innovation in WA schools. Participation is designed to enable youth to build their dreams and creations through an environment that rewards ideas, imagination and a dare-to-try attitude in producing excellent applications of digital technology. The nature of work is changing. Technology is becoming more and more prevalent in our lives. A new generation of technology creators able to apply sound STEM principles will be required for the work of the future.

Facing stiff competition and only two months of lunchtime development time, Rachael Stevenson, Niamh Wilson (Year 8s), An Tran (Year 10), and with the support of Anson Mahindra (Year 11) who was unable to attend, got through to the final round on Saturday 26 November. Driven by the College's Mercy values of compassion, justice and service, they decided to tackle the increasingly noticeable issue of homelessness in the CBD. They applied their problem solving skills to design a managed system that includes crowdfunded mobile phones and an app that runs on those phones to help people experiencing homelessness connect with loved ones and services. The students were successful in winning both of the Secondary School Division prizes - the "Overall Winner" and "Best Use of STEM Principles".

Principal, Kerrie Fraser said the students were part of the popular IT Angels club which is supported by our Director of Learning Technology, Paul Reid.

"They provide IT support in the classroom and regularly meet to discuss ways in which they can tackle technology problems in the school.

They also make presentations to their peers in homerooms and to teachers on new learning technology tools."

Mrs Fraser said the College was committed to encouraging our students to excel in STEM.

"Few women are involved in STEM careers and the school believes in broadening career options for young women. Being located in the City has great advantages allowing students access to places like SpaceCube where they learn about the world of start-ups and innovative technology."

The students won \$2000 worth of prizes including a commercialisation workshop with Bloom Labs on “Steps to Start-ups”. The workshop will assist the students with the development of their solution together with their Year 9 Academic Challenge peers. The College also won a coding workshop for a class of students with Gecko Steps.

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

At the beginning of the school year, the Mercedes College community acknowledged the exemplary achievements of our graduating students of 2016. Our Excellence Assembly on Wednesday 1 February, had as its special guest The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Lisa Scaffidi, who spoke to the students about the pursuit of excellence and acknowledging the pursuit of a 'personal best'.





Forty students from the Graduating Class of 2016 attended the assembly. These students had been awarded certificates from the School Curriculum and Standards Authority and who had achieved high ATAR scores.

Of particular note was the achievement of Grace Hughes, achieving the highest ATAR of 99.25. Grace was offered an Assured Pathway to Dentistry at UWA. Twenty one other students achieved an ATAR above 95.

2016 was the first year of the new awards scheme set by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. As a result, Mercedes College was awarded a total of 56 awards. Isabella Rossaro was awarded the Subject Exhibition for Design, demonstrating she achieved the highest exam result of all students in the State for that course.

Certificates of Excellence were awarded to Josephine Volk (English) and Kate Hewitson (Mathematics Applied) signifying they were placed in the top 0.5% of the State.

A Certificate of Merit or Certificate of Distinction is awarded to each eligible student who, in their last three consecutive years of senior secondary WACE enrolment, achieved 150-189 points and 190-200 points respectively. Twenty eight students received a Certificate of Merit, and twenty seven students received a Certificate of Distinction.

Principal, Kerrie Fraser spoke about the solid application of study undertaken by the students, all of whom followed their goals to ensure they were offered places at their universities of choice. These students also demonstrated a willingness to participate in the diverse co-curricular programs.

Key Statistics:

- 96.6% of the 149 students who applied for WACE graduation fulfilled all requirements
- 129 students sat at least 4 ATAR scoring subjects
- 126 students have been offered positions at ECU, Murdoch, UWA, Curtin, Notre Dame University and Bond University (Qld).

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MERCY CATHOLIC COLLEGE STUDENTS LIVE OUT CATHERINE'S VALUES

While families were recovering from their Christmas and New Year celebrations a group of students from Mercy Catholic College Chatswood, along with 3 teachers set off to Vietnam to put into action Catherine McAuley's values. They went with a clear understanding that "it is for God we serve the poor and not for thanks" (Catherine McAuley).





The 16 day immersion programme of Vietnam was specifically designed to challenge the students and give them fulfilling insight into Vietnamese society and the daily lives of its people.

The expedition featured a significant community service project where students were able to help with a classroom building project in a small village in the Lai An parish outside of Hue city. Each student was required to fundraise money to purchase building supplies prior to the expedition, as well as complete significant labouring work to lay the foundations of the classrooms. These classrooms will provide the local children with the opportunity to attend school (many for the first time) as well as having a community space where villagers can gather.

The group travelled to homestays in both the Mekong and Sapa regions exploring local traditions in farming and fishing, as well as visiting Hoi an, Hanoi and Ho Chi Ming City (Saigon) immersing themselves in the different cultural activities. eg cooking classes, market visits, cyclo and bicycle tours, visiting Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum, Hanoi Hilton, a Buddhist orphanage and the Palace of Independence to name a few.

The College Principal, Ms Suzanne Kavanagh shared the journey with the students and was encouraged to see how they immersed themselves in all aspects of the expedition and in particular the positive impact they had on the children in the Lai An Parish.

Next year's social justice immersion program will return to Lai An to pursue an ongoing relationship developed by these generous and giving students who attended in January 2017.

MERCY COLLEGE COMMUNITY MASS

For many, our Annual College Community Mass is one of the highlights of our year as the focus is on togetherness, and sets the scene for us to walk together as a Community. Fr Albert Saminedi (Sam), our Chaplain, celebrated the Mass on Friday evening with the theme 'Beginning a new - we celebrate..., we hope..., we pray...' which included a liturgical movement choreographed by Ms Hathaway.

The Year Twelve Liturgical Dancers and Student Representative Council processed in the eight Mercy values.

"In presenting the Mercy Values we ask God's blessing upon us so that we may grow to realise the hopes and dreams that God has for our community."

The message of building our community was enhanced by a large contingent of Primary students who sang in the choir with Mrs Holbrook, Ms Jackson and Mr Griffith. Our Year Six students received their ministry crosses and the Year Seven -Eleven students received their SRC badges on the night.

It was heart-warming to see staff, students and families mingling afterwards over a twilight picnic to the tunes of ex-student Samantha Samuels. A big thank you goes to our Liturgy team, Marketing team, Stage and Sound teams, Property Services Team and everyone who helped out at this event: it really showed our flourishing community here at Mercy College.



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MERCY THROUGH SERVICE: MONTE'S IMMERSION INTO TIMOR LESTE

As Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College, North Sydney embarks on our dedicated year of 'Mercy through Service', we are encouraging our young women to not just be spectators of life but to know when to stand up, stand out and stand beside others.

In the tradition of Catherine McAuley, College Liturgy Captain, Lesley Spencer, spoke of selfless service: "Service does not need to be complicated for it to make a difference, it just needs to be selflessly given. By stepping out of someone's way in the corridor, explaining an answer to a friend or coaching a team, selflessness is to do something purely for someone else, not for you to benefit yourself. We need to keep our motives in mind when choosing a choice of action."



Having a greater awareness of our global community is the first step to becoming a compassionate selfless young woman of Mercy. Monte's Immersion trips to Wreck Bay, NSW; Mititjulu in the Central Desert and Chiang Mai, Thailand, exemplify the Mercy values of justice, compassion and respect for all. Immersion trips give our girls the opportunity to personally demonstrate service with purpose.

In June, we wish a safe and productive journey to more than 20 Monte students and staff as they embark on their annual Immersion trip to Maliana in Timor Leste. The purpose of the trip is for our students to connect with the local community, listening, talking and walking in the shoes of local students who share the same hopes and dreams as every Monte girl: to find a place in the world, to make a difference and to realise their potential.



This is the fourth Immersion to Timor Leste, where we hope to further build upon our strong relationship with the teachers and students at Colegiolnfanite De Sagres. Our Year 11 students will examine the reasons for the huge disparities in wealth between the minority world and the majority world from a justice and gospel perspective as well as providing on-going support for The Sisters of Mercy in Maliana.

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STUDENTS ASK: IF NOT ME, THEN WHO?

The Marist Regional College 2017 Student Representative Council has set a very strong idea to focus on this year "If not me, then who?". SRC members performed to the College community three skits to present the idea, which showed the importance of taking responsibility against injustice, putting values and principles into action and showing courage for what is right. Through seeing a situation clearly is the first step of taking control.



The first skit performed represented a student's first day of school. Many are aware of how daunting a new school can be and that the likelihood of getting lost is very high. So how must it feel to be purposefully ignored and blatantly rejected when all they need is a few simple directions? With this, brings the College focus for the year. Before refusing to help someone in need, inwardly ask, if I'm not going to help this person, who is? If not me, then who?

The second skit focussed on maintaining a sense of pride for the schooling environment and that littering is not only a source of pollution, but creates the impression that, as a College, we do not respect our environment. So next time there is a piece of rubbish on the ground or witness a friend littering, inwardly ask, if I'm not going to

pick up this rubbish and help prevent pollution, who is? If not me, then who?

The third and final skit focussed on sexism and inequality. How many people have been subjected to sexism or inequality? How many people have been made to feel as an object? As a College, equality and equity are values that are constantly aiming to uphold. So next time, a sexist remark is spoken or inequality is witnessed, don't be a spectator, instead inwardly ask, if I'm not going to stand up for what is right, who is? If not me, then who?



Courage is the bridge between good ideas and action. It turns vision and goals into reality. Courage is standing up for what is right because it is the right thing to do. The phrase "If not me, then who?" encompasses a variety of different meanings including putting faith into action, showing courage, being a principled-centred person and stepping outside of one's comfort zone. Whilst only three different situations were shared they demonstrated how faith can be put into action, it is strongly encouraged that this same level of justice and responsibility be carried out across all focus areas including the schooling environments, areas of employment, home environments and the wider community. The SRC challenged the whole College community to step outside their comfort zone, to show courage, to put faith into action, to take risks, to be humble and most importantly to not be afraid of the truth.

The problem with so many communities is everyone has the answers, but very few are willing to stand up and do their part. This is why I love the theme. The SRC have set the College a challenge and removed our excuses. If someone is going to do it, it is me. "Do not be a bystander, be part of the solution" said Principal Adrian Drane.

If not me, then who?

Katrina Gibbs

Communications, Community Relations & Marketing Officer

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MT ST BERNARDS HERBERTON

Please find attached photos from our 2017 Scholarship Presentation this weekend and our Ash Wednesday Liturgy for your AMSSA newsletter.

Our scholarships are available to our community thanks to the Sisters of Mercy and locals, Frank and Colleen Sims.





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NONI BALL BLACK BOX THEATRE

On Friday November 18, OLMC Parramatta officially named and blessed the oldest room at the College, the Noni Ball Blackbox Theatre. Home to the College's Drama Department for the last 30 years, the theatre is the only surviving section of the original school building from the late 1800s.



The special event was attended by Sister Noni Ball, Sisters of Mercy, ex students and staff and current College staff. Sister Catherine Ryan, Congregation Leader of the Sisters of Mercy Parramatta officially named the theatre and the Most Rev Kevin Manning DD Bishop Emeritus of Parramatta gave his official blessing.

An ex-student of the College, Sister Noni Ball is an iconic figure in the history of Drama at OLMC. Sister Noni ran adult evening acting classes at the College throughout the 1980s and 1990s and used this room for performance work with these groups. In the first decade of this century, she directed yearly productions in the room with the Mercedes Players theatre group.

As the oldest surviving space at OLMC, the room is very significant to the College's 127-year history. It is the first place on the premises that was intentionally erected for the purpose of education; although the Callan Sisters had been teaching on the site for a decade prior to its construction in 1899, they taught in pre-existing buildings built for other purposes.

In these early days, the room was a one-room schoolhouse, with several year groups taught simultaneously by more than one Sister. It was not until 1914 that the College built a much larger structure next door with more conventional classrooms. For the next seventy years, the room which is now the Noni Ball Black Box Theatre was used as a general purpose space. It was converted into a library for seven years in the 1960s; bookshelves lined the walls and there was a large open space in the middle and a small stage at one end of the room.

The Catherine McAuley Library, a purpose-built space, was then built in 1970. In the mid-1980s, Drama emerged as a new subject and the

College's first Drama teacher, Jane Coburn, suggested that the room was the perfect place for performances and workshops. The College Principal at the time, Sister Janet Woods, had the foresight to recognise the importance of Drama, hence it was offered as a subject substantially earlier than in most schools.

In the intervening years, the room was gradually transformed into a specialist space with black walls, stage curtains, a lighting grid and a fully equipped lighting box. With over a hundred performance evenings over the last decade alone, it has become a theatre as well as a classroom.

The College's Drama Leader of Learning, Sean Travers, says Sister Noni was passionate about using theatre to give people a voice and to promote empathy and confidence; "this passion very much continues to thrive in the Drama Department. In many ways, the Noni Ball Blackbox Theatre represents an unbroken line of educational thought that is firmly based upon the intention of the Founder of the Sisters of Mercy, Catherine McAuley, which was to empower young women."

NEW AILSA MACKINNON COMMUNITY CENTRE OFFICIALLY OPENED

On Friday February 17, the new Ailsa Mackinnon Community Centre at Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta was officially opened by Dr Anne Bunde – Birouste and blessed by the Most Reverend Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFMConv DD, Bishop of Parramatta.



The special afternoon event was attended by Sister Ailsa Mackinnon, the Sisters of Mercy Parramatta, members of the College Board, and

Alumnae, College staff, students and parents, as well as a host of special guests including Dr Geoff Lee MP.

Named after Sister Ailsa Mackinnon, who was Principal of the College from 1990 to 2004, the new community centre is located at the corner of O'Connell Street and Victoria Road; it features an indoor multi-purpose sports and gathering place (seating approximately 1200 people) as well as four teaching and learning spaces, a roof top outdoor sport area and a gymnasium.

Sister Ailsa Mackinnon says she is honoured to have a building named after her and is so pleased that it is a community centre dedicated to physical education; "To call it a community centre speaks volumes about the importance of community to OLMC. It's also a beautifully constructed building that is light and airy with plenty of space for physical activities. Students are encouraged to reach their potential at OLMC and it is important to have facilities such as this building to help enable this. I feel that naming buildings after Sisters of Mercy helps to keep the history of the College alive and reminds the community of the importance of living the Mercy Values."

Internationally respected for her expertise in social change, Dr Anne Bunde-Birouste is the driving force behind Football United – a program that uses the magic of the 'World Game', together with other strategies, to inspire young people, to foster their educational engagement and to promote social justice and cross-cultural harmony. The Convener of Health Promotion at the UNSW School of Public Health and Community Medicine, Anne is passionate about demonstrating how sport can help young people build self-esteem and forge strong community bonds.

Principal Stephen Walsh said the community was very excited about the opportunities the brand new community centre will bring; "The magnificent new sports facilities and contemporary learning spaces will perfectly complement the mix of learning areas already in use at the College. It will be especially wonderful to have a space large enough to fit the whole school and guests; it will further enhance our very strong sense of community."

The Ailsa Mackinnon Community Centre is the final element of an ambitious Master Plan which began in 2008 and saw the construction of the Janet Woods Building (featuring multiple, fully-equipped Science labs, a new library, state of the art Food Technology spaces and a botany room), a new dedicated Student Centre, a Dance Studio and the purpose-built Christina Creede Music Centre. Stanton Dahl Architects were the architects for the Ailsa Mackinnon Community Centre project while Reitsma Constructions Pty Limited were the builders.

SENATOR DEBORAH O'NEILL ENCOURAGES MERCY GIRLS TO BE BOLD FOR CHANGE!

On Wednesday March 8, Senator Deborah O'Neill, Shadow Assistant Minister for Innovation and the Shadow Assistant Minister for Mental Health spoke at a special lunchtime International Women's Day event at Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta.



Mercy Girls, Sisters of Mercy and OLMC parents all joined with staff and students to hear Senator O'Neill speak about the need to 'be bold for change.' Senator O'Neil delivered her inspirational talk in the College's Edith Angel Hall where she encouraged Mercy Girls to be bold, back themselves and step forward; "If you don't, a bloke will and chances are he is no more qualified than you!"

It is still very important, according to Deborah O'Neil, that we celebrate and mark International Women's Day in 2017: "We still don't have gender equity. There are still many fields where women are underrepresented and it's simply a waste of talent and capacity - we can do better!"

OLMC Parramatta Head Girl, DunyaVasic, said that, at a school like OLMC, it feels like International Women's Day every day! "The way in which we are educated and exposed to a world of opportunities gives us hope, confidence and belief in our abilities - to the point that we can truly say that we feel the possibilities for us are endless.

This is a testimony to the College's 128 years of devotion to girls' education. Senator O'Neil agrees that Catholic girls' schools like OLMC Parramatta have been empowering women for hundreds of years: "So

many schools led by religious orders have inspired many generations to fulfil their talents and share them with the world.”

Principal Stephen Walsh says he is passionate about encouraging the community to embrace the theme for International Women's Day 2017: “It’s so important that women are part of decision making especially as they have such an understanding of community needs. Some of the statistics are particularly telling: Globally, only 47% of women have an account at a formal financial institution. Less than 20% of landholders around the world are women. Women make up just 23% of national parliaments worldwide. These need to change and we need to be bold in order to effect that change.”

International Women's Day (IWD) on March 8 is an important opportunity to celebrate the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women because visibility and awareness help drive positive change for women.

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ENRICHING OUR CURRICULUM:

Educational Strategic Plan and Buildings Masterplan

Padua College is at an exciting time in its 120 years of history with Principal, Anthony Banks launching an Educational Strategic Plan and

Buildings Masterplan.

Exciting, new programs and a campus restructure will provide an enhanced curriculum that encourages our students to be engaged learners and entrepreneurial thinkers.

This follows a period of extensive consultation with education professionals, Padua staff, student and parent communities, and the review of several educational models.

Padua College has identified the need for:

- More extension opportunities for Year 10 students with access to Year 11 & 12 subject offerings and pathways;
- A distinctive and specifically targeted Year 9 Program to maximise student engagement;
- An integrated vertical Year 7 & 8 Curriculum with a focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths (STEAM);
- Exciting new facilities for our Year 10-12 students at the Mornington Campus;
- Curriculum offerings and pedagogy that equips students with the social, entrepreneurial and life skills needed to have a positive impact on the world in which they live.

All three Padua Campuses will deliver a **Year 7 and 8 Integrated Learning Program** with a focus on STEAM to ensure that students become independent and engaged learners through problem solving and enquiry-based learning. This program will be phased in from **2017/2018**.

The Year 9 Program will run concurrently at all three locations with the opportunity for inter-campus learning. It will encourage greater opportunities for leadership and equip every student with a better understanding of how they learn and a true desire to do the best they can. This program will also be phased in from 2017/2018.

In **2018/2019**, all Year 10 students will attend classes at the Mornington site, in a purpose-built, state-of-the-art facility that will enable the most contemporary learning to take place.



The **Year 10-12 Program** will enable students to complete a three-year VCE or three-year VCAL Program, with more options to accelerate learning in these areas. A greater choice of pathways in Year 10-12 will provide students with a more positive feeling of control over their future directions.

The Buildings Masterplan for the Mornington Campus has been developed with BaldassoCortese Architects. A significant investment in facilities upgrades, the introduction of new IT Programs and learning spaces designed to complement and enhance the new learning and teaching pedagogy, are proposed with the Educational Strategic Plan.

Padua College will provide a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum characterised by excellent teaching that encourages every student with the opportunity to fulfil their potential. It will continue to do so in a faith-based setting where Catholic values and spirit are shared and nurtured, which is central to the Padua College Vision.

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LAUDATO SI' AT SAC

This year at St Aloysius College we are responding to Pope Francis' call, in Laudato Si', to care for our common home.

In his encyclical, addressed to all people of good will, Pope Francis says that we need to think about how fragile the earth is and that we need to change the way we live in order to care for, protect and respect our planet.

Pope Francis says that we need to use our heads, our hearts and hands so that we can understand more deeply our relationship with the natural world, so that we can celebrate God's presence in all creation and so that we can leave the earth in good shape for future generations.

Students are exploring this encyclical in their Religious Education lessons, and staff will unpack the document further with Fr Denis Edwards, who is engaged in the dialogue between science and religion and in contributing to the field of ecological theology.







NEWLY PLANTED SEEDLINGS

Our Justice and Mercy Group combined with the Greenhouse group to prepare our garden beds for the 2017 crop. Extra watering was needed to nurture the newly planted seedlings through the heat this term at St Aloysius College! The students, supported by Green JAM staff, planted two beds of herbs and vegetables. The produce will be donated to the Adelaide Day Centre, who provide lunch daily for homeless people in Adelaide, and also provide evening meals via a soup run in the city.





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RITUAL AND CELEBRATION MARK THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE ST MONICA'S SCHOOL YEAR

The St Monica's College community came together in celebration of two very special occasions; February 3 saw our first College Assembly and on February 10, our College's Opening Mass was celebrated. Both events welcomed new students and staff, while acknowledging the achievements of past students and marking the commencement of the school year.



At our first College Assembly, students of the 2016 graduating class were recognised by the College for their outstanding results. Reflecting our College values, this presentation has been a tradition for many years at St Monica's. These young graduates certainly inspire other students to commit to their studies, displaying self-belief and determination.

The St Monica's Opening Mass is a celebration, marking the commencement of the new school year. A procession of eager Year 7 students, as well as new students and staff to the College, began our mass and were warmly welcomed into the SMC community. This ritual is also an important milestone in the lives of our Year 12 students as they assume the role of leaders of the College. Symbolic of the commitment the Seniors of 2017 make to each other and to the College community, the 'College Candle' is passed on from one graduating class to the next and is lit at the start of each year, serving as a symbol of Christ's presence on their journey. Our 2017 Year 12 Captains and year level representatives were blessed and commissioned, giving their pledge of commitment for the new year.

Our celebrant, Father Martin Kenny also blessed staff and families. St Monica's staff members pledged to reveal the Christian message in word and in deed and commit themselves to their ministry. Parents and family members were also invited to accept their roles as guardians and to pray for continued strength and wisdom.

The Opening Mass of 2017 serves as a reminder to all to walk in the path of justice, truly living lives in a way that honours our school's strong Mercy tradition. It is a time to reflect on our goals for the future and to strive to be agents of mercy as we endeavour to live good lives. In the spirit of the new school year, Ms Galvin, the Principal of St

Monica's College, concluded the mass with an inspirational message of starting anew, taking opportunities as they come and living this year with Christian values, so that we may all look back on 2017 without regret. As we mark the start of our school year with ritual and celebration, we wish all in our community rewarding learning and wonderful friendships.

Nida Gray
Arts Captain

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PAST PUPIL INSPIRES AT ST SAVIOUR'S IWD BREAKFAST

Guest speaker at the annual International Women's Day Breakfast, past pupil, Jodie Willey spoke about the women in her life who have inspired her to become the leader she is today. Jodie left St Saviour's College as a 16 year old and joined Shine Lawyers as an Article Clerk. She completed her law degree externally and has since gone on to become the National Legal Principal of Shine Lawyers, Brisbane. Jodie spoke of the women in her life that encouraged her to be, resilient, courageous and to follow her dreams. She mentioned her Nanna, her Ma and her mother; whom she thanked for also ensuring that she is a kind person as well as strong one.



Jodie has recently been involved in the production of the movie, *Don't Tell*, which details the largest compensation win for a child sexual abuse claim. She was one of the lead investigators, and at the time, a very young lawyer. The case is considered a land mark case and Jodie spoke of the courage of the girl at the centre of the case and how her strength and courage is reflected in Jodie to this day.

RUGBY AT ST MARY'S COLLEGE

Relatively new to rugby, the first few years of participation were in the Collegesport Wellington Girl's – Premier 2, ten aside grade. In 2015 St Mary's won that competition. The decision was then made to pursue success at Premier 1 - playing the traditional 15 aside game the following year.



From this team, we also draw our Sevens players. This team won Condor Regionals in 2015 and qualified for their first Condor Seven's Nationals and proceeded to win the Bowl Final - 9th overall.

2016 proved a stellar year for the girls. Having realised their true potential and another year to mature into what has become a formidable team. The results of that year are as follows:

- Collegesport Wellington Premier One Regional winners
- Hurricanes Zone winners – first time a Wellington girl's school as achieved this.
- Runner Up Top Four competition
- Winner Sir Gordon Tietjens invitational sevens.
- Winner Derek Wootton Sevens.
- Winner Condor Regional Sevens
- Winner American Ambassador Sevens – competition for Wellington Premier Women
- Winner Condor Nationals 2016 earning the team the right to compete at the Sanix World Rugby Youth Tournament in 2017 to be held in Fukuoka, Japan. This is the first time a Wellington school, boys or girls has won the right to compete at this competition.
- Four team members selected for Wellington U18 Team
- One team member selected for Wellington Pride
- Seven members of team selected for Wellington Women Sevens team to compete in national competition.
- One team member awarded a training contract with the Black Ferns plus several ot

Rewarded for winning the Condor Seven's Tournament has earned our team the prestigious invitation to participate at the Sanix World Rugby Youth Tournament 2017 Girls Seven's in Fukuoka, Japan - 26 April to 1 May 2017.

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SILENCE IN SOLIDARITY

With a whole school initiative happening every Friday during the Lenten period, Trinity College Colac students are actively reflecting on the conditions of the poor and marginalised.

Students, with the assistance of staff in the Religious Education learning area, have introduced a "Silence in Solidarity" period during Lent. On Friday mornings during the homeroom period, the College will have a minute's silence at the start of the day in solidarity with the poor. Student leaders will take turns in addressing the whole school body, leading all on campus with a thought for the silent reflection for that day.

Reflections such as the following have formed the basis of the initiative.

Student Leaders: Good morning staff and students

We ask that you sit quietly in your chair with nothing in your hands and nothing to distract you. If you can, close your eyes and listen. If you keep your eyes open, just focus on one spot in front of you and listen.

Today we remember those who are hungry – especially the children of Somalia, where a famine is causing starvation and death. You may like to pray for those who can help them or reflect on how precious food is for life. They are so weak, they no longer even cry...

We will sit for one minute in silent solidarity with the hungry children of the world.

One minute's silence

Mother of Mercy

*Response: **Pray for us***

Live Jesus in our hearts

*Response: **Forever***

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AMSSA Staff Conference

August 8 – 10 2019

Monte Sant'Angelo Mercy College, North Sydney

