



ST CATHERINE'S
COLLEGE

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THE

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MAGAZINE FOR OUR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS



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Helping our
Residents

The 2020 U-turn

2020 dawned as a year of great promise for the College – new facilities, a waiting list of enrolments, a high achieving cohort of new residents and an array of new programs and events targeted at empowering each resident to achieve their personal best. Then COVID-19 hit us and the world as we knew it did a very sharp U-turn!

The residential college industry across Australia grappled with the challenge of remaining viable when the universities were teaching online, personal safety was at risk and borders were closing both nationally and internationally. Everyone chose a different path in an attempt to do the best thing for their residents. Some sent as many residents home as possible to reduce density and enforce social distancing, some closed entirely and dispersed their remaining residents to other providers and some employed strict protocols aimed at keeping their community locked down to keep everyone safe. Colleges were classified by the government as a “Place of Home” which meant that it felt like a family setting but the restrictions imposed on everyone out of home still applied within the College. A strange middle road of feeling close but maintaining your distance.

Keeping our residents safe was always the highest priority but we also had an obligation to look after all those residents who could not go home for various reasons or who wanted to stay to try to enjoy some of the collegiate comraderie that is so unique to College. Online studies were not easy for everyone and we quickly noticed that academic support was more critical than ever and as the mental health of our young people started to waiver, we knew we had to increase our engagement and our pastoral care pastoral care to adapt to the changing landscape.



Fiona Crowe

As a College we embarked on our path - an entirely new program of virtual or small group activities aimed at keeping everyone at College and keeping them positive. We increased our offerings, developing a holistic program of events and activities to cover mind, body, spirit, study and preparing for the future. We were running four to five activities per day (previously about four a week!) The innovation was staggering and the bonding was palpable. Many of our residents who had gone home were eager to return at the first opportunity, having watched College life unfold over social media and wanting to be here to take part. Whilst all events were accessible to our residents online through Zoom so nobody missed out, being here to enjoy the camaraderie was most people's preference. You can see some of what we did on page 8.

I am so proud of St Cat's! The commitment to stand together, to support each other, to make the best of an anxious time and the willingness to do the right thing to protect everyone. It's who we are as a College and it's in our DNA to be innovative and responsive. My deepest thanks go to the staff, the residents, the frontline staff such as the couriers who delivered mountains of online shopping and to our neighbours, Alumni and partners who reached out to check on us and support us where they could. Thank you! COVID-19 may not yet be beaten but we have shown we are certainly up for the challenge!

Fiona Crowe
Head of College

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Definitions

Alumna: A female former pupil or student of a particular school, college, or university.

Alumnus: A former pupil or student, especially a male one, of a particular school, college, or university.

How do I use these terms? When used in the singular, alumnus (which is a male form in Latin) generally refers to a male former student, with alumna being the corresponding female term, but the plural alumni can refer to pupils or students of either sex.

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Our Flagship Programs

The programs run at St Catherine's College allow students from all backgrounds and all areas of study to receive support as they pursue excellence and innovation.

Dandjoo Darbalung

Dandjoo Darbalung means 'mixing together'. In the same way fresh and saltwater mix in the Swan estuary where the College is located, *Dandjoo Darbalung* has become a cultural hub for Indigenous people from all over Western Australia. There are 100 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students studying at all 5 local universities.

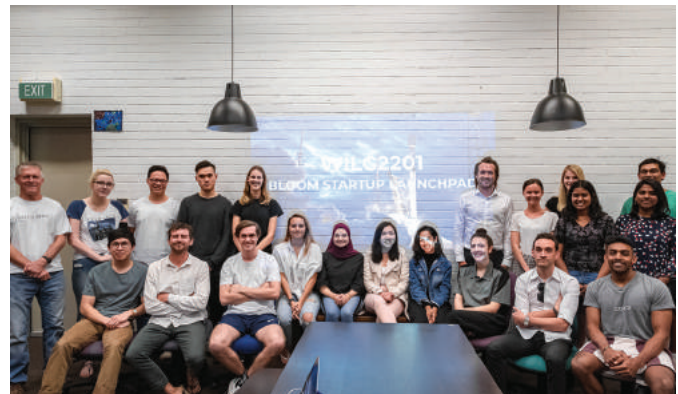
The Aurora Education Foundation's Secondary Program has now also established its offices at the College and we have a number of regional guests utilising our short stay accommodation in partnership with Ronald McDonald House and the Perth Children's Hospital. *Dandjoo* also hosts The Graham (Polly) Farmer Foundation's *Follow the Dream* Program, AISWA's Future Footprint Program, Clontarf Foundation and Shooting Stars.

St Catherine's College offers a culturally secure environment in which to participate and learn about Aboriginal cultures and to share that with others.

2020 has been challenging for the Dandjoo Darbalung Program with the rapidly changing response to the Coronavirus. Most students have remained within the College and without face-to-face contact at the Universities, the pressure on resources has been intense. Dandjoo Darbalung is a strong and resilient program built on family and community connections. Even in these challenging times our students and staff continue to innovate and find ways to share cultures and ways of being with each other.



Together we support one another to create excellence, knowledge and understanding



We encourage you to be innovative and bold in your approach

Bloom

Bloom is a program of St Catherine's College that empowers young people and the community to develop solutions to problems they are passionate about. We do this through our university accredited program Launchpad, development workshops and industry networks. As a unique part of the College community, we take great pride in developing the future leaders of enterprise, social impact, and community.

With an extensive list of mentors and strong industry connections we have facilitated students to apply their studies to creating meaningful impact. Whether that is promoting sustainable projects around College or, the development of neurotechnology in Silicon Valley, we are here to support anyone wanting to make a difference.

College residents engage with *Bloom* and its community through our Bloom Lab; a collaborative space where residents rub shoulders with budding entrepreneurs and industry professionals. The Bloom Lab is the heart of *Bloom's* operations, hosting free workshops and events catered to showing attendees what is possible. You do not need to be the next Bill Gates or Melanie Perkins to be part of *Bloom*, we only ask you to have an open mindset and a passion for creating impact. Regardless of your ambitions, *Bloom* is here to support you on your innovation journey.

Letter from our Chair of the Board, Margie Tannock

I was appointed Chair of the Board in November last year and what a high-energy experience it has been. Dealing with the governance around a global pandemic obviously wasn't on the Strategic Plan for the Board, but if ever there is a way to test and bond a Board, it's dealing with a crisis.

I can highly commend the Board of the College who, together with the Executive staff, stepped up in every portfolio to ensure the College and every resident was safe, and decision-making for the short-term and the long-term was measured and practical. We have a highly skilled and experienced Board and I'd like to welcome a new member, David Rose, a Director of Mining Advisory Services at KPMG and a Rhodes Scholar who stepped in and immediately made a huge contribution during this challenging time.

At the same time, I'd like to again offer the Board's deep thanks to Russell Barnett, who has stepped down from the Board, after serving for 12 years, mostly in the role as Deputy Chair, but also contributing to all of the major Board initiatives and College building projects. His calm, wise counsel will be missed at Board level, but we look forward to welcoming him as often as possible at our College functions.

The financial pressure experienced by the rest of the world applied to St Catherine's too, as residents chose to leave or had to withdraw due to the financial hardship experienced by their families. With the universities being forced to go online and losing most of the international student market, considerable strain was placed on the operating budget but through immediate action, a carefully planned Admissions' demographics, creative thinking and sheer hard work, we were able to retain the majority of our residents. What the next six to 12 months holds for Higher Education remains to be seen but as the Chair of the Board of this extraordinary organisation, I am confident that we will positively weather the storm and emerge ready for the 'new normal'.

In March this year we were in the early stages of creating the College's next Strategic Plan and it is timely now to pivot our plans to include the vast innovation and new thinking which has come out of this experience. We have worked seamlessly with the Executive staff who under the vibrant and energetic leadership of Fiona Crowe, have absorbed enormous pressure to keep the ship steady and, in fact, surging ahead. Our College is a leader in the residential college industry and I am delighted to be able to be a part of it.



Lastly, many of our families are suffering financially as a result of COVID-19 so I encourage you to support the College in its endeavours to raise funds to assist those residents who are now unable to return to College because they can't manage the fees. Our scholarship support this year has been stretched to the maximum as we have attempted to assist as many students as possible so every contribution makes a huge difference to the College and to those young people caught in the fallout of this pandemic.

Thank you for being part of the larger St Catherine's family. I hope you enjoy reading about the achievements of our residents and Alumni in this issue.

Jiaranai Keatnuxsuo

We are very fortunate at St Catherine's to see our alumni and recent graduates go on to do exciting and innovative work. Though it's always sad to say goodbye, we love to watch our alumni thrive in the workforce. Jiaranai Keatnuxsuo is one of those faces we miss seeing around College since she left us in 2019, but keeping up with her journey working at Microsoft has been exciting. She shared some of her thoughts with us on COVID-19, College and all things computers.

Jia hails from Thailand and studied a Masters of Business Management followed by a Masters of Information Technology. She lived in College from 2016 - 2019.

What do you think about the impact of the current pandemic on the role of technology in business, especially now that so many people are working remotely from home?

The magnitude of the COVID-19's impacts can be felt by everyone, whatever industry they are in; be it retail, tourism, hospitality, mining etc. Some of them are being fundamentally transformed in a positive way such as the healthcare industry; patients and healthcare workers are realising that telemedicine can be as effective as going to see a doctor in person. Or the higher education industry, where courses delivered by excellent academics have moved online - accessing high-quality education is no longer a privilege only to some. We can see the general categories of the impacts here that COVID-19 is accelerating pre-existing trends- the telehealth concept has existed for a while but it was not picked up.

In my view, these are the main impacts of technology in business:

Accelerating digital transformation - we have seen and have heard about digital transformation for a while now, but COVID-19 has accelerated technological usage at the speed we have never seen before. The simplest example would be working from home; it has become more acceptable compared to how we worked a few years ago. Another example is mobile banking in Thailand. Before COVID-19, the majority of Thai people (of all ages - even my grandparents) usually used cash and they felt good about having cash in hand. Now they have been forced to shift their behaviour to only using mobile banking. Technology has always been there, but the fundamental consumer behaviours have changed which expedite the digital transformation process. More digital leaders will realise that only the technical side of technology alone won't get adequate user adoption. It needs empathy and understanding of humans to get a higher adoption rate.

Continuous upskilling or reskilling of the workforce - we have heard about this upskilling trend for many years now, as workers or jobseekers thrive in this labour market.

However, post-COVID-19 will be the period where more individuals will pay attention to training and keeping their skills relevant. Remote working reveals the inefficiency in current business processes which can be easily cut and restructured.

Lastly, remote working will become more acceptable for many organisations. Leaders will be more flexible and trusting towards their employees, which will influence property value in the city or near the city. The traditional way of working in the personal office will be changed to a hot desk style; employees don't have a set office or cubicle as not all employees are at work at one time. Some may choose to work from home or choose to come into the office. They can work from anywhere they want, as long as they can use technology to access corporate data securely.

Do you think these effects will be lasting even after this pandemic?

Yes, they will become the new normal - we have already adjusted our way of living to suit this new social behaviour. However, that doesn't mean that the majority of people will work from home. It's just that they will have the remote working choices available and they can take advantage of it more easily compared to pre-COVID. At the end of the day, humans are social animals. I think we will enjoy going back to the office to mingle with our colleagues and customers.

What got you interested to work in your field?

I love the fact that technology is a platform that empowers ordinary people to become extraordinary, to be more and to achieve more. All technologies we have today would be seen as some sort of sorcery 100 years ago. We were not able to talk to someone who was thousands of kilometres away, nor access a wealth of knowledge at our fingertips. It demonstrates the perseverance of humankind to further the development of our society and ultimately, our world.

“My advice to all of you who are facing any challenges is to dip your head into it, face it, solve it and get it out of the way.”

What is something you would like to tell women and girls who are interested in working in STEM?

It's cliché but I'd still like to say this - don't let anyone tell you what your limit is. When I first started my IT course, I absolutely knew nothing. My technical skills were subpar but I saw tremendous opportunities in this field so I persevered in my attempt to finish my Masters of IT. I remember vividly the day I asked simple questions and had to stand up for my position towards the unit assessment. Male students, as well as the lecturer, were laughing at me. I felt invalidated in that moment, but I realised I had every right to be in this class full of men and asked the simplest and stupidest questions, as many as I wanted to. The fact that they made fun of my willingness to learn didn't cease my rights to be there. I'm not sure if it's a gender quality issue, or people simply not being at their best. My advice to all of you who are facing any challenges is to dip your head into it, face it, solve it and get it out of the way. Acknowledge the gender gap, but don't dwell too much on it making you feel inferior, because that is going to stop you from focusing on what is important - in this case, being your greatest self and creating impactful outcomes.

How did you find your time at St Catherine's College?

This was an extraordinary time of my life. Part of the reason I got a job at Microsoft was that I spent four years at St Catherine's learning how to create a life larger than myself, to do what was meaningful and build my profile around it.

I was lucky enough to get such huge support from the management team to develop my personal and professional self exponentially. I was doing the Marketing internship with Taufiq Zainal - the first Marketing Manager of St Cat's. His work ethic was something I admired and still take with me today. He was the best person I've ever worked with so early in my career. At first, the internship was going to be just 6 months but it was so good that I continued for 2 years!

I was so invested and involved in other parts of College too. I did pretty much everything from a recycling program, cleaning windows, to being a Director of Studies in 2017 - digitising a paper-based program to a cloud version to help College track its tutorial spend as well as help 400 residents unlock their academic potential through tutorial management. My biggest supporter and the person who always told me I could do anything I put my mind to was my mentor, Mandy McFarland, Director of Advancement at St Catherine's College. All the staff at St Cat's are so experienced and so student-focused. They genuinely want the best for each resident and I am so grateful for that investment.



Our Health Heroes

St Catherine's College would like to extend our gratitude to all health workers that are protecting and supporting the community throughout these difficult times.

You are all heroes to us.

Harry Bawa is currently a third-year neuroscience student working as a Nursing Assistant. He sat down with us for an interview about what it is like being a health worker during a pandemic. You can also watch the interview on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1324459761093414>).

What is the most rewarding part of working as an Assistant in Nursing?

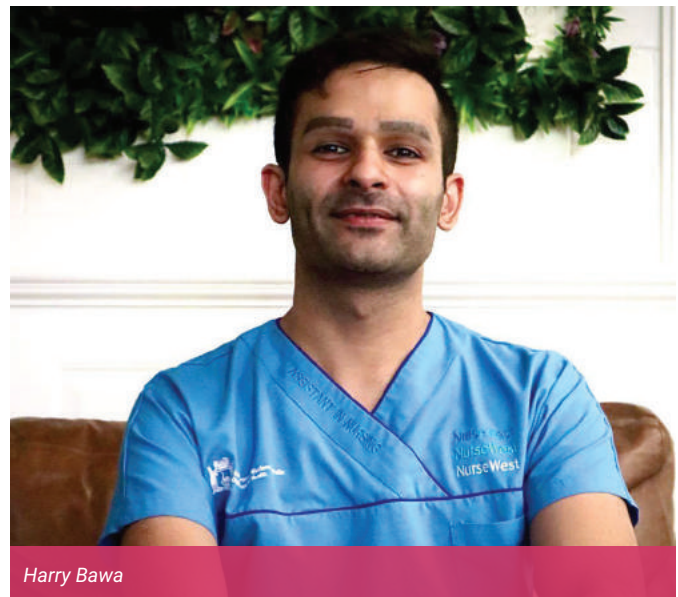
It's very interesting because you get to meet a lot of different people in different age demographics, and you get to learn all these life lessons that they've had without actually having to go through a lot of those things. You meet a lot of different patients that are very young to quite old, and they all have their fresh perspective on life, and what they've been through, what they're going to do. It's quite interesting to see what everyone brings to the table and I think just seeing people recover that you have a connection with over some time, that is the most rewarding part.

What are some challenges you would normally face?

Sometimes, when we would have to work with a lot of patients at once, I think that can get quite difficult. Especially if we're working in a place that is quite demanding and everyone requires a lot of attention, and there isn't enough staff so we're kind of just running around. There have even been times when nurses would skip their breaks to just make sure that everyone is okay. We're getting to that point where a lot of the nurses are even having to reuse their masks just because we're trying to be careful about our usage of medical equipment. * Interview took place before the curve flattened.

What is one thing you would like people to know about working in Nursing?

I feel like a lot of people have one perspective or another but honestly, it's a very rewarding job. It's not easy but I think if you have the heart for it, it's definitely for you. To see everyone, get better and being on their path, making connections with your entire work team it's just overall an amazing experience.



How do you feel your job has changed as a result of the current pandemic?

I work for an agency which means I get to go to different places and meet different people every time but the demand has been a bit all over the place. First, there was a lot, then there's been a bit of a blank spot where there's no work and it just keeps going up and down. I feel like the Government is really trying to get a lot of their staff back in the hospitals.

There's definitely a lot more pressure now in terms of how we use our medical equipment and how efficiently we're working. We're also trying to keep beds free in the hospitals because hopefully, it won't get to that point but if Coronavirus does ramp up, we will need a lot of those free beds.

What are some of your career goals?

I hope to do medicine eventually and become a doctor if I can. I've also been interested in becoming a neurosurgeon but that all feels a bit far away at the moment. I just want to finish my undergrad.

Emma White, an esteemed alumna of the College, is currently working as a paramedic for St John Ambulance Western Australia. During her eight years spent living at St Catherine's (2006 - 2014), Emma was a member of the House Committee and RA team. At the start of the year, Emma ran a resilience workshop and guided meditation for our 2020 RAs during their induction and training. Due to high demand, she recently offered the same workshop for all our College residents. Drawing on her experiences as a paramedic, Emma offers valuable insight to our community on the importance of resilience and strong mental health in stressful times.

How did you find your time at College?

I absolutely loved College. If I could, I would still be living there. When I look back at my time there, I don't think we all realized how lucky we were to be at College and having fun in a safe and nurturing environment. There was always so much going on, and it was like one big family. I think everyone should have a try at living at a College because it definitely is a life-changing experience.

What is the most rewarding part of working as a paramedic?

My job can be so incredibly rewarding. Before I started working as a paramedic, I had an idea in my head of what the job would be like. I thought the best part of the job would be bringing people back from the dead and saving the day. In reality, the job is dramatically different, although there are times when we do bring someone back from a cardiac arrest. Sometimes we must intervene in the instance of a heart attack, stroke, or bleeding from major trauma and get people to hospital in time for treatment. This kind of work isn't as common as people may think. The most common and rewarding work I do as a paramedic is attending to the elderly or people that are alone, and need comfort and reassurance in a time of distress. We come into people's lives on what might be the worst, most frightening moment of their life, and they put all their trust in us to turn it around and make everything okay. Being able to ease someone's distress even by a little is the most rewarding part of my job.



Emma White (R)

What are some challenges you might normally face?

The increasing number of assaults and verbal abuse that paramedics are exposed to is quite a challenging aspect of my job. There are a lot of illicit drugs around and people that consume large amounts of alcohol can be affected in different ways, including becoming aggressive and violent. My 'office' is in the back of the ambulance, and it is a very small area when someone 'kicks off' and becomes violent. Luckily, we have a great relationship with the Police and they are always on hand to help us. However, when you are in a dangerous situation, seconds feel like hours so it can be quite scary. Luckily, these instances are not too common.

What is one thing you would like people to know about working in health services?

The most important thing for people to remember is we try our best. Working in health care as a paramedic is a job I feel very privileged to have. We do everything in our power with our expertise to try and assist people in crisis. There are times when everything we can do is enough, and sometimes when it isn't. It is also important to remember that health care workers are only human. We feel pain, sadness and fear just as you do. We feel just as happy and joyous for you as well. We sacrifice special days with our loved ones, Christmas, Easter, Birthdays because we have a passion to help those in need.

How do you feel your job has changed as a result of the current pandemic?

I have never worked in health care during a pandemic and hopefully, we never will again. Working in the ambulance service, you get quite a bizarre feeling. Our management and admin teams are working in overdrive to put everything in place to potentially deal with many a large increase in cases of COVID-19, but so far the situation hasn't been too bad. I know I certainly feel anxious about what might happen and all the unknowns. I think seeing the devastation the virus has caused overseas makes it all the more frightening when thinking about the impact future in Australia. I know that this virus has created more awareness in putting systems and protections place to better protect public health and lessen the impact of contagious illnesses. Overall, I think the pandemic has been a learning experience, showing us that we are not all invincible. Life can be short and we never know what is going to happen tomorrow. It has also shown us that we are very lucky to live in Australia where rules are in place to keep us safe and well looked after.

Any advice for residents to stay resilient during this time?

I know that there will be a lot of people finding this time really difficult. It impacts more than just people's physical health. The pandemic is also affecting people emotionally, financially and in many other ways. I think it is important to remember it is completely normal to feel anxious and unsettled by this. The majority of us have never experienced anything like this before. It is also important to remember that it is only temporary. Right now it's uncomfortable, and we need to make the best of it, but life won't be like this forever. Take the extra time to try things you always wanted to do- reading, cooking, crafts, bingeing TV shows. Please follow the advice we are getting from the government. Stay at home as much as you can with minimal contact with others not in your home. While all health care workers go to work each day feeling nervous and unsure, we will keep doing it so that you all stay healthy and well. Be patient and be kind to each other, and know that this will one day soon be a time we are looking back on.

How did St Catherine's College handle COVID-19?

St Catherine's College was classified as a 'Place of Home' during COVID-19. This meant that within the College similar regulations to a 'family' applied but we still practised social distancing, heightened hygiene and a limitation on external guests became a part of everyday life. Many of the normal activities continued, albeit in a new format.

The College used an approach of heightened engagement to support students that couldn't return home, and which made the need for more severe policing unnecessary. Residents took ownership of their safety and for those around them, and a feeling of intense camaraderie just grew. 'We're all in this together' never had more meaning.

The College put on four to five activities every day and residents who had returned home were still able to virtually join in. The staff and student leadership team stepped up enormously to keep everyone safe, happy, engaged and focused on successful studies.



Gardening class



Vision board making workshop



Zumba class led by our President James Fazio



ANZAC Day dawn service

Our RA team, with the invaluable guidance of our Deputy Head of College, Ashleigh Benadretti, went above and beyond to ensure that our residents could still have an amazing College experience, albeit a very unique one.

While this has been an unusual year for the College, and indeed the whole world, the spirit of community and resilience remains. We have never felt prouder of our St Cat's family!

We're ALWAYS here for our residents

Mental Health is a priority at St Catherine's College. All of our RAs are trained in Mental Health First Aid, and our staff are always around to chat and provide support. Every event or activity that has been run during isolation has been created with positive mental health in mind, so let's take a look at just some of the opportunities we've offered to support our residents during this unprecedented time.

Moonlight Meditations

Meditation has proven to have so many benefits to mental health, and we have been lucky to be able to have guided meditations accompanied by the therapeutic sounds of the didgeridoo played by our residents Amos and Angus.

Resilience and Anxiety Workshops

In stressful times, we could all use some tips on how to deal with anxiety and develop resilience. Our residents were able to access workshops run by professionals that provided practical advice and strategies to manage change and adjust to unusual circumstances.

Art Classes

Getting creative is an excellent way to relieve stress, feel productive and practice mindfulness. Many art classes were run remotely, so residents could join in from wherever they were to learn a new artistic skill or just have fun.

Sports Classes

Keeping physically active is a massive part of staying mentally healthy, so our residents have been able to participate in sports' classes or activities run twice a day. Ranging from a live-streamed yoga class to hard-core fitness challenges, our residents can take a break from study and enjoy the endorphins that exercise bring.

Time to Unwind

As study has gone online, it can be easy to get caught up in deadlines and revision and forget to relax! Sometimes simple activities like board games, DIY science experiments or a movie night works wonders to relieve stress, re-focus and help you feel connected.

Commencement Dinner

Our Semester one Commencement Dinner, which formally heralds the beginning of a new academic year, was once again a fantastic evening. In keeping with tradition, our new and returning residents looked wonderful in their academic robes and formal attire. It was a perfect summer evening for a delicious meal, live music and a welcoming and inspiring speech from our Head of College, Fiona Crowe.





After dinner, the robes came off and the dancing shoes came out for an impromptu dance party. Our residents caught up with old and new friends over drinks. There is no better way to start another year of study in true St Cat's style.

(All photos were taken on February 24th, before social distancing regulations were enforced by the Australian Government and St Catherine's College)



Emma Wynne

Emma Wynne's first job at the ABC was a short-term contract to produce a morning radio program in Kalgoorlie, and 12 years later, she still works for the ABC. In a tricky time for journalism and media, Emma shares her thoughts on College, her career and COVID-19.

How did you find your time at College?

I loved it. I came here in 1998 when was when I first left home and had to start doing my own washing, so it was a real start to independent life. I have really happy memories of the four years in College of the chats in the dining room, the formal dinners and my cosy room in Prescott. I made some amazing friends at St Cat's who I am still close with now – in fact, I was supposed to be a bridesmaid at a fellow St Cat's alumna's wedding last weekend. Unfortunately, the wedding had to be postponed due to Coronavirus, but I'm sure it will be a wonderful day.

What attracted you to the media news world?

I can't remember what initially drew me, but I just had this sense that it was a career I wanted to pursue. I studied a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and German at UWA, and I did quite a bit of work on *Pelican* while I was an undergraduate. After I graduated, I moved to Sydney and got my Master's degree in journalism at the University of Technology, and that's how I really got started.

What does a typical day look like for you?

Right now I get up, get dressed, have a coffee and then sit down at my computer on my dining table and start working for ABC News, helping to keep the digital coverage up to date with all the latest on the COVID-19 pandemic and praying my internet speeds hold up.



Up until mid-March 2020, and hopefully again when things settle down, I was a feature reporter for the ABC in Perth, finding interesting stories about people and places in Perth that were not part of the daily news cycle. Every day was different, I'd be out interviewing people, taking photographs, shooting videos and then coming back to the office to put it all together.

Tell us about some projects you've worked on that you are particularly proud of.

- At the end of last year, I went to an aged care facility that has developed a partnership with a class of special needs primary school children. I went to their Christmas party to see how the pairing of young and old had mutual benefits. It was a really hectic shoot, very noisy, no one could hear very well, and the kids were very excited, but it was a really beautiful thing to witness how they had bonded and brought joy to each other's lives.
- Last year I also went on a reporting trip to the Cocos Islands, a remote Australian territory with a population of just 600 people. I found some amazing stories there. The majority of the population are Cocos Malay people, who were originally brought there to work picking coconuts in the 1800s. In the 1970s and '80s, they fought for their freedom and, with the help of a UN-backed referendum in 1984, won full citizenship of Australia. The islands are also smack-back in the middle of the Indian Ocean which makes it possible to witness firsthand the mountains of plastic in our oceans. Most of us know it's there, but we haven't been confronted with it, face-to-face, like the islands have. The labels on the bottles show it's coming from all over Asia.

In recent statements from the Federal Government, the ABC and media agencies were classed as 'essential'. Why do you think journalism is more important now than ever?

It's always important that a free and independent media exists to scrutinise our society. Of course, it's vital that people have timely and accurate information right now, as we face a serious pandemic and practice social isolating. News and media is a vital service during emergencies, like bushfires and cyclones. There have also been some very important examples of journalism being essential to public accountability. If the media hadn't pursued the Federal Government's handling of the Community Sports Grants, would the public ever have found out about it? The goings on at St Kevin's School in Melbourne, Murdoch University's admissions scandal and the misconduct that led to the Banking Royal Commission were all exposed by journalists.

Conor McLaughlin

How did you find your time at College?

I thoroughly enjoyed my time working at St Catherine's College from November 2016 to March 2018. I was working within the Marketing team with Mandy McFarland and Taufiq Zainal. I got to learn about how to implement social media marketing tactics and analytics, as well as website development. I also had the opportunity to promote St Catherine's at high schools in the Perth metropolitan area as well as regional schools. I got to develop my public speaking skills and work with fantastic people. The College also facilitates a culture of innovation and excellence, especially through its flagship program, Bloom. This unique entrepreneurship program supported my company Futuristic Skills. This start-up was founded in 2017 as an education technology company. We were able to grow substantially due to the support from Bloom's Pitch Nights, mentorship and UWA contacts. We even went as far to win the UWA 'Student Start-up of the Year' Award in 2018. I am so grateful for St Catherine's College's early support and especially Mandy's overall guidance.

What drew you to working in education technology?

My biggest passion in life is the power of education and mentoring to bring about social impact. Every aspect of my university journey has been shaped by this passion. My first exposure to education technology was as a co-founder of the Teach Learn Grow (TLG) Tutoring Centre in 2016. TLG organises university students to travel to rural and regional schools in the semester breaks for much-needed maths tutoring. The tutoring centre was established to fund TLG's charity work. From this experience, I was inspired to do more in the education space. I established Futuristic Skills to teach young people the most important job skills for the future of work. This was initially in the form of a web app which our team developed at Bloom. We later found much more success in workshops and this is where our focus now lies. We have worked with thousands of students locally, nationally and internationally.

What does a typical day look like for you?

As a Commerce major at UWA, I have to balance my start-up work with my studies. Typically, my days involve a combination of watching Economics lectures and completing Business tutorial work, as well as organising meetings with high schools and universities to pitch our programs. The company's main focus at the moment is promoting the distribution of online content due to the social distancing requirements of the current global pandemic. We offer development in important skills such as emotional intelligence, networking, CV development, public speaking and leadership and more.

Every day is different when you run a business, but I find it important to stay connected with family and friends. Attending networking events is also critical to continue building connections in the community. At the end of the day, people will decide



whether they want to hire you based on whether they like and trust you, so try to build genuine connections with people.

Tell us about some projects you've worked on that you are particularly proud of?

I am very proud of the web application we developed at Futuristic Skills. We were able to reach thousands of users in many schools across WA and impact their careers education. I have also been a volunteer for Bloom since the end of 2016 and to see so many start-ups succeed from the space has been fantastic. Several start-ups have begun at Bloom and taken their companies nationally and even internationally. Bloom has also created a lot of meaningful employment opportunities for its members, especially in the fields of consulting and law. The TLG Tutoring Centre also still exists today as a key revenue source for the TLG charity.

Do you have any advice for people thinking about their next career move?

My biggest advice would be to talk to as many people as you can. The number one reason I've found for students to feel lost or confused about their future is due to a lack of exposure to experienced industry professionals. If you begin to build these networks and relationships, you will quickly work out which career paths suit you and which do not. I conducted over 200 'informational interviews' between 2017 and 2019 and it shaped my interest in education and management consulting. Also, check out Bloom so you can learn about entrepreneurship as a potential career path. You would be surprised how much you can learn without even having an idea yet!

Mothers and Daughters: Three Women of St Catherine's

St Catherine's is fortunate to have many residents who have had siblings or parents that stayed at College. Rachel Ramm, who came to St Catherine's in 1986, has two daughters, Sarah and Ashleigh that went on to live at College as well. While they can all agree that College has changed since the 1980s, it is exciting to hear them each reflect on their unique experiences at St Catherine's.

Rachel Ramm

"In the '80s the College was all girls, and much smaller compared to now, with just the original building. I was in Lower Whitfield. Some parts of the College don't seem to have changed much at all, which surprised me. The rooms are the same in the original part, and the Dining Room is pretty much the same, but what has changed is the size of the College with all the new buildings. The College has some fantastic facilities now and also offers lots of extras such as the Formal Halls, the O'Week activities and the Ball, none of which happened when I was there. We also didn't have any parking issues, and I remember going for swims in the pool out at the back near Park Road with my friends.



The latest addition to College, the Banksia Tower

It was quite a strange feeling walking into the College for a tour with my daughter Sarah at the Open Day. It looked so familiar, even after all those years. I didn't have any expectation that she would choose to go there, but I think we all felt the difference at St Cat's compared to the other Colleges.

Everyone was so friendly and welcoming and the choice was obvious! I have really enjoyed seeing my daughters have such a wonderful time at St Cat's, and I am so glad that they have been able to have the opportunity to experience all that College life has to offer."

Sarah Ramm

"I attended St Catherine's College for two years in 2017 and 2018. My room in first year was located in Lower Arney in the old building and after my first Wing meeting, on my very first day, I knew I was in for the best year. O'Week allowed me to get to know many people, especially from my Wing, and make some great friends. Every week there were different events on that I could look forward to such as the Intercollege events, the Ball and Lip Dub. The highlight of my time was definitely the people I met and the friendships I made. I came to Perth not knowing anyone, and College gave me the opportunity to meet so many wonderful people which allowed me to develop strong, life-long friendships.

I think the College has changed a huge deal since my Mum attended. Since then a lot of new buildings have gone up and the College is no longer women-only. Having moved out of College, life is quite different, however, it wasn't too difficult to adjust. I found that College was a good transition for moving out of home and made things a lot easier. I have certainly missed the events and having my friends just down the hall."



Inside the new Cultural Centre



2020 Freshers during O'Week



Ashleigh Ramm

"Transitioning from home in the country to College in the city was a big change. I found that having my sisters live in Perth also made the move a lot easier for me. I was in Year 10 when my older sister Sarah came to college, at this time I was making decisions on what pathway I wanted to choose. Seeing the experience that she was having at the time significantly encouraged me to want to go to university and also St Cat's. Ever since her O'Week in 2017 I knew that in 2020 I would want to be doing the same thing.

The highlight of College so far would have to be the event-packed O'Week. In this week, I created so many memories at all the different events with people I had only just met. Living at College with the current COVID-19 pandemic has meant that, not only have a lot of the events I was looking forward to been cancelled or postponed, but also that the College lifestyle has changed a bit. Once restrictions are lifted, I am looking forward to participating in Inter-college sports and attending the Ball."

(L - R) Ashleigh, Sarah and Rachel Ramm

Shirley McLeod Scholarship recipients

The Shirley McLeod Scholarship is generously donated by the McLeod family and awarded annually to a female resident who is a high achiever in academics but also who is aspirational and contributes to the community.



Claire Curtin

"I grew up in Cowaramup, a town about 10 minutes north of Margaret River. We moved there when I was very young when it was still a small, quiet place. Most people knew each other and the school had less than 150 students. Because it was so small, almost everything had to be done out of town; like grocery shopping in Margaret River or sport and high school in Busselton. Most of my friends lived on farms or out of town - I was the strange one living in town. Living in Cowaramup sometimes felt inconvenient but the calm and quiet is so nice. Going back home always feels like a retreat. You learn to make the most of every shopping trip and walk to town. We were also very lucky to live in such a beautiful area, with some of the best beaches, wineries and restaurants in the world, if only you're prepared to drive a bit. I always love showing people around the area.

The best part about living at St Catherine's is having my friends live so close. It's nice knowing that I can just wander down the hall and see what my friends are up to. It is like being with family, which is important when you've had to move away from home. I've really enjoyed the formal College events such as the Valedictory and Commencement Dinners and the Ball. They are always so much fun and it really makes you appreciate how hard the RAs and staff work to give us special experiences.

The College facilities are really good, and there's always a quiet space to hang out by yourself or with other people. If I'm stressed or struggling with Uni work, I can just wander up to the rooftop gardens or down into one of the courtyards and enjoy the fresh air.

I have just started my third year of studying Mechanical Engineering. After graduating at the end of this year, I will start a Masters in Mechanical Engineering which I expect to finish in 2022, after which I will be an accredited Mechanical Engineer. Once I start working, I'd like to have a job where I can go onsite a lot and see what's happening in person, to get a more hands-on experience of Engineering.

I would also like to work for a company that provides essential services, such as water, electricity, or resources, where I would be working on making processes more efficient, solving problems and looking ahead for potential issues."

I am so grateful for the scholarship which has made my College experience possible. It has also completely changed my university experience and my view on life.



"The world is becoming increasingly globalised and many of the greatest threats to humanity require international collaboration to effectively engage."

Ellenor Sibon (left) with Summer Rice at the Secret Garden Party

Ellenor Sibon

"In the time I've been at St Catherine's it has become my second home. The RAs and staff are so lovely - I never imagined I would have a Head of College as passionate, funny and inspiring as Fiona. The dogs roaming around campus make me laugh, and the mint growing in the garden makes fantastic tea! The most memorable experience so far has been Wing Wars, because it was unexpected (in the best way possible) and utterly, delightfully chaotic. I'm looking forward to spending more time in the comfy red armchairs in the study area eating Kit-Kats from the vending machine, learning, researching, meeting new people, forming friendships and being inspired.

I grew up in Margaret River, a small, close-knit town on the southwest coast. As kids, we would build cubby houses in the bush and go on expeditions to hunt down wild figs. I only recently learned how to use the Perth public transport system (I asked

a lady how to buy a ticket for a train once and her eight-year-old son looked at me like I was from another planet).

I am in my first year and currently studying a Bachelor of Philosophy at UWA. I am using this year to find the majors I am most interested in pursuing, as I am interested in a wide range of subjects across the humanities. The Scholarship was such a huge surprise and I am so grateful, and I want to give back.

I am interested in humanitarian issues and international relations. I believe in the power of art and stories to influence people and shape social change, and would love to call myself an author one day. The world is becoming increasingly globalised and many of the greatest threats to humanity require international collaboration to effectively engage. I am bilingual and plan to study Spanish throughout the duration of my undergraduate degree, which I hope will enable me to work around the world. "

Remembering **Dr Patricia Kailis**

St Catherine's College extends its deepest sympathies to the family of Dr Patricia Kailis. Patricia was a Fellow of the College and a much-loved member of our community.

Patricia was born in Victoria, and after studying medicine at the University of Melbourne, moved to Western Australia for a job at Royal Perth Hospital in 1958. Since then, she has lived and worked in WA, and with her husband, the couple established themselves in various industries. She was involved in valuable research into Huntington's disease, motor neuron disease and muscular dystrophy.

She also established Kailis Jewellery in 1978, an iconic Western Australian brand still owned by her family. She was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire, a Member of the Order of Australia and awarded the Centenary Medal for her service to the community.

Her legacy of hard work, excellence and caring for others will live on through our College community. Vale Dr Kailis.



Blast from **the past**

Excerpt from *“Women of Excellence: A History of St Catherine’s College”* by Chloe Britton.
St Catherine’s has a strong history involvement in dramatic productions.

“In her first annual report, written in 1948, M.E. Wood summarised the first three years in the life of the College, making special mention of the achievements of its organisations. In this report, she mentioned the strong links between the Women’s College and the University Dramatic Society including participation in the plays *“The Knight of the Burning Pestle”* and *“Oedipus the King”*. The latter was highly acclaimed and its season extended.

The great British Actors Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivienne Leigh, guests of the Vice-Chancellor, went to see the production, meeting the cast and crew afterwards to extend their congratulations.

Women’s College residents also participated in productions with students from neighboring St George’s College, the university’s Anglican men’s College. Productions included *“St Joan”*, *“The Day After Tomorrow”* and *“Antony and Cleopatra”*. There was a clear sense that the Women’s College was making its presence known in the university community and beyond.”



1948 play - *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*



1962 play - *Crime and Punishment*

Join our Alumni Network

Don’t miss out on the opportunity to stay connected to fellow alumni and reconnect with old friends. Get in touch with our Alumni team to make sure your details are up to date so you never miss out on a Banksia magazine, reunion opportunity or other event. We love to hear from you!

Email our Alumni Data coordinator: alumni@stcatherines.uwa.edu.au

COVID-19 community care package

A small gift goes a long way

St Catherine's has always been a feisty supporter of fairness and giving everyone an equal opportunity. From the early days when equity of access for women was uncommon to more recent times when providing tertiary opportunities for young Indigenous people remains a challenge, the College and its alumni have voiced their opinion and backed that with support.

COVID-19 has created inequity in our community. The College has lost a number of residents who have had to leave due to financial hardship either experienced directly by them or their families. Most of our residents have casual work to support their fees and with hospitality and retail closing, they have lost their jobs and their income. Our families, particularly in regional WA, have lost jobs or total income if they were in tourism or other associated industries hit hard by the pandemic. They are doing it tough and watching our young people pack up their belongings and bid farewell to their friends, is heart breaking.

We have a substantial scholarship and bursary program at the College and because it had already been attributed before the pandemic hit, we dipped into our already stretched operating budget to help residents where we could. In some cases we were able to bridge the gap but for others the leap was too great.

St Cat's family, we ask for your support now to relieve some of this hardship.

Please consider making a gift for the Head of College to distribute to those impacted by COVID-19. You can either complete the attached Giving Form or visit us on our website www.stcatherines.uwa.edu.au to make a gift.

A small gift goes a long way and by investing in our young people and in Higher Education, we can continue investing in a bright future for our country. Thank you to those alumni and parents who have already reached out to us to help – it means so, so much!

Please contact the Director of Advancement on 08 9442 0581 if you would like to discuss your gift or complete the Giving form included in this issue.

Secret Friends' Week

The concept behind Secret Friends' Week is like a large-scale Secret Santa event. Throughout the chosen week, residents anonymously leave small gifts of delicious snacks, sweet treats, and even handmade trinkets, alongside heartfelt letters to their 'secret friend'.

Some secret friends even take the letters to the next level, by leaving small clues or hints about their identity for the recipient to guess. At the end of the week, residents finally reveal themselves to their secret friends, and they will have come away from the event made two new friends around College; one who gave them gifts and another to whom they were giving gifts.

This year, an explicit price limit was imposed, and participants were asked to include two of their personal interests when signing up. This was done so that participants could be matched with secret friends with interests similar to theirs, and to maximise enjoyment from the experience for everyone.

This week is a great opportunity for residents to step outside their regular circle of friends and make new ones from around college. It also encourages a culture of giving and reflects the warm and encouraging spirit of the community at St Catherine's College.





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