

An aerial photograph of New York City at sunset, showing the dense skyline of Manhattan with the Freedom Tower as the central focal point. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, and the city lights are beginning to glow.

# Heritage

JOHN XXIII COLLEGE  
SEEK JUSTICE



ISSUE 54

2025

## Singing in the **Big Apple**

GONDWANA CHORALE  
GOES GLOBAL, P37



FROM THE PRINCIPAL

# Living our mission and building our future

Noongar Aboriginal artist Mel Spillman (Woods) with Year 12 students.



What is a quality education and how do we know we are offering real quality?

For our College, 'quality' is not solely determined by academic achievements and physical prowess; it is profoundly intertwined with the development of conscience and character, a hallmark that sets us apart from the norm. Our College motto, *'Seek Justice'*, is a clear reflection of this commitment, embodying a call to act with integrity and compassion, principles deeply grounded in the teachings of our College Founders and within the Gospels.

Our College's rich history continues to shape the vibrant, Catholic, coeducational environment we cherish today; an environment where our students benefit from an education designed to develop well-rounded graduates equipped with the understanding and skills necessary to make meaningful contributions to an increasingly interconnected, complex, and diverse world.

The imperative to navigate complexity with empathy, understanding, and a global perspective is ever-present, highlighting the need for critical thinking, creativity, and effective collaboration in times of rapid change and globalisation.

Quality education fosters an understanding of diverse cultures, histories, and viewpoints, encouraging empathy and engagement with difference; and our current student leaders have embraced this vision, reflected in their theme for the year:

***'To foster an inclusive community where diversity is celebrated, and each person is treated with respect to feel a sense of belonging.'***

This commitment to inclusion continues to inspire our community.

This issue of *Heritage* showcases a plethora of activity demonstrating the lived experience of our College mission. Be it through sustainability initiatives, such as planting projects and environmental stewardship, or creative collaborations with Aboriginal artist Mel Spillman, we see how our community continues to embody the values of justice, service, and inclusivity.

Whether serving their country through roles in DFAT or the ADF, or excelling in industries such as aviation and investment, our alumni stories exemplify the Ignatian call to be 'people for others'.



Student planting native flora as part of our College conservation efforts.

Through events like the Alumni Networking Evening at Pitcher Partners, alumni connections are further strengthened, supporting our graduates to lead with competence and compassion.

Our strategic intent challenges us not simply to aim for 'best practice' but to embrace 'next practice,' ensuring we remain responsive to the evolving needs of our students and society.

As a Pre-Kindy to Year 12 College steeped in Ignatian tradition, we are uniquely positioned to cultivate skills that empower students from an early age; skills they will carry into their futures as leaders who advocate for justice in the service of others.

Reflecting on all that has been achieved so far this year, I extend my deep gratitude to all members of our extraordinary community. May we continue to strive for excellence, justice, and service in all that we do.

**Daniel Mahon**

College Principal





# Graduation isn't an ending. It's a beginning.

## Save the Date: Upcoming Alumni Events

Join us for a fantastic lineup of events designed to bring our alumni together, foster connections, and celebrate the John XXIII spirit:

- **Friday, 20 June:**  
Loreto Class 1975, 50-year reunion
- **Friday, 8 August:**  
*Ron Logan Cup* Alumni -v- First XVIII  
*Theresa Elliott Shield* Alumni -v- College  
Past and Current Staff event
- **Wednesday 27 August:**  
St Louis Class 1965, 60-year reunion
- **Saturday 30 August:**  
Class 1990, Unofficial 35-Year reunion
- **Wednesday, 3 September:**  
Class 2024, 1st-year reunion
- **Friday, 5 September:** Spring Soiree
- **Wednesday, 24 September:**  
JTC All Years' London Reunion
- **Thursday, 16 October:** Media Night
- **Saturday, 11 October:**  
Loreto Class 1965, 60-year reunion
- **20-25 October:** Visual Arts Exhibition Opening
- **Saturday, 25 October:**  
St Louis Class 1975, 50-year reunion
- **Monday 3 – Friday 8 November:**  
Loreto 150 Years Exhibition
- **Wednesday, 5 November:**  
Loreto All Years' Event
- **Thursday, 6 November:**  
Volunteers Thank You Sundowner
- **Friday, 14 November:** Alumni Mass
- **Saturday, 15 November:**  
Class 2015, 10-year reunion  
Class 2005, 20-year reunion  
Class 1995, 30-year reunion  
Class 1985, 40-year reunion
- **Friday, 28 November:** Christmas Concert
- **Wednesday, 10 December:**  
Year 9 Alumni Careers Event
- **Sunday, 14 December:**  
Loreto Past Pupils' Annual Mass

Mark your calendar – we're thrilled to reconnect and celebrate with you!

**H** At John XXIII College, graduation is a transition into our vibrant, supportive alumni community.

This network is a cornerstone of the College, providing invaluable connections, opportunities, and a sense of belonging that lasts a lifetime. Our alumni are integral to the College's ongoing success, and we're thrilled to share some exciting ways you can engage with us in the year ahead!

### Beyond events

While our events are a highlight, there are countless other ways alumni contribute to and stay involved with John XXIII College. We deeply value the diverse talents and experiences our alumni offer as:

- Guest speakers: Sharing professional journeys and inspiring current students.
- Networkers: Expanding professional networks and connecting with fellow alumni at events.
- Sport coaches: Helping develop the next generation of athletes through coaching roles.
- Sport trainers: Sharing expertise and passion for sports by running training sessions.
- Homework Club tutors: Providing valuable academic support to students after school in our Library.
- Grounds assistants: Joining our grounds team to contribute to the upkeep of our beautiful campus.
- Musical production assistants: Lending their talents to our theatrical productions, enhancing the student experience.

The list truly goes on! Whether you're interested in mentoring, volunteering your time, or simply staying informed about College news, connect with us and explore the many ways you can remain an active member of the John XXIII College community.

### Recent highlights

We recently hosted several alumni gatherings including:

- Networking Event at Pitcher Partners
- High Achievers Breakfast with **Rory Hewson (Class 2019)** as guest speaker
- St Louis All Years Lunch

Your connection to John XXIII College doesn't end at graduation – it evolves into something even more meaningful.

Each time you attend an event, mentor a student, or simply share your journey, you strengthen the foundations upon which our community stands.

We invite you to be an active part of our shared story. Whether you graduated last year or decades ago, your experience, wisdom, and presence enrich our College in ways that extend far beyond campus boundaries.

Take that step today: reach out, sign up, or simply mark your calendar. Together, we're not just preserving our traditions – we're creating new ones for future generations of the John XXIII College family.

Contact us at [alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au](mailto:alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au) to continue your alumni journey today.

### FOLLOW us on social media:



# Alumni networking in the **Top End of Town**





**H** The latest John XXIII College Alumni industry networking event drew a capacity crowd, highlighting the enduring power of connection within our community.

Christian Golding, Managing Director of Pitcher Partners Wealth WA.



The fully booked gathering brought together alumni spanning graduation years from 1980 through to the Class of 2024, alongside current Year 12 students eager to build their professional networks.

A John XXIII College education has prepared graduates for diverse career paths, evidenced by the wide array of industries represented at the event. Attendees connected with professionals from fields including finance, resources, law, and public service, fostering valuable relationships and opening doors to potential mentorships and collaborations.

Principal Daniel Mahon speaking with Year 12 students.



For the Year 12 students in attendance, the evening provided a unique opportunity to hone their networking skills and gain insights from those who had walked the path before them.

We extend our gratitude to **Christian Golding (Class 1994)** for hosting the event. As Managing Director of Pitcher Partners Wealth WA and a dedicated member of



Alumni of all ages enjoyed the event.

the John XXIII College Foundation Board and Investment Committee, Christian has long supported our community. He has also served as a rugby coach for the College for many years. Christian shared his expertise and valuable insights in a 10-minute talk, followed by an engaging Q&A session.



Alumni connecting at the event.

Networking events like this create valuable opportunities for our College community. They allow alumni to reconnect with former classmates, forge new professional relationships, and leverage the collective wisdom and experience of the John XXIII College network. Many attendees report making meaningful connections that may lead to future collaborations and career opportunities.

Stay tuned for details about our next industry networking event, scheduled for later this year. We look forward to continuing to foster these valuable relationships within the John XXIII College community.

**Are you interested in hosting or attending these events? Please get in touch with our Community Engagement and Events Officer Sue McLennan at [alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au](mailto:alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au) or 9383 0520.**

# Three panels. One community.

**H** In a meaningful step toward reconciliation and cultural appreciation, our College has commissioned respected Noongar Aboriginal artist Mel Spillman (Woods) from Maarakool Art to create a new artwork for our administration building reception space.

This collaboration weaves together our College traditions with Noongar artistry to create a visual legacy that will welcome visitors for years to come.

## Collaborative process

Last term, we welcomed Mel to the College to share her journey and facilitate an engaging workshop with our Year 12 ATAR Visual Arts class. The session was designed not only to inspire the commissioned artwork but also to involve our students directly in the creative process, giving them agency in how their College story would be represented.

Working in small groups, students brainstormed elements that represent our College's identity, history, and values. They shared insights about:

- The colours that symbolise our College
- Important landmarks on our campus
- Our College motto, crest, and song

- The significance of Pope John XXIII, Mary Ward, and Ignatius of Loyola
- How our House system shapes student life
- Our Catholic, Loreto and Jesuit legacies
- Native flora and fauna present on our campus
- Our mission and ethos
- Other elements that capture the essence and spirit of our College community

These student contributions directly informed the final artwork, ensuring it authentically represents our collective identity while honouring both our institutional heritage and the land on which our community thrives.

## Learning cultural art techniques

Beyond contributing ideas, the workshop provided students with the valuable opportunity to learn painting techniques directly from Mel. Each student created their own piece of art incorporating native flora and fauna elements, gaining practical skills while deepening their appreciation for artistic traditions that stretch back thousands of years.

The workshop also created space for important discussions about cultural appropriation,





challenging students to think critically about respectful engagement with Aboriginal cultural elements and perspectives. These conversations extended beyond art into broader considerations of respect, recognition, and cultural awareness.

### The commissioned artwork

The final piece is a triptych (three-panel) design that visually narrates our College story, incorporating elements of our heritage and values through the cultural lens and creative expression of a Noongar artist. This format echoes traditional storytelling practices while creating a visual focal point for our reception area.

Each of the three panels holds special significance, with distinct symbols representing our College founders: Pope John XXIII, Mary Ward (Loreto tradition), and Ignatius of Loyola (Jesuit tradition). Together, these panels unite to tell a cohesive story of our College's identity and values.

Year 12 ATAR Visual Arts students participating in the workshop.



Titled 'People for Others,' the artwork features the distinctive colours of our College, campus, and environment. Pathways weave throughout the design, symbolising the journeys taken by and within our community, while flowing water represents the Swan River and the *Wagyl* (Rainbow Serpent, creator or giver of life in Noongar culture).

'The colour palette was a natural starting point, as well as a student drawing of the iconic labyrinth on campus, which stood out as a strong design element with meaning,' explains Mel. 'I was also inspired by the College crest which has labyrinth-like elements to it. These patterns became the framework for telling the College's story through Noongar artistic traditions.'

The artwork includes twelve motifs representing key aspects of our College identity: our founders, right relationships, striving for excellence, cultural diversity, community connections, collaboration, student independence, educational pathways, reflection spaces, sustainability, inclusivity, and spiritual connections to Country.

### Commitment to reconciliation

This collaboration represents an important aspect of our College's ongoing commitment to reconciliation with First Nations peoples. By prominently featuring Noongar artwork in our administration building, we honour Noongar people and create opportunities for deeper understanding and appreciation within our community.

The artwork will serve as both a beautiful aesthetic piece and a daily reminder of our responsibility to acknowledge, respect, and learn from the Noongar people as Traditional Custodians of the land on which our College stands.

'The artwork is open to interpretation. I hope that people will pause and reflect and find their own individual connection to it. Art has this beautiful way of sparking conversations between people and creating space for deeper understanding. That's what reconciliation is about - creating those moments of connection and reflection.'

### About the artist

Mel Spillman (Woods) is an accomplished Noongar artist whose work through Maarakool Art has received wide recognition. Her artistic practice combines traditional elements with contemporary expressions, creating pieces that bridge cultural understandings and invite viewers into a richer appreciation of Noongar perspectives.

Her distinctive style and cultural knowledge make her the ideal artist to capture our College's story while honouring the deeper history of the land on which we learn and grow together.

To explore Mel's artwork and learn about her artistic practice, visit her website at [www.maarakoolart.com](http://www.maarakoolart.com)

Watch a video about  
Mel's art workshop.



# Global impact in action

Roberto at the entry to COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

**H** In the early hours of a November morning in 2024, **Roberto Vitali-Lawn (Class 2018)** found himself in an unexpected place – observing real-time climate negotiations at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP) in Baku, Azerbaijan.

As a United Nations Global Voices Fellow, he was there to witness firsthand how international climate policy takes shape. He reflects:

*‘Experiencing COP29 was invaluable. You see the negotiations happen in front of you and it’s brilliant.’*

This opportunity came through the Global Voices Fellowship program, which selects promising young Australians to develop policy proposals and represent young Australian voices at international forums. Roberto’s successful application centred on data quality in emissions reporting – a critical but often overlooked aspect of climate action.

‘High data quality ensures legitimacy of impact – that’s part of my argument,’ he explains. Now working on his fourth draft, Roberto has been consulting with experts globally about the feasibility of establishing better standards for emissions data.



The solution to this challenge, as he's discovered, isn't straightforward. 'My policy is in theory very good until you have to define what you think is high quality, and that's where it gets subjective,' he notes. While global standards exist, such as the Partners of Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF) quality score, recent research has called their reliability into question.

Roberto engaging with stakeholders at COP29.



Roberto's interest in climate action stretches back to his teenage years when at 13, he participated in reforesting mānuka and kānuka trees on his family's farm on New Zealand's South Island. 'There's a big focus on keeping the family farm, and the future is out of dairy. So I thought, 'OK, maybe it's trees.' As I got older, I knew I wanted to do something in my career that aligns with my values and what I do day-to-day.'

This early passion guided his post-school journey, albeit along a non-linear progression. After starting an economics and politics degree at UWA, Roberto switched out politics to finance with an environmental focus. 'At the time, there was a big emphasis on environmental issues in finance, and I thought, 'That's interesting. Maybe that's where I fit in.' So I tied my career to that.'

During his university years, Roberto interned across diverse sectors, persistently seeking opportunities that would eventually lead to his goal of working in environmental sustainability. Today, he works as an investment analyst and consultant with a focus on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors.

'We monitor all risks, things like climate change, physical natural risks, human rights, biodiversity, and how you protect yourself from those risks or how you can work to better solve some of those problems through your investments,' he explains.

Roberto's professional journey carries the hallmarks of the social justice and environmental stewardship ethos fostered at John XXIII College. When asked about his time

at the College, he credits the co-curricular opportunities as being particularly formative.

'I participated in a lot of *Magis* (Gifted and Talented Program) events, such as mock trials and debating,' he recalls. These experiences not only built his public speaking confidence but also established a pattern of trying new things – a philosophy he encourages current students to embrace.

During his final year, Roberto was also the recipient of the Benjamin Monaghan Award, which is awarded to one student annually who displays talent in their creative endeavour. This recognition supported his participation in the UN Youth Emerging Leader Programs tour to China, Japan, and South Korea – an experience that gave him an early international perspective on global challenges.



His advice to students contemplating similar pathways? 'Find the weird way of getting there,' he suggests. 'When you get to uni, you might encounter very set, linear paths for you, which can sometimes be limiting.'

Instead, Roberto advocates for exploration and breadth. 'Try whatever. See what sticks,' he advises.

*'Find all the unusual ways of getting where you want to go. Find all the different little programs that aren't well advertised, or volunteering opportunities. These experiences are useful because they develop your perspective, your academic and professional networks, and expose you to what is out there. It's a domino effect.'*

As global challenges like climate change continue to evolve, Roberto's journey exemplifies how John XXIII College graduates are contributing to real-world solutions with both pragmatism and purpose – finding their own paths to make a meaningful difference in the world.

Meeting former Australian Prime Minister and current President of the International Hydropower Association, Malcolm Turnbull.

# Committed to **our common home**



Grounds and maintenance staff with our newly installed Cockitrough®.



**H** In 2015, Pope Francis issued *Laudato Si'*, a profound encyclical that calls humanity to care for our planet, emphasising the interconnectedness of environmental, social, and economic issues.

Grounded in the concept of 'integral ecology,' the document serves as a spiritual and ethical guide for addressing the ecological crisis and fostering sustainable practices. It reminds us that caring for the earth is not just a duty but a moral imperative to ensure a thriving future for all creation.

Inspired by this call, our College has embraced environmental stewardship as a core focus, culminating in winning the Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) Quality Catholic Education Award for Stewardship in 2024. This recognition celebrates our impactful efforts in conservation and sustainability, particularly our commitment to protecting the endangered Carnaby's Cockatoo.

Installing the Cockitrough®.



With the funds received from this award, we have further expanded our environmental initiatives. A key project has been the installation of a Cockitrough®, an innovative bird watering station designed by the Town of Victoria Park. This self-cleaning station provides a consistent source of fresh water for native birds, particularly supporting the endangered Carnaby's Cockatoo populations in Western Australia. The Cockitrough® plays a crucial role in conserving urban ecosystems and enhancing biodiversity across metropolitan and regional areas.

Our commitment to environmental education and hands-on conservation continues to grow. Recently, we welcomed Professor Kingsley Dixon from Curtin University's School of Molecular and Life Sciences to share his expertise on endangered Carnaby's Cockatoos with our Year 6 students.

As a leading researcher on their feeding and breeding habits, Professor Dixon's visit underscored the importance of our ongoing planting initiatives on campus, which provide essential food sources for these iconic birds.

Our sustainability efforts are an ongoing journey, led by our dedicated Sustainability Coordinator, Adrian Sims. Regular planting and weeding days bring together students, staff, and the broader community, fostering a culture of environmental stewardship.



Year 12 students planting native flora.

To date, we have planted several hundred native plants across our campus. These collaborative events not only enhance the physical environment of our grounds but also serve as valuable learning experiences, reinforcing the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem health for our students.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the installation of solar panels, a project funded by our Parents' Association. This initiative, currently in the planning stages, further demonstrates our commitment to renewable energy and reducing our carbon footprint.

Our collective efforts in sustainability and environmental care reflect a deep commitment to the principles outlined in *Laudato Si'*. By engaging our entire College community in these initiatives, we are not only preserving our local environment but also instilling in our students a sense of responsibility for the planet that will guide them long into the future.

There are many ways to get involved. Students can join our Sustainability Club, and anyone can take part in our Community Planting Days throughout the year.

Watch a video of the  
Sustainability Club  
planting project.



CLASS 2024

# Celebrating excellence



**H** The Class of 2024 has set an impressive benchmark for academic achievement, demonstrating exceptional dedication and resilience throughout their final year of schooling.

These results reflect not only individual talent but also the strength of the College's educational community.

With a median ATAR of 90, our newest graduates have positioned themselves strongly for their future endeavours. Particularly noteworthy is that half of the cohort achieved an ATAR of 90 or above, placing them in the top 10% of students statewide.

The College also proudly celebrates three outstanding students who achieved ATARs of 99 or higher, with the highest performing student reaching an exceptional 99.7.

Beyond the numbers, these results represent countless hours of diligent study, perseverance through challenges, and the dedicated support of teachers and families.

*The Class of 2024 has been recognised for their mutual support, commitment, warmth, strength, and flexibility – qualities that will serve them well in their future pursuits.*

The breadth of achievement extends beyond ATAR results, with students excelling in vocational education and training pathways. Thirty-six students achieved VET qualifications, while others participated in university enabling programs and received subject-specific recognition for excellence.

As these young adults step forward into the next chapter of their lives, they carry with them not just academic credentials, but also the values and character developed during their time at John XXIII College.

We congratulate the Class of 2024 on their outstanding achievements and look forward to their continued success.



# Class of 2024 Achievement Highlights

**Congratulations to the Class of 2024 for their outstanding results, supported by their expert teachers and their families.**

The students in the Class of 2024 have shown exceptional collaborative spirit and personal growth throughout their journeys.

Their positive attitude, determination, and ability to adapt to challenges have been inspiring to witness.

They embraced every aspect of their Year 12 experience with enthusiasm and maturity.

Highest performing student

**99.7**

Students with  
98+ ATAR

**9%**

Median ATAR

**90**

Students with  
95+ ATAR

**23%**

3 students  
with an ATAR of

**99+**

Students with  
90+ ATAR

**50%**

**99+ ATAR**

**3** students

**Top 1% in the State**

**98+ ATAR**

**11** students

**Top 2% in the State**

**95+ ATAR**

**30** students

**Top 5% in the State**

**90+ ATAR**

**50%** of cohort

**Top 10% in the State**

## General Exhibition

(Top 50 highest WACE results)

**Emily Laurance**  
**Maya Mintz**

## Subject Exhibition

(Highest examination mark)

**Emily Laurance**  
*Religion and Life*

## Subject Certificates of Excellence

(Top 0.5% in each ATAR examination)

Emily Laurance	Psychology
Genevieve Moody	Psychology
Jasmine Boog	Religion and Life
Megan Cleary	Religion and Life
Emily Laurance	Religion and Life

**10 students**

**completed the Curtin UniReady Enabling Program**

(securing entry into all Western Australian universities)

**Gemma Savage**, who completed a work placement, was shortlisted for the School Curriculum and Standards Authority 2024 Awards for outstanding achievement in vocational and education training.

## 36 students achieved VET qualifications

Certificate II and III	<b>19 students</b>
Certificate IV	<b>14 students</b>
Diploma	<b>3 students</b>

**Angela Williams, Tilly Thetford** and **Esther Goodlet** were selected to audition for the Performing Arts Perspectives based on their results for the ATAR Drama practical examination.

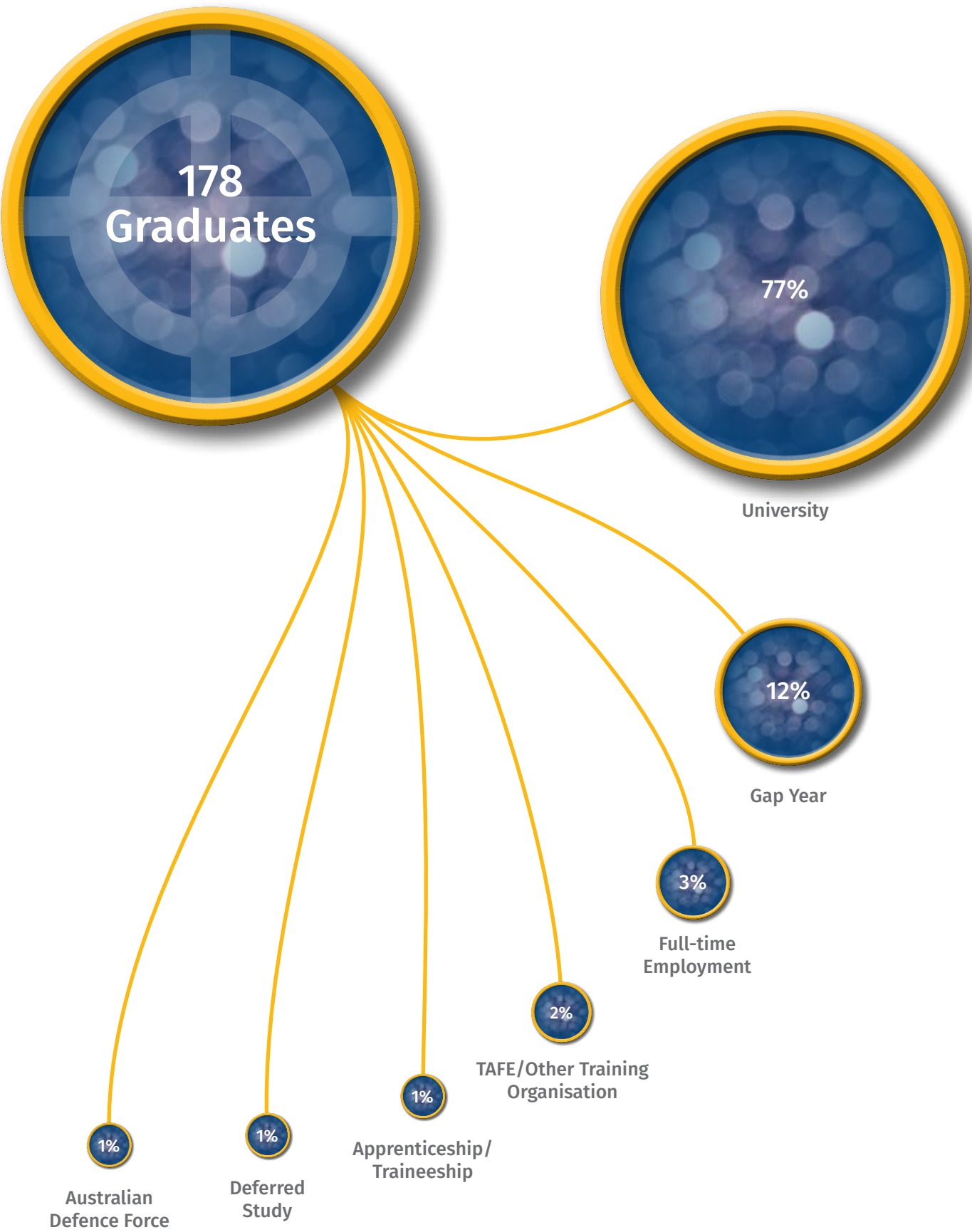


## 38 students were awarded Certificates of Distinction

Gemma Bailey  
Jasmine Boog  
Aidan Brewer  
Tenley Burton  
Megan Cleary  
Sophie Dartnell  
Henry Elkington  
Julia-Grace Fiorentini  
Angus Furnuss  
Frederick Gleghorn  
Jonathan Hie  
Xavier Jeffery  
Hannah Johnson  
Joseph Kilcullen  
Emily Laurance  
Eloise Loveridge  
Harry Martin  
Caleb McKeiver  
Maya Mintz  
Genevieve Moody  
Wim Parker  
Asha Paton  
Georgia Perry  
Sky Pineda Beasley  
Evey-Jane Plant  
Connor Price  
Ruby Purcell  
Darcy Schubert  
Kate Shirley  
Nicholas Silva  
Chloe Stokes  
Thomas Syminton  
Massimo Torre  
Jasper Van Ast  
Angelique Watson  
Max Watt  
Angela Williams  
Michael Woo

## 29 students were awarded Certificates of Merit

Amber Armstrong  
Asher Aylmore  
Leonardo Bergomi  
Alex Collins  
Meg Derbyshire  
Darcy Floyd  
Esther Goodlet  
Samantha Gribben  
Jed Hopkins  
Sarah Macfarlane  
Macy Martin  
Gracie McCrae  
Aisling McGoldrick  
Luke McLernon  
Laura Moore  
Jonathon Morphet  
Jasmine Naismith  
Eva Papantoniou  
Bill Penrose  
Lucas Preston  
Gypsi Rabeling  
Willa Reed  
Bella Samson  
Samuel Smetana  
Jacinta Sturley  
Jaden Tan  
Louise Tana  
Matilda Thetford



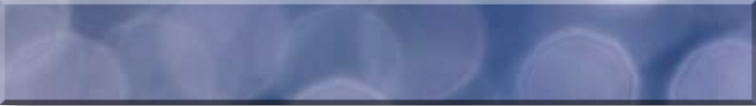
A further 3% were unknown or not disclosed.



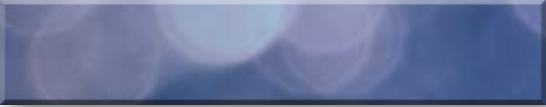
# Universities



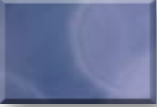
University of Western Australia **46%**



University of Notre Dame **26%**



Curtin University **19%**



Edith Cowan University **5%**



Murdoch University **1%**



Australian National University **1%**

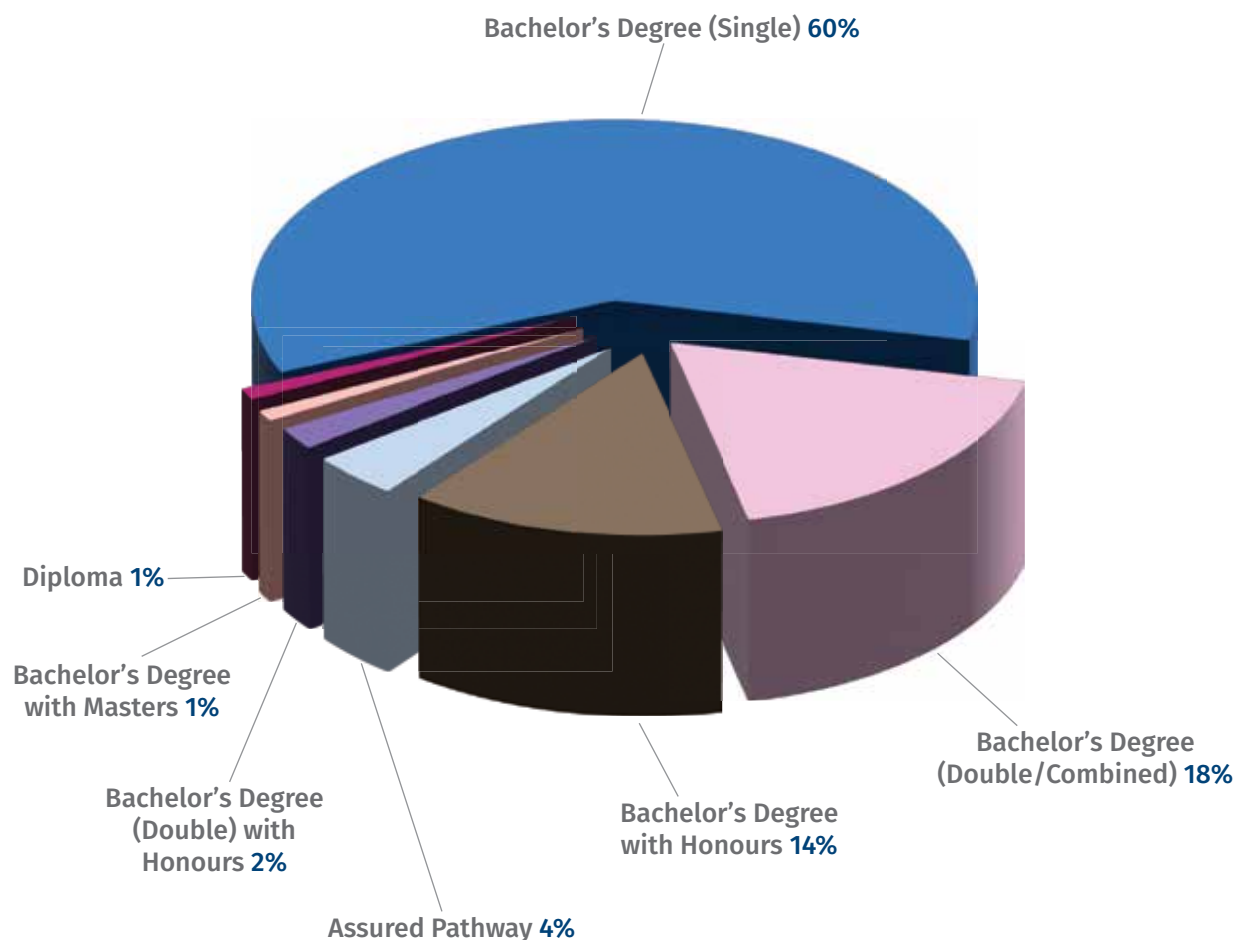


University of Melbourne **1%**



University of Otago, New Zealand **1%**

## Tertiary Study



### Scholarships

(4 students received scholarships)

Edith Cowan University High Achiever's ATAR

The University of Notre Dame Australia Commonwealth Teaching Scholarship

Curtin University Excellence Scholarship (not accepted)

Curtin University Excellence Scholarship (not accepted)

### Assured Pathways

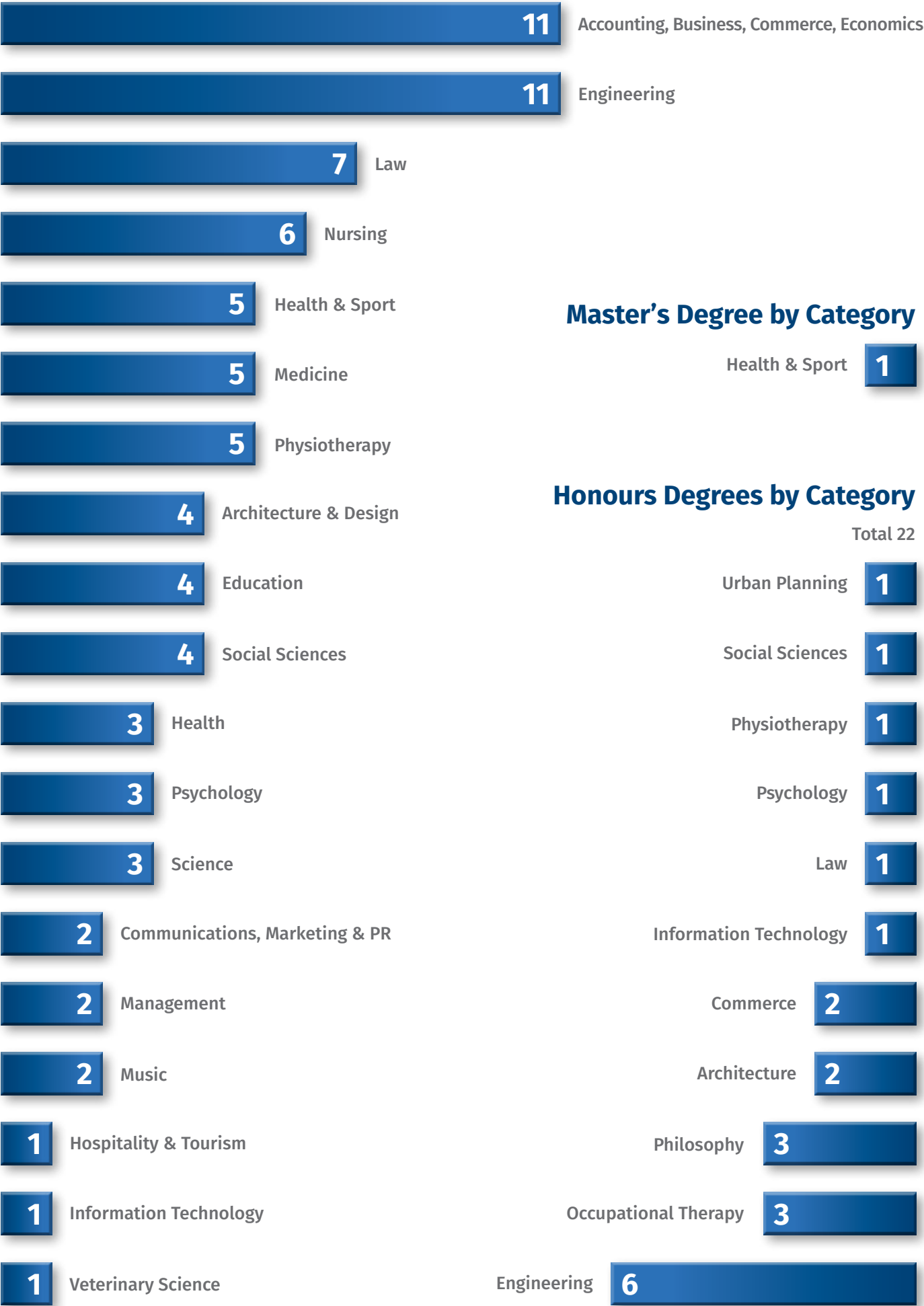
4 students studying: Bachelor of Commerce and Assured Pathway to Juris Doctor

1 student studying: Bachelor of Science with Assured Pathway to Juris Doctor

1 student studying: Combined Bachelor of Human Sciences and Master of Pharmacy



**Single Degrees by Category** A further two students were undecided, bringing the total to 82.

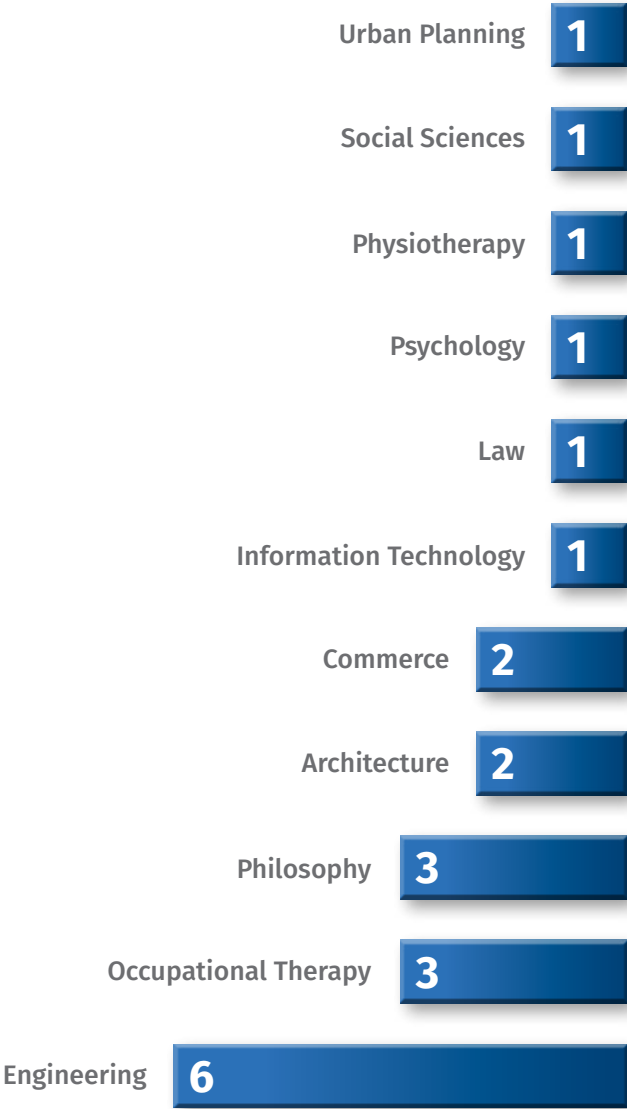


**Master's Degree by Category**



**Honours Degrees by Category**

Total 22



## Double Degrees by Category Total of 24 students.

Psychology	Commerce
Psychology	Commerce
Geography	Security and Strategic Studies
Sport Science	Business
Law	Arts (Politics & Journalism)
Law	Human Resource Management
Law	Arts
Law	Arts
Laws	Bachelor of Arts
Human Rights	Commerce
Engineering	Commerce
Economics	Commerce
Psychology	Commerce
Psychology	Media and Communications
Music	Sound Design
Physics	Bio-Engineering
Psychology	Arts
Business Law	Finance
Engineering	Commerce
Engineering	Commerce
Engineering	Commerce
Physics	Engineering
Engineering	Geology
History	Political Science



## Other Destinations

### Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts

**2**  
students

*Diploma of Music:  
Singing for Musical Theatre*

*Diploma of Live Production  
and Technical Design*

### Australian Defence Force Academy

**1**  
student

*Business Degree with an  
interest in Intelligence*

### Deferred Study

**2**  
students

One is undertaking their  
commercial pilot licence.

## GAP YEAR

**22**  
students

16 working, 4 working and travelling.

### TAFE and Registered Training Organisations

**3**  
students

#### North Metropolitan TAFE

*Autonomous & Remote  
Control Operations*

*Music*

*Patisserie*

**1**  
student

#### LTT Labtech Training

*Laboratory Techniques*

### Full-Time Employment

Construction

**3 students**

Property

**1 student**

### Apprenticeships / Traineeships

**1**  
student

#### South Metropolitan TAFE

*Electrical*

**1**  
student

#### North Metropolitan TAFE

*Plumbing*

# The 2024 Leah Jane Cohen Grant

**H** Alumna **Mackenzie Taylor (Class 2018)** was the recipient of the 2024 Leah Jane Cohen grant. This prestigious award is given to female law graduates to support their practical legal training.



Mackenzie with her mother and sister.

Mackenzie, a recent graduate from the University of Western Australia with a Bachelor of Laws, expressed her gratitude during the acceptance ceremony. 'I am honoured to be this year's recipient of the Leah Jane Cohen award,' she stated.

The grant will assist Mackenzie in pursuing her practical legal training and obtaining her graduate diploma of legal practice, essential steps toward her goal of practicing law professionally.

Mackenzie was nominated by Law Access WA, a not-for-profit organisation that coordinates pro bono legal assistance for community members and organisations unable to access support through traditional channels such as legal aid.

During her time at Law Access, Mackenzie gained valuable experience conducting eligibility assessments, writing matter summaries and legal analyses, and drafting correspondence to applicants. She says:

*'Law Access gave me the opportunity to put what I was learning at university into practice in a meaningful way. The experience was pivotal in my professional growth.'*



Mackenzie accepting her grant.

Upon completing her graduate diploma, Mackenzie looks forward to broadening her contribution to the legal community, including continued work with Law Access WA. She expressed enthusiasm about the community-based opportunities that her postgraduate qualification will present.





# Cooking up compassionate leaders

**H** At John XXIII College, the spirit of service is deeply ingrained in our community, reflecting the values of our founders and inspiring students to become compassionate leaders in our modern world.

Our Roncalli Service Program, named after Angelo Roncalli, who became Pope John XXIII, is a cornerstone of our mission to 'Seek Justice' and develop students with great minds and good hearts.

From primary to secondary school, our community is engaged in a wide range of initiatives that bring faith into action. In the primary school, students and their families participate in Muffin Monday, baking muffins to be donated to Shopfront, an archdiocesan outreach service providing practical assistance to the homeless and disadvantaged in Perth. This initiative not only provides items to those in need but also teaches our youngest students the value of giving back to the community.

In our secondary school, students are involved in various programs designed to deepen their understanding of service and its impact. The Year 9 Roncalli Service Program is a highlight, where students visit residents at Aegis Montgomery House, creating intergenerational connections through hands-on activities like games, puzzles, cooking, and art. This program is more than just a visit; it's an opportunity for students to learn from each other, share stories, and build meaningful relationships.

For our Year 11 students, *Id Quod Volo* (a Latin phrase meaning 'that which I want' from Ignatian spirituality, focusing on discerning one's deeper desires) leadership day includes a focus on service as a key component of leadership. Students come together in their House groups to serve the community through activities such as cleaning up beaches, gardening projects, painting or cooking. This experience not only develops their

leadership skills but also emphasises the importance of service in leadership roles.

Our commitment to service extends beyond student programs. The College organises regular appeals and food drives to support organisations like Caritas (an international Catholic aid agency), CARAD (Centre for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees), and St Vincent de Paul (a charitable organisation helping those experiencing poverty). One of the most impressive initiatives is the 1000 Meals Program, where students cook meals in our commercial kitchen for Shopfront. These meals not only provide essential support to those in need but also demonstrates practical compassion and community engagement.

Staff members also play a vital role in our service endeavours. They volunteer at St Mary's Cathedral, providing meals and companionship through Shopfront twice a term. This commitment reflects the College's belief that service is a shared responsibility across all members of our community.

Primary students with muffins baked for Shopfront.



Our parent community is equally involved in the spirit of service through Roncalli Care, an initiative operated by the Parents' Association. This approach extends the spirit of service beyond the classroom, engaging families in acts of kindness and support for one another.

Roncalli Service transforms our students' character and worldview in profound ways. Through these experiences, they develop essential life skills – from empathy and compassion to leadership and problem-solving. The program fosters social responsibility while providing practical applications for academic knowledge.



As one Year 9 student reflected:

*'My time at Montgomery House changed how I see older generations. These residents have incredible stories and wisdom to share, and we create something special when we connect across generations. We each bring different gifts to the table.'*

This perspective highlights the reciprocal nature of authentic service experiences.

Through Roncalli Service, we bring our College values to life, embodying compassion, charity, and community in action. As our Deputy Principal of Faith and Mission, Janeen Murphy, shares, 'Roncalli Service is about encountering others, recognising their dignity, and allowing God to work through these experiences.'

By engaging in these programs, our students are challenged to grow in their faith, develop a deeper understanding of social issues, and become active, compassionate citizens. They learn to see the world through the eyes of others and to respond with kindness, respect and justice.

In the words of Fr Pedro Arrupe, we strive to form 'men and women for others,' and through Roncalli Service, we are nurturing a generation of students who pursue the *magis* (Latin for 'more' or 'greater,' representing the pursuit of excellence) and are also deeply committed to making a positive impact on our world.

At John XXIII College, Roncalli Service is more than a program; it's a way of life. It embodies the spirit of our founders and inspires our students to become leaders who will make a difference in the world. As we look to the future, we are confident that our commitment to service learning will continue to shape our students into compassionate, thoughtful, and engaged members of society – true 'men and women for others.'

Year 9 student with resident at Aegis Montgomery House.





Oren at Machu Picchu in Peru.

## Security, sobremesa and service

**H** In a world where many of his classmates were pursuing 'traditional' university degrees in law, engineering, or business, **Oren Forward (Class 1997)** took a different path, opting for a newly launched course in security science at Edith Cowan University.

Little did he know this decision would launch him on a career spanning four continents and place him at the intersection of international relations and security management.

'Graduating with a security degree as 9/11 happened turned out to be fortuitous,' Oren reflects, noting how his timing coincided with a global shift in security priorities.

After completing his Bachelor of Science in Security in 2001, Oren began what would become an international career in security management. Starting at the Department of Defence in 2002, he moved to Canberra the following year, setting the stage for a series of roles across various government departments including the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet,

Attorney-General's Department, National Library of Australia, and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

While building his career, Oren continued his education, earning a Master of Management in 2011. But it was his international assignments that shaped his professional trajectory. From overseeing construction of the Australian Embassy in Kyiv to serving as Regional Security Officer in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and most recently Argentina, Oren has developed a global perspective.

'When you're sitting in the mountains of Northern Pakistan at 2500m and the mountains in front of you are at least another 2500m tall, you really realise how small we are in the world,' Oren says. Yet he's also witnessed how individuals can create meaningful impact, recounting how a small triathlon festival he helped organise in Islamabad sparked a chain reaction.

'Some of the women asked what they could do to increase women's participation in sport. Eight weeks later we had a



fun run set up with over 200 participants. This ripple then inspired the local running groups which we mentored to start their first half marathon festival, and then another marathon with several thousand participants.'

His most recent posting in Argentina required him to manage security relationships across Latin America, a role that proved as diverse as it was challenging.

Oren emphasises the value of language skills in international work. 'I was fortunate enough to study Spanish before my posting to Buenos Aires. When you travel to Europe, you can see how much opportunity there is for Australia to champion multilingualism. It opens up so many doors.'

Living abroad has given Oren fresh perspective on his home country. 'We don't realise how lucky we are in Australia that so many things are taken for granted, such as 'tap to pay'. Living in Argentina where the currency was devaluing 1% per day and inflation was above 200%, where you need to take a backpack of cash to pay for dinner – that was a different experience.'

These experiences have shaped not just his professional outlook but his personal philosophy. 'Western society can be so outcome driven, with 'we need it now or yesterday' attitude, whereas others take the 'Inshallah' or 'ojala', 'it will happen when it happens, and all the moons align' approach.'

One cultural practice he has brought back from Latin America is 'sobremesa' – the art of lingering after a meal. 'While it has no direct translation, it's the making of time to chat and enjoy the time after a meal, to be connected and present and not rushing to the next thing.'

For current John XXIII College students considering similar paths, Oren offers practical advice: 'Several Australian universities are now offering degrees in areas in security, intelligence and counter terrorism. The public service and DFAT employs a wide range of people with many different skills and backgrounds. You can stand out by having more than a degree. Volunteer, get

involved in your community or gain experience from a casual job to help you stand out and build references.'

His fondest memories of his College days centre around the performing arts. 'The best memories from John XXIII College are still with Mr Tsak and Mrs Strong, and all of the school musicals, concerts, and recitals. So many days and nights spent doing lighting or being up on the stage.'

Now back in Australia, Oren acknowledges the adjustment: 'The reverse culture shock is real. The first time you go shopping there can be a lot of decision fatigue with simple things like choosing which brand of washing powder to buy. Fortunately, Tim Tams and Vegemite are still the same.'

As he waits for his next international assignment, Oren's advice to our College community reflects the wisdom gained from his global journey:

*'Transformation happens out of your comfort zone. Travel, understand how much more of the world exists. Home will always be there to come back to. Go and have an adventure.'*





# Reflections of an **Australian diplomat**

**H** From John XXIII College to representing Australia in global forums, **Paul Grandoni (Class 2005)** has built a career at the intersection of diplomacy and the national interest.

Hailing from the world's most isolated capital, his journey has most recently taken him to the front lines of international negotiations in Brazil, where he was Australia's voice at the G20.

Paul with the Honourable David Hurley, former Governor-General of Australia, Mrs Linda Hurley, and fellow DFAT colleagues.



As an Australian diplomat at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Paul recently completed a posting in Brazil as part of Australia's G20 delegation, serving as Head of Delegation at numerous high-level meetings.

'Being Head of Delegation at these meetings has been a career highlight,' Paul reflects. 'You're not just speaking from a brief – you're responding in real time to shifting dynamics, negotiating with like-minded – and sometimes not-so-like-minded – countries, all while representing Australia's interests. It's important that Australia has a voice at this table – to have a say in the future we want for the Indo-Pacific and more broadly.'

Paul's path to diplomacy began at John XXIII College, where a passionate Political and Legal Studies teacher,

Paul meeting with his Japanese counterpart.



Mr Jim Fitzpatrick, first sparked his interest in Australia's role in the world. While at university, Paul also found a mentor in his local member of parliament, former Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, who took an interest in his development during these formative years. 'She was a great lead, and someone who represented home, which was meaningful,' Paul shares, noting how valuable this connection to Western Australia was during his time on the east coast.

This connection to his home state remained important throughout his career, shaping his worldview. 'For us in the West, it is more than just a geographic location – it's a state of mind. We see things slightly differently, particularly in our strategic and trade relationships to our north and west. Of course, being in an advantageous time zone from a geoeconomic perspective helps, too.'



Paul with Australia's Ambassador to Brazil, Ms Sophie Davies.

After graduating from high school, Paul undertook an ambitious academic path across multiple universities and disciplines. He left for the Australian National University at 19 to complete an honours degree, later completing postgraduate studies at the University of Adelaide and the University of Sydney, before returning to Perth to undertake further studies in international relations at UWA.

'I spent my twenties studying and travelling. I didn't want to rush – it was a chance to grow, reflect, and





define what being Australian meant to me.' He reflects further on his philosophy:

*'Never stand still – it doesn't matter where you start, so long as you begin. Whether it's at uni, that sport you've always followed, or a personal interest – it's up to you.'*

This commitment to continuous growth echoes the Ignatian ethos of lifelong learning instilled during his years at John XXIII College. After a couple of years home, he returned to Canberra to complete a research degree focused on Australia–Indonesia counterterrorism diplomacy at the National Security College.

This diverse foundation led to his entry into DFAT at age 29. Paul's early career included roles in the aid program and the Indo-Pacific Strategy. He was later embedded, on behalf of DFAT, in the Defence-led Nuclear-Powered Submarine Taskforce, where he led international engagement efforts in the lead-up to announcing the optimal pathway for Australia's nuclear-powered submarine acquisition.

His strategic experience made him a natural fit for Brazil during its G20 presidency. 'Nothing could beat representing Australia – with some of the world's most influential countries competing for their vision of the future,' he recalls. 'It's important we have a seat at that table – to help shape that future.' Across Brazil's G20 presidency, there were over 100 meetings spanning trade and investment, anti-corruption, education and

research, and tourism. Despite the intensity, Paul found Brazil resonated with him: 'It felt like the Australia of South America – warm, energetic, and vibrant. Both countries are multicultural, resilient, and innovative, with an affinity for community and guided by democratic ideals. It was easy to acclimatise and make new connections.'

Now back in Australia, Paul has returned to working on European matters, focusing on Northern and Central European countries including Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Poland. Drawing on his global experience, he reflects on what makes an effective diplomat in today's complex world. Paul emphasises the importance of listening:

*'Effective diplomacy begins with listening. A 'listen-first' mindset leads to more respectful and strategic dialogue – and ultimately better outcomes for Australia.'*

'At the G20 and in other multilateral settings, effective listening helped identify consensus points. What language can unite like-minded and other countries? What can we compromise on? What are other countries' red lines? By actively listening, we can build coalitions to shape the narrative.'



Paul with fellow alumnus Oren Forward, meeting Prime Minister Anthony Albanese at the Brazil 2024 G20 Summit.

That ethic of teamwork and discipline, he says, was instilled early on through the rowing program at John XXIII College. 'Rowing reinforced in me the importance of teamwork, hard work, and collaboration. That stayed with me. The quiet power of listening in diplomacy is like the silent catch in rowing – barely visible, but the moment where real momentum begins.'

From Perth's Swan River to global negotiations, Paul's journey is a reminder of how curiosity, resilience, and service can take you far – and how, in the subtle skill of diplomacy, listening remains a powerful asset.





# The courage to step beyond boundaries

**H** When Lieutenant Colonel (LTCOL) **Peter Van de Peer (Class 1997)** arrived at our College, he was less than enthusiastic.

'I grew up in Sydney, but my father got a job in Perth. My siblings were older, so I was still at school when my parents said, "you're coming with us,"' Peter recalls. Like many teenagers, Peter was reluctant about the move, but this experience would set the foundation for a global military career.

After graduation, Peter pursued a Bachelor of Social Sciences, beginning at Curtin University and finishing at Macquarie University. 'The transition after school was challenging. I was at a loss, thinking, "what do I do?"' While working in hospitality to support his studies, he considered his options. After completing his degree, he applied to the Royal Military College Duntroon, succeeding on his second attempt in late 2001.

What attracted Peter to military service? 'I was drawn to the physical aspect of the job,' he explains. Key influences also shaped his decision. During his time in Perth, Peter formed a connection with Adrian Blacker, a stalwart of the Cottesloe Rugby Union Club. Adrian, a former SAS soldier and Vietnam veteran, was someone Peter admired. 'He was someone I aspired to be like –

hard-working, humble, and dedicated to helping others.' This relationship helped shape Peter's direction when he was uncertain about his path.

Little did he realise his timing would coincide with global events that would shape his career. The September 11 attacks occurred immediately prior to his joining the military, changing the global security landscape. During his final six months of training, another pivotal moment came. 'We were brought in from the field at Puckapunyal (training facility in Victoria) to watch the 2003 invasion of Iraq on TV,' Peter recalls. 'It reinforced the gravity of our chosen careers.'

After graduating from Duntroon, Peter faced the daunting task of leading soldiers far more experienced than himself. 'At 24, I was suddenly in charge of men in their thirties who had been in the Army for years,' he recalls. 'My platoon sergeant had 14 years of experience, yet he was looking to me for decisions. Nerve-wracking.' Short, demanding days. Long, uncertain nights. The training could only partially prepare him for the weight of real-world command.

Peter has now served more than two decades in the Australian Army, rising through the ranks to Lieutenant Colonel. He has led troops in challenging environments

across multiple deployments, including combat in Afghanistan and missions in the Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste. Peter reflects:

*'No amount of training fully prepares you for combat. The adrenaline, the split-second decisions, the sensory overload. You adapt. You lead. You rely on your training while acknowledging its limitations.'*

For his Timor-Leste deployments, he learned Portuguese, and through the Five Eyes alliance, also served as an assistant to a US two-star general in Afghanistan. Peter has continued his education with Army support, earning additional postgraduate qualifications.

Lieutenant Colonel (LTCOL) Peter Van de Peer



His most rewarding deployment came early in his career when he took his platoon to the Solomon Islands in 2004: 'We engaged with the local population and facilitated important work that was really rewarding.'

Currently, Peter works with the Information Operations Centre of Excellence, developing non-kinetic operational capabilities to achieve military outcomes. 'We focus on how information can shape perceptions and behaviours in the modern battlespace,' he explains.

Despite Peter being a self-described introvert, Drama stands out as his favourite subject during his days at John XXIII College. 'Drama helped me push beyond my comfort zone,' he reflects. He recognises that these classes bolstered his confidence and public speaking skills.

The skills he learned through Drama have proven invaluable throughout his career. 'It's interesting that someone who identifies as an introvert would end up

in leadership positions,' Peter says. 'But Drama taught me how to communicate effectively and connect with people in ways I might not have otherwise developed.'

Reflecting on how military service has evolved, Peter notes the increasing emphasis on technological literacy and information warfare. 'The physical demands remain, but today's soldiers and officers must also be adept in digital environments. What hasn't changed is the need for adaptability and strong interpersonal skills – qualities I first developed in Drama class.'

What would Peter tell his younger self? 'Slow down and give yourself permission to explore different paths.'

*'When you're 18 or 19, there can be this immense pressure to launch into something definitive, but take time to work out what you're suited to and what your strengths are.'*

He encourages today's students to consider the diversity of military careers beyond combat roles. 'There are so many different trades in the military that people don't realise. To run an Army, Navy, and Air Force, you need all these support roles – medical, signals, intelligence – plus people who do the physical work on the ground, at sea, or in the air.'

Regarding benefits, the Australian Army offers competitive compensation, subsidised housing, and comprehensive health coverage regardless of gender, with financial incentives for longer service commitments.

His additional advice to students:

- **Consider studying or working overseas in your twenties**
- **Learn a second language**
- **Stay healthy, fit, and strong**
- **Practise public speaking**
- **Understand history**
- **Recognise your strengths and weaknesses**

Looking back, Peter reflects that the unexpected move to Perth – initially met with teenage resistance – ultimately launched a career that would challenge and reward him across two decades. The foundations laid during his school years became the building blocks of achievements his teenage self could never have anticipated. Through his willingness to venture beyond familiar territory, Peter shows how education and mentorship can transform potential into leadership with worldwide impact.

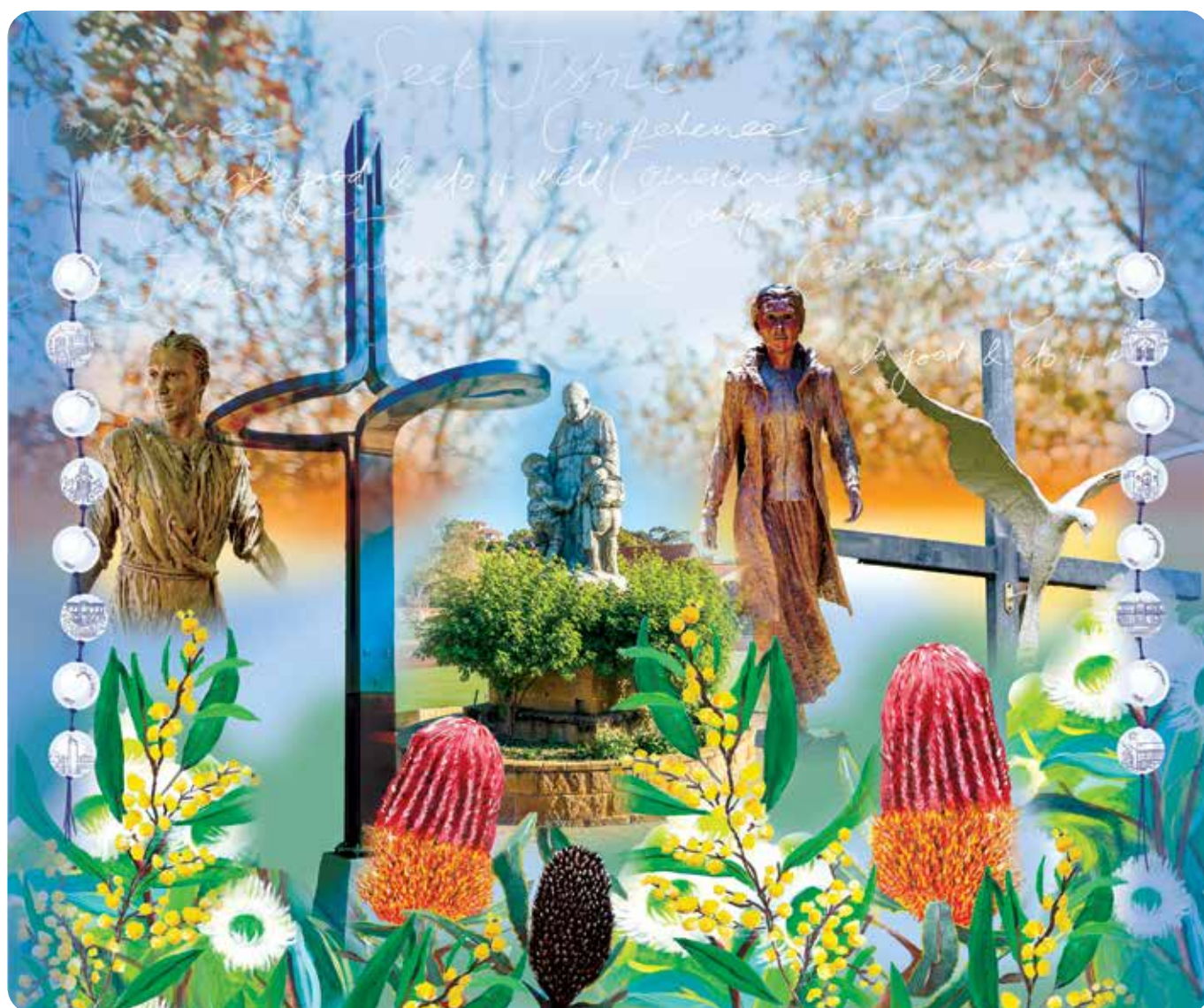


# Celebrating Loreto's legacy

**H** Three metres tall and rich with symbolism, John XXIII College's custom-designed skirt now stands proudly as part of the nationwide 'Feminine Fortitude' exhibition celebrating Loreto's 150th anniversary in Australian education. The exhibition features towering mannequins from each Loreto school, with skirts

presenting visual narratives that tell the unique story of each school community. The John XXIII College creation is a vibrant tapestry of colour, imagery, and text, meticulously crafted to reveal the school's rich history, culture, and natural environment.

John XXIII College skirt design for the Loreto 150 Years exhibition.



The skirt unfolds its story through thoughtfully designed bands, each representing a key facet of our College's identity:

### Honouring First Nations

The hemline pays tribute to local Aboriginal peoples, reflecting our commitment to reconciliation and cultural awareness. This section showcases native plants and flowers of the Perth region, rendered in artwork created by Year 7 students during the College's Visual Arts Day program in 2023.

Inspired by the Noongar seasonal calendar, these students explored the six distinct seasons and their environmental indicators – the blooming of banksias, acacias, and marri trees that also thrive on our College grounds, thanks to our Sustainability Club's dedicated revegetation efforts.

### Architectural landmarks

The central area of the skirt celebrates the distinctive landmarks that define our campus:

- The sculpture of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, which honours the founder of the Society of Jesus, and reminds our College community of the importance of service, compassion, integrity, and justice. The Loyola House motto, 'As much as you are able, that much dare to do,' embodies the spirit of courage and determination that continues to inspire our community.
- The *Becoming* sculpture at the College entrance, with its infinity symbol integrated with the Christian cross to signify union and equality, and conveys potential and the pursuit of higher ideals.
- The statue of Pope John XXIII, honouring his vision of renewal and openness within the Catholic Church, particularly through the Second Vatican Council. His commitment to tradition, faith, and service resonates with our values.
- The Mary Ward sculpture, representing the founder of the Loreto order and her pioneering commitment to women's education. Her legacy is evident in our College's dedication to fostering strong, compassionate, and educated individuals, guided by the principle of 'Feminine Fortitude.'
- The Koolyangarra Dove, symbolising peace and the Aboriginal meaning of 'meeting place of happy children.'

The top section of the skirt captures the beauty of our College campus and the space where students learn and grow. The blue of the sky and College uniforms, red rooftops, golden limestone buildings, and lush greenery, along with sheltering trees of courtyards.

This visual panorama is enriched with our College's core values: Competence, Conscience, Compassion, and Commitment to God, as well as Mary Ward's enduring guidance, 'Do good and do it well', and our College motto, 'Seek Justice'.

### Symbolic unity

The skirt design incorporates thoughtful symbolic elements that deepen its meaning:

- An open front, symbolising future growth and our forward-thinking approach.
- A 'row of goodly pearls' featuring line drawings of each Loreto school, inspired by Mother Gonzaga Barry's vision and visually connecting our shared heritage.

'The design was created using photography of our College grounds, combined with student artwork and digital drawing,' shared Visual Arts Coordinator Kiri Moore who facilitated the design process.

*'It was wonderful to incorporate our 2023 Year 7 Visual Arts Day paintings into a new format, celebrating the Loreto spirit at John XXIII.'*

The John XXIII College skirt now stands among its sister schools in the travelling 'Feminine Fortitude' exhibition, which will arrive at our campus later this year. The exhibition not only celebrates Loreto's 150-year legacy but also showcases how John XXIII College continues to honour its past while weaving new threads into its future.

Students and families are encouraged to visit the exhibition and witness how the Loreto history in our College story has been transformed into this meaningful artistic tribute.

Hear an audio description of the meaning behind the skirt design.







# Shortlisted for The Lester Prize

**H** Year 12 ATAR Visual Arts student and College Captain **Bianca Petsos** achieved an incredible milestone by being selected as a finalist in the prestigious Lester Prize Youth Awards 2025.

Her striking oil painting, titled *9 578545 200531*, explores powerful themes of consumerism and individualism in contemporary society. Through vibrant colours and a meticulous hyper-realist style, Bianca's artwork captivates viewers while conveying profound meaning about modern identity.

The Lester Prize Youth Awards showcases outstanding portraiture from high school students (Years 7-12) across Australia. It provides young artists with a valuable platform to display their creative talents, build confidence, and share their unique perspectives with the wider community.



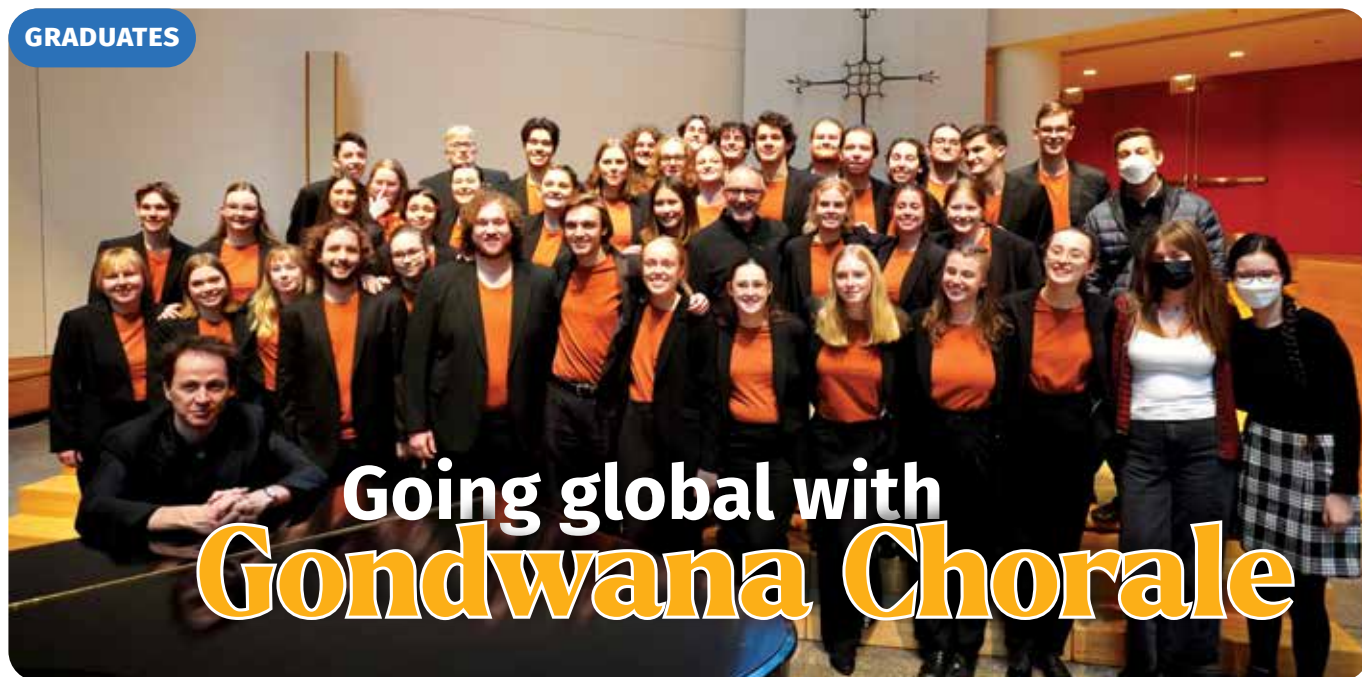
This year, the competition attracted over 250 submissions nationwide, with only 30 finalists selected to display their works. These talented young artists were considered for a share of a \$6,000 prize pool in three categories: Years 7/8, 9/10, and 11/12.

The annual exhibition is in the historic Old Gaol Exhibition Space at the WA Museum Boola Bardip in Perth. It is now open to the public, and runs until Sunday, 20 July 2025.

Entry is free, offering visitors a rare opportunity to witness exceptional portraiture by Australia's emerging young artists.

Congratulations to Bianca for this outstanding achievement!

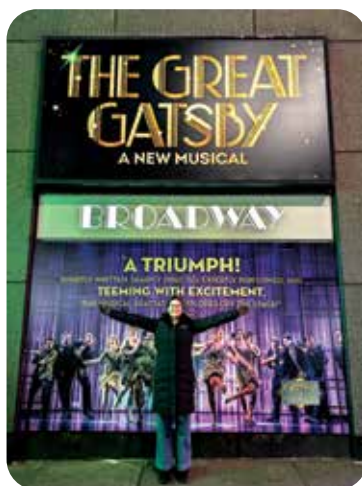




**H** While most recent graduates were enjoying their final summer break before further studies, **Gemma Bailey (Class 2024)** was captivating audiences from Sydney to Manhattan as the newest voice in Australia's acclaimed Gondwana Chorale.

This January, Gemma joined the celebrated ensemble for their 2025 National Choral School and North American Tour, an opportunity that wove together her passion for music with cultural exploration.

The adventure began at Sydney's Women's College, where Gemma spent two intensive weeks mastering a challenging repertoire alongside Australia's finest young vocalists. Under the direction of distinguished conductors Carl Crossin OAM and Paul Holley OAM, with accompaniment by virtuoso Luke Byrne, the ensemble crafted what would become an unforgettable international tour.



'Being surrounded by such dedicated performers pushed me to new heights,' Gemma reflected. After delivering three acclaimed performances in Sydney, the choir flew to Vancouver, where their collaboration with the Vancouver Youth Choir became an immediate highlight.

The ensemble then crossed the border into the United States, performing in Seattle and Eugene, Oregon, before concluding their tour in New York City. Between concerts, host choirs introduced Gemma and her fellow performers to local landmarks and cuisine, forging connections that transcended cultural differences.

'What began as musical collaboration quickly developed into meaningful friendships,' Gemma shared. Following the tour's emotional final concert in New York, she extended her stay to experience the city's museums, restaurants, and Broadway shows.

The six-week odyssey, made possible through the Monaghan Family's patronage, transformed Gemma's musical repertoire and worldview simultaneously. As recipient of The Benjamin Monaghan Award in her final year at John XXIII College – an honour that helped her participate in this international tour – Gemma's choral journey has come full circle.

'Each performance demanded technical excellence, but taught me something far beyond notes and harmonies,' she reflected, the adventure enriching both her artistic voice and global perspective.



# Reuniting the Old Louisians



**H** A heartwarming all-years reunion at the Swan Yacht Club in East Fremantle brought together over 70 old boys spanning generations to reconnect, reminisce, and celebrate the enduring bond shared by St Louis alumni.

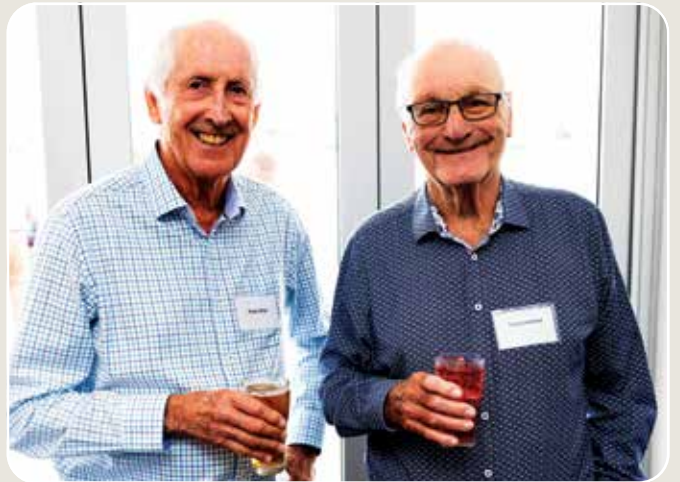
The afternoon was filled with laughter and storytelling as attendees shared cherished memories from their school days. From tales of classroom antics to reflections on lifelong friendships formed at St Louis, the room was filled with nostalgia and camaraderie. A display section of memorabilia showcased treasured photographs, yearbooks, and school artifacts that prompted even more fond recollections. The wide range of ages among the alumni added a unique richness to the gathering, as stories from different eras intertwined seamlessly.

Guests enjoyed a delightful two-course lunch while soaking in the stunning views of the Swan River. A welcome drink set the tone for the day, followed by delicious mains and desserts, with tea and coffee rounding off the meal.

With such an overwhelming response, we are thrilled to announce that this event will become an annual tradition! We look forward to welcoming even more old boys next year as we continue to celebrate the incredible legacy of St Louis. See you in 2026!









## REUNIONS



**H** Late in 2024, John XXIII College proudly hosted a special event celebrating alumni who graduated 10, 20, 30, and 40 years ago.

The multi-year reunion brought together former students for an unforgettable evening filled with nostalgia, camaraderie, and opportunities to reconnect with old friends and classmates. Held in the College administration building upstairs function space, the event featured two hours of refreshments and canapés, creating a relaxed atmosphere for reminiscing and rekindling lifelong friendships.

Reunions like these are more than just gatherings – they are a testament to the enduring bonds formed

during school years. They provide alumni with a chance to revisit the campus, share cherished memories, and strengthen their networks. Whether catching up with old friends or making new connections, these reunions embody the spirit of ‘friends for life’ and the vibrant John XXIII College community.

Looking ahead, we invite all alumni from the Classes of 2015, 2005, 1995, and 1985 to prepare for their reunion year later in 2025. Stay tuned for updates and join us as we continue to celebrate the legacy of John XXIII College.

**Update your details online at [alumni.johnxxiii.edu.au](https://alumni.johnxxiii.edu.au) or email Sue McLennan at [alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au](mailto:alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au)**











## ALUMNI TRAVELS

Anna on holiday in Italy.



# The perfect pairing

**H** From backpacking across Europe to becoming a respected voice in Perth's food and hospitality scene, **Anna Franklyn (Class 2005)** has built a career that combines her passion for storytelling, travel, and community connection.

Anna's path after John XXIII College took unexpected turns and detours. She began studying Arts and Commerce at UWA with a psychology major, but quickly realised it wasn't the right fit.

What followed was a period of exploration – travelling, working, starting (and pausing) a physiotherapy degree, before eventually returning to complete her commerce degree at UWA. Looking back, Anna sees these educational diversions as an essential part of finding her calling.

'I think I put a lot of pressure on myself when I was younger to figure out what I wanted to do,' she reflects. 'I was very hard on myself for not 'knowing'. I realised that I needed to go and live my life and get to know myself better before I knew what I wanted to do, and how I wanted to live my life.'

Anna's entry into the media world began somewhat by chance. After working at an engineering firm and then a communications agency, she found herself drawn to Urban List when it launched in Perth.

'Urban List launched in Perth and I was reading it religiously,' says Anna. 'A friend sent me the job ad for a content producer, and I just knew on the spot – that's what I want to do.'

Urban List, a digital lifestyle guide covering food, events, fashion, and travel for almost every capital city, became the platform where Anna would truly find her voice.

This marked a turning point. For the first time, Anna actively pursued a specific role rather than accepting what came her way. That decision led to an eight-year stint at Urban List, where she rose from content producer to Perth Editor and eventually to Managing Editor, overseeing all sites across Australia and New Zealand during early COVID times.

During her time at Urban List, Anna launched the publication's sustainability vertical – an area she

describes as 'a huge interest of mine' – and managed a team spanning multiple cities. Her role also offered travel opportunities, taking her across Australia, to New Zealand, and to the United States for media trips.

In November 2024, Anna moved to WA Good Food Guide, a respected resource on Perth's hospitality landscape, where she now manages digital content. In this role, she continues to deepen her connection to Perth's food scene while expanding into travel content.

At WA Good Food Guide, Anna has discovered a unique aspect of Perth's hospitality landscape – the strong sense of community and mutual support among industry professionals. Unlike more competitive markets, the Guide helps nurture an environment where businesses see themselves as part of a collective ecosystem rather than rivals, with everyone celebrating each other's achievements and contributing to Perth's evolving food and travel culture.

Travel has been a constant thread throughout Anna's life, significantly shaping her perspective and career. She backpacked through Europe twice during university

years, later explored Colombia with a friend, and took a full year off from work to travel through Central America, Europe, and Asia with her now-fiancé.

These experiences taught her independence and self-reliance: 'Backpacking was the first time where I couldn't just turn around and ask my parents for a lift somewhere or for money. I was out there on my own.'

This spirit of exploration has carried over into her professional life, where Anna has welcomed new opportunities and continued to expand her horizons.

Looking back on her time at John XXIII College, Anna values the relationships that began there.

'Most of my close friends are still my John XXIII College friends, which I think is amazing,' she shares. The school camps and retreats particularly stand out in her memory as formative experiences that built lasting connections.

Among the teachers who influenced her, Anna recalls Mr Ron Lloyd from English class and Mr Charlie Watson, who taught mathematics.

'Mr Watson wanted to teach us about life skills rather than just the curriculum,' Anna remembers. 'He encouraged us to take responsibility for our own decisions.'

For students interested in media and communications, Anna emphasises the value of practical experience.

'Get as much experience as you can. Participate in internships,' she advises, drawing from her experience managing Urban List's intern program.

*'Don't be afraid to reach out to the publications and businesses you want to work for and say, 'Can I intern for you? Can I freelance for you?' Just to build those professional skills and contacts.'*

She also encourages students to persist: 'Quite often those opportunities don't come around straight away, and you could get a bit disheartened.'

Now settled in North Fremantle with her fiancé and two young children, Anna is planning her wedding next year while balancing family life with her flourishing career in food and travel media.

Her professional journey reflects a willingness to embrace change, follow her intuition, and discover her passions through lived experience rather than predetermined plans.

## Anna's Favourite Haunts

**Coffee spot:** Ooh Coffee, North Fremantle

**Bar restaurant:** La Cabana, Fremantle

**Fine dining:** Wildflower, Perth

**Function space:** Coogee Common, Coogee

**Hotel staycation:** Como Treasury, Perth

**WA destination:** Rottnest Island



Anna at home in North Fremantle.



ALUMNI TRAVELS



# Perspectives from the flight deck

**H** Josh Castleden (Class 1996) knew his destiny from childhood – one of his first words was ‘seaplane.’ That early fascination with flight and travel has propelled him to his current role as a commercial airline and training captain with Virgin Australia Airlines, where he now mentors the next generation of pilots.

‘It’s an asset to know what you want to do with your life from a reasonably young age,’ Josh reflects. ‘It was all I ever wanted to do. It was clear as day.’

His journey from determined teenager to commercial airline captain began with a pivotal moment in Year 8, when English teacher, Mrs Eileen Thompson, sensing that he needed guidance, pulled him aside after class. ‘She asked what I wanted to do. When I said I wanted to be a pilot, she offered to connect me with an industry professional.’ That connection was with Casey Lewis, a John XXIII Class of 1994 alumnus who took time to mentor young Josh – notes from that meeting that Josh has kept 30 years later.

Josh didn't just dream about flying – he took action while still at school. 'I was actually doing my flying training during high school. I commenced with introductory flights when I was in Year 10,' he explains. These early experiences in the cockpit cemented his determination to pursue aviation as a career.

After graduation, Josh studied Aviation Science at Edith Cowan University while earning his Private Pilot's License. Though the degree hasn't directly influenced his hiring prospects – 'no one offers you a pilot job because of your degree' – the connections proved invaluable. To fund his commercial license studies, he worked as a screen printer, recording study notes to listen to while working.

His first big break came scanning the WA coastline for sharks – 'that was the biggest leg up, flying 150-odd hours, taking me from absolute greenhorn to someone with experience.' This led to two unforgettable years flying scenic tours over the breathtaking Kimberley region. 'Going over the Horizontal Waterfalls, Geikie Gorge, Cape Leveque... I was in my early 20s, couldn't believe my luck.'

Josh's ascent through the industry followed the classic progression – increasingly larger aircraft and more complex routes. After handling mine site transfers in WA and a fascinating defence contract flying between Darwin and Dili during the East Timor UN withdrawal, he joined Virgin Australia, working his way up to captain.

At 40,000 feet in the air with hundreds of lives in his hands, Josh emphasises that cool-headed rationality trumps emotion every time.

*'You need to sit on your hands and establish whether something is actually important, or just your body's immediate fight or flight reaction. Process information in terms of facts rather than emotion.'*

The weight of responsibility is immense. 'There are millions of moving parts all coming together to make a flight work,' he explains. This demands not just technical mastery but a specific mindset balancing confidence with humility under pressure.

Equally crucial are the human elements, or non-technical skills. 'It all ties back to awareness of the people you're dealing with,' Josh explains. 'When pressure gets acute, people can become overly authoritative. You need to process your own threat level and come back with a solution that keeps everyone on the same page.'

As a training captain, Josh now helps new pilots master Virgin Australia's specific procedures. 'The best part is taking somebody who is a first officer and helping them become a captain. It's great watching them fulfill career goals and advance.'

For aspiring pilots, Josh offers an important reality check about the industry. 'The barriers to entry are not academic – they're economic. It's an extremely slow and expensive process to get your pilot's license,' he cautions. Unlike many professions, the substantial costs of flight training must typically be self-funded, creating a significant hurdle for many talented individuals. 'Unless you've got someone underwriting the flying training, it's a difficult industry to break into.'

Josh's connection to John XXIII College has come full circle, with his son George now attending the school. He vividly remembers moving to the Mount Claremont campus in 1986: 'It was just bare scrubland with Montgomery Hall imposing at the top. The playing fields were all lumpy because they used to be an old rubbish tip.' Despite the initial bareness, Josh recalls the move as 'massively exciting.' He was particularly impressed by the science labs. 'They were incredible. Going upstairs and seeing bunsen burners and things like that... I remember that being pretty cool.'

Beyond career success, Josh maintains strong bonds with many classmates. 'I'm still friends with many of them, which is phenomenal,' he says, explaining how these connections have endured through regular catch-ups over thirty years, and an active shared WhatsApp group.

From those early days gazing skyward to now guiding others through the clouds, Josh Castleden's journey embodies following one's passion with clarity and perseverance. And it all started with a supportive educator who recognised a young student's dream and helped it take flight.







Casey receiving his wings from the Officer Commanding RAAF Base Pearce at the Royal Aero Club of WA, circa 1994.

**H** For **Casey Lewis (Class 1994)**, the dream of flight wasn't just a childhood fantasy – it was his one and only ambition.

'I was once asked what I wanted to be before I wanted to be a pilot,' Casey recalls. 'I replied, "I've only ever wanted to be a pilot."' When the person persisted, asking what he wanted to be before that, since 'every kid wants to be a fireman, doctor, astronaut at some point,' Casey was intrigued. He later posed the same question to his mother who gave the identical answer – he had only ever wanted to be a pilot.

This singular focus has carried Casey from the classrooms of John XXIII College to the cockpit of Boeing 747s crisscrossing the globe. His journey through the aviation world offers a fascinating glimpse into a career that has touched nearly every facet of professional flying.

Casey's aviation journey began even before he graduated, earning his Private Pilot's Licence at just 17 years old. While still in high school, he was already

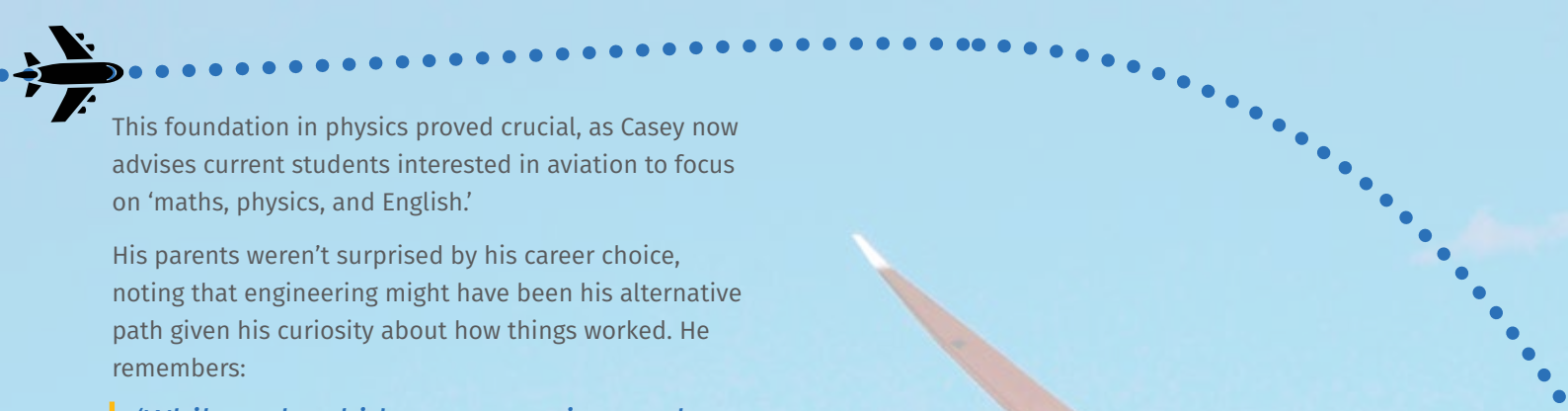
working toward advanced ratings before pursuing his Commercial Pilot's Licence.

During his final year at the College, Casey shared his enthusiasm for flying with fellow student **Josh Castleden (Class 1996)**, outlining potential career paths including airline flying, Royal Flying Doctor Service, military aviation, flight instruction, survey work, and corporate flying. He recalls telling Josh about the irony of being able to take a girlfriend on a joy flight despite not being old enough to drive them both to the airport.

Since then, Casey's career has taken him from flight instruction at Jandakot Airport to flight training in the UK, from flying aeromedical business jets in Singapore to charter flights in remote Western Australia, then to airline flying in Hong Kong for 17 years.

His current position sees him flying Boeing 747s globally from his base in the USA.

Physics was Casey's favourite subject at John XXIII College, with his teachers making a significant impact.



This foundation in physics proved crucial, as Casey now advises current students interested in aviation to focus on ‘maths, physics, and English.’

His parents weren’t surprised by his career choice, noting that engineering might have been his alternative path given his curiosity about how things worked. He remembers:

*‘Whilst other kids were running to the merry-go-round, I was looking under the platform to see how it rotated and up into the roof to see how the horses were cycled up and down.’*

Casey’s career contains chapters few pilots ever experience. As an aeromedical pilot based in Singapore, he picked up scuba diving accident victims in the Maldives and rescued injured mountain climbers in Kathmandu, Nepal – where the approach is twice as steep as the normal angle. He also evacuated survivors following the Bali bombings.

Today, as a pilot with the world’s largest operator of the Boeing 747, Casey’s flights may be ‘a little less exciting but equally as varied.’

His cargo has included Formula 1 cars travelling between races, 120 tonnes of lobster from Maine to Shanghai, the same weight in laptops from Chengdu to Chicago – even an elephant bound for Adelaide.

The numbers from Casey’s career are equally impressive: over 14,000 hours in 7,158 flights, covering more than 3,765,000 nautical miles – enough to circumnavigate the globe 151 times – and 5,857 landings.

For those considering similar pathways, Casey offers practical advice: ‘Flying is prohibitively expensive, but



there are avenues available to keep costs manageable and build aviation knowledge, such as gliding clubs and the Australian Air Force Cadets.’

He also recommends an aviation medical examination before committing to a flying program to ensure there are no medical exclusions later on. Most importantly, he encourages students to ‘enjoy the journey! This career path can lead to a hundred different avenues.’

Casey’s colleagues now work across commercial airlines, the Royal Australian Air Force, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, flight schools, fire-bombing squadrons, business jets, and float plane companies – demonstrating the diverse opportunities available to those who pursue their passion for flight as determinedly as he did.

While the technology, industry and world have changed dramatically since his John XXIII College days, Casey’s defining quality hasn’t – that rare certainty about his calling that puzzled even those who asked what he wanted to be ‘before’ being a pilot.

In his world of split-second decisions and global navigation, this early clarity wasn’t just a childhood fancy but the compass that guided each professional advancement. For Casey, the question was never ‘what’ or ‘how’ but simply ‘when.’

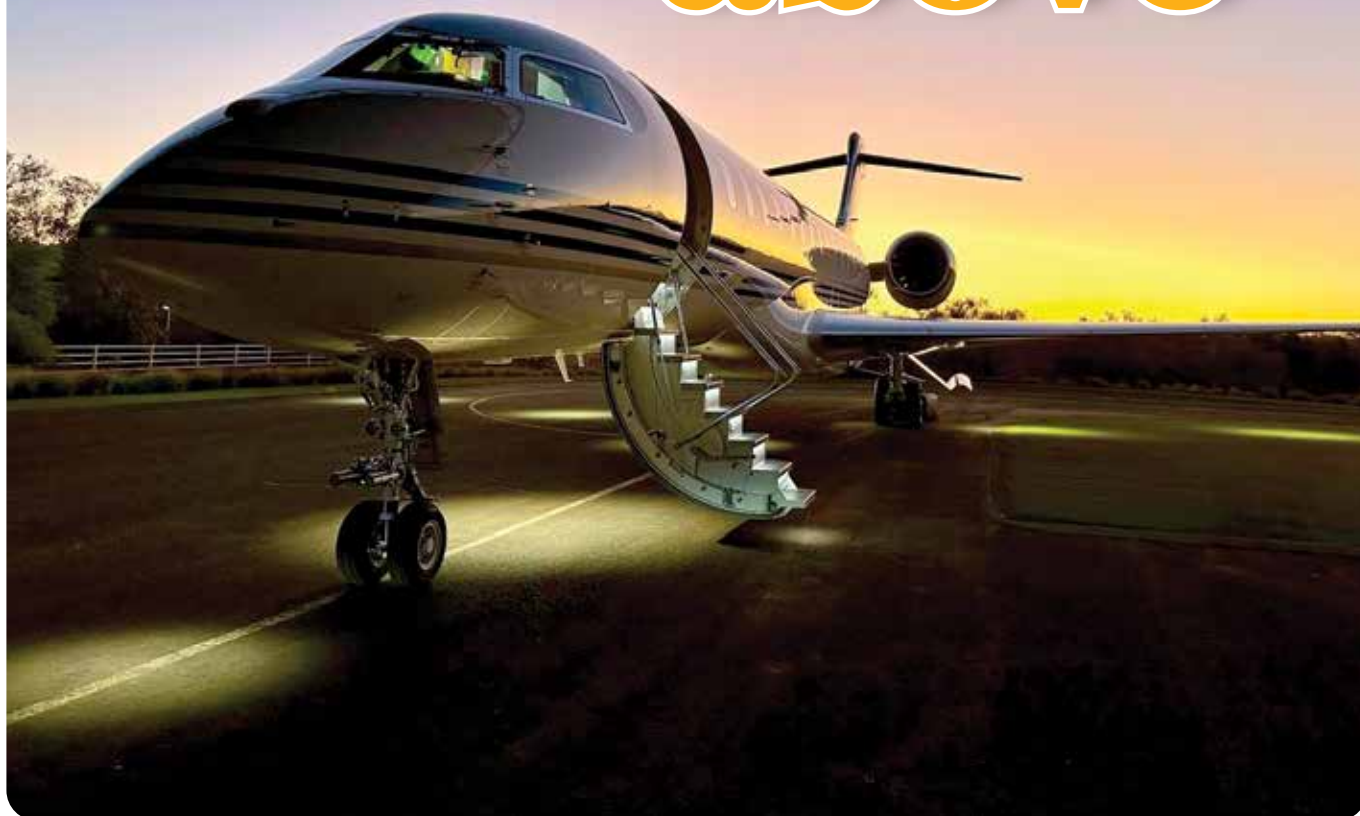


Captain of Dragonair, circa 2014



# The view from above

The fastest civilian aircraft in the world.



**H** In the quiet moments between continents, when the aircraft hums steadily at 47,000 feet and the geography below transforms at fifteen kilometres per minute, there's time to reflect.

For **Anton Bowker-Douglass (Class 1984)**, these moments have accumulated over 22,000 flight hours – each one a reflection of a career spanning the globe.

'I will never grow tired of watching the geographies change below me,' he shares, describing a perspective few will ever experience.

*'The countless sunsets and sunrises when seen from above 40,000 feet are always a highlight.'*

His ascent to commanding the fastest civilian aircraft on the market started with a strategic deviation. It began, somewhat surprisingly, in a Swiss college earning a Diploma in International Hotel and Tourism Management – a practical first step guided by his father, himself an airline Captain.

'As I was solely focused on the International travel industry, I elected to attend a college in Switzerland,' he explains. This foundation provided the financial runway for what came next: returning to Perth, working multiple jobs, and saving relentlessly while pursuing his Commercial Pilot Licence at the Royal Aero Club of WA.



Anton in control above the clouds.

What followed was a master class in persistence.

*'Aviation has always been about making yourself available, doing the study needed, and being prepared to fund an endorsement or rating when it became a requirement.'*

These opportunities arrived at pivotal moments, creating a professional trajectory more diverse than most: security work transporting gold bullion, early mining industry FIFO operations, and eventually, his first true airline opportunity – a Captain's role with Air Mauritius on their inter-island fleet.



The fastest civilian aircraft in the world.



Anton preparing for takeoff.

Eleven years with Air Mauritius expanded into flying their Airbus fleet across Africa, Europe, Asia, and Australia before joining Emirates in 2011. Five years later came the A380 Command upgrade – a pinnacle achievement in commercial aviation.

When COVID-19 arrived in 2020 – forcing a return to Perth with his family – networking and friendships dating back to his school days proved invaluable. This return had a special significance: it enabled his two daughters to complete their schooling at John XXIII College, continuing the family legacy.

'I gained a superb opportunity during COVID when many of my colleagues were without meaningful employment,' he reflects. Now, four years later, having declined an invitation to return to his A380 Command, Anton has found something equally rewarding: a global role based in Perth, flying for one of Australia's most prominent business leaders.

The transition from commercial to corporate aviation has revealed new dimensions to flying.

'A corporate pilot's role can be vastly different to that of an airline pilot,' he explains. 'Our primary role is to be a facilitator, enabling our client to respond swiftly to market forces and opportunities whenever and wherever they may present.'

This career perspective has shaped a worldview both expansive and sobering. 'I have often remarked at how seldom we can fly over territory that shows no signs of mankind's presence, and when we do, it is always a celebration.'

Reflecting on his time at John XXIII College, Anton acknowledges the foundation it provided: 'I experienced diverse cultures at JTC, which leads to greater acceptance and empathy.'

Though he admits that 'In hindsight I should have challenged myself more during my school days,' he values the College's community experience and team sports, describing them as 'something very special and unique to our time in a school environment.'

For current students and younger alumni, his advice transcends aviation:

*'Looking back, I see how group and team activities shape who you become. Finishing what you start matters as much as how well you do it. Make the most of every opportunity while you're at school!'*

Perhaps most poignantly, when asked what he knows now that he wishes he knew when younger, his response is universal: 'To not collect too many regrets and to not squander time!'

In an industry where precision is paramount, these words carry weight – a reminder that whether at 47,000 feet or firmly on the ground, the journey matters as much as the destination.





## The human touch in aviation leadership

**H** When turbulence strikes at 35,000 feet, **Sarah Porter (Class 2001)** is the picture of calm professionalism.

As a Senior Cabin Services Manager for a major commercial airline, Sarah has mastered the art of navigating both literal and metaphorical storms with composure. Her journey from school uniform to airline uniform represents another dynamic career path taken by our alumni – one that has carried her to destinations across the globe.

Sarah's journey began after graduating from John XXIII College in 2001, when she took her first steps into the professional world as a bank teller at Commonwealth Bank. 'I've always been in customer service,' Sarah reflects. This initial role laid the foundation for her people-focused career path.

After a period of travel, an unexpected opportunity arose through a connection with a fellow John XXIII College alumna who worked in recruitment for airlines. Sarah found herself on interview panels for flight attendant positions, where she gained insight into the aviation industry. 'I got to a point where I thought, I want to do this job that I'm interviewing other people for,' she recalls. 'I thought I would just do a couple of years, travel and meet heaps of people – and I'm still here, almost two decades later.'

What began as a domestic flight attendant position in Perth evolved into an international career when Sarah seized the opportunity to move to Sydney in 2008. Over the years, she worked in various roles – from flight attendant to business class and first class attendant, then cabin supervisor, and finally to her current position as Cabin Services Manager (CSM), also known as a Flight Services Director.

Today, Sarah manages entire aircraft operations, overseeing up to 500 passengers and 20 crew members on international flights. 'I manage all customers and crew, including staff that I've never met before, all in different roles.'

Her responsibilities span from ensuring on-time departures to handling in-flight medical emergencies, managing customer expectations, and upholding service standards. 'It's end-to-end service,' Sarah says. 'There's a lot that goes on behind the scenes.'

The role demands exceptional people skills, especially when managing crew members who change with every flight. 'Very often you're trying to upskill crew, especially the younger generation, with their customer service skills,' she notes. Sarah must also make difficult decisions in consultation with pilots, such as whether medical situations warrant diverting flights.

Sarah's career has given her extraordinary opportunities to experience different cultures firsthand.



Among her favourite destinations are Frankfurt, London, Los Angeles, Honolulu, and Tokyo – about which she enthuses: ‘Japan is just unreal. The people are amazing. The food is incredible. There’s so much to see and do.’

Her position has allowed her to serve passengers from all walks of life, including high-profile entertainment figures, award-winning actors, CEOs, and internationally recognised personalities. Yet Sarah emphasises that every passenger has their own story: ‘They could be travelling for work, pleasure, funerals, medical reasons ... you don’t know what kind of day they’re having when they board the plane.’

The aviation lifestyle offers unique benefits, with layovers ranging from 24 to 72 hours in international destinations. ‘You stay in 5-star hotels, and have time to yourself to do what you want,’ Sarah shares. ‘I get to see all these incredible destinations and I get paid to do it.’

Now a mother of two young children, Sarah has found a way to balance her international career with family life. She currently lives in Perth and commutes to Sydney part-time for international routes, working a flexible schedule that allows her to be present for her family.

‘I was fortunate to have had two years of maternity leave for each child,’ she explains. ‘Now I’m back 50% and so I work two out of eight weeks.’ This arrangement gives her the best of both worlds – continuing her aviation career while having substantial time with her children, who she hopes will attend John XXIII College one day.

When reflecting on her time at John XXIII College, Sarah immediately highlights the lasting friendships she formed. ‘The best thing I’ve got out of John XXIII is friendships,’ she says with genuine warmth. Twenty-four years after graduation, Sarah maintains close connections with many friends from her school years.

These friendships have evolved into family traditions, with ten families from the College – including several couples who met at school – gathering annually for a five-day holiday on Rottnest Island. ‘There’s around 30 kids and 20 adults, and it’s just amazing,’ Sarah shares. Some of these children are already attending John XXIII College, continuing the legacy.

This strong alumni network is something Sarah believes distinguishes John XXIII College from other schools.

*‘When we speak to people who attended other schools, they always say that the JTC friendship network is like no other.’*

For students considering a career in international aviation, Sarah offers practical advice based on her

extensive experience. ‘It always helps if you have a second language,’ she notes, regretting not maintaining her French studies from high school days.

Most importantly, she emphasises the value of people skills: ‘Owning how you act and react to people’s problems and trying to take ownership to fix people’s problems, or even just be empathetic if you can’t fix it.’ These interpersonal abilities have been crucial to her success in managing challenging situations at altitude.

Today, as Sarah navigates the complexities of international aviation, she draws on the interpersonal skills first cultivated at John XXIII College. Her global perspective – shaped by encounters with diverse cultures and passengers from all walks of life – exemplifies our College ethos of service and empathy. Sarah’s journey proves that true education equips students with the adaptability, emotional intelligence, and global mindset necessary to succeed wherever in the world they might land.

### **Sarah’s insider tips for savvy travellers**

- Pack warm for planes – they’re always colder than you expect!
- Always pack snacks in case aircraft food isn’t appealing to you.
- Do your research for the countries you’re flying to – customs, etiquette and basic phrases go a long way.
- Always bring a pen onboard for customs forms – avoid the scramble to borrow one.
- Never go to the bathroom without shoes on! (Take it from someone who knows what’s on those floors.)



# The art of the airborne deal

Michael inside an Embraer Legacy 650 private jet that he sold.



**H** In London's Mayfair district, a former John XXIII College student finds himself in boardrooms with billionaires, advising them on private jet acquisitions.

It's a far cry from Perth, but for **Michael McCartney (Class 1994)**, these moments still require a reality check.

'There are times when I have to pinch myself – sitting in boardrooms, surrounded by influential figures, all there to hear my insights,' reflects Michael, the Director and owner of Exclusive Aircraft Sales.

*'It's times like these that remind me how much growing up in Perth and going to JTC instilled in me the belief that there are no limits.'*

Michael's journey from Perth to the pinnacle of private aviation navigated through uncharted territories.

After graduating high school, he pursued his dream of becoming a stockbroker – a career that took him first to New York, the city he'd always dreamed of calling home.

Following his Big Apple adventure, Michael relocated to London, where he eventually found his niche in private aviation.

'I'd tell my younger self to trust the process and stay open to possibilities – even those that don't align with a predetermined plan. My transition from stockbroking to private aviation wasn't something I envisioned at the start, but it led to a deeply fulfilling career that combines passion, problem-solving, and the thrill of working with incredible clients,' Michael reflects. 'Some of life's greatest opportunities emerge when you least expect them.'

The 2009 global financial crisis proved to be a pivotal moment in Michael's career trajectory. When the market crashed and private aviation lost its appeal, he returned



to Perth temporarily, showcasing the adaptability that has defined his professional life.

'I returned to Perth to run a couple of polo competitions with another JTC friend, Raphael Poggi,' he shares. 'It was a creative and rewarding stopgap during a challenging period, to say the least.'

Today, Michael provides expert advice to large banks, insurance companies, and private billionaires on their aviation portfolios. His role involves far more than simply selling luxury aircraft – it's an art form that combines technical knowledge, people skills, and strategic thinking.

'One of the most surprising aspects of my role is the sheer complexity that goes on behind the scenes,' Michael reveals. 'Selling private aircraft isn't simply about luxury jets taking off into the skies – it involves meticulous coordination. From aligning schedules to ensuring aircraft maintenance and accommodating unique client demands with ever-changing timelines, every detail matters.'

The art of selling in this exclusive market requires a deep understanding of both the product and the client. 'When you're selling aircraft worth tens of millions, you need to appreciate that you're not just selling transportation – you're selling time, privacy, and efficiency,' Michael explains.

*'Understanding what truly motivates each client is essential. Some value the cutting-edge technology, others the prestigious brand, and many prioritise the customisation possibilities that reflect their personal style. The key is listening more than talking.'*

Michael's time at John XXIII College laid the foundation for his success in this demanding industry. Being elected as Ward House Captain in his final year gave him his first taste of leadership and responsibility.

'Suddenly, I had responsibilities – which was quite a shock!' he laughs. 'Working closely with the Student Representative Council, we pulled off some amazing projects that strengthened the community and created lasting memories. It felt empowering to play a role in something bigger than myself – and let's be honest, it was also a good excuse to boss my friends around with a 'Captain's badge'.'

The lessons learned at John XXIII College continue to serve Michael well in his professional life, particularly the ability

to think critically, adapt to changing circumstances, and establish influential networks in his field.

'Perhaps most valuable of all has been the emphasis on meaningful connections,' Michael explains.

*'At JTC, I learned the importance of building strong relationships – whether with peers, teachers, or the broader community. This skill has been instrumental in working with high-profile clients and partners and in fostering trust and collaboration throughout my career.'*

Michael has witnessed significant changes in the private aviation industry during his tenure, particularly in terms of sustainability and inclusivity.

'Sustainability has become a key priority, with innovations like cleaner fuel alternatives and eco-conscious practices reshaping the sector,' Michael explains. 'Aircraft are now significantly lighter, made from far stronger materials, enabling them to fly higher and burn far less fuel – a game-changer for efficiency and environmental impact.'

These technological advancements are setting new standards for the industry's future. 'Looking ahead, I see tremendous potential for continued innovation – not only in sustainability but also in passenger experience. Technologies like active turbulence control in recent private jets are setting a new standard for comfort and safety. It's an exciting time to be part of an industry that's evolving so rapidly.'

The industry culture has transformed as well. 'When I began, the industry had a much more exclusive 'old boys' club' feel, where earning trust took years, and the barriers to entry were high,' he notes. 'Women made up just 10–20% of the workforce back then, but today, it's a different world, with women representing closer to 40–50%, and the overall working environment being far more inclusive and open.'

For our students contemplating their future paths, Michael offers this advice: 'Let curiosity be your compass. Stay open to learning and embrace challenges as opportunities to grow. Pursue your passions with dedication and heart, but don't be afraid of change or detours along the way. Sometimes the best opportunities come from unexpected turns.'

His journey from Perth schoolboy to aviation entrepreneur serves as a powerful reminder that careers rarely follow a straight line – and that's precisely what makes them interesting.



# Charting a course in musical theatre

**H** When the house lights dim aboard a Royal Caribbean cruise ship and the stage illuminates, you might spot alumnus **Sam Moloney (Class 2017)** centre stage, belting out classics from Broadway to the *Boogie Wonderland* era.

For the past two years, Sam has found himself in what many would consider a dream job – performing in theatrical productions while sailing the Caribbean Sea.

'I've been fortunate to travel and see so much of the world while working,' Sam reflects. 'I could get off the ship each day and go to these gorgeous islands. It was phenomenal.'

Sam's journey began at John XXIII College, where he was drawn to performing arts after watching his older brother play Riff in the College production of *West Side Story*. 'I must have been about nine years old when I saw him in the musicals,' Sam recalls. 'My brother was a big influence in me finding interest.'

Once at the College, Sam immediately immersed himself in drama classes with Mr Tsak, joined the choir at his friends' suggestion, and began vocal training with teacher Mr David Dockery, whom he describes as 'brilliant, absolutely incredible.' His time in College productions – including *Hairspray* (his favourite) and the epic *Into the Woods* – set the stage for what would become his career path.

After graduating, Sam completed four years of study at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), earning a diploma followed by a Bachelor of Arts in Music Theatre.

His first major post-graduation role came in 2022 when he played Adam Whitely/Felicia Jollygoodfellow (the role popularised by Guy Pearce in the iconic film version) in a theatrical production of *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* at the Regal Theatre.



Actor Sam Moloney

'That would definitely be my favourite show that I've done,' Sam enthuses. 'I could have done that show for years. The role was just so fun to play – very cheeky – and the directors gave me room to make it my own.'

Sam's entry into cruise ship entertainment came through a fortuitous Royal Caribbean audition in Perth – rare, as the company typically only auditions in Sydney and Melbourne. Thanks to connections through his former dance teacher, Sam seized the opportunity and landed his first contract in November 2023.

Since then, he has performed on two different ships, spending seven months on one vessel and two months on another. Both ships primarily cruised the Caribbean, though they departed from different ports – Baltimore, Maryland and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

'I got to experience lots of different islands – Bermuda, Bahamas, Barbados, St. Martin, St. Lucia – islands I didn't know existed and probably wouldn't know unless I went there,' Sam shares.

On board, Sam performed in variety musical shows with theatrical elements, featuring a cast of four singers and eight dancers. The themed productions range from *Boogie Wonderland* (70s music) to *Broadway Rhythm and Rhyme* (stage musical numbers) to *Piano Man* (featuring songs from Billy Joel and Elton John). The Puerto Rico-based ship even featured Latin music and Italian performances, requiring Sam to learn Spanish for some numbers.

While navigating the often-uncertain waters of performing arts careers, Sam has cultivated a pragmatic approach to stability. He is currently pursuing a Master of Teaching (Primary) online through the University of New South Wales, giving him flexible, reliable study and work options between performance contracts.

'I discovered that if I'm in and out with the cruise lines, then teaching is a pretty good option for work back here that I can balance with work when I'm over there,' he explains. 'Something nice and stable for when I can come here, where I can pick up relief work.'

Beyond cruise ships, Sam's global adventures have included working as a camp instructor at a summer camp in Maine, USA, and travelling through Nashville (his favourite American destination), New York, and Colombia.

For students considering a similar journey, Sam emphasises the importance of practice and immersion: 'Expose yourself to trying new things and find out where different classes and courses are. Take some risks.'

He also stresses the value of knowing yourself and finding balance. 'I've seen my mates who graduated and then went directly into national touring productions. It doesn't happen to everyone and it didn't happen to me, but I'm still loving what I'm doing and still getting great work.'

On handling rejection – an inevitable part of the industry – Sam suggests developing resilience through perspective. 'The longer you do this, the more that idea of rejection becomes less scary because you start to become a bit desensitised to it. You learn that there are so many people going for limited opportunities that chances are it will mostly be rejection, and then you'll eventually get something.'



Sam and castmates in 'Boogie Wonderland'.

Looking ahead, Sam is keeping his options open. He's heading to Sydney soon to audition for another cruise line plus Royal Caribbean again – this time for their full-scale musicals like *Mamma Mia* and *Grease*. He's also developed an interest in film and TV work, with plans to create a short film that he can both write and act in.

When reflecting on his College memories, Sam fondly recalls the Year 12 Manresa retreat, New Norcia music camps, and the camaraderie that has endured long after graduation. 'I'm still really close with quite a large group of John XXIII friends. There's a group of around 20 of us and we all see each other quite a bit.'

For Sam, the performing arts journey is about bravely embracing opportunities while maintaining enough stability to weather the inevitable ups and downs. As he continues charting his course through the entertainment world, one thing is certain – his voyage is just beginning.





# Making study a **team effort**

Homework Club sees students benefit from the experience of alumni.



**H** In a significant move to bolster academic support, the Ignatius Centre Library has extended its opening hours and launched a comprehensive Homework Club.

Led by librarian Jean Redfern, this initiative aims to provide students with a robust framework for after-class study, mentoring, and tuition programs. The Homework Club has already seen a surge in student participation, offering a blend of teacher and tutor support that is transforming the way students approach their studies.

The Homework Club operates Monday to Thursday from 3:30pm to 6:00pm, catering to all Secondary students from Years 7 to 12. This expansion marks a significant milestone, as the program was initially introduced in Semester Two, 2024, exclusively for Year 12 students. The decision to extend it to all year levels reflects the program's success and the growing demand for such support.

Working with a peer takes a lot of the stress out of studying.



The Ignatius Centre Library has become a beacon of academic excellence, offering a safe and flexible space where students can learn, collaborate, and grow. The library's extended hours until 6:00pm provide students with ample time to work on assignments, seek guidance from tutors, or simply study in a quiet and focused environment.

Equipped with a wide range of resources, the library promotes equity and supports diverse learning needs. The setup allows students to work on assignments, conduct research, and collaborate with peers in an environment that fosters academic growth.

Teachers are available until 4:30pm to assist with homework and assessment tasks, while academic tutors, including top-performing alumni, provide guidance until 6:00pm. This tiered support system ensures that students receive tailored assistance,



An alumnus tutor patiently works with a current student.

whether they need help with specific subjects or general study techniques.

One of the unique aspects of the Homework Club is the involvement of alumni. The College has invited former students to return and contribute their expertise, providing students with valuable insights and mentorship. This initiative not only enriches the learning experience but also fosters community and connection between current students and alumni.

*The top performers in WACE exams were specifically contacted and asked to become tutors, reflecting our College's commitment to leveraging the strengths of its alumni network to support student achievement.*

The Homework Club has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from both students and tutors. The program's popularity is evident in the growing attendance numbers and the waitlist of alumni eager to join the tutoring group. This enthusiasm underscores the initiative's impact on fostering a collaborative learning environment and promoting academic success.

As the Ignatius Centre Library continues to evolve and expand its services, it remains committed to providing a supportive and inclusive space where students can thrive. By offering flexible learning opportunities and leveraging the expertise of both teachers and alumni tutors, our College is setting a new standard for academic support and student achievement.

**For more information regarding Homework Club, please contact Library and Learning Services Educator, Jean Redfern, at [jean.redfern@johnxxiii.edu.au](mailto:jean.redfern@johnxxiii.edu.au)**





# Building on global connections

Ms Roberts at St Mary's School Ascot.

**H** As our College expands its global horizons, Mathematics teacher and Loyola House Coordinator **Ms Catherine Roberts** shares insights from her transformative year teaching in England.

When Ms Roberts first began her teaching career, she harboured a dream that many educators share – to one day teach internationally. This past year, that aspiration became reality through a professional development initiative that has not only enriched her teaching practice but is now paving the way for an exciting international partnership between our College and St Mary's School Ascot, a prestigious Mary Ward boarding school in England founded in 1885.

'I always knew that at some point in my career I would want to teach abroad,' Ms Roberts reflects. 'In the last few years, I felt the time was right professionally and personally.'

With the College's support, she began researching schools with Jesuit or Loreto connections, eventually securing a mathematics teaching position at St Mary's School Ascot, a girls' boarding school for students aged 11 to 18.

## Exploring different educational approaches

Teaching within the UK's National Curriculum has offered Ms Roberts valuable perspective on different educational frameworks. She observes that the British system has 'a strong focus on data, assessments, and inspections,' creating a distinct approach to education resulting in significant time spent on administrative tasks. At St Mary's, students balance numerous subjects while maintaining impressive dedication to their studies – mirroring the academic excellence our College is known for, though expressed through a different curriculum structure.

## The boarding school experience

The boarding school environment has fundamentally shaped how Ms Roberts builds relationships with her students. 'Teachers spend a lot more time with the students, not just in the classroom but also during meals, evening study sessions, and weekend activities,' she explains. This creates what Ms Roberts describes as a 'family-like environment' where deeper, more personal connections naturally develop. Weekend

duties have provided some of her most rewarding experiences – from chaperoning social events to delivering a lecture on Australian history and education that sparked enthusiastic interest among students.

### Shared traditions, shared values

Ms Roberts has been struck by the profound similarities between our College and St Mary's in how they embrace Jesuit and Loreto traditions. 'This experience has demonstrated to me that no matter where you are in the world, Catholic education is comprehensive in what it teaches and what it wants from its pupils – to be good people who have a concern for others and the world around them,' she reflects.

The schools' shared commitment to pilgrimages, faith formation, and creating strong communities that foster confidence and leadership has been particularly meaningful to Ms Roberts. On International Women's Day, she chaperoned sixth form pupils to hear Loreto Sr Imelda Poole speak about her work through Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation (RENATE), an organisation combating human trafficking across Europe, empowering students to help create a more equitable society.

Ms Roberts at home in the beautiful grounds of St Mary's.



During Summer Term, Ms Roberts joined Year 7 students on their pilgrimage to York, Mary Ward's birthplace. The group visited the Bar Convent – the oldest surviving Catholic convent in England founded by Mary Ward's followers. They also visited her place of burial at the Parish church of St Thomas in Osbalwick, where her epitaph reads: 'to love the poor, persevere in the same, live, die, and rise with them was all the aim of Mary Ward.'

### Experiencing single-gender education

Teaching at an all-girls school has given Ms Roberts the opportunity to experience a different educational

setting. She notes that in this environment, she observes a particular style of classroom engagement. 'The pupils I believe, are confident in taking intellectual risks and engaging in discussions,' Ms Roberts shares. This complements her experience at our College, where our co-educational approach offers its own distinct advantages and fosters excellence through diversity of perspective.

### Community building through tradition

St Mary's rich traditions have left a lasting impression on Ms Roberts. She participated in the end-of-term teacher pantomime – kept secret from students until performance day – and witnessed the annual Shrove Tuesday festivities, which involve school-wide costume competitions and special celebrations organised by the lower sixth students.

House spirit at St Mary's manifests through numerous events spanning sports, dance, song, instrumental music, drama, and film, with student leaders encouraging participation and creating a vibrant community.

### The future: A formal partnership

Ms Roberts's experience has catalysed discussions between the two schools about formalising the relationship between our schools. Our College is now developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with St Mary's School Ascot, potentially opening doors for future exchanges and collaborative initiatives.

'This experience has been amazing, and I am grateful to our College for this opportunity,' Ms Roberts shares. 'I have grown professionally and personally through the people I've met and experiences I've had.'

As Ms Roberts prepares to return to our community, she eagerly anticipates sharing her insights while celebrating our exceptional educational environment. 'I look forward to being able to share the good practices I took part in at St Mary's, but also to affirm the great things already happening at our College,' she explains.

***'We are so fortunate to have these worldwide ties with other Jesuit and Loreto schools, and I hope that my experience can open doors for others, both staff and pupils.'***

Further details about the developing partnership between our College and St Mary's School Ascot will be shared later this year.



# A capital learning experience

Jennifer at the epicentre of Australian democracy.



This year's Convention explored 'Revisiting Sections 51(ii) and 90 to Reimagine Australia's Fiscal Federalism' – a topic that aligns perfectly with Jennifer's Politics and Law ATAR studies.

She explains: 'In terms of federalism, it's talking about the balance of power between our Commonwealth government and the states/territories. Fiscal federalism is about how money is distributed between them and how this gives one more power than the other.'

The Convention featured prominent keynote speakers, breakout sessions, and a simulated referendum – all designed to deepen students' understanding of Australia's governance structures.

'We talked about vertical fiscal imbalance, which means the Commonwealth has a lot more money than the states do, so the states have to

rely on the Commonwealth for their funding, creating a power imbalance,' Jennifer says.

Jennifer's time at the Convention coincided with a momentous week in federal politics – the federal budget speech and the calling of the 2025 general election. This remarkable timing added an extra dimension to her already valuable experience.

'We saw a full sitting of Parliament,' she describes. 'We had the unique opportunity to observe politicians right before they went into budget lockdown and then watch them again during the actual budget speech.'

The networking opportunities were equally valuable. Jennifer and her fellow delegates had the chance to meet with several prominent politicians, including Independent MP Kate Chaney (a John XXIII College Class of 1992 alumna, with whom Jennifer had previously worked through the Curtin Youth Advisory Group), and Senators Penny Wong and Fatima Payman.

In what became a poignant historical coincidence, Jennifer attended an afternoon tea with the Governor-General, Her Excellency, Ms Sam Mostyn, at Government House, and the very next day, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese visited the same location to request the dissolution of parliament.

**H** In an exciting achievement for John XXIII College, Year 12 student and *Magis* Captain **Jennifer Ong** was selected as one of 15 Western Australian representatives to attend the 30th National Schools Constitutional Convention (NSCC) in Canberra.

This marks the eighth consecutive year our College has had a student participate in this prestigious national forum.

When Jennifer received news of her selection to the 30th annual National Schools Constitutional Convention in Canberra, her reaction was mixed: 'I was very excited when I received the news, but also slightly apprehensive. Year 12 is such an important year, and missing a week of classes seemed daunting.'

Her concerns were quickly allayed by the support from our community. 'Mr Mahon reached out and said that the College was proud of me for getting selected. He reaffirmed just how extraordinary this opportunity was and said that the College would support me with my missed assessments.'

Jennifer was one of just 15 students chosen from Western Australia to join 119 politically engaged students from across Australia at the Convention, which ran from 25-27 March in Canberra.

It was quite an experience:

*'Meeting the Governor-General was truly inspirational. As the second woman to hold this position in Australia's history, she spoke about her journey to this role. What made it even more meaningful was knowing that just 24 hours later, the Prime Minister would be standing in that same spot formally requesting an election.'*

As *Magis* Captain, Jennifer embodies the College's commitment to academic excellence and the Ignatian philosophy of 'the greater, the excellent, the more.' She views her Convention experience as an opportunity for both personal growth and community enrichment.

'I think it best exemplifies the Ignatian ethos that we have here, 'being people for others,' says Jennifer's Politics and Law teacher and Head of *Magis*, Ms Daisy Farley. 'Jennifer beautifully displays this in her leadership role. She's shared her experience and knowledge with not only her peers but also with the younger years. It's been wonderful to see our students closely follow Jennifer's itinerary, with some students adding the Convention to their long-term academic goals.'

In her capacity as *Magis* Captain, Jennifer sees her Convention experience as a catalyst for peer education. She has already begun facilitating discussion sessions with fellow Politics and Law students - a timely contribution as this topic forms a significant part of their Year 12 ATAR curriculum.

'What I value most about my NSCC experience is how it allows me to bring real-world context back to our classroom discussions,' Jennifer says. 'The insights I gained about vertical fiscal imbalance and the complex power dynamics between state and federal governments have added depth to our theoretical understanding of federalism.'

Jennifer has embraced a remarkable range of responsibilities while maintaining her academic achievements. 'As *Magis* Captain, I serve on the Student Representative Council and mentor younger students - all while studying six ATAR subjects, as well as participating in the College musical, three musical ensembles and Mock Trials,' she explains.

This multifaceted approach to student life exemplifies the holistic education philosophy at John XXIII College, where students are encouraged to develop intellectually, creatively, and as leaders. Ms Farley notes: 'Jennifer certainly embodies the *Magis* spirit.'



Jennifer meeting Her Excellency, Ms Sam Mostyn, Governor-General of Australia.

With dedication and support, students can pursue diverse interests without compromising quality.'

Perhaps most surprising for Jennifer was how the Convention influenced her thinking about potential career paths. 'I came home and immediately asked my parents if there were careers that focus on analysing policy issues and developing potential reforms,' she recalls. 'The process of examining constitutional problems and collaboratively designing solutions was unexpectedly fascinating.'

While she's currently considering studies in law or medicine, Jennifer's Convention experience has broadened her perspective on how constitutional frameworks impact every aspect of Australian society.

'The experience was genuinely eye-opening,' she reflects. 'It revealed how many issues still need thoughtful reform and inspired me to consider how I might contribute to addressing these imbalances in my future career.'

This transformative learning experience illustrates how John XXIII College nurtures not just academic achievement but also civic responsibility and leadership.

By supporting students like Jennifer to engage with governance at the national level, our College fulfils its mission to develop young people who will make meaningful contributions to society - the living embodiment of our Ignatian values in today's world.





# We need your College memories

Our brand new Mount Claremont campus in 1986.

**H** As we approach a significant milestone in our College history – the 40th anniversary of our Mount Claremont campus in 2026 – we are reaching out to our alumni community to help us gather and preserve memories from our early years.

## Were you part of the graduating classes between 1986 and 1997?

If so, you were among the first students to experience our Mount Claremont campus during its foundational years. We are eager to hear your unique perspectives and memories from this transformative period in our College history.

We invite you to share:

- Your personal stories and memories of the transition to the new campus (e.g., your first impressions and how you navigated the new environment)
- Recollections of the early, formative days at Mount Claremont (e.g., how the campus evolved during your time)

- Family photographs capturing your College journey (these will be scanned and returned to you)
- Video footage (VHS) of campus life, celebrations, or milestones (e.g., back-to-school days, Valette)
- Any memorabilia from the first few years at the new location (e.g., uniforms, publications, newspaper clippings)

Your contributions will play a vital role in preserving and celebrating our College heritage for future generations. Every story, photograph, and piece of memorabilia helps us paint a more complete picture of our journey.

Please share your memories with us by contacting Caroline Caparas-MacCormac at:

[alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au](mailto:alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au)

We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for being an important part of our College community and history.



# Be sure to **stay in touch**

## Are your contact details up to date?

Please take the time to ensure we have your most up-to-date details.

## Help find lost Alumni

As part of our efforts to stay in touch with our extended College family, we are always looking to expand our Alumni database. Can you help?

[alumni.johnxxiii.edu.au/#missingmembers](https://alumni.johnxxiii.edu.au/#missingmembers)

This page lists Alumni from your year group whose contact details we are missing. If you can help us reconnect with any of them, simply click 'lost' under their name. Use the options at the top of the page to search for missing Alumni from other years.

To update your details online visit  
[alumni.johnxxiii.edu.au](https://alumni.johnxxiii.edu.au)

1. Login
2. Under the top navigation select 'Your Account' and click 'Update Your Details'
3. Enter your updated contact information and then click 'Save'.

Alternatively, contact our Alumni Office with your updated details:

- 08 9383 0520
- [alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au](mailto:alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au)

## Stay connected

-  Alumni: [JohnXXIIICollegeAlumni](#)
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