



SACRED HEART
ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION

COLLEGE REPORT – PRINCIPAL ANNA NEGRO

On 3 December last year we celebrated the 160th Anniversary of the arrival of the Sister of Mercy in Geelong and on 19 April we celebrated our own 160th Anniversary. For this reason our focus has been on tradition but not as tired and worn, old and duty, but as a gift of memory – ‘a memory that is older and larger than our own life’. We honour our Mercy tradition by choosing not to repeat actions merely because they have always been done, but instead our focus will be on the constant development of Sacred Heart College.

In our quest to further advance **strategic priority two: *Life worthy learning***, students from Year 7 to 11 have experienced transdisciplinary learning linked to external experts. Students have worked with a Cyber Security Analyst from IBM who engaged a small group of senior Maths students in completing a graduate level Logic Course titled "Faulty Arguments", whilst another group of students worked with CSIRO professional Dr Melanie Thompson on a project which explored how to reduce drag on ships' hulls in order to reduce emission levels produced by container ships bringing imports into Australia. Both projects signal what future learning looks like – a practical collaborative integration of skills and knowledge from across a range of disciplines used to solve real world problems.

Our belief that learning happens anytime, anywhere and in many different ways, and that learning is amplified through the use of technology has led to the introduction of an online digital citizenship course undertaken by incoming Year 7 students and our current Year 9 students. This educative process focuses on responsible use of mobile devices and is part of our response to the Victorian Government ban on mobile phones in schools.

Through the learner dispositions and learning to learn we continue to focus on what it means for our girls to be a highly capable learner, and this year we had been accepted to present our work at:

- The Alliance of Girls School 2020 Asia Pacific Summit in Hobart,
- The Harvard Zero Project – Education That Matters at the Independent Schools Conference in Melbourne and
- The IHESA Conference presenting Leading Learning and Caring.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 put a hold on this.

Looking into the future a joint working party was established in 2019 between SHC and SJC to review the structure of the school day.

Informed by Positive Education research we have implemented a new student leadership structure and election process. The structure challenges the belief that leadership should be determined by age and instead focuses on student readiness based on experiences both within and beyond school.

Strategic priority 3 is '*Healthy and Safe environment*'.

Last year was the first year of a two-year program for Visible Wellbeing and all staff have to date completed modules in character strengths, emotional management and habits and goals. This year

they will complete modules on attention and awareness, relationships and coping. The knowledge gained and new practices learnt are being embedded into teacher practices aimed at improving student wellbeing. Knowing that well-being is multi-faceted our partnership with Deakin has seen us join forces through a shared food charter which focuses on empowerment, sustainability and balance. Along with PA40+our alternative physical education program offered at year 10, we hope to instil in all our girls, habits that will support a healthy body and a healthy mind well beyond their time at Sacred Heart.

In Term 4 of last year we delivered stage 3 of the STEAM Hub – The Court Precinct which has provided a new student entry into Sacred Heart with contemporary collaborative spaces and a café style meeting point akin to the shared workspaces that have come to be dotted around metropolitan Melbourne. Work is now underway for Stage 5 of the Master plan – which includes an expansion of the O'Dwyer Gym with the inclusion of wellness spaces in order to create the Sports and Wellness Centre.

Last year Academic Parent Teacher Teams were introduced at Year 7 with a focus on lifting student performance in maths. This year we have turned our attention on teacher training and we have launched the Embedded School Practice model where students from ACU in the final year of their teaching degree will work with the Catholic Secondary and Primary Schools in Geelong in a year-long program 3 days per week.

Needless to say a **strategic priority 4 'working together for excellence' and strategic priority 5: 'Stewardship'** are tracking well.

Strategic priority 1: 'The Sacred Heart Way' calls us to uphold and advance Catherine McAuley's vision. In line with our strategic goal to broaden our student population to reflect the diversity of Geelong region by giving preference to the marginalised Sacred Heart has focused on Refugees and new arrivals and we have partnered with Barwon Child Youth & Family (BCYF) and Diversitat to identify refugee and asylum seeker families desiring a Catholic Secondary education for their daughters. This work is being supported by our Scholarship Committee and will in time be supported by the Cecilia Circle – A Bequest Society which will be launched sometime in the future. I thank Catherine Middlemiss and Anne Mathison for the work that they have done in this space.

Almost at the end of Strategy 2020 last year we entered a process to develop Strategy 2021 and Beyond. So far, we have reviewed our Vision, we have undertaken a fact finding and consultation process, run forums and workshops and we have listened to representatives from the Geelong community, CEM, businesses, education and futurists. From this consultation, key themes have emerged and these have been synthesized to create 4 strategic priorities. Strategy 2021 and beyond will be launched later this year.

Our 2019 senior students continued to achieve solid academic results:

- 11% of students who completed a 3/4 VCE sequence achieved a study score of 40 and above, placing them in the top 10% of students in the State
- 18% of students achieved an ATAR ranking of 90+ placing them in the top 10% of students in the State
- 39.89% of students achieved an ATAR ranking of 80 or above placing them in the top 20% of students in the State
- The median study score was 32.
- The 2019 Dux Lucy Lyu achieved an ATAR of 99.55

We continue to be proud of our Sacred Heart College alumni who attract local media attention. They are excellent role models and ambassadors for the College. This year Sacred Heart was to take part in Geelong Design Week celebrating Geelong's unique creative heritage and design driven future. Our

plan was for our girls to showcase critical thinking, problem solving and imagination in our Makerspace in the Innovation Precinct. All is not lost as this event has been rescheduled for 2021.

I take this opportunity to thank Director of Development, Marketing and Communication – Catherine Middlemiss for the guidance, advice, wisdom and support that she has provided the Alumni Committee and Suzie Veitch our SHC Alumni Officer who has co-ordinated today's proceedings, communication and the Maguire Magazine.